When and How Did Jerusalem Become a Great City? The Rise of Jerusalem as Judah's Premier City in the Eighth–Seventh Centuries B.C.E.*

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This article critically examines the assumption that Jerusalem grew rapidly in the late eighth century due to a wave of mass immigration from the northern kingdom of Israel following Sargon II's conquest of Samaria in 720 B.C.E. This historical hypothesis rests on the analysis of the archaeological evidence from Jerusalem and other Judahite sites. The article seeks to demonstrate that the assumption is contradicted by the historical, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence. It further examines issues that are related to the expansion of Jerusalem in the eighth century, such as the problem of dating the foundation of long-enduring archaeological strata, the political status of the kingdom of Judah under Hezekiah, the treatment of runaways and refugees by ancient Near Eastern kingdoms, in particular the Assyrian Empire, the impact of Sennacherib's campaign against the kingdom of Judah on the growth of Jerusalem in the late eighth–early seventh centuries, the decline in the population of Jerusalem in the course of the seventh century, and the contribution of the Book of Chronicles to the study of the building operations of Hezekiah and Manasseh in Jerusalem. It is suggested that the growth of the city of Jerusalem was gradual, starting in the ninth century and accelerating in the eighth century B.C.E., culminating in the late eighth–early seventh centuries, when refugees from the areas around Jerusalem and the destroyed Judahite cities entered Jerusalem to find shelter within its walls. Later, in the course of the seventh century, many of the refugees left the city and either returned to their places and tried to rebuild their destroyed cities or founded new settlements in the area around Jerusalem and elsewhere.

INTRODUCTION

The excavations conducted by Avigad in the Old City's Jewish Quarter between 1969 and 1982 uncovered a stretch of the city wall measuring approximately 65 m and dating from the First Temple period. The unearthed structure (sometimes called "Avigad's wall" or the "Broad Wall") stood on the base rock and on remains of structures from a previous settlement. The discovery put an end to the debate, which had been ongoing for many years, whether First Temple Jerusalem was a relatively small town comprising David's City and the Temple Mount, or had gradually expanded and encompassed all, or at least parts of, the Western Hill (i.e., the Jewish and Armenian Quarters and part of Mount Zion). It proved beyond doubt that the city did indeed spread to the Western Hill and was later fortified with a wall between the Hinnom Valley, the Tyropoean, and the cross gully (the stream that

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drains the Tyropoean to the west). Moreover, excavations in various sites all over the Western Hill uncovered pottery vessels, remains of walls, floors, and fills from the time of the First Temple. The combined findings supported the assumption that large parts of the Western Hill were in fact inhabited during that period. Finally, remains of structures discovered under the city wall proved that the Western Hill had been settled before it was walled in, which leads to the conclusion that in the first stage of the city's expansion, the quarter was unfortified and contained both residential and agricultural structures and only later was the wall built which apparently encompassed the entire residential quarter (Geva 1979: 84–89; Avigad 1983: 31–60; Tushingham 1985: 9–24; Reich 2000: 108–18; Chen, Margalit, and Pixner 2000; Geva, ed. 2000; Geva 2003a; 2003b).

The total area of the City of David and the Temple Mount comes to approximately 40 acres. With the inclusion of the Western Hill within the area presumably encompassed by the wall, it comes to about 160 acres (Reich 2000: 116).[1] Except for a very few sherds of Middle Bronze Age and Early Iron Age II, the earlier pottery forms found on the Western Hill should be compared mainly to the pottery assemblage found in the debris of Level III at Lachish, a city that was totally destroyed in the course of Sennacherib's campaign in 701 B.C.E. (Avigad and Geva 2000: 81; de Groot, Geva, and Yezerski 2003: 15–16). Therefore, scholars suggested that the settlement on the Western Hill must have begun about the same time as the settlement in Level III of Lachish. In light of these data, some scholars concluded that the city grew demographically and geographically at an unprecedented pace in a few years, and so they began to search for explanations for such an exceptional expansion.

Following the discovery of the wall, and the subsequent conclusion about the city's remarkable expansion, Broshi proposed an explanation that has become axiomatic in the archaeological study of Jerusalem in the late First Temple period. Assuming that the sudden spurt could not have been due to economic reasons or a natural population growth, the answer had to be found in the particular historical circumstances prevailing at that time. These he found in two major migrations which he assumed reached Jerusalem at that time—one emanating from the kingdom of Israel after its conquest by Sargon in 720 B.C.E., and the other from the parts of the kingdom of Judah that had been conquered and devastated by Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. Based on these assumptions, Broshi argued that the expansion of the city occurred in the reign of Hezekiah and the early part of Manasseh's, and that many of the settlers were refugees who arrived from nearby areas and found shelter in the city, which had not been affected by the Assyrian campaigns (Broshi 1974).

Broshi's supposition, a historical interpretation of the archaeological findings, has been supported, and even considerably developed and extended, by some scholars, while others have criticized it. Broshi and Finkelstein (1992: 51–52) argued that the city's great expansion began only after the fall of the kingdom of Israel (720 B.C.E.) and received added impetus following Sennacherib's campaign to Judah. Reich (2000: 116), too, favored the view that those two events crucially affected the city's growth (see also Tatum 2003: 297). Finkelstein and Silberman went further, ascribing the growth of Jerusalem to a great wave of refugees who arrived in a short time from Israel. Here is how they describe it in their first book (Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: 243):

> The royal citadel of Jerusalem was transformed in a single generation from the seat of a rather insignificant local dynasty into the political and religious nerve center of a regional power—both because of dramatic internal developments and because thousands of refugees from the conquered kingdom of Israel fled to the south. Here archaeology has been invaluable in charting the pace and scale of Jerusalem's sudden expansion. As first suggested by Israeli archaeologist Magen Broshi, excavations conducted there in recent decades have shown that suddenly, at the end of the eighth century B.C.E., Jerusalem underwent an unprecedented population explosion, with its residential areas expanding from its former narrow ridge—the city of David—to cover the entire Western Hill. A formidable defensive wall was constructed to include the new suburbs. In a matter of a few decades—surely within a single generation—Jerusalem was transformed from a modest highland town of about ten or twelve acres to a huge urban

[1] Barkay collected the evidence discovered in rescue excavations and casual digs in the area north of the "Broad Wall" and suggested that all the area up to the moat north of the Old City wall was settled in the First Temple period. See Barkay 1985: 161–65; 1985–1986: 39–40; 1997: 7–26. According to his analysis, the vast area of about 75 acres north of the "Broad Wall" was inhabited by extramural suburbs. However, the evidence of the assumed extramural suburbs is slim; it is more likely that the area was covered by isolated farms and other buildings that served for agricultural exploitation (for details see below).

> area of 150 acres of closely packed houses, workshops, and public buildings. In demographic terms, the city's population may have increased as much as fifteen times, from about one thousand to fifteen thousand inhabitants.

The idea that a far-reaching transformation took place in Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah, and consequently throughout the kingdom of Judah, occupies a prominent place in Schniedewind's writings (2003: 380–81, 385–86; 2004: 68–73, 94–95). This scholar adopted Broshi's hypothesis about a wave of exiles from Israel who flooded into Jerusalem from the north, and even argued that there are indications that Hezekiah tried to integrate northern refugees into his kingdom and that the refugees from the north made a major impact on the social structure of Judah in the seventh century (Schniedewind 2003: 380, 385–86). The following passage, from the chapter on the reign of Hezekiah, illustrates his view (Schniedewind 2004: 68–69):

> It is now clear that Jerusalem grew more than fourfold in the late eighth century B.C.E. and continued to expand until the last days of the Judean state. Jerusalem's growth was a by-product of the rise of the Assyrian Empire. First of all, Assyria destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel resulting in the immigration of Israelites to Jerusalem and other cities in the south. A few years later, another influx of dispossessed refugees came into Jerusalem from the foothills of Judah following the campaign of Sennacherib against Judah in 701 B.C.E. . . . In 722 B.C.E. Hezekiah was faced with a flood of immigrants from the defeated northern kingdom. Rather than barricading his borders, Hezekiah tried to integrate these refugees into his realm, hoping thereby to restore Israel's idealized golden age, the kingdom of David and Solomon. Thus, the famous "messianic" prophecies of Isaiah of Jerusalem must have been understood by the citizens of Jerusalem as commentary and political policy.

In their recent book, Finkelstein and Silberman took this idea a step further, describing the major wave of immigrants that poured from Israel into Judah as a crucial, formative occurrence in the kingdom's history (Finkelstein and Silberman 2006a: 129–38; 2006b: 259–85). Not only did the influx from Israel dramatically increase the population of the kingdom of Judah and alter its society, it turned it into a society that was broadly Judahite-Israelite. The authors even attribute the picture of a unified kingdom that arises from the story-cycle of Saul and David, to the desire of the kings of Judah to create a common past and provide an ideological foundation for the new society that had grown in Judah at the end of the eighth and early seventh centuries B.C.E. They conclude the discussion as follows (Finkelstein and Silberman 2006: 137–38).

> Not only did Judah develop from an isolated highland society into a fully developed state integrated into the Assyrian economy; its population dramatically changed from purely Judahite into a mix of Judahite and ex-Israelite. Perhaps as much as half of the Judahite population in the late eighth to early seventh century B.C.E. was of north Israelite origin. And as we will see, the composition of an official dynastic history, in which the concept of a *united* monarchy was central, was only one of the ways that the rulers of Judah attempted to bind together the new society that had been created within the span of just a few decades.

Other scholars attribute the expansion of Jerusalem not to incoming waves of migration in the last quarter of the eighth century B.C.E., but to a steady development in the course of the eighth–seventh centuries, in which groups of immigrants, fleeing from the Assyrian campaigns of the late eighth century, played a part. Barkay (1985: 488–92) suggested that the settlement on the Western Hill had begun at the end of the ninth century and gradually increased in the course of the eighth century B.C.E.[2] Vaughn (1999: 64–69) examined the archaeological data from the excavations on the Western Hill in an attempt to determine the date of the settlement at the site. He maintains that the settlement began early in the eighth century and proceeded slowly and gradually; it is reasonable to suppose that refugees from the north arrived in Jerusalem and settled there, but they did not necessarily provide the primary impetus for the growth of the new quarter. Ariel and de Groot (2000: 158, 161–63) discussed the development of the lower eastern quarter of the City of David hill and the Western Hill. They suggested that the eastern quarter developed since the beginning of the 11th–10th centuries B.C.E., whereas the settlement on the Western Hill began only in the eighth century, and that in the course of the eighth century, the two

[2] Ussishkin demonstrated that the ninth-century B.C.E. city of Lachish was large and massively fortified (Level IV), and that other Judahite cities also grew at that time. He thus argued that the capital city must have also developed and expanded in the ninth century. See Ussishkin 2003: 534.

neighborhoods developed gradually and were fortified with a surrounding wall in the reign of Hezekiah. Geva (2003a: 520–21; 2003b: 204–5) presented a broad spectrum of factors that helped develop the city, such as political stability, natural increase, and internal migration linked to the status of Jerusalem as the capital, which made it grow steadily in the course of the eighth century and attract new inhabitants with new economic potentialities. To these factors was added the influx of refugees from the kingdoms of Israel and Judah following the Assyrian campaigns. Recently, Faust (2005: 106–9 and n. 16) also noted the difficulties with the hypothesis that waves of immigrants populated the entire Western Hill in a short space of time. In his opinion, the beginning of the Western Hill settlement should be dated to the late ninth century B.C.E., and the new quarter developed gradually in the course of the eighth century. The refugees who came from the kingdom of Israel and the lowlands of Judah in the late eighth–early seventh century joined a settlement that had existed for about 100 years.

The hypothesis about a large wave of migrants who arrived in Judah from Israel in the final quarter of the eighth century, and were a decisive factor in the growth of Jerusalem or even the whole kingdom, is an unmistakably historical one, resting on an interpretation of the archaeological findings in Jerusalem and other cities in Judah. This hypothesis, as well as the analysis of the factors that led to the growth and consolidation of Jerusalem in the eighth–seventh centuries B.C.E., have certain archaeological and historical aspects, each of which calls for a separate discussion. In the framework of this discussion, I begin by addressing the difficulties of using pottery vessels found in a destruction stratum as the basis for dating it. Next, I describe Hezekiah's standing in the region and his relations with the Assyrian Empire, and examine closely the hypothesis about a wave of migrants from Israel arriving in the kingdom of Judah in the final quarter of the eighth century B.C.E. I also deal with the connection between the impact of Sennacherib's campaign to Judah and the archaeological findings in Jerusalem; examine critically the argument that the city's population continued to increase in the course of the seventh century B.C.E.; and finally, consider the descriptions in the Book of Chronicles as a source for the study of the construction in Jerusalem in the reigns of Hezekiah and Manasseh and in the author's time.

THE STAGES IN THE GROWTH OF THE POPULATION ON JERUSALEM'S WESTERN HILL IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY B.C.E.

The hypothesis that a wave of refugees from Israel arrived in the kingdom of Judah and settled in Jerusalem arose from the impression that the settlement on the Western Hill increased sharply at the end of the eighth century B.C.E., which could not be accounted for by the usual factors that cause a city to grow (e.g., natural increase, the attraction of a growing capital city, economic and commercial development). We need to ask, do the findings from the Western Hill show unequivocally that the settlement there grew and developed in a short space of time? The impression of a settlement that grew in a matter of a few years is due to the dating of the pottery found there, and here we start the discussion.

The pottery vessels from the First Temple period found in the excavations at the Western Hill, most of them broken and scattered, were dated on the basis of a parallel with the III–II strata at Lachish, the earliest of which was destroyed in 701 and the latest in 587/586. In their final report on the excavations at the Western Hill, the archaeologists stated that the earliest pottery forms found at the site should mainly be compared with the pottery assemblages found in Level III in Lachish. Since the foundation of that stratum was dated to the latter half of the eighth century, they assigned a similar date to the new quarter in Jerusalem (Avigad and Geva 2000: 81; Geva and Reich 2000: 42; Geva 2003a: 514–15; 2003b: 195 n. 24; de Groot, Geva, and Yezerski 2003: 15–16). Since most of the pottery vessels found at the Western Hill resemble those found in Level III in Lachish, they were dated—parallel with the destruction of Lachish—to the end of the eighth century B.C.E. This context gave rise to the supposition that at this time a great wave of migrants arrived in Jerusalem and settled over most of the city's area. But the date of the founding of Level III in Lachish and of the appearance of the type of pottery vessels found in that stratum, as well as of their disappearance and the development of the new vessel forms known to us from the subsequent Lachish Level II, are far from certain and call for a brief discussion.

Dating the presence of the types of pottery vessels that parallel the ones found in Level III in Lachish

is indicated by a comparison between the vessels discovered in the destruction stratum of Sennacherib's campaign to Judah and the ones found in the preceding stratum (Level IV) in Lachish. Zimhoni (1997: 170–72; 2004: 1705–7), who discussed the development of pottery vessels in Lachish, noted that the vessels from Level IV differ significantly from the ones found in Level III, suggesting that they were separated by a considerable interval. It is not known when Level IV was destroyed, but it is supposed to have happened at the end of the ninth or early eighth century B.C.E.[3] Consequently, we may assume that the pottery vessels typical of Lachish Level III were developed in the first half of the eighth century B.C.E.

The continued use of vessels paralleling those of Lachish Level III in the seventh century is indicated by the following two test cases:

(1) A characteristic type of vessel found in Lachish III is a jar with handles impressed with the word *lmlk*, found in large numbers in the city's ruins. Vaughn (1999: 93–110), who discussed their dating at length, examined the jars found in the destruction layers from the end of the kingdom of Judah. Since not a single whole jar of this type was discovered in these strata, he argued that they had already fallen into disuse at the beginning of the seventh century B.C.E. To which I might add that it is not to be expected that *lmlk* jars would be found in the destruction layers of the kingdom of Judah 115 years after Hezekiah's uprising against Assyria. Thus, the absence of these jars from the 587/586 ruin strata does not indicate when they ceased to be used throughout the kingdom of Judah. *Lmlk* seal impressions were discovered at sites founded in the seventh century, after Sennacherib's campaign to Judah (Mazar in Mazar, Amit, and Ilan 1996: 208–9; Finkelstein and Na'aman 2004), and no doubt many others remained in use in all the places that were not destroyed in the Assyrian campaign, until they finally broke and were discarded. It is not known how long *lmlk* jars were used, simply because none of the sites excavated so far in the territory of the kingdom of Judah was destroyed in the seventh century. Thus far, some 290 *lmlk* jar handles have been found in the Jerusalem excavations, and we may assume that they continued to be used for many years after Sennacherib's campaign, until they broke and were thrown away, and that the same applies to the rest of the kingdom. (For the list of *lmlk* seal impressions discovered in the excavations of Jerusalem, see Vaughn 1999: 185–89.)

(2) Finkelstein and the present writer pointed out that several towns in the southern Shephelah, which had been destroyed by Sennacherib's campaign to Judah (Tell Beit Mirsim, Tell ʿAiṭûn, Tel Ḥalif), were subsequently resettled by refugees who tried to rebuild them (Finkelstein and Na'aman 2004). The pottery vessels found in those resettlement strata, including *lmlk* seal impressions, are identical to the vessels found in Lachish III, showing that the settlers continued to use the ceramics that had been widely used in the early seventh century throughout the kingdom of Judah. It is not known when these sites were abandoned, except for the fact that they did not contain ceramics paralleling the kind found at the sites that were destroyed in the early sixth century. This is further evidence that the type of pottery found in Lachish III continued to be used for considerable time after that city was destroyed in 701 B.C.E.

When did the vessels typical of Lachish III fall into disuse? Some 115 years separate the assemblages of vessels found in the ruins of Strata III and II in Lachish. Nowhere in the area of the kingdom of Judah has a settlement destroyed between those two periods been excavated, and the dating of vessels discovered in the strata of the excavated sites is based on their resemblance to the assemblages of vessels dated to 701 and 587/586. Destruction layers dated to the campaign of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar to Judah in 604 were found in Ashkelon, Ekron, Tel Batash, and Beth-shemesh, which tell us about the assemblage of pottery vessels in use in the Philistine kingdoms at the end of the seventh century B.C.E.[4] But almost a century passed between the destruction layers of Sennacherib's campaign to Judah

[3] Mazar and Panitz-Cohen (2001: 274–75; see Mazar 2005: 16, 24) dated the end of Level IV at Lachish to the second half of the ninth century. Herzog and Singer-Avitz (2004: 220–21, 228–31) attributed Level IV at Lachish to what they call the "Late Iron IIA stage" which they date to the ninth–early eighth century B.C.E. See also Faust 2005: 106–7, with earlier literature.

[4] For the destruction of Ashkelon in Nebuchadnezzar's campaign of 604 B.C.E., see Stager 1996. For the destruction of Ekron, probably in the same Babylonian campaign, see Gitin 2003, with earlier literature. For the destruction of Tel Batash, see Mazar and Kelm 1993, with earlier literature. For the blocking of the Beth-shemesh water system, probably in the 604 B.C.E. Babylonian campaign, see Fantalkin 2004.

in 701 and that of Nebuchadnezzar in 604, and we have no additional data about when the pottery typical of Lachish III ceased to be used.

Jerusalem was inhabited uninterruptedly throughout the First Temple period, and there, unlike in the cities destroyed in Sennacherib's campaign to Judah, the types of pottery paralleling the types found in Lachish III remained in use in the early seventh century, until the fashion changed and potters began to produce new types of vessels. Since Jerusalem was first destroyed in 587/586, many years after these vessels had fallen into disuse, the pottery of the types found in Lachish III was shattered and scattered all over. We have, therefore, no choice but to date the broken vessels of these types that were found in excavations throughout the Western Hill to the years in which they were in use, approximately from the first half of the eighth century B.C.E. to the first half of the seventh. Thus, it was during that period that most of the area of the Western Hill became inhabited and was also fortified with a surrounding wall.

To what extent, then, do the pottery sherds found scattered in the excavation reflect the early founding stages of the site that would be inhabited continuously for many years? In answer, I propose to compare the picture of a "sudden" growth that supposedly took place in Jerusalem at the end of the eighth century with the "sudden" growth of Ekron in the early seventh century, as described by that site's excavators. The comparison with Ekron is useful, because its history is documented, which makes it possible to test the validity of the archaeological finding—unlike the case in Jerusalem, where there are no external sources enabling a safe dating of the archaeological data.

The excavations at Tel Miqne (ancient Ekron) revealed that in the seventh century, the city covered an area of approximately 50 acres, which included an upper city of roughly 7.5 acres and a spacious lower city. The big, thriving city uncovered in Ekron was walled and inhabited in most or all of its area, and its economy was based mainly on the olive oil industry, as attested all over the excavation in the lower city. The destruction level of Ekron (604 B.C.E.) contained ceramics of the end of the seventh century B.C.E., while pottery that was in use during the ninth–eighth centuries was discovered only in the upper city. The excavators therefore concluded that during the ninth–eighth centuries, the settlement concentrated in the upper city, and that Ekron as a whole underwent a spurt of growth in the early seventh century B.C.E. (Gitin 1989; 1993; 1995; 1997; Dothan and Gitin 1993). The "sudden" growth of Ekron, whose area was multiplied sixfold, including residential quarters and numerous industrial premises, has been attributed to the close cooperation between its rulers and the Assyrian Empire, as well as to the arrival of thousands of refugees following Sennacherib's campaign to Judah and the destruction of many of its cities.

In addition to the archaeological data, the history of the settlement at Ekron is amplified with written documents (Na'aman 2003). Ekron is mentioned in the prophecies of Amos (1:6–8) as one of the Philistine sovereign cities, alongside Gaza, Ashdod, and Ashkelon, as well as depicted in a relief from the reign of Sargon II (721–705 B.C.E.), and mentioned several times in Assyrian administrative documents from that reign. A broken inscription of Sennacherib, recounting in great detail his campaign to Judah, appears to refer to Ekron as "a royal [city] of the Philistines, which H[ezek]iah had captured and strengthened for himself," and described as a fortified city with a palace and a water system (Na'aman 1974: 26–28 lines 14–16, 29). Thus, the written sources confirm that Ekron became an important center as early as the latter half of the eighth century B.C.E. and was probably fortified with a wall in the final quarter of the century, following the appearance of the Assyrian Empire in the region.[5]

I have noted that the big city at Ekron was dated to the seventh century on the basis of the pottery found in the destruction stratum and the absence of vessels typical of the late eighth century B.C.E. in the settlement excavated in the lower city. But the findings from the destruction stratum reflected the material culture in use at that time, while the ceramics that had been in use for many years prior to the destruction are usually scattered and disappear in the surroundings, and may not even be represented in the destruction stratum. Written documents are of critical value in dating the foundation of archaeological sites, especially those that were destroyed after a long, continuous existence. It seems to me that Ekron, which was a big, important city in the 11th century B.C.E., was devastated about the middle of

[5] Ussishkin (2005: 61–63) has observed some late eighth-century artifacts (e.g., three *lmlk* jar handles, asymmetrical bowls labeled "scoops") in the lower city of Ekron. In light of the documentary and archaeological evidence, he suggested dating the fortifications of the city to the late eighth century B.C.E.

the 10th—possibly by the ruler of Gath, its southern neighbor—after which it declined. Following the destruction of Gath (Tell el-Ṣāfi) by Hazael, the king of Aram, in the 830s B.C.E., and the resulting power vacuum in the northern Shephelah,[6] Ekron began to grow and expand, and in the eighth century B.C.E. its inhabitants began to settle in the lower city. At first the new quarter stood unwalled; then, in the final third of the eighth century, probably in view of the Assyrian threat, it was walled and the settlement within continued to expand in the seventh century B.C.E. It is likely that refugees from Judah, whose cities had been destroyed and who were seeking refuge outside the kingdom, also settled in Ekron. It should be kept in mind that while Samaria became an Assyrian province, so that migration from its territory to the kingdom of Judah would have conflicted with Assyrian interests (see below), an exodus of Judahite refugees to Ekron would have suited those same interests, since weakening the kingdom of Judah had been one of the main objectives of Sennacherib's campaign in 701 B.C.E. (Na'aman 1974: 35–36; 1994: 248–49).

It seems to me that the settlement of Jerusalem's Western Hill evolved in a similar way to Ekron's lower city. Keeping in mind that only a small part of the Western Hill has been excavated, it is possible that the settlement began in areas that have not yet been unearthed. Moreover, the continued habitation of Jerusalem over thousands of years, the strength of its settlement in the eighth–seventh centuries B.C.E., and the continued occupation of the site until the destruction in 587/586, mean that pottery vessels from the early stages of the settlement had scattered in all directions and are therefore absent from the site's destruction stratum. We must also keep in mind that even in the excavations at the City of David, very little pottery from Iron Age I–IIA has been found, though there is no doubt that the city was inhabited, if partially. Finally, Avigad and Geva (2000: 72; see Faust 2005: 107) reported that four building stages preceded the construction of the Broad Wall; and isolated early Iron Age II sherds were found scattered in the Western Hill (Avigad and Geva 2000: 81; de Groot, Geva, and Yezerski 2003: 15–16). Thus, settlement of the Western Hill might have begun as early as the late ninth century B.C.E. (as suggested by several scholars), but the absence of written documents and the later destruction of the city make this supposition impossible to prove.

In view of the above, we can state that the settlement on the Western Hill began in the first half of the eighth century, gradually increased, and at some point toward the end of the century was fortified with a wall (for the archaeological evidence for dating the construction of the wall, see Avigad 1983: 56–60; Geva and Reich 2000: 42; Avigad and Geva 2000: 45–82; de Groot, Geva, and Yezerski 2003: 2, 16; Geva 2003a: 511–16). The settlement of the Western Hill doubtless accelerated before and after Sennacherib's campaign of 701 B.C.E., and Judahite refugees, either fleeing ahead of the Assyrian army or after the destruction of their cities, found a safe haven within the walls of Jerusalem. The emerging picture is of a long, gradual process involving many factors, such as natural increase, the developing economy and commerce, internal migration to the kingdom's principal urban center offering economic potentialities, and finally, the immigration of many refugees seeking shelter within the fortified city following the Assyrian campaign to Judah in 701 B.C.E.

The development of the urban and rural settlement throughout the kingdom of Judah should be dated in much the same way as the first settlement of the Western Hill in Jerusalem. Ceramics parallel to those found in Lachish III were found in the destruction layers of the cities that were devastated by Sennacherib's campaign in 701 and in the extensive rural settlements around them. That is why the label "Hezekiah" was attached to these pottery vessels, and why the founding of the settlements where they were discovered has been dated to his reign. This gave rise to the picture of large-scale settlement in the final quarter of the eighth century. But pottery vessels of a type similar to that found in the destruction layers of these sites had existed for most of the eighth century, and there is no basis for the assumption that these settlements were all founded in the reign of Hezekiah. The urban and rural settlements throughout the kingdom of Judah developed gradually through the ninth and eighth centuries B.C.E., and finding pottery that parallels the types found in Lachish III indicates the time when these cities and villages, established and flourishing for many years before, were finally destroyed.

[6] On the rise of the city of Gath to the status of prime city in southern Palestine in the second half of the tenth century and its destruction by Hazael, king of Aram, in ca. 830–820 B.C.E., see Na'aman 1996: 176–77; 2002: 210–12; Maeir 2004: 319–34, with earlier literature.

HEZEKIAH AND THE KINGS OF ASSYRIA

While Hezekiah reigned in Judah, the Assyrian Empire reached its apogee, ruling over vast territories on a scale unprecedented in the history of the ancient Near East (Tadmor 1958; Becking 1992; Na'aman 1994; Fuchs 1994; Frame 1999; Younger 2003). Faced with a rebellion after his succession, Sargon II launched a campaign to the west, suppressed the revolt, and annexed the kingdoms of Hamath and Israel to his empire. The province of Samaria (Samerīna) encompassed the whole of the highlands of Samaria, the eastern margins of the Sharon, and part of the northern Shephelah, and its southern boundary adjoined the kingdom of Judah. Sargon subsequently extended the Assyrian Empire in the east, north, and northwest, and annexed extensive territories in the Iranian mountains, northern Syria, and southern Anatolia. Following the uprising in Ashdod in 712, he dispatched the Assyrian army under the leadership of the *turtānu* (see Isa 20:1), and in 711 captured Ashdod and annexed it too to Assyria. As a result, the kingdom of Judah found the Assyrian Empire also on part of its western border (for Sargon's conquest and annexation of Ashdod, see Tadmor 1958: 79–80; 1966: 94–95; 1971; Na'aman 1994: 239–40; Fuchs 1998: 44–46, 73–74, 86–87).

Sargon deported tens of thousands of people from the kingdoms he conquered and at the same time conducted massive population transfers to the territories he annexed, to develop the regions that had been devastated and enhance the economic prosperity of the areas Assyria wished to develop (Oded 1979, with earlier literature). Groups were exiled from the Iranian mountains to the area of Naḥal Besor and Ashdod province, and Arabs from northern Arabia to the province of Samaria (Na'aman and Zadok 1988: 38–46; Becking 1992: 61–104; Na'aman 1993; Younger 1998).[7] Having conquered Babylonia in 710–709 B.C.E., Sargon exiled some of its inhabitants as well as tribesmen from the surrounding areas and settled them in the province of Samaria (see 2 Kgs 17:24) (Na'aman and Zadok 2000). In Sargon's reign, Assyria reached the zenith of its power, not only towering over the small kingdoms in its vicinity, but mightier than the most powerful kingdoms on its borders (Elam, Urartu, Mushki, and Cush). In the regions adjoining the Assyrian Empire, the fear of its ruler's response to any form of resistance was overpowering, and Sargon dominated the entire expanse between the Anatolian highland and northern Sinai and the shores of the Persian Gulf.

Sargon's death in battle in Anatolia in 705 B.C.E. must have shaken all the empire's inhabitants and the rulers of the kingdoms it had not annexed, and led to the revolts in southern Anatolia, in Babylonia (led by Merodach-baladan), and in southern Palestine (led by Hezekiah). Isa 14:4b–21 gives poetic expression to the general relief felt at the demise of the great conqueror. Scholars have noted that the text originally referred to Sargon's fall on the battlefield, but since it did not name him, it was later adapted to the king of Babylonia, by means of opening and closing verses (4a and 22–23, respectively) (Winckler 1897: 193–94, 410–15; Ginsberg 1968: 47–50; Barth 1977: 136–40; Clements 1980a: 139–40; Sweeney 1996: 232–33, 237). Here is the passage that expresses the awe felt by contemporaries at the fall of a fearsome overlord (verses 4b–8, 12–17; The New JPS):

> How is the taskmaster vanished, how is oppression ended! The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the rod of tyrants, that smote peoples in wrath with stroke unceasing, that belabored nations in fury in relentless pursuit. All the earth is calm, untroubled; loudly it cheers. Even pines rejoice at your fate, and cedars of Lebanon: "Now that you have lain down, none shall come up to fell us." . . . How are you fallen from heaven, O Shining One, son of Dawn! How are you felled to earth, O vanquisher of nations! Once you thought in your heart, "I will climb to the sky; higher than the stars of God I will set my throne. I will sit in the mount of assembly, on the summit of Zaphon: I will mount the back of a cloud—I will match the Most High." Instead, you are brought down to Sheol, to the bottom of the Pit. They who behold you stare; they peer at you closely: "Is this the man who shook the earth, who made realms tremble, who made the world like a waste and wrecked its towns, who never released his prisoners to their homes?"

Here it is necessary to assess the reign of Hezekiah, starting with the problem of chronology. There is a well-known dispute among scholars about the date of Hezekiah's accession. One chronological sys-

[7] On the Assyrian efforts to develop the conquered territories, see Radner 2000: 235–38, with earlier literature; Parker 2003: 525–57, with earlier literature.

tem, based on the synchronisms in the Book of Kings, dates his reign to ca. 727–698; the other, based on 2 Kgs 18:13 and Isa 36:1, dates him to ca. 715–686. According to the first system, Hezekiah was subordinate to Assyria through most of his reign, rebelled against it only toward the end, and died soon after the Assyrian campaign (see Na'aman 1994: 236–39, with earlier literature). According to these dates, Hezekiah reigned for about 22 years before the revolt, during which time he could have done much to strengthen and develop his kingdom. According to the second chronological system (which I am inclined to support), Hezekiah rebelled against Assyria at the end of the first decade of his reign, Sennacherib's campaign occurred in the middle of it, and its latter half was marked by the consequences of the failed revolt. Needless to say, opting for one or the other chronological system affects the assessment of Hezekiah's acts prior to the revolt against Assyria, but since it is impossible to decide between them, the discussion is futile.

The conquest and annexation of the province of Samaria by Sargon seriously damaged the geopolitical position of the kingdom of Judah. Israel and Judah had existed side by side for some 200 years, their relations undergoing many changes and transformations, but Israel had never endangered the very existence of the kingdom of Judah. Its place was now taken by a terrifying major power, whose objectives on the border of Egypt and intentions vis-à-vis Judah were unpredictable. Now looking back, we know that Judah was not in fact annexed by Assyria, but in those days the king's court and subjects were increasingly anxious. The annexation of the highlands of Samaria and the kingdom of Ashdod in Sargon's time, and the growing Assyrian presence on Judah's northern and western boundaries, represented a tangible threat to the kingdom, and there can be no doubt that during Hezekiah's reign, the level of anxiety must have risen precipitously and there were grave worries about Assyria's future moves.

So long as Sargon was supreme, Hezekiah obviously did not dare to maintain contact with the inhabitants of the province of Samaria. We must keep in mind that the first stages following annexation always involved stationing Assyrian troops and officials in the annexed territory to back up any measures adopted by the conqueror and, above all, to suppress uprisings, gather captives, exiles, and spoils from all over the province, occupy key sites, and prepare the ground for resettling deportees from other parts of the empire. Indeed, the description of the revolt of Ashdod in 711 depicts Judah as one of the vassal kingdoms that paid tribute and remained loyal to Assyria.[8] Moreover, following the Egyptian defeat by Sargon in 720 B.C.E., the king of Cush conducted a cautious policy in his relations with Assyria. He refused to support Yamani, the king of Ashdod, in his anti-Assyrian rebellion, and following the crushing of the revolt and the rebel's flight to his territory, he extradited him to Sargon's hands. This state of affairs changed only with the death of Sargon in 705, when Hezekiah rose up against Assyria and, together with Egypt, formed an alliance of kingdoms that would have permitted him to intervene in the region to his north. But none of the existing sources suggest that the Assyrian provinces in Syria-Palestine joined the revolt. In contrast to the revolt that broke out when Sargon succeeded to the throne in 722, which included the Assyrian provinces annexed by Tiglath-pileser III in the west (Arpad, Ṣimirra, and Damascus), and which was suppressed by Sargon, Sennacherib's westward campaign was conducted only in the territories of the vassal kingdoms, and there is no indication that Assyrian provinces took part. There is no evidence, direct or indirect, in the Assyrian documents to suggest that Hezekiah ever tried to expand northward into the province of Samaria.

Nor is there any evidence in the Book of Kings to suggest that Hezekiah ever sought to intervene in the affairs of the province of Samaria. The argument about his intensive involvement in the territory of the kingdom of Israel is based on 2 Chr 30:1–31:1. But it is highly unlikely that the author of the Book of Chronicles, who wrote his work at the end of the Persian or in the early Hellenistic period, some 350 years after Hezekiah's reign, had sources from which he could draw reliable historical information beyond what is found in the Book of Kings. It is no accident that the Book of Chronicles does not even mention Assyria in connection with Hezekiah's purported actions in the highlands of Samaria or the Galilee, and it is doubtful if its late author quite understood the situation in those regions in Hezekiah's time. It

[8] In his Nineveh Prism, Sargon describes the Ashdodites' efforts to incite rebellion among the rulers of the neighboring kingdoms as follows: "To the k[ings] of Philistia, Judah, Ed[om] (and) Moab, who dwell by the sea, payers of tribute and gifts to Ashur, my lord, (they sent) evil words and unseemly speeches, to set (them) at enmity with me. To Pharaoh, king of Egypt, a prince who could not save them, they sent their presents and asked him for (military) aid." See Fuchs 1998: 46, lines 25–30, 73.

seems to me that the entire description of Hezekiah's activity in the territory of the kingdom of Israel, including the story about his emissaries to Samaria and the Galilee, the arrival of numerous pilgrims from Israel to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem, and concluding with the cult reform he supposedly carried out in Samaria, is without historical foundation. The description is due to the author's intention of aggrandizing Hezekiah and depicting him as the most outstanding of all the kings of Judah in the First Temple period.[9] Strangely enough, not a few scholars have relied on the description in the Book of Chronicles to view Hezekiah as a powerful ruler, who at the height of the Assyrian Empire could act decisively and unhampered in the Assyrian provinces to his north (Talmon 1958; Moriarty 1965; Williamson 1982: 360–65; Japhet 1993: 938–40; Herzog 2002: 67; Schniedewind 2004: 94–95). It must be reiterated that before Sargon's death in battle, Hezekiah's hands were tied and he could not have acted inside the province of Samaria. During the short period between his revolt (705) and the arrival of Sennacherib (701), he had to prepare for the confrontation with the expected Assyrian campaign, and it is doubtful that he could spend time on efforts in the Assyrian province of Samaria. It is also possible that even during the revolt, Assyria continued to dominate all or some of the provinces west of the Euphrates, since there is nothing in Sennacherib's inscriptions to suggest that he had to fight them during his campaign. Thus, any attempt by Hezekiah to act in the province of Samaria would have entailed fighting against the Assyrian forces stationed there, which he probably avoided, except perhaps in essential locations on the province's southwestern boundary, which he needed to control so as to secure the approaches to his kingdom.[10]

Finally, it should be remembered that Israel and Judah had been two separate kingdoms for some 200 years, each with its own boundaries and forms of administration, society and economy, cult places and customs, material and spiritual culture, perhaps even a distinct historical tradition. Finkelstein (1999: 35–52) has offered a good description of the differences in the environmental and cultural background as well as the growth and development of the two adjoining kingdoms (citation from p. 48):

> Israel and Judah were two distinct territorial, sociopolitical, and cultural phenomena. This dichotomy stemmed from their different environmental conditions and their contrasting history in the second millennium B.C.E. Israel was characterized by significant continuity in Bronze Age cultural traits, by heterogeneous population, and by strong contacts with its neighbors. Judah was characterized by isolation and by local, Iron Age cultural features, as evidenced by the layout of its provincial administrative towns. Israel emerged as a full-blown state in the early ninth century B.C.E., together with Moab, Ammon, and Aram Damascus, while Judah (and Edom) emerged about a century and a half later, in the second half of the eighth century.

The biblical picture of sister kingdoms, Israel and Judah, who shared a common past, split apart for many years, but were conscious of being two parts of one nation, was an ideological rather than historical description. The suggestion that the division was temporary, and that in most of the elements of their identity the inhabitants of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah remained parts of one people, reflects the aims of the later authors who wished to present the primeval unity of the People of Israel, and was broadly disconnected from the realities of the First Temple period. In the eyes of the inhabitants of the province of Samaria, the king of Judah and his subjects were aliens, just as the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel were aliens in the eyes of the inhabitants and leadership of Judah. The picture of the relations between Israel and Judah in the Book of Chronicles probably reflects the state of affairs between the provinces of Jerusalem and Samaria in the author's time and can tell us nothing about the situation during the First Temple period.[11]

The conclusion is that any assumption about Hezekiah's activity in the province of Samaria, about

[9] On the common elements of the descriptions of Hezekiah and Solomon in the Book of Chronicles, see Williamson 1977: 119–25.

[10] Thirty-seven *lmlk* seal impressions were discovered in Gezer, which may indicate that Hezekiah had conquered the city and held it during the revolt; see Vaughn 1999: 191 and n. 31. But it is also possible that Gezer was the Assyrian administrative center nearest to the border of Judah, a base for sorties and a depot of war spoils, and that the *lmlk* jars found there were part of the booty stored at the place. On Gezer's position as an Assyrian administrative center, see Reich and Brandl 1985.

[11] For the assumed anti-Samaritan polemic of the Book of Chronicles, see Torrey 1910: 154–55, 208–13; Rudolph 1955: IX; Delcor 1962: 282–85; Noth 1987: 100–106. For the history of research, see Williamson 1977: 1–4. For a recent discussion, see Knoppers 2004: 80–85, 260–65.

masses of Samaria's inhabitants following the king of Judah, and about Judahite aspirations of expanding into Assyrian-ruled territory have no foundation in the historical reality of the late eighth century B.C.E. (contra Schniedewind 2004: 74, 83, 86–87, 94–95). Likewise, the picture of the kingdom of Judah as a place that in a few years passed a sweeping internal transformation and became a "regional power" is far from being a true historical one (contra Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: 243–45; 2006: 129–44). Following the Assyrian Empire's annexation of all the big, powerful kingdoms north of Judah (Arpad, Hamath, Damascus, and Israel), Judah remained the strongest kingdom in the buffer zone between Assyria and Egypt, which buttressed the fears concerning her own future. The annexation of Ashdod in 711 heightened her concerns about Assyria's intentions in the region. Prior to Sargon's death, Judah had no influence beyond her borders, and there is no reason to assume that she initiated moves that could lead to conflict with the region's great power and endanger her very existence. Only after Sargon's death in 705 was Judah briefly a significant regional factor, after which she received a mighty blow from which she did not recover for many years. The traditional policy of the kings of Judah in the ninth–eighth centuries B.C.E. of avoiding military adventures and maintaining cautious relations with neighboring kingdoms had made the kingdom grow gradually stronger, culminating in Hezekiah's reign. Having inherited a kingdom that was strong, well developed, and economically sound, Hezekiah began by forgoing hasty moves that might jeopardize his kingdom. Then, at a certain stage—toward the end of his rule, if we accept the early chronology, or ten years after his accession, according to the later chronology—he diverged from his ancestors' cautious policies and brought a terrible disaster down on his kingdom and subjects.

ON THE ISSUE OF REFUGEES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

In the introduction I referred to Broshi's assumption, which has won many supporters, that a large number of refugees escaped to Judah from the kingdom of Israel after it had been conquered and annexed by Sargon in 720 B.C.E., and these refugees settled on the Western Hill of Jerusalem, greatly increasing its population. Finkelstein and Silberman further developed this idea, arguing that tens of thousands of refugees from the southern highlands of Samaria spread all over the kingdom of Judah, and within a few years almost doubled its population. To examine the assumption about thousands (or tens of thousands) of migrants moving from Israel into Judah, we need to look into the attitude of ancient Near East kingdoms in general, and the Assyrian Empire in particular, toward refugees fleeing into neighboring countries.

The issue of handing over fugitives who fled into a neighboring country was a prominent one in the relations between kingdoms in the ancient Near East, as expressed in key clauses in international treaties, in which each side undertook to hand over refugees who fled from one kingdom to the other. An extradition clause appears in the oldest treaty found, between King Naram-Sin of Akkad and the king of Elam (Hinz 1967: 76, 93), and similar clauses are found in other documents from the early Babylonian period (Sasson 1968: 51–52). Extradition clauses were especially common in treaties between the Hittite Empire and the kingdoms in its vicinity, and they appear in treaties between sovereign kingdoms as well as between great kings and their vassals. (On the extradition of fugitives in the Hittite Empire, see Korošec 1931: 64–65, 80–81; Liverani 1965: 328–33; 1990: 106–12; Kestemont 1974: 413–21; Buccellati 1977; del Monte 1983; Beckman 1996.) Clearly, these clauses reflected the interests of both sides to prevent refugees from their kingdoms finding safe haven in their neighbors' lands. Of course, the readiness of rulers to honor such commitments was contingent on the political situation and on the ability of the stronger party to impose them. A kingdom's refusal to surrender fugitives could lead to diplomatic and military pressure and, at times, even to the use of force to compel the defaulting party to return the fugitives.

Here are two examples from the relations between two great powers, Hatti and Mitanni, in the 15th–14th centuries B.C.E.:

The historical preamble to the treaty concluded by Tudhaliya II of Hatti with Shunashura of Kizzuwatna describes a previous chapter in the relations between Hatti and Ishuwa, a country on the Upper Euphrates, which is presented as a precedent for the new treaty. (On the historical prologue to the Tudhaliya-Shunashura treaty, see Beal 1986; Wilhelm 1988; Altman 1990; 2004: 398–426; Beckman

1996: 14–15.) It appears that Ishuwa had formerly belonged to the king of Mitanni, but following hostile actions on its part, Tudhaliya attacked and conquered that country. Refugees from Ishuwa fled to Mitanni, and Tudhaliya demanded their extradition, no doubt on the basis of a treaty between the two kingdoms. But the ruler of Mitanni refused to comply, arguing that the Ishuwa people had originally been his grandfather's subjects but later switched over to the Hittite side: "Now, finally, the cattle has chosen their stable. They have definitely come to my land." The ruler of Mitanni did not deny the extradition treaty but argued that it was an exceptional case and that the refugees ("the cattle") had the right to choose their patron and were therefore not extraditable.

In the treaty agreed between Shuppiluliuma of Hatti and Shattiwaza of Mitanni, the former describes how the country of Ishuwa rebelled in his father's time and the attempt to conquer it failed. Consequently, other cities rebelled, and when Shuppiluliuma defeated them, refugees from these cities fled to the land of Ishuwa. Since the treaty that had been made between Hatti and Mitanni to extradite fugitives had not been honored, the flight of refugees to Ishuwa entitled the Hittites to invade it. The Hittite army crossed the border, entered the land of Ishuwa, and drove the fugitives back to Hittite territory. (On the Ishuwa episode, see Klengel 1968; 1976; Beckman 1996: 38; Altman 2004: 191–96, 273–78.)

At the beginning of the 14th century, a treaty was made between two kingdoms, Mukish and Tunip—in northern and central Syria, respectively—which included numerous clauses regarding fugitives that were applicable only to Tunip (see recently, Dietrich and Loretz 1997; for English translation, see Reiner 1969: 531–32; for discussion of the extradition of fugitives, see Liverani 1964). The first clause dealing with extradition runs as follows (lines 16–18): "If someone [enter] from my land [into your land], if you hear of it and not se[ize him] and inform me; and if he lives in your land if you do not seize and ext[radite him]." It is followed by further clauses concerning the extradition of people who attempt to sell stolen property, surrender of escaped slaves, return of lost or stolen animals, the rules concerning a male or female slave entrusted to a subject of the neighboring kingdom and freed unlawfully, the treatment of thieves from a neighboring kingdom who were caught in the act, and finally, the duty to defend subjects who migrated temporarily to a neighboring land to find subsistence and the prohibition on detaining them and preventing them from returning to their country whenever they wished.

This treaty attests to the close supervision over the transit of people from one state to the next, as well as the distinction between different categories of persons crossing borders. A document from Alalakh (AT 101) illustrates the methods of surrendering fugitives (Mendelsohn 1955: 69–70; Liverani 1965: 330):

> Two women and a man, fugitives, are of Pantar-ashura; in the presence of Niqmepa' (king of Alalakh), Akimu the servant of Pantar-ashura took them from the city of Urume; witness: Arnupar, administrative official of the city of Halab.

The obligation to extradite was usually applied only to the vassal. But we know of cases in which refugees were handed over in the opposite direction. An example appears in a document from Ugarit, in which the king of Hatti undertakes to surrender to the king of Ugarit any refugees who flee to his territory (*PRU* 4: 17, 238) (Liverani 1965: 331 Weippert 1971: 413–15; Beckman 1996: 163):

> Sealed document of Tabarna, Hattushili, Great King: If some subject of the king of Ugarit, or a citizen of Ugarit, or a servant of a subject of the king of Ugarit, departs and enters the territory of the ʿApiru of My Majesty, I, Great King, will not accept him (but) will return him to the king of Ugarit.
>
> If the citizens of Ugarit ransom someone from another country with their own silver and he flees from the land of Ugarit and enters among the ʿApiru, I, Great King, will not accept him (but) will return him to the king of Ugarit.

A treaty between Murshili II of Hatti and Targashnalli, king of Hapalla, a kingdom in western Anatolia, stipulated that the latter was obliged to return any fugitives from Hatti, whereas the Hittite king was not obliged to return members of the elite who fled to his kingdom. "But if he is a cultivator, or a weaver, a carpenter, or a leatherworker—whatever sort of craftsman, and he does not [deliver] his assigned work, [but] runs off and comes to Hatti, I will arrest him and give him back to you" (Friedrich 1926: 58–59, lines 35–40; Korošec 1931: 64; Liverani 1990: 109 and n. 11; Beckman 1996: 66).

The obligation to surrender refugees is stipulated in a number of treaties made between the kings of Hatti and rulers in the Hittite territory in Syria (Beckman 1996: 31, 35–36, 52–53, 57–58, 61–63). A number of documents found in Ugarit discuss the issue of extraditing refugees (Liverani 1965: 331–32; Bottéro 1954: 123–29). Likewise, a document from el-Amarna demands that Aziru, king of Amurru, surrender to Egypt men described as "the king's enemies." The letter includes a detailed list of these men, some of whom bear Egyptian names, indicating that they had fled from Egypt and sought refuge in the kingdom of Amurru (EA 162: 55–72). To conclude, we may include the treaty made between Hattushili of Hatti and Ramesses II of Egypt in 1259 B.C.E., which also contained extensive clauses concerning the extradition of refugees between the two major powers (see Edel 1997).[12]

Written treaties were not an important part of the political relations between the kingdoms of Mesopotamia during the second half of the second millennium and early first millennium B.C.E. It appears that the relations were based mainly on oral agreements backed by oaths, in which the sides swore to fulfill their agreed obligations; the problem of fugitives from one kingdom to the next was also settled by such methods.

The growing might of the Assyrian Empire in the reigns of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II, in the second half of the eighth century B.C.E., created a new situation throughout western Asia. Whereas in the second millennium B.C.E. the region was dominated by several strong kingdoms of roughly equal standing, each with its own vassal states, and the overlords abided by mutual treaties and maintained a balance of power and well-defined rules of the game, now the power became concentrated in one mighty empire. The rules of the game Assyria forced on its vassals included unconditional surrender and obedience to its demands, and the vassals had to swear oaths to comply with all the terms imposed. Assyria punished ferociously any attempt at resistance or failure to fulfill a commitment, and anxiety about its reactions was a major element in the relations between it and the subjugated nations. The vassals avoided any move that might be interpreted as conflicting with Assyrian interests, for fear of the Great King's heavy hand.

The Assyrian ideology was monocentric, and the inscriptions of the kings of Assyria express their ambition to expand their rule over the entire world (for the monocentric concept as against a multicentric concept of the world, see Liverani 1990: 66–78; Wazana 1998: 12–24). Expansion was depicted not as conquest, but as restoring the proper, previous order, and the inscriptions are full of this ideology (for Assyria's ideology of expanding the borders, see Tadmor 1999). But ideology aside, in reality Assyria had boundaries, and these changed in the course of time in keeping with the conquests and annexations carried out by the kings of Assyria.[13] The expression "Assyria's boundary/territory (*miṣru*, *taḫūmu*)" appears many times in the documents and indicates a well-defined system of borders surrounding the empire, and all that was in it and belonged to it. Adjoining the empire's border was a frontier zone, whose situation depended on the physical geography, the settlement and demographic conditions, the economic potential, and the kind of relations with the adjoining kingdom (Parker 2002).[14] The empire's boundaries were fortified in certain places, and exit and ingress were closely guarded, to prevent uncontrolled border crossing (Parker 1997). Documents reveal numerous reports to the rulers of Assyria about delegations or private individuals traveling to or from the capital, showing that there was close supervision over the movement of people in the empire and on its borders. The deportation of refugees and fugitives and their settlement within the empire is attested in numerous documents and reflects the tight control kept by the Assyrians on the territories in their power and on the movement of inhabitants to nearby kingdoms.

To date, only a small number of treaties concluded by Assyria have been discovered, and most of them are too damaged to decipher (for the Neo-Assyrian treaties and loyalty oaths, see Parpola and Watanabe 1988). The commitment of vassals to Assyria was

[12] The texts were first inscribed on two silver tablets, of which one was kept in Hattusha and the other in Egypt. The text of the treaty was translated from Akkadian into Egyptian and was discovered at the Amun temple in Karnak.

[13] For a detailed description of the Assyrian Empire under Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 B.C.E.), see Liverani 1992; for discussion of the borders of Assyria in the height of its power, see Liverani 1995; also consult the maps in Parpola and Porter 2001.

[14] For the northern frontier of the Assyrian Empire according to the recent surveys, see Parker 2001; 2003, with earlier literature; Wilkinson et al. 2005: 44–50, with earlier literature on pp. 51–56.

generally made orally and sealed with an oath to the gods, while written contracts were of secondary importance (Garelli 1973; Tadmor 1982). Some of the latter mention extradition, but further information is thwarted by the generally broken condition (see the table of Neo-Assyrian types of stipulations in Parpola and Watanabe 1988: XXXVIII).

There is not much information about refugees in letters from Sargon's reign, and what there is generally refers to refugees moving from one Assyrian province to another, though there is evidence of refugees moving into the empire from outside (Lanfranchi 1997: 86 and n. 33; for administrative registers of runaways, see, e.g., Fales and Postgate 1995: nos. 162–63). There are some testimonies to the movement of refugees from the territory of the empire into Shubria and Urartu, two kingdoms to the north of Assyria, but needless to say, there is no mention in the documents of any mass migration from the Assyrian territory to neighboring kingdoms.

The most famous pursuit of fugitives and a demand for their return appears in a letter from Esarhaddon to the god Ashur (Borger 1956: 102–7). Following the murder of Sennacherib (680 B.C.E.), Arda-mulissu, Esarhaddon's brother, attempted to seize the throne of Assyria but was defeated in battle, and many of his followers fled to Shubria (for Sennacherib's murder, see Parpola 1980: 171–81). Esarhaddon demanded that the king of Shubria return the fugitives who had taken refuge in his territory, and when the latter did not comply, he conducted in 673 a campaign to Shubria, defeated its king, captured the fugitives (*halqu munnabtu*), and punished them (Leichty 1991). Then he investigated the background of other fugitives he had captured, some of whom had fled from Urartu into Shubria, and according to his statement, punished those who deserved it and returned the rest to their land of origin (Na'aman 2006). This indicates that the kingdoms on the margins of the Assyrian Empire could retain small numbers of refugees who fled from their native lands to neighboring kingdoms.

Assyria and Elam had a treaty which, though it has not yet been found, is reflected in Assyrian documents. It included clauses relating to the manner of handling fugitives from the neighboring country, and the circumstances in which it was obligatory to surrender them. In one edition of Ashurbanipal's annals (Edition B, composed in 649), he relates that when there was a famine in Elam, he sent grain to King Urtaku of Elam and even permitted refugees from that country to save themselves by entering Assyrian territory, and when the rains returned he sent them back. This description serves as his pretext for conducting a campaign against the king of Elam, supposedly for having failed to repay the favor and having attacked Babylonia (664 B.C.E.) (Piepkorn 1933: 57–61, lines 18–57). Not long after this, Urtaku died, a revolt broke out, a ruler named Teumman seized the throne, and Urtaku's sons and nephews fled to Assyria. Ten years later, Teumman demanded that Assyria extradite the fugitives, no doubt on the basis of the treaty between the kingdoms. Ashurbanipal refused and even used the demand as a pretext to attack Elam, kill Teumman in battle, and place Urtaku's son, Ummanigash, on the throne (653 B.C.E.) (Piepkorn 1933: 60–71; Parpola and Watanabe 1988: XX–XXI).

Eight years later, Ashurbanipal led a campaign against Elam, on the pretext that its ruler had refused to surrender to him Nabu-bel-shumate, Merodach-baladan's grandson, who had sheltered in Elam after rebelling against Assyria. Then the fugitive committed suicide, and the king of Elam delivered his body to the Assyrian ruler (Streck 1916: 60–63 lines 9–44; Oded 1992: 52, 93).

The relations between Assyria and Elam clearly demonstrate the flexible way the Assyrians applied the treaties to which they were party. Being the powerful side, they could demand their implementation or ignore them, as their interests required.

Finally, there was the case of Yamani, who seized the throne of Ashdod and rebelled against Assyria; when the Assyrian army arrived to suppress the revolt, Yamani sought refuge in Egypt. But the king of Cush, who was ruling Egypt at this time, had the fugitive shackled and delivered to the Assyrians (Fuchs 1994: 219–22, lines 90–112; Frame 1999: 36 lines 19–21, 52–54). There was no extradition treaty between Egypt and Assyria at that time, and the Assyrian ruler could not seriously pressure the king of Cush, so it seems that the latter was following the custom in international relations when he surrendered the rebel to his overlord.

Clauses concerning the return of refugees appear in the Aramaic-language treaties discovered in Sefire, a site in the ancient kingdom of Arpad in northern Syria (Gibson 1975: 46–49; Lemaire and Durand 1984: 115 line 45, 118–19 lines 4, 19; Fitzmyer 1995: 229 s.v. *qrq*). These treaties were signed about the second quarter of the eighth century B.C.E., between Bar-ga'yah, the king of KTK—the identity of

the country and the ruler are in dispute among scholars—and Matî'el, the king of Arpad, and all their stipulated obligations apply to the latter. One of the clauses refers to people who flee from the territory of KTK into the city of Halab and obliges the king of Arpad to take care of them, reassure them, and then extradite them. It even states that if he tries to persuade them to remain in his country, he would be violating the treaty (Gibson 1975: 46–47; Fitzmyer 1995: 137–38, lines 4–7; 146–48). Another clause concerns the bilateral principle of extradition: "And as for kings of my vicinity, if a fugitive of mine flees to one of them, and a fugitive of theirs flees and comes to me, if he has returned mine, I shall return his; and you yourself shall not do me injustice. And if not, you will have been false to this treaty" (Gibson 1975: 48–49; Fitzmyer 1995: 138–41, lines 19–20; 157).

In all probability, similar extradition treaties were concluded by kingdoms in Syria and Palestine, but since they were written on papyrus, they did not last.

The foregoing discussion on the subject of refugees, fugitives, and extradition treaties shows the tight control that kingdoms in the ancient Near East—including the Assyrian Empire—exercised over their borders, and how sensitive they were about people crossing from their realms to neighboring kingdoms, and vice versa. This issue has obvious implications for the hypothesis of a mass migration from Israel to Judah following the Assyrian conquest in 720 B.C.E., as I show in the next section.

DID A MASS OF IMMIGRANTS FROM SAMARIA ARRIVE IN JERUSALEM IN THE LATE EIGHTH CENTURY B.C.E.?

First of all, it must be emphasized that a mass of refugees fleeing from the highlands of Samaria to the kingdom of Judah would have seriously clashed with Assyrian interests in the region. In the process of turning Samaria into an Assyrian province, Sargon exiled 27,290 people from it—a significant fraction of its population—and also settled in it exiles from remote regions (Becking 1992: 61–104; Na'aman 1993; Younger 1998; Na'aman and Zadok 2000). The Assyrian officials must have made efforts to stabilize the newly established province, restore the internal order, and have the population return to their work as quickly as possible. To illustrate the steps taken by Assyria in the conquered and annexed provinces, I shall cite a letter sent by the deputy governor of Mazamua to Sargon about the orders he gave to the people of Allabria, a former kingdom in the Zagros mountains that was annexed in 713 B.C.E., seven years after the annexation of Samaria (Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990: No. 210):

> I have spoken kindly with the countrymen of the son of Bel-iddina and encouraged them . . . . [I said]: "Do your work, each in [his house and] field, and be glad; you are now subjects of the king". They are peaceful and do their work. I have brought them out from six forts, saying: "Go! Each one of you should build (a house) in the field and stay there". The king, my lord's subjects have entered (the forts); the guard will be strong until the governor comes. I am doing everything the king, [my] l[ord], ordered him (to do).

The letter shows that the Assyrians operated in two ways: on the one hand, they brought out people from the forts where they found shelter in time of war and restored them to their places and fields, and on the other hand, they established garrisons in the conquered fortresses to tighten their control on the conquered territories (see Radner 2000: 238).

The assumption that the Assyrians permitted thousands, possibly tens of thousands, of people to flee from the new province and settle in Judah, a vassal state that Assyria had not annexed and had no wish to strengthen, contradicts everything known about the policy of the Assyrian Empire in the newly annexed territories. Accepting thousands of refugees from Israel into the territory of Judah would have amounted to an open provocation against the king of Assyria and a serious blow to the Assyrian efforts to establish and stabilize their new province. Hezekiah was unlikely to take such a risk.

Furthermore, there are serious difficulties about the assumption that fear of Assyria drove thousands, or tens of thousands, of people to flee from the highlands of Samaria southward, to settle *permanently* in the kingdom of Judah. Refugees leave behind them properties and sources of livelihood, tear themselves from the communal societies in which they and their forefathers had lived for generations, lose their standing as citizens of their native countries, and become aliens, without property or livelihood, in the new location. Mass migration and resettlement in a new place happened following epidemics, famine, and serious distress, but mass emigration for permanent resettlement following occupation and change

of government is quite a different matter. The Assyrian sources sometimes mention the flight of inhabitants upon the arrival of the Assyrian army, but such flights usually occurred in mountainous regions and frontiers, where there were no fortified towns for the fugitives to shelter in. Moreover, once the danger was over, the inhabitants usually returned to their homes, since only there did they have property, a source of income, and a social position. Thus, the assumption that (tens of) thousands of rural inhabitants abandoned their homes and properties in Israel and settled in Judah, where they became citizens, seems quite far-fetched. It is possible that an unknown number of inhabitants from Israel fled to Judah immediately after the Assyrian conquest, but after a while, when conditions stabilized and the anxieties abated, no doubt most of them returned to their homes and communities, and only a few remained in Judah.

In addition, the assumption that masses of refugees from Israel would have been received with open arms in Judah is very doubtful. Probably the notion about a mass flight from Israel and its rapid absorption in Judah rests on the biblical image of sister kingdoms which had split apart for a long time and were now reunited, so that the people of one could be at home in the other, almost overnight. I have already noted that Israel and Judah were two separate kingdoms, differing from each other in their ecological environment, their settlement and cultural history, as well as forms of government, economy, and administration, and there is no reason to imagine that the officials and the people of Judah would warmly welcome a mass immigration from the neighboring kingdom. Not only would such large numbers of refugees undermine the internal equilibrium of the host country, but the immigrants would be in urgent need of livelihood and income, for which they would compete with the local population. A great influx of refugees would have threatened both the elite and the general populace, so that the picture of the kingdom opening its gates and its resources to welcome thousands, or tens of thousands, of fugitives from the highlands of Samaria must be rejected out of hand (contra Schniedewind 2004: 94–95; Finkelstein and Silberman 2006: 134–41).

The problems caused by the flight of inhabitants from one country to another may be illustrated with a brief description of the ʿApiru phenomenon, which was widespread throughout the second millennium B.C.E. and is frequently mentioned in documents from all over the ancient Near East (Bottéro 1954; 1972–1975; 1980; Greenberg 1955; Na'aman 1986; Lemche 1992: 6–10; Salvini 1996). The ʿApiru were people who had been uprooted from their native society and wandered to neighboring countries, where they lived as aliens. They could settle as individuals in the new country, offering their services in return for upkeep or a wage, or they could settle in frontier areas which were sparsely inhabited and hard to control. Faced with dangers in their new homes, they sometimes formed bands headed by gang leaders and engaged in robbery and protection rackets, often hiring their services to rulers in return for patronage and subsistence. Though their relative numbers in the second millennium B.C.E. were not large, they caused considerable trouble in the countries to which they fled, were often hunted down and subjected to attempts to exterminate them, or at any rate to reduce their menace. In consequence, they were compelled to move from place to place and try to win the patronage of a ruler who could protect them from their pursuers.

So long as the number of such vagrants was small, the kingdoms could cope with their presence and threat, but when their numbers grew beyond the bearing capacity of the permanent population, greatly increasing the predatory elements in the given territory, they could cause the entire system to collapse, as indeed happened following the influx of the "Sea People," in the 12th century B.C.E. (Liverani 1987; Ward and Joukowsky 1992; Drews 1993; Singer 1994; Gitin, Mazar, and Stern 1998). This shows how unlikely is the assumption that half the inhabitants of the kingdom of Judah in the early seventh century were immigrants of northern Israelite origin who had settled there at the end of eighth century and before long became regular citizens (Finkelstein and Silberman 2006: 134–38).

Schniedewind (2003: 380, 385–86; 2004: 94–95) adduced five facts in support of his argument that Hezekiah strove to incorporate the northern refugees in his kingdom: (1) Hezekiah named his son Manasseh, after the tribe inhabiting the north-central mountain region; (2) the charge that Manasseh followed the ways of Ahab (2 Kgs 21:3) indicates the influence of the Israelite migrants on the cult in Judah; (3) Manasseh married a woman of northern origin (Jotbah), and her son Amon succeeded to his throne (2 Kgs 21:19); (4) 2 Chr 30:1 indicates that

Hezekiah sent emissaries to Israel to bring them closer; (5) the moral deterioration in Judahite society is reflected in Micah (3:9–12), excoriating "the rulers of the House of Jacob and the chiefs of the House of Israel" who "build Zion with crime, Jerusalem with iniquity," which Schniedewind interprets as a reference to dignitaries of northern origin. But none of these reasons provides a solid foundation for his argument: (1) We do not know for sure why Hezekiah chose to name his son Manasseh. The name M^{e}naššeh is a piel participle of the root *nšh* "he will make forget," namely, the death of a prior child (see Gen 41:51). Manasseh was 12 years old when he began to reign, and we may assume that he was named after the death of his elder brother(s). (2) The sins of Manasseh are compared with those of Ahab, by way of comparing the worst king of Judah to the worst king of Israel, but there is no similarity or association between the "sins" of one and those of the other. (3) There is no reason to assume that Jotbah resided in the kingdom of Israel. Moreover, the assumption that Manasseh married his son to a woman from an insignificant village in the Galilee makes no sense (Na$^{\flat}$aman 1991: 27–28). (4) The entire description in the Book of Chronicles about Hezekiah's connections with the kingdom of Israel after its annexation by Assyria lacks historical basis (see above). (5) The passage in Micah is clearly addressed to the leadership of the kingdom of Judah, and the phrase "the rulers of the House of Jacob and the chiefs of the House of Israel" is merely a derogatory expression, intended to compare it to the sinful leadership of the kingdom of Israel. Schniedewind's assumption that Israelite refugees joined the leadership of the kingdom of Judah in a matter of a few years, and that Hezekiah chose to integrate them into his senior administration, above the main clans of Judah, seems most unlikely.

It must be remembered that not one source mentions a migration of Israelite inhabitants into Judah at the end of the eighth century, and it is merely a hypothesis based on an interpretation of the archaeological finding in the excavations in Jerusalem and other settlements in the kingdom of Judah. There is no hint in the Bible about the arrival of thousands, or tens of thousands, of Israelite immigrants into Judah at the end of the eighth century; nor does the epigraphic finding contain any personal names of the "Israelite" type. No distinct northern spelling of the name of YHWH (*-yau*), or theophoric elements found in Israelite names (e.g., the god Baal), have been found in inscriptions discovered in Jerusalem or other Judahite sites. Furthermore, a great wave of Israelite immigrants into Judah on the eve of Sennacherib's campaign should have been accompanied by a wide distribution of material culture originating in the central hill country. But the pottery found in the destruction stratum of Sennacherib's campaign is mainly Judahite and reveals a sequence of pottery vessel types from the beginning to the end of the eighth century B.C.E. Indeed, the material culture found in the destroyed settlements attests above all to Judah's insularity to external cultural influences (Singer-Avitz 1999: 3, 12–13; de Groot and Ariel 2000: 97; Katz 2001: 110–55, with earlier literature). Even if one can find a few vessels of north Israelite origin, it certainly does not indicate a great wave of recent immigrants. The situation changed only in the seventh century, following the *pax Assyriaca*, when the kingdom opened its gates, and the material culture found in sites all over Judah reflects its expanding contacts with the nearby regions.[15]

Finkelstein and Silberman (2006: 135–36) sought to sustain their assumption about mass emigration from southern Samaria to Judah with an analysis of the demographic data from this area during the Iron Age II and the Persian period. They calculate that the population in this area declined by 75 percent between the end of the eighth century and the end of the Persian period, and they ascribe the decline to emigration from the south of the Samaria hill country to Judah at the end of the eighth century B.C.E. However, hundreds of years passed from the annexation of Samaria in the beginning of Sargon's reign (720 B.C.E.) to the end of the Persian period. Is it feasible to argue, on the basis of such a late demographic status, that it was precisely emigration from the southern highlands of Samaria to the kingdom of Judah

[15] Findings from Tel Beersheba, which sat on the important caravan route from northern Arabia via Transjordan to the Philistine coast, shed light on Judah's entry into the commerce that was beginning to develop at the end of the eighth century B.C.E. See Singer-Avitz 1999. But a comparison between these findings and those from the central sites in the Shephelah (Lachish and Tell Beit Mirsim) shows that until the end of the eighth century, contacts between the kingdom of Judah and its western neighbors were few and on a small scale (Singer-Avitz 1999: 3, 12–13). A similar conclusion arises from Katz's extensive discussion on the economy of the kingdom of Judah during the First Temple period (Katz 2001: 110–55).

at the end of the eighth century—an emigration not mentioned in any source—that caused the marked decline in the number of inhabitants in the area?

It must be kept in mind that the marked population decline in the seventh–fifth centuries B.C.E. occurred throughout the central hill country, not only in southern Samaria. Data published by Zertal (2003: 395–405, with earlier literature) show that during the seventh–sixth centuries B.C.E., the population in the northern highlands of Samaria (the biblical inheritance of Manasseh) declined by an average 68 percent, which he linked to the mass deportation by Sargon in 720 B.C.E. Moreover, during the transition from the seventh century to the middle of the Persian period, there was an equally marked decline in the number of inhabitants all over the highlands of Judah and Benjamin (Lipschits 2005: 258–71, esp. the tables on pp. 262–63). Thus, there is no reason to distinguish southern Samaria from the other mountain areas and propose a different reason for its demographic decline. On the contrary, the decline in the settled population in the southern highlands of Samaria during the seventh–fifth centuries was part of a widespread demographic change that affected all parts of the central hill country, beginning no doubt with the Assyrian deportations under Sargon's rule and proceeding during the process of turning the southern reaches of the mountain into the southern frontier of the Babylonian and Persian empires. (For the severe economic and demographic crisis that encompassed vast regions of the Near East and the eastern Mediterranean in the sixth century, see Liverani 2005: 231–34.)

In summary, it may be stated that any assumption about a mass flight of Israelite refugees, their absorption in Judah, and their settlement in very large numbers in Jerusalem and all over the kingdom of Judah at the end of the eighth century has no basis either in the written sources or in the archaeological findings. It should be reiterated that Israel and Judah were two separate kingdoms, which differed from each other in most aspects. Had a large number of refugees from Israel poured into Judah, it would have entailed immense problems of absorption and shaken the kingdom's stability; it would also have led to an open confrontation between the kingdom of Judah and the awesome power that ruled unchallenged over the entire region. The biblical and epigraphic literatures make no mention of such a migration, nor has any marked evidence of it been found in the excavations and surveys. It is, of course, possible that a certain number of fugitives might have come to Judah following the Assyrian conquest,[16] but in that case it is best to adopt a minimalist position about the possible influence they might have had on the development of the society, economy, ideology, and culture of the kingdom of Judah in the seventh century B.C.E.[17]

THE NEW QUARTER ON THE EASTERN SLOPE OF THE CITY OF DAVID AND THE SETTLEMENT ON THE WESTERN HILL

Excavations at the City of David revealed that beginning in the 11th–10th centuries B.C.E., a new residential quarter began to be built on the lower part of the city's eastern hillside (Ariel and de Groot 2000: 158). The quarter, which gradually developed in the late ninth–early eighth century B.C.E., was discovered in the excavations carried out by Kenyon (1974: 135–43; Franken and Steiner 1990: 50–56) and Shiloh (1984: 6–12), whereas the fortification on the lowermost part of the eastern slope, not far from the gully of the Kidron, was uncovered in the excavations of Reich and Shukron (2003: 209–18). Ariel and de Groot, who published the report of Shiloh's excavation in the new quarter, suggested that it had grown gradually and that it received a new impetus at the end of the eighth century, at which time the wall was built at its foot (Ariel and de Groot 2000: 155–64, esp. pp. 161–64). They thought that the new quarter on the Western Hill also grew gradually in the eighth century, and both quarters were fortified

[16] In the course of a discussion on the term *urbi* in the annals of Sennacherib, I suggested that it referred to a band of uprooted men who served in the Judahite army during the revolt and were handed over to Sennacherib after the surrender. If this hypothesis is correct, then it is possible that these were refugees from Israel, who had banded together and offered their services to the king of Judah. See Na'aman 2000: 621–24.

[17] The hypothesis that the background of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic school should be sought in Prophetic and Levite circles of the Northern Kingdom was common among scholars in the 1950s and 1960s of the previous century, but was later dismissed and disappeared from the new scientific literature. For the suggestion, see Burney 1918: xlvi note; Welch 1924: 209–20; Alt 1953; Dumermuth 1958; Clements 1965; Nicholson 1967: 58–82, with earlier literature in n. 1.

for the first time during Hezekiah's reign. This is what they wrote about the growth of the two new quarters (Ariel and de Groot 2000: 162):

> As a whole, the evidence does not support Broshi's historical reconstruction of a *rapid* expansion of Jerusalem in the 8th century B.C.E . . . . If one accepts Broshi's reconstruction, one would expect to find that the construction of the extramural neighborhood of Jerusalem was restricted to the second half of the 8th century B.C.E. Broshi was not aware of the fact that on the Western Hill and on the eastern slope of the City of David hill, such an extramural neighborhood was already in existence. The development of the neighborhoods was gradual, starting at least at the beginning of the 8th century B.C.E. and in some cases, as in the City of David, even earlier.

Ariel and de Groot (2000: 164; de Groot, Geva, and Yezerski 2003: 3) emphasized that the eastern quarter was abandoned after Sennacherib's campaign, as was the fortification built down in the wadi.[18] The abandonment of the lowermost fortification was due to a lesson learned from Sennacherib's campaign to Jerusalem, when it became obvious that the wall was extremely vulnerable due to its low position, which was easily dominated from the other side of the Kidron gully. The abandoning of the quarter in the seventh century was part of a general dwindling of the population of Jerusalem at this period (Ariel and de Groot 2000: 164).

Reich and Shukron (2003), who excavated the wall at the foot of the eastern quarter, also discussed the connection between the expansion of the City of David and the Western Hill. They assume that in the late ninth–early eighth century B.C.E. the city experienced a natural increase in the number of inhabitants, while it also attracted people from outside, thanks to the economic potentialities of the capital, and that as a result, it was necessary to extend the built-up area. The resulting increase in the number of inhabitants prompted the building of the quarter on the eastern slope of the City of David in the eighth century (Reich and Shukron 2003: 212). Here a few dozen dwellings were built in an orderly manner, and later the fortification was added that reflected the size of the labor force available to the ruler. The settlement on the Western Hill, on the other hand, was due to a marked population increase following Sargon's conquest of the kingdom of Israel and Sennacherib's campaign to Judah in 701, rather than to a natural, incremental growth of the city. They therefore conjectured that the expansion of the settlement on the city's east somewhat predated its westward spread, for if the reverse had happened, there would have been no impetus to build on the slope. In their opinion, the inhabitants of the eastern quarter had to make do with limited resources and settle in such an inconvenient site, but in the early seventh century, the inhabitants had become more prosperous and gradually moved to the fortified quarter in the west, leaving their former quarter empty.

But the assumption that settling on the Western Hill was more advantageous than on the eastern slope is not to be taken for granted. The settlement in the lower east slope of the city antedated that of the Western Hill, and if indeed the latter was more desirable, the inhabitants could have chosen to go there. Moreover, while the eastern quarter was relatively crowded, the Western Hill was more spacious, especially before the defensive wall was built. Thus, the preference for the eastern quarter was probably a matter of choice, rather than constraint, as Reich and Shukron suggest. In fact, a comparison between the remains of structures and architectonic findings in the City of David and the Western Hill, the quality of their respective pottery and small artifacts, indicate that the former location was highly desirable (Geva 2003a: 521–22, with earlier literature; 2003b: 206). For instance, the quantity of *lmlk* and rosette seal impressions found in the area of the City of David is immeasurably greater than the quantity of such impressions found in all the other quarters of Jerusalem (Cahill 2003: 88–89). Similarly, the quality of the tombs found in the Siloam village, east of the City of David, compared with the graveyards discovered west and north of the Western Hill, testifies to the greater prestige of the City of David (Ussishkin 1993; Barkay 2000: 248–55). It is obvious that the vicinity of the royal palace, the temple, and the city's main water source gave the City of David its prestigious status even after construction of the quarter on

[18] The background of the abandoning of the quarter is not clear. On the one hand, Ariel and de Groot (2000: 164) wrote that "The archaeological record certainly does not support any destruction at this time in Jerusalem, though destruction layers attributed to the reign of Hezekiah are well known in Judah (e.g., at Lachish)." On the other hand, de Groot, Geva, and Yezerski (2003: 3) suggested that "This quarter was probably destroyed during Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem in 701 B.C.E. and was deserted afterwards."

the Western Hill, and it remained the seat of the ruler, the ruling elite, and the city's prosperous class.[19]

The assumption that the eastern quarter was abandoned because its residents preferred to move to the west side of the city is far from certain. It fails to take into account the high status of the City of David and to explain why the inhabitants of the eastern quarter would abandon it and move to a less select area. Another explanation should be offered for the abandonment of the quarter in the seventh century.

In times of war, fortified cities offered shelter to the surrounding rural population, which would stay behind the fortified walls until the danger passed. Evidently this happened also in Jerusalem during the Assyrian invasion and for some time after (remember that the possibility of another Assyrian campaign lingered after the army's withdrawal in 701 B.C.E.), and numerous people from the nearby villages and towns sought shelter behind its walls. In addition to these transients, the city's population was swelled in the early seventh century with thousands of refugees from all over the kingdom of Judah, their towns having been devastated by the Assyrian campaign. These refugees found temporary shelter in Jerusalem, but most of them could not remain there for long, since the sources of livelihood were fairly limited and would only expand many years later (see 2 Kgs 19:29). All these refugees swarmed into the city at a time when pottery of the Lachish III type was still in fashion, so it is no surprise that large quantities of it were found in all parts of the city. It seems to me that the presence in Jerusalem of both the country people from around the city and the refugees from the devastated towns of Judah created the impression of a sudden increase in the number of city dwellers. The Assyrian campaign to Judah in 701, with its disastrous consequences for the kingdom, explains not only the increase in Jerusalem's population at the late eighth–early seventh century B.C.E., when the Lachish III type pottery was still in fashion, but also the marked decrease in the city's population in the seventh century, when the Assyrian danger had passed and many of the refugees returned to their settlements or established themselves in other places where they found dwellings and livelihood. Jerusalem's decrease of population and the abandonment of the fortification that defended the quarter well explain why the eastern quarter was not resettled following the withdrawal of the Assyrian army in 701 B.C.E.

THE DIMINISHED POPULATION IN SEVENTH-CENTURY JERUSALEM

In the early years of Manasseh's reign (695–640), the kingdom of Judah began to recover from the massive destruction left by Sennacherib's invasion. Presumably many, perhaps most, of the settlements that were reconstructed or founded in the seventh century were built during his reign, which lasted 55 years. This cannot be demonstrated, because the settlements in Judah continued to exist until the fall of the kingdom, and the pottery vessels found in the destruction levels represent the totality of vessels in use when the settlements were destroyed during the Babylonian campaign in 587/586 and those that had been used for many years and were broken and dispersed. Many settlements that had been destroyed during Sennacherib's campaign, especially those in the Shephelah, remained ruined, while others were rebuilt, though they were often smaller and weaker than they had been at the end of the eighth century B.C.E. In the seventh century, the kingdom of Judah had fewer settlements, a smaller population, and reduced economic capacity compared with the flourishing, densely populated kingdom it had been at the end of the eighth century, on the eve of Sennacherib's campaign (for an assumed disintegration of the non-Jerusalemite Judahite clans in the seventh century, see Halpern 1991: 70–77).

It seems that in the seventh century, the population shrank in size not only in the areas devastated by the Assyrian invasion, but also in Jerusalem, even though the city's relative standing in the realm rose dramatically following the destruction of many urban centers throughout the kingdom. Evidence of this shrinkage has been found on the Western Hill, in the eastern quarter of the City of David, and even in the quarter encompassed by the "mid-slope city wall" of the City of David (de Groot and Ariel 2000: 93–100; Ariel and de Groot 2000: 155–69 [esp. pp.

[19] Data on the prestigious status of the City of David, compared to the Western Hill, contradict Barkay's hypothesis that the palace and the royal garden ("the garden of Uzzah") of the kings of Judah in the seventh century were in the latter site. See Barkay 1977; 2000: 233–37; Faust 2005: 105. The distance from the temple and the city's main water source, as well as the lesser status of the western quarter, contradict the assumption that the royal palace was moved there in the seventh century. The description in Neh 3:15–16, 25 also indicates that the tombs of the House of David and the royal palace were situated inside the City of David, not outside it.

163–64]; de Groot, Geva, and Yezerski 2003: 15–16; Geva 2003a: 518–19, 522–23; 2003b: 207–8). The Western Hill revealed few structures and pottery vessels dated to the late seventh–early sixth century B.C.E., suggesting that the number of residents in the quarter toward the end of the kingdom's existence was smaller, perhaps significantly so, than in the late eighth–early seventh century B.C.E. Similarly, the eastern quarter of the City of David, which was inhabited in the eighth century B.C.E., was abandoned, as was the fortification that had been built below it. As noted above, the reduction in the city's population was partly due to the fact that many residents who had found temporary shelter in the city during the Assyrian campaign left it when the threat was lifted and returned to their homes. Also, some of the refugees from the devastated cities of Judah returned to rebuild them, or founded new settlements around Jerusalem and elsewhere in the kingdom.

The conclusions reached by the archaeologists who excavated in the Western Hill and the eastern quarter of the City of David concerning the reduction of the population of Jerusalem in the latter half of the seventh century are subjects of controversy, some scholars maintaining that in the seventh century the city was greater in size and population than it had been in the eighth (Barkay 1985: 165, 485–87, 490–92; 1997: 22–26; Finkelstein 1994: 175; Vaughn 1999: 69–70; Cahill 2003: 93; Faust 2005). Faust, in a recent article (2005), tried to deal extensively with the excavators' argument about a significant decline in the number of residents on the Western Hill during the seventh century B.C.E., and even to sustain the assumption about an increase in the number of Jerusalem inhabitants during that time. Addressing the argument about the paucity of seventh-century structures discovered in the Western Hill excavations, he pointed out that Jerusalem had been a continuously inhabited mountain settlement for a very long time, so that the absence of such remains did not indicate that it was thinly populated then (Faust 2005: 98–99). Undoubtedly, the argument about the disappearance of ancient remains in continuously inhabited mountain sites is applicable to many periods of unbroken settlement, but is invalid with regard to a site that was massively destroyed and abandoned, as happened in Jerusalem at the end of the First Temple period. Faust ignores the fact that at every site in the City of David that was excavated, which had been inhabited in the late seventh–early sixth century, there was clear evidence of the destruction wreaked on the city in 587/586. (On the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the sharp decline of settlement in its vicinity between the Iron Age and the Persian period, see Lipschits 2001; 2005: 210–18, with earlier literature.) The small number of structures and of destruction layers containing pottery found in the excavated sites on the Western Hill does, in fact, indicate that it was sparsely inhabited in the seventh century B.C.E.

Geva (2003a: 518–19) has argued that the absence of cisterns and water conduits indicates that the site was thinly occupied during the seventh century B.C.E. Faust (2005: 99–100) responded that cisterns have been found in settlements around Jerusalem, as well as in the City of David, so they should be found on the Western Hill too. But this argument does not hold water (excuse the pun), since no one denies that the settled sites had cisterns and conduits. However, the settlement excavated in the Western Hill, where there were no flowing springs, must have required alternative water sources, and the fact that no remains of water-storage systems were found indicates that the site was sparsely settled during the First Temple period. It is not impossible that cisterns and conduits from the First Temple period will be discovered in other parts of the Western Hill in future, proving that they were settled, but so long as they have not been found, the conclusion must be that the Western Hill was sparsely inhabited in the seventh century B.C.E.

Faust went on to present what he contends is indirect evidence that the Western Hill was densely populated in the seventh century B.C.E. He repeated Barkay's argument (Barkay 1985: 161–165; 1985–1986: 39–40; 1997) that during the First Temple period there were "extra-mural suburbs" in the space between the "Broad Wall" and the area up to the moat north of the present-day Turkish wall, from which he concluded that the population within the city walls was dense enough to oblige some of the inhabitants to build their homes outside (Faust 2005: 101–3). But the fragmentary and scattered findings from the area north of the "Broad Wall" do not tell us much about the nature of the settlement at the site. Moreover, there was a lot of empty space within the city walls and no need to establish extramural suburbs. It seems to me that Lipschits (2005: 251–52 and nn. 50, 53) was right to propose including the small farms discovered in archaeological excavations and surveys around Jerusalem among these "extramural suburbs" and view them as the city's agricultural hinterland. We should keep in mind that, for most of the seventh century, no wars were fought

in the territory of the kingdom of Judah, and the external security enjoyed by the kingdom for most of the ninth–eighth centuries B.C.E., which had enabled it to develop and achieve substantial economic prosperity, resumed during the *Pax Assyriaca*. That is why the inhabitants could live in relative security even in the outlying farms and habitations beyond the city walls, tilling the land and raising livestock. The existence of a scattered settlement near Jerusalem in the seventh century tells us nothing about the scope of the settlement and population on the Western Hill during that period.

Finally, Faust adduces the ramified rural settlement that had grown around Jerusalem as evidence that the city was densely populated during the seventh century (Gibson and Edelstein 1985; Faust 1997; 2005: 102–3; Feig 2000: 387–409; Kloner 2000; 2001; 2003); yet it goes without saying that this datum does not indicate the scope of the settlement and population within the walls either. I have already noted that Jerusalem was by far the biggest of all urban centers in seventh-century Judah, and even a low estimate of the city's population would still make it considerably greater than that of any other city in the kingdom. Moreover, Jerusalem was the seat of the palace and the temple, as well as the kingdom's center of administration, economy, and commerce, and thus the needs of its residents and the various institutions of Jerusalem were many times that of any other Judahite city. No wonder, then, that a large rural community grew around it, to supply the city with provisions and services. The data about the size of this rural population do not help to determine the number of Jerusalem's inhabitants in the seventh century B.C.E.

Consequently, none of the arguments adduced by Faust actually supports his suggestion that the population of the capital increased in the seventh century. On the contrary, all the archaeological data indicate that the number decreased, perhaps significantly, during that period. I noted above that many of the people who resided temporarily in Jerusalem at the end of the eighth and early seventh century left the city, and some of them perhaps settled in the villages and farms around it, integrating into the rural population that developed in the area during the seventh century. It is also possible that the decreased number of city residents was due to the marked decline in the kingdom's economic potential, as the ruler's income from taxation and tributes was sharply reduced.[20] The kingdom's subordination to Assyria and the taxes and tributes paid to the great power must also have been a burden on the treasury.

Finally, it is necessary to examine the numbers of exiles to Babylonia quoted in the Books of Kings and Jeremiah as possible indicators of the number of inhabitants in Jerusalem in the early sixth century B.C.E. (see Albertz 2003: 74–90). Scholars have noted that the original description of the deportation in the reign of Jehoiachin appears in 2 Kgs 24:12, 15–16, whereas verses 13–14 are a late addition.[21] According to this source, in 598 the king of Judah, his mother, his wives, his servants and officers, as well as 7,000 soldiers and 1,000 craftsmen, were exiled.

Jer 52:28–30 speaks of three deportations, which probably refer to the closing days of the kingdom of Judah. The first deportation is dated to Nebuchadnezzar's seven<teen>th year (588/587), when 3023 persons were exiled (the reading *šbʿ* <*ʿśrh*> follows Rudolph 1958: 298, 300, with earlier literature). The second took place in his eighteenth year (587/586), numbering 832 deportees, and the third in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (582/581), when 745 people were deported. The total number of deportees is 4,600. According to these dates, the first deportation took place even before the conquest of Jerusalem, and the exiles were the first captives taken in the Babylonian campaign. The second deportation took place immediately after the city was captured, and the third had to do with the murder of Gedaliah. Probably these three deportations are described in the summary in 2 Kgs 25:11: "The remnant of the people that was left in the city, the defectors who had gone over to the king of Babylon—and the remnant of the population—were taken into exile by Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards." The three deportations were therefore con-

[20] The 7:1 ratio between the total number of *lmlk* and rosette seal impressions discovered in the excavations in Jerusalem may perhaps indicate the decline in the kingdom's economic strength following Sennacherib's campaign—that is, assuming that the two seal impressions had the same function that they filled for some years. See Cahill 2003: 89–92. Cahill supposed that the *lmlk* and rosette jars were used in tax collection, which if correct, means that the large number of *lmlk* impressions compared with rosette ones would indicate the steep fall in the total tax revenue that reached the capital in the second half of the seventh century B.C.E.

[21] Many scholars have observed that the original text of 2 Kings 24 included verses 12, 15–16 and that verses 13–14 were interpolated in a second (exilic) redaction. See Lipschits 2005: 299–304, with earlier literature on pp. 56–57 n. 74.

nected to the Zedekiah uprising and the subsequent organization of the conquered territory.

We may therefore assume that the main deportation from Jerusalem took place in 598. It is, of course, possible that the deportations of 598, 587, and 582 included people from all over the kingdom of Judah, but it is best to assume that many, if not all, of the exiles were taken from Jerusalem and its environs, while the deportations from other parts of Judah, not included in these figures, were on a larger scale. If this assumption is correct, and the number of exiles mentioned in the Books of Kings and Jeremiah is reliable, this would support the conclusion that the number of inhabitants in Jerusalem in the late seventh–early sixth century was lower than the estimates proposed by most of the scholars who have discussed this issue.[22]

THE BUILDING OPERATIONS CARRIED OUT BY HEZEKIAH AND MANASSEH IN JERUSALEM: THE EVIDENCE OF THE BOOK OF CHRONICLES

The Book of Chronicles' history of Hezekiah and Manasseh describes building and fortification projects the two kings carried out in Jerusalem, and these descriptions have been discussed by scholars seeking to date the construction of the walls discovered in the recent excavations (Avigad 1983: 56–60; Ariel and de Groot 2000: 160–61; Geva 2003a: 511–16). It would be appropriate to conclude this article with a critical discussion of these descriptions. Underlying my discussion is the assumption that the authors who described the building projects in Jerusalem had actually seen the structures whose construction they attributed to the kings of Judah. Moreover, in view of the continuous settlement of Jerusalem from the tenth century B.C.E. until the destruction of the First Temple, it is reasonable to assume that the authors who wrote during the First Temple period and a short time after it were incorporating local oral tradition about the time when these structures were founded. Such a tradition can be trustworthy or fanciful, but the biblical authors were not concerned to investigate their sources and evaluate their historical reliability, but simply incorporated the traditions as they reached them. Only after the fall of Jerusalem and its prolonged abandonment would such a tradition be broken, and this must be taken into account in dealing with sources written during the Persian period and after.

It seems to me that the descriptions in the Books of Samuel and Kings about the construction projects of David and Solomon in Jerusalem need to be explained in light of the assumption about a continuous oral tradition during the First Temple period. The first such project attributed to David, following his capture of the city, is "David also built the surrounding area, from the Millo inward" (2 Sam 5:9), implying that he prepared the conquered site for himself and his men to reside in. The area described ranged from the Millo—doubtless the stepped structure at the top of the City of David,[23] into the city ("inward"), while the words "and they built a house for David" (v. 12) suggest that he built his government center near the Millo. Further on, it is said that Solomon fortified Jerusalem (1 Kgs 3:1) and "built the Millo and repaired the breach of the city of his father" (1 Kgs 11:27), implying a deliberate continuity in the construction projects of David and Solomon in Jerusalem. It appears that the Jerusalemite tradition attributed to Solomon the building of the stepped structure, and to David the government center that stood near it. I am not suggesting that this tradition is reliable, since ascertaining it involves archaeological considerations, but I wish to stress that we are dealing with a local Jerusalem tradition, relied on by the author in describing the construction projects of David and Solomon.

The Book of Kings gives no further descriptions of the fortification of Jerusalem, probably because the author attributed to Solomon "the wall of Jerusalem round about" (1 Kgs 3:1; see 9:15). Like his descriptions of the palace and the temple, whose magnificent structures he attributed to Solomon, leaving his successors only the tasks of reconstruction and

[22] For scholars' estimations of the number of people who dwelt in Iron Age Jerusalem, see Faust 2005: 109–12, with earlier literature; for estimations of the number of people who lived in Judah in the late Iron Age, see Lipschits 2005: 258–71, with earlier literature.

[23] The term *Millo* is derived from the root *ml'* and refers to an elevated structure built on fills and terraces; see Stager 1982. For the term *ml'* mentioned in an Aramaic inscription from Hatra, see R. C. Steiner 1989. In the Hatran inscription, *ml'* probably designated the ramp that circumvallated the city next to the outer wall.

renovation, so with regard to the fortifications: he said nothing about their expansion and extensions in later reigns. That is why he made no mention of the new wall built around the Western Hill, and readers of the Book of Kings had to assume that it too was built by Solomon. Indeed, Josephus, who described the course of the "old wall" (= "the First Wall"), which encompassed the City of David, the Temple Mount, and the Western Hill, attributed its construction to David and Solomon (*Jewish Wars* 5.4.2). The author of the Book of Kings states that King Joash of Israel captured Jerusalem and made a wide breach in its wall (2 Kgs 14:13), but he does not say who repaired it. He also notes that Jerusalem was besieged during Ahaz's reign (2 Kgs 16:5; Isa 7:1), and that of Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:17, 26–27; Isa 36:2, 11–12), but we do not know the course of the city walls nor their strength under those two kings. From the account of the Book of Kings, it is difficult to deduce much about the fortification of Jerusalem during the First Temple period.

The record is much more extensive when we move on to the Book of Chronicles, which describes the construction and fortification projects of the kings of Judah during the First Temple period. But the book was written at the end of the Persian or in the early Hellenistic period—hundreds of years after the end of the events it describes—and in keeping with the author's doctrine of retribution that determined its presentation of events. (For the date of the composition of the Book of Chronicles, see Williamson 1982: 83–86; Japhet 1993: 23–28; Kalimi 1993; Kegler 1993; Steins 1997; Knoppers 2003.) Scholars have noted the many limitations of the Book of Chronicles as a historical source, and many think it best to avoid using it as a source for the history of the First Temple period. (For the severe problems involved with the use of the Book of Chronicles as a source for the building operations of the kings of Judah, see Welten 1973: 9–78; North 1974; Ben Zvi 1997.) Nevertheless, it is worth studying what its author had to say about the construction projects of the kings of Judah in the eighth–seventh centuries B.C.E., both in order to examine their appropriateness to their purported period and to understand the realities of the author's own time and how he interpreted them in the light of his doctrine of retribution.

2 Chr 25:21–24 describes the war between King Joash of Israel and Amaziah of Judah, the fall and capture of Amaziah, and the conquest of Jerusalem by Joash (v. 23: Joash "made a breach of 400 cubits in the wall of Jerusalem, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate"). The entire description is taken from the Book of Kings, and its chief interest lies in its place in the historical sequence as presented in the Book of Chronicles. About Amaziah's successor Uzziah, it is said that he "built towers in Jerusalem on the Corner Gate, and the Valley Gate, and on the turning of the wall, and fortified them" (26:9); about his son Jotham it says, "he also built extensively on the wall of Ophel" (27:3). The author does not ascribe any construction or fortification to Ahaz, since he is depicted as a ruler who sinned throughout his life, whereas the works of Hezekiah in Jerusalem are described thus: "He acted with vigor, rebuilding the whole breached wall, raising towers on it, and building another wall outside it. He repaired the Millo of the city of David, and made a great quantity of arms and shields" (32:5). The verse suggests that Hezekiah built a wall and towers where the wall was breached, added another wall "outside it," reinforced the Millo, and prepared an arsenal for the imminent Assyrian campaign.[24] The sequence in Chronicles implies that the section of the wall between the Gate of Ephraim and the Corner Gate had remained in a ruined state under Amaziah's successors and was rebuilt in Hezekiah's reign, on the eve of the Assyrian campaign, with added towers. It seems to me that the description of the breached wall being rebuilt by Hezekiah was the Chronicler's interpretation of Isaiah's verse (22:10), "and you counted the houses of Jerusalem and pulled houses down to fortify the wall." I shall return to this matter further on.

The first part of 2 Chr 32:5 continues from the fortification of the breached wall—presumably the section between the Ephraim Gate and the Corner Gate—to the construction of "another wall outside it." According to Neh 12:38–39, the second procession marched on the wall, "above the Tower of Ovens to the Broad Wall; and above the Gate of Ephraim, the Jeshanah/Mishneh Gate, the Fish Gate . . . " (for the reading "Mishneh," see Williamson 1985: 196; Blenkinsopp 1988: 234). The Broad Wall is mentioned again in Neh 3:8: "They restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall." It can safely be identified with the "wall outside it" built by Hezekiah, and the place

[24] The most detailed discussion of verse 5 was written by Welten (1973: 69–72). However, the discussion was written before Reich and Shukron unearthed the late eighth-century wall at the eastern end of the city.

where it met the wall of the City of David was not far from the Ephraim Gate, close to the southern end of the breached wall which, according to the Book of Chronicles, was restored by Hezekiah.[25]

Scholars generally agree that the terms "another wall outside it" and "the Broad Wall" refer to the city wall whose further extension was uncovered by Avigad in the Western Hill, and there is no doubt that during the Second Temple period, people were acquainted with it and knew it had been built in the time of the First Temple (as indicated by Josephus's description [*Jewish Wars* 5.4.2] of its construction by David and Solomon). The archaeological and historical data led scholars to date the building of the "Broad Wall" to the reign of Hezekiah, and the passage in 2 Chr 32:5, describing the fortification works this king carried out in Jerusalem, played a significant part in promoting this conclusion.[26]

The Chronicler also attributed the strengthening of the Millo to Hezekiah (32:5)—an obviously unreliable claim, since the Millo was no longer in use once the "mid-slope city wall" was constructed in the eighth century B.C.E., and residential houses were built on it in the seventh century (Reich 2000: 103–5; M. Steiner 2003: 358–61). Nor is it historically convincing to attribute to Hezekiah the closing of the breach made by Joash, since it is highly unlikely that the city wall of Jerusalem remained broken through most of the eighth century B.C.E. The Chronicler also states that Hezekiah prepared "great quantity of arms and shields"—no doubt seeking to complete Isaiah's laconic statement (22:8), on "the arms of the Forest House." I mentioned above Josephus's belief that the First Temple wall had been built by David and Solomon, and it is unlikely that the Chronicler heard a different version than the one heard by Josephus. Attributing this construction to Hezekiah was due to his tendency to ascribe to this king as many of the fortification projects as possible, as a reward for his devotion to YHWH. We may therefore conclude that the source for all the construction projects attributed to Hezekiah in 2 Chr 32:5 was the author's own creative imagination.

Manasseh's construction project in Jerusalem is described as follows: "Afterwards he built the outer wall of the City of David west of Gihon in the wadi on the way to the Fish Gate, and it encircled Ophel; he raised it very high" (33:14). (For a comprehensive discussion of 2 Chr 33:14, see Welten 1973: 72–78, with earlier literature.) The Kidron is mentioned in various biblical passages as a "stream" (see references in Welten 1973: 74 n. 303), and the Gihon Spring is located west of it. The Chronicler apparently described a wall that passed near the Kidron gully, and near the Gihon Spring turned west and joined the "mid-slope city wall," surrounded the city on the east as far as the Fish Gate, somewhere on the city's north (see Zeph 1:10; Neh 3:3, 12:39), and continued as far as the Corner Gate, where it met the wall whose building the Chronicler attributed to Hezekiah. Thus, the Chronicler's description corresponds well to the wall unearthed by Reich and Shukron at the lowermost end of the city's eastern slope, which was also an "outer wall" and passed "in the wadi."[27]

The Chronicler was acquainted with the vestiges of the eastern wall, which were still standing in his day and were only covered with rubbish in the first century C.E. (Reich and Shukron 2003: 217–18). Not knowing who had built it, he attributed its construction to Manasseh, as a reward for his penitence, just as he ascribed to Hezekiah the repairing of the breach Joash had made in the city wall, the building of "the wall outside it," and the fortifying of the Millo. The Chronicler's description of Manasseh's fortifications was written to round off the ones he

[25] For the assumed location of the "Broad Wall," the Ephraim Gate, and the Jeshanah/Mishneh Gate in the configuration of the City of David and Temple Mount, see Tsafrir 1977: 41–42; Williamson 1984; Blenkinsopp 1988: 234–36; Eshel 2000: 334, 337–38.

[26] For the identification of the "Broad Wall" with the wall unearthed by Avigad and for its dating to the time of Hezekiah, see Grafman 1974: 50–51; Avigad 1983: 56–60; Geva 2003a: 511–16. For the archaeological evidence for dating the construction of the wall, see Geva and Reich 2000: 42; Avigad and Geva 2000: 45–82; de Groot, Geva, and Yezerski 2003: 2, 16; Geva 2003a: 514–15.

[27] Ariel and de Groot (2000: 163) rejected the identification of the wall built by Manasseh with the lowermost eastern wall, because it had been built before the reign of Manasseh, when it was abandoned. They argue that the description applies to the main eastern city wall of the City of David. But the course of the latter wall is far from the Kidron gully, is not an "outer wall" of the City of David, and does not match the description. The two scholars assumed that the Chronicler was familiar with the situation during the First Temple period, and therefore his description could not contradict the ancient reality—an assumption that does not withstand criticism. Other scholars have also identified the main eastern wall of the City of David with the wall that Manasseh supposedly built. See Bahat 1981; Tatum 2003: 300. Grafman (1974: 50–51) identified Manasseh's wall with the "Broad Wall."

attributed to Hezekiah. The latter fortified the western quarter, the west side of the city as far as the Corner Gate, and the Millo; the former completed the fortification on the east and in the north around the City of David, most probably as far as the Corner Gate.

This analysis tells us how cautious we have to be in relying on the Chronicler's descriptions. There is no doubt that he knew Jerusalem well, but he did not know who had built the vestiges of the walls whose remnants on the west and east he could see, and attributed their construction to Hezekiah and Manasseh as rewards for their devotion to YHWH. Hence, we had better not rely on his testimony concerning "the wall outside it" or use it to date its construction.

SYNTHESIS

There is a recent tendency in the archaeological and historical scholarship to aggrandize Hezekiah and depict him as a mighty ruler, whose reign marked a dramatic increase in the kingdom of Judah's external power and internal strength. Archaeologists have attributed to Hezekiah extensive urbanization, fortification, and construction projects throughout the kingdom, and historians have depicted him as a firm, powerful monarch, of major status in the region, in whose reign the kingdom of Judah experienced unprecedented cultural flowering. This is a surprising presentation, as quite a different picture arises from the sources. It was in Hezekiah's time that Assyria reached the apogee of its power and ruled supreme over the entire Syro-Palestinian region, so that Hezekiah's capacity to act in the international arena would have been even more restricted than that of his predecessors. The sources written during the First Temple period stress his devotion to YHWH and his leadership during the revolt but do not describe him as a powerful ruler or a great builder, nor is there any hint of a rich literary flowering in his reign.[28] It must be recalled that his revolt against Assyria ended in a painful defeat, and that his policy led to the destruction of large parts of his kingdom and the deportation of many of his subjects. The question then arises, what has given rise to the hypothesis about Hezekiah's might, his prominent position in the region, the unprecedented momentum of construction and development in his reign, and its accompanying cultural flowering?

It seems to me that the answer lies in the uncritical acceptance of the pro-Hezekian description in the Book of Kings, which was overstated and magnified in the late biblical historiography and post-biblical literature (Daube 1966; Ackroyd 1987: 105–92; Feldman 1992), and the one-sided interpretation placed by scholars on the archaeological findings. I noted in the historical discussion above that Assyria's conquest and annexation of the province of Samaria seriously damaged the situation of the kingdom of Judah. Under Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II, the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel became Assyrians, and this deepened the gulf between the population of the Samaria highlands and the kingdom of Judah, which remained outside the boundary of the empire. In Hezekiah's time, Assyria was at its mightiest, and there was nothing to suggest that it would ever decline. The kingdom of Judah's worsening political situation and the grave concerns for its future survival stand in contrast to scholars' image of a Judah that, following the annexation of the kingdom of Israel, became a kind of regional power that not only enjoyed an unprecedented economic and cultural prosperity, but actually nurtured hopes of union with the kingdom of Israel and gave such hopes wide historiographical expression. This last assumption, together with the related one that the biblical concept of the United Monarchy as the culmination of such hopes and aspirations has emerged in the time of Hezekiah, at the height of the Assyrian Empire, strike me as incongruous in the historical realities of the final quarter of the eighth century B.C.E.[29]

As for the archaeological findings, amid the destruction layers of the Assyrian campaign to Judah in 701, researchers found pottery vessels made in the final years before the destruction, which they have

[28] Schniedewind (2004: 75–76) relies on Prov 25:1 ("These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out") to support the argument that during Hezekiah's reign there was a royal project of collecting and copying wisdom literature. But copying wisdom literature is not at all the same thing as writing historiography. One scholar, in fact, argued that the verse was inserted at a later time, in order to aggrandize Hezekiah and associate him with learning and knowledge. See Carasik 1994.

[29] I strongly oppose the idea that the ideology of unification of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah emerged already in the time of Hezekiah and that literary works intended to support and advance this ideology had been written at this time. See Schniedewind 2004: 73–90; Finkelstein and Silberman 2006: 137–38, 141–44.

labeled "Hezekiah." Settlement strata and construction projects containing pottery of this type were dated to Hezekiah's reign, thereby crediting him with starting many new settlements and launching extensive construction projects throughout the kingdom. From these assembled data came the picture of an unprecedented settlement with attendant construction and economic momentum in Judah under Hezekiah. Instead of examining critically the assumptions underlying this picture, scholars have accepted it as a solid fact and have contented themselves with seeking historical explanations for such a dramatic growth of the kingdom and its capital.

In the course of the discussion, I noted that the pottery found in the destruction layers of Sennacherib's campaign had been in use for many years before Hezekiah, and continued to be used after the Assyrian invasion. I also noted that the vessels found in these strata reflected the fashion of the time, while the pottery that had been in use in previous times had been broken and scattered, hence rarely present in the finding. The settlements in the kingdom of Judah were continuously populated through the ninth–eighth centuries B.C.E., because the kingdom enjoyed a prolonged peace and its rulers generally avoided war, preferring to pay tax and surrender rather than face a battlefield. It is due to the long years of peace that there are very few destruction layers from the periods preceding Sennacherib's 701 B.C.E. campaign to Judah. This continuity makes it very difficult to date the founding of the settlements devastated in that campaign; it is even more difficult in such sites as the Western Hill in Jerusalem, which were not destroyed in the Assyrian campaign and remained inhabited continuously from their foundation until the fall of the kingdom of Judah in 587/586 B.C.E.

The picture of the kingdom of Judah experiencing dramatic growth at the end of the eighth century should be replaced with one of a steady, slow growth during the ninth, and a momentum of settlement, construction, and development during the eighth century. The rulers of Judah used the long peaceful spells enjoyed by the kingdom to build it up and reinforce it. In the absence of building inscriptions, we cannot determine which structures had been built by Hezekiah's predecessors and which in his reign, with the possible exception of some projects that might have been built in preparation for the imminent Assyrian invasion. Presumably each of Hezekiah's predecessors contributed to the strengthening and fortification of the kingdom, and Hezekiah inherited a strong and solid kingdom, which he proceeded to develop and build up on the firm foundation laid by his predecessors. It is certain that Judah had become a developed state during the eighth century B.C.E., and that Hezekiah was the last in a succession of rulers, each of whom contributed to its development. In other words, the picture arising from the archaeological investigation of a strong, well-developed kingdom on the eve of Sennacherib's campaign to Judah did not come about suddenly a short time before, but represents the cumulative initiatives and projects of Judah's rulers and inhabitants in the ninth–eighth centuries B.C.E. The limitations of the archaeological investigation and the absence of written sources prevent us from isolating Hezekiah's distinctive contribution in the sequence of construction and development of his line. It is therefore advisable to present the overall development in general terms and not seek to define the contribution of this or that ruler to the kingdom's flourishing and growth.

The urbanization and settlement of Jerusalem and its environs should be seen in conjunction with the development of the kingdom of Judah. The capital city grew and expanded in the course of the ninth–eighth centuries B.C.E., reaching its zenith at the end of the eighth, on the eve of Sennacherib's campaign to Judah. The settlement on the Western Hill began in the first half of the eighth century and culminated in the early seventh century, with the influx of refugees from the devastated cities of Judah. The preparations for the Assyrian campaign affected the capital, too, as implied in Isa 25:8b–11. And just as it is difficult to determine when the various settlements and structures elsewhere in the kingdom of Judah were founded, it is equally difficult, in the excavations in Jerusalem, to determine when the unearthed structures were built, or even the preparation made for the Assyrian assault. The problem is vividly illustrated by the question of when the Broad Wall around the Western Hill was built.

The excavators of the Broad Wall proposed two main elements for dating its construction—one archaeological and the other historical. The first is determined by the fact that the structure that preceded it, the fill underneath (Loci 352, 163), as well as its associated floor and the fill over it (Locus 179), contained no *lmlk* seal impressions, but *lmlk* impressions were found in the floor that covers the wall

(Floor 193) and in its fill (Loci 195–196) (Avigad and Geva 2000: 61–66, 81–82; Geva and Reich 2000: 42; de Groot, Geva, and Yezerski 2003: 2, 16; Geva 2003a: 511–15). Assuming that the jar-handle impressions appeared for the first time in Hezekiah's reign, the archaeologists concluded that the wall was built at some stage before the seal impressions were made. Dating the wall to Hezekiah's reign was based on the text of Isa 22:10 and 2 Chr 32:5 (Avigad 1983: 56–60; Avigad and Geva 2000: 82; Geva 2003a: 515), and as I have pointed out, the latter source is not to be relied on for this dating. The Isaiah text says, "And you counted the houses of Jerusalem, and pulled houses down to fortify the wall." It seems to suggest a situation in which houses were demolished in order to strengthen an existing wall, as indeed the author of 2 Chr 32:5 understood, when he wrote that Hezekiah built up the whole breached wall—not indicating the building of a new wall.[30]

It is not my contention that the date set by Avigad for the construction of the wall is untenable, but to propose an alternative hypothesis, namely, that the wall was built in the face of the Assyrian campaigns to Palestine in 734–732, possibly as a lesson learned from the siege laid on Jerusalem by Rezin and Pekah (2 Kgs 16:5; Isa 7:1, 5–6), and was constructed gradually over several years. Beside the scenario proposed by Avigad and Geva (2000: 82; Geva 2003b: 192–95, 198–99)—that the wall was built in Hezekiah's time and the line of fortification was moved in Manasseh's—it is possible to sketch a different scenario, in which the wall was built in the reign of Ahaz, and then in Hezekiah's reign, on the eve of the Assyrian campaign, when the *lmlk* stamps were already in use, the course of the wall was shifted a little to the north, the better to protect the city. If this hypothesis is correct, it means that already under Ahaz, most of the Western Hill was settled, perhaps sparsely, and took in many more inhabitants in the following years.

There is no doubt that on the eve of the Assyrian campaign to Judah the city was surrounded with walls on all sides, and that after it, in 701 B.C.E., a wave of refugees poured into Jerusalem, some from settlements nearby, others from the areas overrun by the Assyrian armies, and later also from the cities that were destroyed by the invading Assyrians. Presumably some of these refugees settled temporarily in Jerusalem, greatly increasing its population. This increase at the late eighth–early seventh century, when the Lachish III pottery vessels were in fashion, created the impression of a big city whose population had grown in a matter of a few years. Some scholars have assumed that the city continued to grow and develop, and that the number of inhabitants in Jerusalem in the late seventh century was greater than at the end of the eighth. But the archaeological findings from the City of David and the Western Hill show that this was not the case. It seems that the refugees did not remain in the city for many years, that many of them gradually left the city and returned to their places or settled in the environs of Jerusalem and other settlements in the kingdom. The destruction of many of the kingdom's cities meant that Jerusalem became its only big urban center, and that even after the steep drop in its population, it remained vastly larger, in population and grandeur, than any other city in the kingdom. Thus, despite the decline in the number of inhabitants, and no doubt also in the income flowing into it, the memory of Jerusalem in the sources as the premier city in the kingdom, the city "once great with people" (Lam 1:1), did reflect its unique standing in the kingdom of Judah on the eve of the fall of the First Temple.

[30] Some scholars doubted the Isaianic origin of the prophecy in verses 8b–11 and attributed it to a late redactor. See Gray 1912: 362–63; Duhm 1914: 136; Donner 1964: 128; Kaiser 1974: 138–40; Clements 1980b: 429–32.

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