

Here is my Creed. I believe in one God, Creator of the Universe: That he governs the World by his Providence. That he ought to be worshiped. That the most acceptable Service we can render to him is doing good to his other Children. That the Soul of Man is immortal, and will be treated with Justice in another Life, respecting its Conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental principles of all sound Religion, and I regard them as you do, in whatever Sect I meet with them (65).

As a practicing Deist he could not countenance any liaison between religion and politics. For him religion was a useful instrument for the betterment of society.

No other Founding Father has been more canonized than George Washington, yet he was a man given to little religiosity. In 1795, he wrote: "In politics as in religion my tenants [*sic*] are few and simple" (76). He used the language of faith and often praised the Grand Architect of the universe. There were other allusions to God, such as "the Governor of the universe," "Higher Cause," "Great Ruler of Events," "Wise Creator," and "Supreme Dispenser of all Good" (77). He saw the hand of Providence in the formation of the American nation, but he scrupulously avoided the endorsement of any religion. In 1789, when some Presbyterian elders protested to Washington that the Constitution lacked any explicit recognition of the only true God and Jesus Christ, the new president calmly replied that the "path of true piety is so plain as to require little political direction" (78).

Edwin Gaustad has proven conclusively that while the Founding Fathers were deeply religious and understood the religious character of the American nation, they all steadfastly opposed any kind of state religion for the nation. They refrained from endorsing publicly any religious group. They all remembered Europe's bloody past when the church and state were united, and they wanted an American nation where church and state were separate. They were not asking that religion be excluded from public discourse or from the arena of public conduct, but that the state, the political arm of the country, stay clear of any kind of alliance with any religious group.

This book is a must-read for those who want to understand American religious roots and the role of religion in the formation of the American nation, as well as for those who want to be aware of the views of the Founding Fathers regarding the relationship of religion and state.

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Kalimi, Isaac. *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, Inc., 2005. xiii + 473 pp. Hardcover, \$44.50.

This book is an expanded revision of the author's earlier work published in Hebrew (*The Book of Chronicles: Historical Writing and Literary Devices* [Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 2000]), which was itself an expanded revision of an earlier German work (*Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten* [Berlin: deGruyter, 1995]). In it, Kalimi deals with the parallels between Chronicles and other passages in the Hebrew Bible, i.e., what he calls "an extensive and enlightening example of a later biblical author's editing and adaptation of earlier literary-historiographical sources available to him" (1). He attempts to identify the forms and techniques employed by the Chronicler in his adaptations of Samuel-Kings incorporated into Chronicles.

In his introduction, Kalimi discusses the two different approaches developed in the nineteenth century regarding the Chronicler's use of sources, i.e., either that the Chronicler used and modified Samuel-Kings or that both used a common source. He sides with the first view, but does not rule out textual differences in the source text available to the author

of Chronicles or to scribal errors either in Chronicles or its sources.

Kalimi states that the study is based on the MT of Chronicles and Samuel-Kings, though he also consulted the fragments from the Judean Desert and the LXX as part of his research. Many scholars will take exception to his statement that “the reading of the Masoretic version is generally to be preferred to that of the alternative” (11). Nevertheless, the MT is a valid choice as a starting point for this study, since there is no general consensus on the history of the textual transmission of the various textual witnesses.

Each chapter explains one specific historical or literary emendation, followed by examples illustrating it. The first two chapters deal primarily with historiographical changes, whereas the next seventeen chapters deal primarily with literary changes. The last chapter deals with three topics: inconsistency in the reworking of an earlier text, alterations resulting in disharmony with other parts of Chronicles or other biblical texts, and historical mistakes stemming from gaps in the Chronicler’s knowledge concerning the period of the monarchy.

In his concluding chapter, Kalimi concisely outlines some brief conclusions based on the data and some suggested areas of research that this study may impact. One of the important implications of this study is that most differences between the parallel texts in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles result from the intentional creativity of the Chronicler, rather than problems of a text-critical nature. He suggests that this “free use” of previous texts may have also occurred in the pre-Masoretic form of other biblical texts. Another conclusion is that the existence of similar features throughout Chronicles “may” support the attribution of the work to one single author, though he cautions that this is “not necessarily certain” (407). Nevertheless, he states unambiguously in his next-to-last paragraph that this “book argues that Chronicles, in the main, represents a unified composition” (412). Another result of this study is that it throws light on the skill and sophistication of the Chronicler as an author as well as a redactor. Also, this study demonstrates that inconsistencies in the final form of a text cannot always be attributed to later additions and redactions. Finally, Kalimi sees some wider application of this study in the investigation of historical writings in the Ancient Near East in general, citing as an example the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions.

For those who like seeing examples, Kalimi’s book is a delight to read. It is replete with examples illustrating the various techniques used by the author of Chronicles. These are well organized, catalogued, and explained. However, there is some inconsistency in his method of citation. That is, although most examples are cited in Hebrew with an English translation, others are cited only in English (e.g., see chaps. 10–11). I assume that this may be partly due to the intended English readership of the book, and partly to a space-saving consideration, such as the example of inclusio in the list of Judah’s sons in 1 Chron 2:3-4 (318-320). Nevertheless, since the author takes the MT as the basis for his study, it would be preferable for all examples, or at least the relevant phrases or sentences, to be cited first in Hebrew.

Kalimi has succeeded in systematically listing and classifying the literary and historiographical adaptations employed by the Chronicler in using source material from Samuel-Kings. The cumulative weight of the evidence presented also makes a strong case for his conclusion that Chronicles consists of a unified composition. Kalimi’s book is an important contribution to the study of Chronicles, and an invaluable reference tool.