**Chapter 2.**

**The Alternative Story of the Kingdom’s Division in LXX 3 Kingdoms 12:24a–z**

**1. Introduction**

The story of the division of the kingdom after the death of Solomon (1 Kgs 11:1–12:24) has a number of components: Jeroboam’s rebellion and his subsequent escape to Egypt; the assembly at Shechem that concludes with the rebellion of the Israelite tribes against the house of David; and subsequently the war that the tribes of Judah and Benjamin declare against Israel in order to return power to Solomon’s son Rehoboam. The events that follow are also very much the same in the MT and in the LXX (except for the story of the illness of Jeroboam’s son in 1 Kings 14, to be discussed below). However, after the story of Judah and Benjamin going to war against Israel (prevented only the intervention of the man of God in v. 24), the LXX has a long plus (12:24a–z) like those in 3 Kingdoms 2 (see Chapter 1), duplicating the information already recounted in the stories in both the MT and the LXX. However, this version of the story differs greatly from the way it is told in both the MT and the section of the LXX that corresponds to the MT. (In what follows I shall refer to this corresponding LXX section, without the addition of 12:24a–z, as G\*.) Since this plus constitutes a duplicate tradition of the story of Jeroboam and the division of the kingdom in MT 1 Kings 11–14, it is sometimes referred to as Story B or “the Alternative Story” (hereafter, AS).[[1]](#footnote-1)

The circumstances that brought this duplicate tradition into being are unclear and there is scholarly disagreement about the nature of this tradition and the connection between it and the MT. The majority of scholars, e.g. Gooding, Gordon, and Talshir, consider 12:24a–z the product of late literary activity or a midrashic reworking of a version similar to that reflected in the MT.[[2]](#footnote-2) Commentaries based on the MT devote relatively little discussion to the AS; most of them consider this unit secondary to the LXX.[[3]](#footnote-3) Conversely, scholars such as Debus, Trebolle Barrera, and Shenkar identify 12:24a–z as the earliest account of the split, from which the version reflected in the MT developed.[[4]](#footnote-4) Actually, each of these approaches has both persuasive and problematic aspects. The approach I will detail in what follows seeks to incorporate the positive aspects of both approaches while avoiding their flaws. Though the AS lacks most of the huge Deuteronomistic overlay found in the MT, many factors indicate that it did undergo textual development, just in a different direction. We shall see, therefore, that the AS and the story in the MT are two parallel manifestations of the same sources, both of which continued in later periods to develop independently. The discussion that follows will include a reconstruction of the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the AS and a detailed analysis of the differences between the three versions: the traditional Hebrew text (MT), the version in the LXX (G\*) that is relatively similar to the MT, and the AS, which represents a completely different tradition. Within the LXX, the AS constitutes a duplicate version or doublet, since it repeats stories found elsewhere in chapters 11–14. After this analysis, I will propose an explanation for the creation of the AS and will attempt to date the stories found in it and in the parallel stories in MT (and G\*). The question of dating should prove decisive for our understanding of the essential nature of the AS.

**2. The Hebrew Base Text**

In the course of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, some scholars proposed that the AS was created originally in Greek—for example, Keil, who thought that the additional verses in 3 Kgdms 12:24a-z “are nothing more than a legendary supplement made by an Alexandrian.”[[5]](#footnote-5) Wevers and Gooding, in the same vein, attributed most of the differences between the LXX and the MT to the Greek translators or Greek reworkings. Still, none of these scholars carefully analyzed either the AS or the assertion that the AS originated in Greek.[[6]](#footnote-6) As noted in the Introduction, the scholarly situation changed with the progress of publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which uncovered a great number of Hebrew scrolls preserving various biblical books in versions that differ from that of the MT. Debus and Talshir, working in the second half of the 20th century, took a different direction than their predecessors, pointing to the essentially Hebraistic nature of the AS and offering a complete Hebrew reconstruction of it.[[7]](#footnote-7) But in recent decades there has been yet another reversal, with the studies of Van Keulen and Turkenic, who systematically assigned most of the unique texts in the LXX to the Greek translators or Greek reworkings, even though they did not particularly focus on the language of the AS. In order to refute the argument that the AS is the work of the Greek translators, and to substantiate the claim that it is based on a Hebrew base text, there is still some work left undone: to systematically list the following calques and other indications of a Hebrew background showing that the AS was based on a Hebrew *Vorlage* sometimes rendered artificially into Greek without consideration for the rules of Greek, or sometimes simply translated incorrectly. As in the case of the *Miscellanies*, here too verses that are found in the MT prove nothing, since in such cases the translator of the AS may have relied on another Greek translation (and the resulting Hebraism may derive from this previous translation). The examples that follow are therefore found in texts that have no parallel in MT or are not identical to G\*.

(1) In a few cases it is evident that the translator of the AS translated a Hebrew phrase literally word for word, even though the result bears no resemblance to Greek. For example, in Hebrew it is usual to note someone’s age by calling him a “son” of some number of years.[[8]](#footnote-8) The AS mimics this construction when it gives the age of Ahijah in v. 24h: καὶ οὗτος ἦν υἱὸς ἑξήκοντα ἐτῶν ‘he was a son of sixty years’, a translation that is awkward in Greek. In this case there is no parallel verse giving Ahijah’s age in the MT (compare 1 Kgs 14:2–3), so one cannot argue that the Greek scribe was dependent on an earlier Greek text from the LXX. He was relying on a Hebrew base text.[[9]](#footnote-9)

(2) An additional example of literal, un-Greek translation is found in v. 24b, which has no parallel in the MT or in G\*. The verbal construction of εἰμί + ἐπαιρόμενος apparently reflects the Hebrew construction ויהי מתנשא or the like (compare Gen 1:6, 4:17; Josh 9:21; Jud 16:21; 2 Sam 13:23). A proper Greek formulation would likely employ only the middle form in such cases.

(3) The wording ὅτι οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὐκ εἰς ἄρχοντα οὐδὲ εἰς ἡγούμενον in v. 24t (“for this man shall be neither a ruler nor a leader”) is elliptic, with neither copula nor verb, a formulation characteristic of Hebrew but rare in Greek.[[10]](#footnote-10) It may be reconstructed as follows: כי זה האיש לא למושל ולא לנגיד. Exod 32:1, 23 has an expression resembling כי זה האיש, and the construction “לא ל + noun … ולא ל + noun” / “*lo l-* + noun … *v’lo l-* + noun” appears (for example) in Josh 22:26, 28 (לא לעולה ולא לזבח); Isa 57:16 (לא לעולם ... ולא לנצח); Ps 103:9 (לא לנצח ... ולא לעולם).[[11]](#footnote-11) This sentence in v. 24t, again, does not match anything in the parallel MT, so there is no question of its being copied from elsewhere in the LXX. It must be a translation based on a Hebrew base text.

(4) In a few cases it is possible to identify a literal translation into Greek of a Hebrew expression, when the translator of the AS translates each separate part of the Hebrew expression, but the meaning is lost because the expression as a whole is not the same as the sum of its parts. For example, the words ὡς ἀνὴρ εἷς (24t), which have no parallel in the MT or G\* to 1 Kgs 12:16. This Greek expression certainly reflects the Hebrew idiom כאיש אחד (literally, “as one person”), which means “all together, all at once” (see, e.g., Num 14:15; Jud 6:16, 20:1.8.11; 1 Sam 11:7; 2 Sam 19:15; Ezra 3:1; Neh 8:1).[[12]](#footnote-12) The literal translation into Greek in v. 24t of each word individually does not faithfully render the meaning of the Hebrew expression.

(5) An additional indicator of a Hebrew base text arises from the choice of a word that translates a Hebrew word one way, when the original (reconstructed) Hebrew actually intended a different meaning of that word. This is the case with the Greek word σκυτάλη (v. 24b), which appears in a description of Jeroboam that is not found in the MT parallel (cf. 1 Kgs 11:28).[[13]](#footnote-13) The Greek word σκυτάλη, whose literal meaning, “staff, cudgel, club,” is relatively rare in the LXX.[[14]](#footnote-14) Outside of this verse, the word is used in the LXX for any kind of stick-shaped object: in Exod 30:4–5 for בד; in 2 Sam 3:29 for פלך. Here too the Greek word apparently translates פלך (or מטה), which has two meanings in Hebrew: “club” (like the Greek word here) or “staff, tribe.” The usage in this verse, of course, since the text is discussing Jeroboam’s job, is that Jeroboam was on Solomon’s “staff”; the Vorlage should be reconstructed as שר פלך (or שר מטה). The translator chose one meaning of the Hebrew word when the other meaning fits the context better.

(6) A similar case is found in the word σκῆπτρον, which appears three times in the AS (24f, 24u [twice]). The Greek word means “stick” or “staff”[[15]](#footnote-15) and in the LXX it generally translates מטה or שבט. But these Hebrew words obviously appear not just with the meaning “stick” or “staff” but also with the meaning “tribe.” This is also the meaning of the word in the AS, where the Greek word certainly reflects Hebrew שבט, since it is paired with the tribal names Ephraim (24f) and Benjamin and Judah (24u). The translator deliberately chose to reflect the first meaning of the Hebrew word, artificially matching the standard usage in the LXX, even though the re quired Greek meaning was different.

(7) οὕτως in v. 24q is often used in the LXX for Hebrew כן (e.g., Gen 1:9.11.15, 6:22), but the meaning here is not the standard Hebrew meaning of כן: “thus, so, in this way.” The resulting sentence is missing something. See for example the NETS translation: “Thus the people spoke to you,” which appears that way without adding what the people said. Some of the Greek manuscripts add various pluses here, or else they change the formulation in order to clarify the sentence. LXXL, for example, and others, read Οὕτως λαλήσεις πρὸς τὸν λαόν ἀγαθῶς (“Thus you shall speak favorably to the people”).[[16]](#footnote-16) Apparently the Hebrew base text did have the word כן, but the correct interpretation of it in this context would be “correct, right, accurate” as in the following examples: “Moses said, ‘You are right [כֵּ֣ן]! I will never see your face again’” (Exod 10:29); “The daughters of Zelophehad are right [כֵּ֗ן] in what they are saying” (Num 27:7); or “Then Moses commanded the Israelites according to the word of YHWH, saying, “The descendants of the tribe of Joseph are right [כֵּ֛ן] in what they are saying’” (Num 36:5).[[17]](#footnote-17) The translator of the AS chose οὕτως as the equivalent of כן, thus creating a sentence that is meaningless in Greek.

Even though this reconstruction poses difficulties, it has many advantages and it gives scholars a convenient tool for comparison with existing Hebrew texts, and understanding the development of the versions. In the 20th century two complete, detailed, notated reconstructions have been offered, by Jörg Debus and Zipora Talshir.[[18]](#footnote-18) The reconstruction presented here is based on the previous studies but differs from them in certain details. The accompanying footnotes deal with all the considerations that led to each reconstruction, with matters of textual transmission, and with the differences between the reconstructions of Debus and Talshir. The the nature of the differences between the versions, and the consideration of literary and historical questions, will be discussed at greater extent below. Alongside the reconstruction appear also the numbers of the parallel verses in MT and G\*. Full details will be found in the discussion of each separate unit. The English translation provided here is intended to provide a smooth reading of the reconstructed Hebrew base text, rather than of the Greek text when I believe it misunderstood the reconstructed base text or when the Greek text itself might have been misunderstood by its readers.

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| **parallel verse in MT** | ***Vorlage*** | **LXX 12:24a-z** | **English translation** | **parallel verse in G\*** |
| 11:43 | **24a**  והמלך שלמה שכב עם אבותיו[[19]](#footnote-19) ויקבר עם אבותיו בעיר דוד. וימלך רחבעם בנו תחתיו בירושלים. | **24a** [Greek text] | **24a** And King Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and his son Rehoboam ruled in his stead in Jerusalem.  | 11:43 |
| 14:21 | בן[[20]](#footnote-20) שש עשרה שנה במלכו ושתים עשרה שנה מלך בירושלים ושם אמו \*נעמה[[21]](#footnote-21) בת חנן[[22]](#footnote-22) בן נחש מלך בני עמון.  |   | He was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twelve years in Jerusalem, and his mother’s name was Naama daughter of Hanan son of Nahash, king of the sons of Ammon,  | 14:21 |
| 14:22a | ויעש הרע בעיני יהוה ולא הלך בדרך דוד אביו. |  | and he did evil in the eyes of YHWH and did not walk in the path of David, his father. | 14:22a |
| 11:26 | **24b**ויהי[[23]](#footnote-23) איש מהר אפרים עבד לשלמה ושמו ירבעם ושם אמו \*צרועה,[[24]](#footnote-24) אשה זונה.[[25]](#footnote-25)  | **24b**  | **24b** And there was a man from Mount Ephraim, a servant of Solomon, and his name was Jeroboam, and his mother’s name was \*Zeruah, a prostitute,  | 11:26 |
| 11:28 | ויתנהו[[26]](#footnote-26) שלמה לשר פלך[[27]](#footnote-27) על סבל בית יוסף. ויבן לשלמה[[28]](#footnote-28) את צררה בהר אפרים, ויהיו לו רכב שלוש מאות סוסים.[[29]](#footnote-29)  |  | and Solomon made him supervisor over the levy of the house of Joseph, and he built for Solomon Zererah in Mount Ephraim, and he had chariots of three hundred horses.  | 11:28 |
| 11:27 | הוא בנה את המלוא בסבל בית אפרים, הוא סגר את עיר דוד ויהי מתנשא[[30]](#footnote-30) למלוכה  |  | It was he who built the Millo (citadel) with the levy of the house of Ephraim; he closed off the city of David, and he exalted himself over the kingdom.  | 11:27 |
| 11:40 | **24c**ויבקש שלמה להמיתו, ויירא ויברח אל שישק[[31]](#footnote-31) מלך מצרים ויהי עמו עד מות שלמה. | **24c**  | **24c** And Solomon was seeking to put him to death, and he was afraid and ran away to Shishak, king of Egypt, and he was with him until the death of Solomon. | 11:40 |
| 11:21 (cf. 12:2) | **24d**וישמע ירבעם במצרים כי מת שלמה, וידבר באזני שישק מלך מצרים לאמר, שלחני, ואלך אל ארצי.  | **24d**  | **24d** And Jeroboam heard in Egypt that Solomon had died, and he spoke in the ears of Shishak, king of Egypt, saying, “Send me off, and I will go to my own country,”  | 11:21 |
| 11:22a | ויאמר לו שישק, שאל מה ואתן לך[[32]](#footnote-32) |  | and Shishak said to him, “Request any request, and I will give it to you.” | 11:22a |
| 11:19 | **24e**ושישק נתן לירבעם את אנו[[33]](#footnote-33) אחות תחמינס[[34]](#footnote-34) הגבירה[[35]](#footnote-35) אשתו לו לאישה, היא הגדולה בתוך בנות המלך,[[36]](#footnote-36)  | **24e**  | **24e** And Shishak had given Jeroboam Ano, the sister of his wife Tahmenes, the Queen, as wife to him; she was the senior among the King’s women,  | 11:19 |
| 11:20 | ותלד לירבעם את אביה בנו. |  | and she bore to Jeroboam Abijah his son. | 11:20 |
| 11:22b | **24f**ויאמר ירבעם לשישק, לא כי[[37]](#footnote-37) שלח תשלחני[[38]](#footnote-38) ואלך.  | **24f**  | **24f** And Jeroboam said to Shishak, “No, do let me go, and I will depart.”  | 11:22b |
| – | ויצא ירבעם ממצרים ויבא לארץ צררה בהר אפרים, ויאסף[[39]](#footnote-39) שם כל שבט אפרים, ויבן ירבעם שם מצור[[40]](#footnote-40)  |  | And Jeroboam departed from Egypt and came to the land of Zererah, which is in Mount Ephraim, and there all the tribe of Ephraim gathered, and Jeroboam built a fortress there. | Cf. 11:43a |
| 14:1 | **24g**ויחל ילדו[[41]](#footnote-41) חולי חזק מאוד וילך[[42]](#footnote-42) ירבעם לדרש על[[43]](#footnote-43) הילד  | **24g**  | **24g** And his child became ill with a very severe sickness, and Jeroboam went to inquire about the child,  | – |
| 14: 2a | ויאמר אל אנו אשתו קומי לכי דרשי באלהים על הילד אם יחיה מחוליו |  | and he said to Ano his wife, “Arise, and go; ask God about the child, whether he will recover from his sickness.” | – |
| 14:2b-3 | **24h**ואיש היה בשילה ושמו אחיה, והוא בן שישים שנה, ודבר יהוה אתו. ויאמר ירבעם אל אשתו קומי וקחי בידך אל איש האלהים לחם וניקודים[[44]](#footnote-44) לבניו[[45]](#footnote-45) וענבים ובקבוק דבש | **24h**  | **24h** And there was a man in Shiloh, and his name was Ahijah, and he was sixty years old, and the word of YHWH was with him. And Jeroboam said to his wife, “Arise, and take in your hand for the man of God bread and cakes for his children and grapes and a jar of honey.”  | – |
| 14:4 | **24i**ותקם האישה ותיקח בידה לחם ושני ניקודים וענבים ובקבוק דבש לאחיה. והאיש זקן ועיניו קמו מלראות.  | **24i**  | **24i** And the woman arose and took in her hand bread and two cakes and grapes and a jar of honey for Ahijah, and the man was old, and his eyes were too dim–sighted to see.  | – |
| 14:5-6 | **24k**ותקם מצררה ותלך, ויהי כבאה העירה אל אחיה השילוני ויאמר אחיה לנערו, צא נא לקראת אנו אשת ירבעם ואמרת אליה בואי ואל תעמדי, כי כה אמר יהוה קשה אנכי שולח אליך.[[46]](#footnote-46)  | **24k**  | **24k** And she arose from Zererah and went, and as she came to the city to Ahijah the Shilonite, Ahijah said to his servant: go out to meet Ano the wife of Jeroboam and say to her, “Come in and do not stand, for this is what YHWH says, ‘I am sending harsh things upon you.’ ”  | – |
| 14:12 | **24l**ותבא אנו אל איש האלהים ויאמר אליה אחיה למה זה לי[[47]](#footnote-47) הבאת לחם וענבים ונקודים ובקבוק דבש, כה אמר יהוה הנה את הלכת מאתי והיה בבאך השערה[[48]](#footnote-48) צררתה ונערתיך תצאנה לקראתך ואמרו לך הילד מת.  | **24l**  | **24l** And Ano entered before the man of God, and Ahijah said to her, “Why have you brought me bread and grapes and cakes and a jar of honey? This is what YHWH says, ‘Behold, as you depart from me, and as you enter the gate of Zererah, your maid-servants will come out to meet you and will say to you, “The child has died.” ’  | – |
| 14:11, 13 | **24m**כי כה אמר יהוה הנני אכרית[[49]](#footnote-49) לירבעם משתין בקיר והיה המת לירבעם בעיר יאכלו הכלבים והמת בשדה יאכלו עוף השמים והילד יסָּפד[[50]](#footnote-50) הוי אדון[[51]](#footnote-51) יען נמצא בו דבר טוב אל יהוה. | **24m**  | **24m** For thus YHWH says, ‘Behold, I will destroy from Jeroboam everyone who urinates against the wall; anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, the dogs shall eat; and anyone who dies in the field, the birds of the air shall eat. And they shall lament the child, “Woe, O master,” because in him there is found something pleasing to YHWH.’ ”  | – |
| 14:17 | **24n** ותלך האשה כשמעה[[52]](#footnote-52) ויהי כבאה צררתה והנער מת ותצא הצעקה[[53]](#footnote-53) לקראתה.  |  | **24n** And the woman departed as she heard, and as she entered to Zererah, the child had died, and the wailing came out to meet her.  | – |
| 12:1 | וילך ירבעם שכם אשר בהר אפרים ויקבץ[[54]](#footnote-54) שם את שבטי ישראל ויעל שם רחבעם בן שלמה. |  | And Jeroboam went to Shechem, which is in Mount Ephraim, and gathered there the tribes of Israel, and Rehoboam son of Solomon went up there,  | 12:1 |
| 11:29-31 | **24o**ודבר יהוה היה אל שמעיה האלמי[[55]](#footnote-55) לאמר קח לך שלמה חדשה אשר לא הובאה במים וקרעֶהָ שנים עשר קרעים, ונתת לירבעם ואמרת אליו כה אמר יהוה, קח לך עשרה קרעים לכסותך,[[56]](#footnote-56) ויקח ירבעם ויאמר שמעיה כה אמר יהוה על עשרה שבטי ישראל.[[57]](#footnote-57)  | **24o**  | **24o** and the word of YHWH had come to Shemaiah the Elamite, saying, “Take for yourself a new garment which has not been immersed in water and tear it into twelve pieces, and you shall give it to Jeroboam and say to him, ‘This is what YHWH says, Take for yourself ten pieces to cover yourself,’ ” and Jeroboam took them, and Shemaiah said, “This is what YHWH says concerning the ten tribes of Israel.” | 11:29-31 |
| 12:3b-4 | **24p** ויאמר העם אל רחבעם בן שלמה, אביך הכביד[[58]](#footnote-58) את עלו עלינו ויכבד מאכל שלחנו ועתה[[59]](#footnote-59) הקל אתה מעלינו ונעבדך.  | **24p**  | **24p** And the people said to Rehoboam son of Solomon, “Your father made his yoke heavy upon us and the food of his table is weighty. And now, ease up on us, and we will serve you,”  | 12:3-4 |
| 12:5 | ויאמר רחבעם אל העם, עֹד שלשה ימים והשבתי[[60]](#footnote-60) אתכם דבר. |  | and Rehoboam said to the people, “In three days I will bring back an answer to you.” | 12:5 |
| 12:6-7 | **24q**ויאמר רחבעם הביאו אלי את הזקנים ואועץ אתם מה אשיב את העם דבר ביום השלישי, וידבר רחבעם באזניהם כאשר שלח העם אליו, ויאמרו זקני העם, כן[[61]](#footnote-61) דבר אליך העם. | **24q**  | **24q** And Rehoboam said, “Bring me the elders and I will take counsel with them what answer I should bring back to the people on the third day.” And Rehoboam spoke in their ears what the people sent to him, and the elders of the people said, “The people are right in what they said to you.” | 12:6-7 |
| 12:8-9 | **24r**ויעזב[[62]](#footnote-62) רחבעם את עצתם ולא ייטב[[63]](#footnote-63) בעיניו. וישלח ויביא[[64]](#footnote-64) את (הילדים) אשר גדלו אתו[[65]](#footnote-65) וידבר אליהם, כזאת וכזאת[[66]](#footnote-66) שלח אלי לאמר[[67]](#footnote-67) העם.  | **24r**  | **24r** And Rehoboam rejected their advice because it did not please him, and he sent and gathered those who had grown up with him and spoke to them “such and such (demands) the people have sent to me and said.” | 12:8-9 |
| 12:10-11 | ויאמרו (הילדים) אשר גדלו אתו, כה תדבר אל העם לאמר, קטני עבה ממתני אבי, אבי יסר אתכם בשוטים ואני איסר אתכם בעקרבים. |  | And those who had been brought up with him said: “Thus you shall speak to the people, saying, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.’ ” | 12:10-11 |
| 12:13-14 | **24s** וייטב הדבר בעיני[[68]](#footnote-68) רחבעם ויען את העם כאשר יעצהו הילדים אשר גדלו אתו.[[69]](#footnote-69)  | **24s**  | **24s** And this pleased Rehoboam, and he answered the people as the young men who grew up with him advised him.  | 12:13-14 |
| 12:16 | **24t** ויאמר כל העם כאיש אחד איש אל רעהו ויקראו כלם לאמר, אין לנו חלק[[70]](#footnote-70) בדוד ולא נחלה בבן ישי, לאהליך ישראל כי זה האיש לא למושל ולא לנגיד. | **24t**  | **24t** And all the people said unanimously each to his neighbor, all cried out saying, “We have no part in David, neither inheritance in the son of Jesse; to your tents, O Israel, for this man shall be neither a ruler nor a leader.”  | 12:16 |
| 12:18b | **24u**ויפץ כל העם משכם וילך איש לאהלו. ויתאמץ רחבעם וילך ויעל במרכבתו ויבא ירושלים וילכו אחריו כל שבט יהודה וכל שבט בנימין. | **24u**  | **24u** And all the people dispersed from Shechem, and each man departed to his place. And Rehoboam strengthened himself, departed and mounted his chariot; he went to Jerusalem, and the whole tribe of Judah and the whole tribe of Benjamin went after him.  | 12:18b |
| 12:21 | **24x**ויהי לתקופת[[71]](#footnote-71) השנה ויקהל רחבעם את כל איש יהודה ובנימין ויעל להלחם עם ירבעם שכמה. | **24x**  | **24x** At the turn of the year Rehoboam gathered all the man of Judah and Benjamin and went up to fight against Jeroboam at Shechem.  | 12:21 |
| 12:22 | **24y**ויהי דבר יהוה אל שמעיה איש האלהים, | **24y**  | **24y** And the word of YHWH came to Shemaiah, the man of God,  | 12:22 |
| 12:23 | אמר אל רחבעם מלך יהודה ואל כל בית יהודה ובנימין ויתר העם לאמר, |  | “Say to Rehoboam, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin and to the rest of the people, saying, | 12:23 |
| 12:24a | כה אמר יהוה לא תעלו ולא תלחמון עם אחיכם בני ישראל, שובו איש לביתו כי מאתי נהיה הדבר הזה.  |  |  ‘Thus says YHWH, You shall not go up or fight against your brothers, the sons of Israel; let everyone go home, for this thing is from me.’ ”  | 12:24a |
| 12:24b | **24z**וישמעו את דבר יהוה, וישבו[[72]](#footnote-72) ללכת כדבר יהוה. | **24z** | **24z** And they heeded the word of YHWH and turned back according to the word of YHWH. | 12: 24b |

**3. The AS and the Parallel Materials**

A detailed comparison between the AS and the parallel materials in the MT and the matching LXX texts (G\*) that will be presented below shows that in fact there are advantages and disadvantages to each of the prevalent scholarly approaches. On the one hand, the AS often displays an older version of the parallel story in the MT, since it does not include most of the Deuteronomistic components. Even so, there are several places where the text of the AS apparently reflects a later stage, including pluses of a midrashic character. The necessary conclusion is that the texts did not develop one from the other, but from a shared source, and each continued to develop in various ways. This hypothesis nonetheless must be put on firm footing by careful examination that will elucidate each unit of the AS collection individually. The discussion to follow divides the AS into five sections:

(1) the introduction, including the frame verses that are standard in the book of Kings, reporting on the end of Solomon’s kingship and the beginning of Rehoboam’s (v. 24a);

(2) the story of Jeroboam’s escape to Egypt and his rise to power (24b-f);

(3) the illness of Jeroboam’s son (24g-n);

(4) the story of the assembly at Shechem (24n-u);

(5) the story about the tearing of the garment (24o); and

(6) the story of the war of Judah and Benjamin against Israel, which concludes the story of the division of the kingdom (24x-z).

For each unit, I will provide a detailed comparison between the AS and the corresponding text in the MT and G\*, seeking to understand the literary and historical relationship between them. Other versions (e.g., Chronicles) will be mentioned only when they can offer us something significant for the history of the text.

**3.1 The Introduction (24a)**

In contrast to the rest of the units that make up the AS, v. 24a does not contain a story or any narrative; it is a text of conclusion and introduction. The verse contains the conclusion of Solomon’s kingship (corresponding to MT 11:43) and the beginning of Rehoboam’s kingship (corresponding to MT 14:21-24). As is evident from the table of comparison below, there are significant differences between the MT and the AS in the sequence of the text:

[TEXT]

**Differences in Sequence:** According to the sequence in the MT (and in G\*), there is a discontinuity between the end of Solomon’s reign and the beginning of Rehoboam’s reign, even though in most of the other places in Kings, after the death of the king and the statement, “his son PN succeeded him as king,” we are presented with information about the next king of that kingdom or of the other kingdom (e.g., 1 Kgs 14:29-15:5, 15:7-15, 15:23-26, 15:31-34, 16:27-30). In the AS, the link between the end of Solomon’s reign and the beginning of the reign of his heir Rehoboam is closer to the texts of conclusion and introduction that are standard in Kings, while the disjuncture in the MT between the conclusion of Solomon’s reign and the introduction of Rehoboam forced the narrator of the MT to introduce Rehoboam’s reign with a sentence that has no parallel elsewhere—“Meanwhile, Rehoboam son of Solomon reigned in Judah” (1 Kgs 14:21a).[[73]](#footnote-73) This sentence can be identified as secondary by virtue of the fact that it duplicates the continuation of v. 21, “He reigned seventeen years in *Jerusalem*,” which corresponds to the standard introduction.[[74]](#footnote-74) The anomalous phrase in the MT might indicate that the AS is earlier, but the differing sequence might also be the result of parallel editorial methods. The Deuteronomistic elements in the verse, on the other hand, offer a clearer indication of which version is late and which is early.

**Signs That the AS is Early:** The MT version of the opening formula, in 14:21, has a distinctly Deuteronomistic stratum, focusing on the choice of Jerusalem and on cultic issues that are missing in the AS. After the standard formula “he was X years old when he became king, and he reigned Y years in Jerusalem,” MT adds a description of Jerusalem as “the city the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to establish His name there.” As is well known, the idea of the choice of Jerusalem is characteristic of Deuteronomistic writing in Kings (e.g., 1 Kgs 8:44, 48; 11:32, 36, cf. 2 Kgs 21:7; 23:27), which identifies it as “the site that the Lord your God will choose.”[[75]](#footnote-75) The expression “to establish His name there,” which also appears as part of the idea of the choice of Jerusalem, is dependent on Deuteronomy and appears in Deuteronomistic literature (Deut 12:5, 21; 14:24; 1 Kgs 9:3; 11:36).[[76]](#footnote-76) But it is worth noting that this is the single time where mention of the choice of Jerusalem appears in the opening formula in Kings.[[77]](#footnote-77) This reinforces the hypothesis that the words about the choice of Jerusalem in 14:21 are a secondary addition to the opening formula, while the shorter text of AS here reflects an earlier stage of the text.[[78]](#footnote-78)

An additional difference between the versions is connected to the theological evaluation that generally follows the opening formulas in Kings. In AS, the evaluation is short, relating to Rehoboam personally: “He and he did evil in the eyes of YHWH and did not walk in the path of David, his father” (24a). This evaluation is general and formulaic, offering no detail and perhaps not referring to any sin in particular. In MT, the evaluation is much broader, referring to the peoples’ sins rather than those of Jeroboam: “Judah did what was displeasing to the Lord, and angered Him more than their fathers had done by the sins that they committed” (1 Kgs 14:22), specifically focusing on the sin most significant to the Deuteronomistic writers, idolatry: “They too built for themselves shrines, pillars, and sacred posts on every high hill and under every leafy tree; there were also male prostitutes in the land. [Judah] imitated all the abhorrent practices of the nations that the Lord had dispossessed before the Israelites” (1 Kgs 14:23-24). This formulation is certainly influenced by the commandments of Deuteronomy (e.g., Deut 12:2-3), and similar formulations appear more extensively in the Deuteronomic justification for the destruction of the kingdom of Israel (2 Kgs 17:7-11). It seems reasonable to accept the suggestion of Noach Hayut that the Deuteronomistic expansion in vv. 22b-24 belongs to a later Deuteronomistic writer, who has a perspective on reward and punishment closer to that of Chronicles, which blames the punishment of the people on sins committed by the public as a whole, not just by the king alone.[[79]](#footnote-79) We find evidence of this in the opening formula of the reign of Rehoboam’s son Abijam, which comes next in all versions of the text: “He continued in all the sins that his father before him had committed” (1 Kgs 15:3) as well as in the text about Rehoboam preserved in Chronicles (“He did what was wrong, for he had not set his heart to seek the Lord,” 2 Chron 12:14). Both of these indicate familiarity with a formulation similar to that of the AS, referring to the sins of the king alone and not those of all Judah. It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that the briefer religious evaluation in the AS, referring to Rehoboam himself, is earlier than the exceptional formulation in the MT.[[80]](#footnote-80)

It must, however, be noted that even the AS is not completely devoid of ostensibly Deuteronomistic coinages. The reference in the duplicate tradition to Rehoboam as doing “what was displeasing to the Lord” is distinctly Deuteronomistic, appearing in Deuteronomy (e.g., Deut 4:25; 9:18; 17:2; 31:29) and many times in the framework of Kings (e.g., 1 Kgs 11:6; 15:26, 34; 16:19, 25, 30; 21:20; and elsewhere). Talshir and the others who consider the duplicate tradition a late creation based on the final version of Kings (as known to us from MT), take this as proof that the author of the AS adopted those Deuteronomistic formulations that suited him and rejected others.[[81]](#footnote-81) However, the general evaluation “He did what was (dis)pleasing to the Lord” characteristic of the framework verses of Kings is found in non-Deuteronomistic strata of biblical literature as well (e.g. Num 32:13; 1 Sam 15:19) and there is theoretically nothing preventing such expressions from appearing in pre-Deuteronomic sources that served as raw material for the book of Kings in its final recension.[[82]](#footnote-82) In the previous examples as well, such the references to the choice of Jerusalem in the opening formula of Rehoboam’s reign, we presented other evidence that the pluses in MT (when compared with v. 24a) are later developments of the text, and it makes no sense to claim that these were deleted by the author of the AS. In any case, no matter whether the duplicate tradition reflects any editorial stage of Kings or its sources, it is evident that the AS had access to an earlier version than the one reflected in MT. The MT underwent more substantial Deuteronomistic editing, referring to high places, emphasizing the choice of Jerusalem, and making the entire public responsible for the sin, not just the king. It is, therefore, impossible to accept the argument that the version reflected in MT as we know it is the source of the AS.

**Signs That the AS is Late:** Despite the strata in the MT that are evidently later than the AS, the AS is not the source from which the MT developed. There are a number of signs pointing to the fact that the AS too underwent change and adaptation. The beginning of v. 24a is almost completely identical to 11:43 of the MT, except that instead of the standard concluding formula “Solomon slept with his fathers,” the Greek text of the AS, Καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς Σαλωμὼν κοιμᾶται μετὰ τῶν πατέρων αὐτοῦ apparently reflects the Hebrew text והמלך שלמה שכב עם אבותיו, “King Solomon slept with his fathers.”[[83]](#footnote-83) If this was indeed the translator’s Hebrew Vorlage, it is a quite unusual construction, unmatched in the other concluding formulas in the book of Kings, in two ways. First, there are no other formulations in which the subject comes before the verb (appearing in the perfect, as here); ordinarily, in the standard formula, the verb comes before the subject: עם אבותיו PN וישכב (“PN slept with his fathers”). Second, normally the concluding formulas do not contain the title “King.”[[84]](#footnote-84) To be sure, this formulation does have a parallel in the LXX to 1 Kgs 11:43, in the repetitive resumption (in bold) intended to guide the reader back to the context after the half-verse that inserts the mention of Jeroboam (on this verse in the LXX, see at greater length section 3.4, “The Story of the Assembly at Shechem”):

TEXT

Since the use of this construction is unusual, it is possible that here too, in 12:24a, in the LXX as it currently exists, the expression serves as a sort of resumptive repetition (in the Greek as in the Hebrew) in order to guide the reader back to the conclusion of the Solomon pericope in 1 Kgs 11:43. It must be remembered that according to the text of the Septuagint as we have it (including the AS) the information about the death of Solomon appears three times (twice in 11:43; 12:24a) in contrast to just a single time in 1 Kings (11:43).[[85]](#footnote-85) In any case, it is reasonable to assume that the standard formulation, in the MT, reflects an earlier text, even if this linguistic detail changes little from the perspective of the flow of the plot or determination of the question of the relationship between the versions.

A more significant difference between the versions concerns the age of Rehoboam when he became king. In the MT, Rehoboam rises to power when he is “forty-one years old” (1 Kgs 14:21), while according to the AS he is “sixteen years old” (24a). As many have observed, Rehoboam’s age in the MT (41) demonstrating no particular predisposition; it follows that the MT apparently preserves the original text. This text has been changed in the AS in order to make it fit the description of Rehoboam as a young king, advised by a cohort of young advisers, of his own age, “who had grown up with him” (1 Kgs 12:8, 10).[[86]](#footnote-86) The 16-year-old in the AS is a young king, just as Azariah is described as a youth when he rose to kingship at age 16 after his father Amaziah was killed. The royal officials took Azariah and crowned him, and he is described as being made king rather than making himself king (2 Kgs 14:21; 15:2).[[87]](#footnote-87) The Chronicler too, who represents for us a later perspective, was apparently bothered by the awkward fit between his age at attaining kingship in the introductory framework, 41, and his portrayal during the assembly at Shechem as a boy. In Chronicles, therefore, Rehoboam is described as a boy who associated with “riff-raff and scoundrels”: “Rehoboam was inexperienced and fainthearted and could not stand up to them” (2 Chron 13:7). The story of the assembly in told in 2 Chronicles 10; only after some time are we told that “King Rehoboam grew strong in Jerusalem and exercised kingship, for Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king” (2 Chron 12:13). The Chronicler therefore has created the impression, without rewriting or adjusting the age, that a great deal of time has passed in between his associating with his young friends, as a youth, and his rise to kingship.[[88]](#footnote-88) The MT, which describes Rehoboam as a 41-year-old when he became king, reflects in this case the *lectio difficilior* and demonstrates that the stories developed separately from the framework verses. The number 41 was changed to 16 at a later stage in the AS, when the stories were inserted into the framework. By contrast, it is difficult to find a persuasive explanation for the reverse process, in which 16 became 41.

An additional numerical and chronological difference should be noted in this context. In the MT (at 14:21, and in G\*) Rehoboam reigns for 17 years, as opposed to the AS, where he reigns for 12 years. This difference is not significant in the same way that the previous difference is, and it might be due to graphic reasons or to the regular chronological differences in approach between the MT and the LXX; nonetheless, the result is that according to the AS Rehoboam died at age 28, unusually young in comparison with the other kings of Judah who began to reign at such a young age.[[89]](#footnote-89) There are other kings who began to reign at a young age but reigned for many years. For example, Jehoash was 7 when he became king and reigned 40 years (2 Kgs 12:1-2); Azariah was 16 when he became king, and he reigned 52 years (2 Kgs 15:2); Manasseh was 12 when he became king, and he reigned 55 years in Jerusalem (2 Kgs 21:1); and Josiah was 8 when he became king, and he reigned 31 years (2 Kgs 22:1) even though he did not die a natural death. The deaths of kings who began to reign in their youth and died in their twenties are explained in the Bible by special circumstances. Thus, Ahaziah son of Joram was 22 when he became king, and he died that same year after being wounded in battle, having been killed (as we are told in 2 Kgs 9:27) on the instructions of Jehu; Amon was also 22 when he became king, and reigned for just 2 years, after which he was killed by a conspiracy of his courtiers (2 Kgs 21:19, 23); Jehoiachin was 18 when he became king and was exiled after just three months (2 Kgs 24:8). The fact that no explanation is given in the AS for Rehoboam’s death at such a young age supports the assumption that the ages in the AS are secondary.[[90]](#footnote-90)

An additional element that apparently reflects a later development in the AS concerns Rehoboam’s mother. The MT briefly names her as “Naamah the Ammonitess” (2 Kgs 14:21), while the duplicate tradition makes sure to tell us that she was “the daughter of Hanan son of Nahash, king of the Ammonites.” Nahash the Ammonite is mentioned in 1 Samuel as a cruel king who refuses to make peace with the men of Jabesh-gilead except on condition “that everyone’s right eye be gouged out” (1 Sam 11:2), after which he is defeated by Saul. This story about him was developed more broadly in the Samuel scroll from Qumran (4QSama/4Q51).[[91]](#footnote-91) A tradition of a different sort appears in 2 Samuel 17, where we read that when David fled to Mahanaim from Absalom, Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbath-ammon (apparently the offspring of this same Nahash who was mentioned in 1 Samuel 11) treated David kindly, providing him with food and other necessities (2 Sam 17:27-29). A further tradition that is a sort of combination of the positive approach and the negative approach with regard to the previous relationship between Nahash and Israel is found in 2 Samuel 10 (before the Absalom stories);[[92]](#footnote-92) there we are told that Nahash the Ammonite had kept faith with David and that David wished to return the favor to his son Hanun. But Hanun responded with cruelty toward David’s courtiers, treating them as spies: “He clipped off one side of their beards and cut away half of their garments at the buttocks, and sent them off” (2 Sam 10:4). These last citations indicate that there may have been traditions connecting the dynasty of David with that of Nahash the Ammonite, but there is no clear information of any marriage relationship between the two royal houses, and it is hard to know from the MT whether “Naamah the Ammonitess” is connected to the stories about Nahash, his son Hanun, and David.[[93]](#footnote-93) It is not impossible that the longer tradition in the AS naming “Naamah, the daughter of Hanan son of King Nahash of the Ammonites,” which unusually mentions not only the name of her father but also of her grandfather—both of them having been mentioned in earlier stories—can reinforce the assumption that this is a midrashic addition.[[94]](#footnote-94) This midrashic-textual expansion is in all the traditions, identifying Naamah the Ammonitess with the family of Nahash the Ammonite. The tendency to identifying anonymous characters, or to identify one character with a more famous one, is also found in the early midrashim.[[95]](#footnote-95)

To conclude this section, we may say that v. 24a of the AS contains a number of signs of lateness, but apparently it is not familiar with the late Deuteronomistic layer in the MT. Thus, this verse in the AS did not develop from the final form of Kings in the MT as we know it, but from earlier texts that might have been the raw material for the final form of that book. Moreover, these sources reflected in the AS underwent further development in the course of their formation until they were inserted into the LXX after 3 Kgdms 12:24. We will reach this same conclusion in the other units of the AS to be discussed below.

**3.2 Jeroboam’s Rise to Power (24b-f)**

The story of Jeroboam’s rise has the largest number of differences with the MT of any story in the AS. Some of the differences, such as rearrangement, pluses and omissions, and assigning the actions of one character to a different character, might be thought to be characteristic rather of oral or preliminary literary stages than those of transmission and transcription, but this is the situation presented by the unit under discussion here, as witnessed by two written versions of the story. Scholars disagree about which version reflects the earlier stage and which version made the changes, but we must agree (it seems to me) that that the MT version of the story of Jeroboam’s rise raises many questions, while the AS version presents a more complete and coherent reading. Along with this, the data that I shall present below do not prove that one version developed from the other. There are many more indications that the two versions developed from earlier, shared material, and that each source continued to develop independently. First, I shall present the two versions next to each other (following the AS verse order) and I shall analyze the description of Jeroboam’s origin, Jeroboam’s rebellion and his escape to Egypt, as well as the hero’s life in the court of the Egyptian king and his return to Ephraim:

TEXT

**Jeroboam’s Origins (24b)**: The beginning of the story is different in each version. Actually, only the AS presents these things as the beginning of the story; the AS version, “There was a man from LN whose name was PN,” appears at the beginning of a number of stories in the Former Prophets (Jud 13:2; 17:1; 19:1; 1 Sam 1:1; 9:1), while 11:26 of the MT continues the sequence of the stories about Solomon’s enemies; it is not presented as the beginning of a story of a new hero. From a plot perspective, the two versions of the story of Jeroboam’s rise begin as do several stories of heroes in the Bible or in the ancient Near East, with a child of lowly origin. Jeroboam rises to greatness despite his being a usurper who comes from a low social and economic level (11:26).[[96]](#footnote-96) In the MT, Jeroboam is described as the son of a widow woman, while in the AS his mother is a prostitute. In the AS, and throughout his story in the AS, the absence of his father’s name is notable, while in the MT Jeroboam is always called “son of Nebat.” The absence of his father’s name would seem to be connected to the presentation of Jeroboam as the son of a prostitute. That is, in the AS Jeroboam is from the underclass, for even his father’s name is unknown.[[97]](#footnote-97) On this account, many scholars have come to the conclusion that the AS intends to malign Jeroboam and perhaps even deliberately tarnished Jeroboam for this very purpose.[[98]](#footnote-98) Moreover, the AS also contains elements that present Jeroboam in a positive light, while the MT omits many positive elements and covers up the stories that retained a memory of the positive traditions about Jeroboam, the first king of the northern kingdom. Similarly, the very description of Jeroboam rising to greatness despite his origins in the lowest social level may be specifically intended to promote the legendary nature of the story of his rise. It is comparable to the story of the rise of Sargon, the king of Akkad, whose father’s name is likewise unknown and who was born to a priestess, apparently through prostitution,[[99]](#footnote-99) or the story of Jephthah, likewise born to a prostitute and pushed out of the family by his brothers (Jud 11:1). Like Jeroboam, Jephthah too was forced to flee to a different country (Jud 11:3; cf. 1 Kgs 11:40) and eventually was called to return and to lead his tribe (Jud 11:5-11; cf. 1 Kgs 12:20). The tradition of Jeroboam in the prophecy of Abijah on Mount Zemaraim in 2 Chronicles 13 also has a link between the stories of Jeroboam and Jephthah. This text describes the people whom Jeroboam collected around himself in his rebellion against Solomon as “riff-raff” (2 Chron 13:7), exactly the same expression that appears in Judges to describe Jephthah’s people (Jud 11:3).[[100]](#footnote-100) It is important to note also that in the MT of 1 Kings, Jeroboam is called an “able man” (1 Kgs 11:28), just like Jephthah (Jud 11:1) and other heroes of biblical stories, even though this version severely limits its description of Jeroboam’s legendary coup.[[101]](#footnote-101) As in the stories of Sargon and Jephthah, Jeroboam succeeds, despite coming from a lowly station, in becoming an official in Solomon’s administration and “officer in charge of the forced labor of the House of Joseph” (24b; cf. MT 1 Kgs 11:28). Traditions of this kind about Jeroboam are not meant to malign him; on the contrary, it is possible that their source is in northern traditions meant to present the first King of Israel as someone who rose to greatness miraculously, with divine support.

As for the name of Jeroboam’s mother, the MT and the AS are actually rather similar; in 11:26 of G\*, her name is missing:

TEXT

Jeroboam’s mother is named Zeruah in the MT; in the AS the name appears as Σαρεισά in MS B and Σαρ(ε)ιρά in other Greek MSS, like the name of the city that Jeroboam builds for Solomon in the second half of the verse (24b), or the home town of Jeroboam named in the MT, Zeredah (11:26).[[102]](#footnote-102) In the LXX translation of 11:26 his mother’s name does not appear; only the name of the city is mentioned; despite this, in the parallel verse in the AS the city is not named, and the part of the verse that presents Jeroboam gives only the name of the mother. Only the MT names both: Jeroboam is “an Ephraimite of Zeredah, the son of a widow whose name was Zeruah” (11:26). Given the surprising similarity between the two names, and the fact that the mother’s name is missing in G\*11:26, and considering the fact that Kings does not mention the names of the mothers of the kings of Israel but only those of the mothers of the kings of Judah, we may hypothesize that the unusual mention of Jeroboam’s mother’s name in most of the versions developed secondarily, in one or another of the various stages of the story’s growth;[[103]](#footnote-103) perhaps as a result of confusion between “from [מן] Zeredah” and “son of [בן] Zeredah,” understood at some stage as the name of Jeroboam’s mother.[[104]](#footnote-104) If this was indeed what occurred, the MT’s Zeruah reflects an additional development, perhaps intended to smear Jeroboam, since this name lends itself to being interpreted as “a woman afflicted with a skin disease.”[[105]](#footnote-105)

**The Jeroboam’s Rebellion and Escape to Egypt (24b-c)**: The versions differ more significantly in the next unit in the story. The MT presents Jeroboam’s rise as rebellion: “He raised his hand against the king. The circumstances under which he raised his hand against the king were as follows” (1 Kgs 11:26-27). But aside from these introductory words, we are provided with no information about what Jeroboam actually did or about the rebellion itself.[[106]](#footnote-106) The description of the rebellion is excerpted from the prophetic story about the prophet Ahijah’s tearing of the garment (11:29-39), connected to the story by means of the phrase “during that time” (11:29), though the story of Ahijah is an independent episode that underwent a massive Deuteronomistic reworking; it is actually not connected to the rebellion itself (see section 3.5).[[107]](#footnote-107) The story of the rebellion resumes only in v. 40: “Solomon sought to put Jeroboam to death, but Jeroboam promptly fled to King Shishak of Egypt; and he remained in Egypt till the death of Solomon.” In the MT, however, it is unclear what caused Solomon to do this and exactly what Jeroboam’s rebellion consisted of. Anything that could tell us what led Solomon to seek Jeroboam’s death is missing from the MT; the story is left unexplained. There is likewise in this version no story about what happened to Jeroboam when he was with Shishak. It is possible that the writers of the Bible limited the details of Jeroboam’s stay in Egypt, but since the name of a specific king, Shishak, is mentioned here, rather than a general title such as Pharaoh or King of Egypt, we should perhaps hypothesize that the story originally sought to expand on this topic in some way. Yet as we have said there are no details about his stay in Egypt.[[108]](#footnote-108) The narrative sequence in the MT about Jeroboam resumes only with his return from Egypt and his being crowned king over all Israel (1 Kgs 12:20a; cf. 1 Kgs 12:2-3a; LXX 11:43 [see below ??].

The AS presents the story of Jeroboam in sequence, without the introductory phrase “the circumstances under which” that appears in the MT. In this version, admittedly, the information about the young Jeroboam whom Solomon appointed over the House of Jacob (MT 11:28; see below) is lacking, but it does include many more details about the activities of Jeroboam. The AS moves directly from the presentation of Jeroboam and his lower-class origin to his being an official of Solomon and the man appointed as “supervisor over the levy of the house of Joseph” (24b). As noted, in the AS the name of Jeroboam’s home town is not mentioned; the name is assigned instead to the place Jeroboam built in the framework of his job as a Solomonic official: “He built for Solomon Zererah in Mount Ephraim” (24b). In the continuation, Jeroboam accumulated power “and he had chariots of three hundred horses.” This detail does not appear in the MT, but it evokes earlier heroes who accumulate power and claim the throne, like Adonijah (1 Kgs 1:5) and Absalom (2 Sam 15:1). This formulation is reminiscent also of the information about Solomon’s own cavalry in 1 Kgs 5:6 and 10:26, paralleled as well in the miscellanies in 1 Kgs 2:46i, and perhaps points to some literary relationship between the two units.[[109]](#footnote-109)

The AS continues, “It was he who built the Millo (citadel) with the levy of the house of Ephraim” (24b), in contrast to the MT, which attributes this undertaking to Solomon (11:27; cf. also 9:15, 23 and LXX 2:35e). Jeroboam’s next project as well, according to the AS, is that “he closed off the city of David,” an activity attributed in the MT to Solomon.[[110]](#footnote-110) Even so, in the AS this activity is perhaps even taken as part of the action of the rebellion, not as a simple building project. The verse does not say “He *closed up* *the breach* of the city of David” as does the MT; the AS reading might be understood to refer to besieging the city (cf. Josh 6:1).[[111]](#footnote-111) Even if this version grew out of a misunderstanding, the editorial remark that “he exalted himself over the kingdom” supports an understanding of these actions as a provocative and rebellious challenge. This verse, like the “chariots of three hundred horses”—both without parallel in the MT’s Jeroboam pericope—are reminiscent of Adonijah, about whom similar words were used: “Now Adonijah son of Haggith went about boasting, ‘I will be king!’ He provided himself with chariots and horses, and an escort of fifty outrunners” (1 Kgs 1:5). These details fill in the information that is missing in the MT. The great power accumulated by Jeroboam, the city that he founded in Ephraim, and the attempt to besiege the city of David constitute the reason (according to the AS) why Solomon sought to have Jeroboam killed, and why the latter fled to Shishak, king of Egypt, where he stayed until Solomon died (24c; MT 11:40).

It is reasonable to assume, then, that the story of Jeroboam in the AS more extensively preserves portions of the story that were abridged and obscured in the MT. True, Jeroboam’s rebellion is portrayed in the AS as a failed attempt to reign, just like Adonijah’s, yet this story includes also traces of positive traditions about Jeroboam, like those that describe him as having risen from lowly estate to greatness with the help of God, and as a rebel against the mighty King Solomon, viewed here as the king who enslaved the House of Ephraim. These traditions also have echoes of other heroes from the Israelite world, like Jephthah, another able warrior who was the son of a prostitute, cast out of the family and afterward called back to save them; Joseph, the father of the tribe, who rose to greatness in Egypt; and Moses, who fled from the Egyptian king who enslaved the Israelites and returned to save the people (see below). The Judahite scribes of the book of Kings would presumably not have liked the Jeroboam portrayed in the AS. Moreover, the MT version did not use the AS version as its source. It is reasonable to assume that this latter version too absorbed changes in the course of time. The character of Jeroboam was tarnished in it too (perhaps in other ways than those in the MT), and here and there it is the MT that preserves traces of an earlier story.

For example, the omission of the name of Jeroboam’s father, Nebat, from the AS appears secondary; it is anomalous with regard to the traditions of the other kings of the north as well as what we know about Jeroboam from the books of Kings and Chronicles.[[112]](#footnote-112) As noted above, it emphasizes Jeroboam’s lowly beginnings.[[113]](#footnote-113) Similarly, the MT includes a verse missing from the AS without which it is difficult to understand how young Jeroboam rose from the margins of society to become a high-ranking official in the court of Solomon. According to this verse, “Jeroboam was an able man, and Solomon saw that the young man was a capable worker” (11:28); this is why he was put in charge of “the forced labor of the House of Joseph.” This latter aspect, his being in charge of the House of Joseph, is in all the versions, but only the MT gives the reason for it: Solomon recognized the young man’s ability and promoted him. It does not seem coincidental that Jeroboam is described in this verse similarly to the way Joseph is described in Genesis. Jeroboam rises to greatness as a young man working for a master who observes his extraordinary talent (cf. Gen 39:2-4) and who assigns Jeroboam to a supervisory role in similar language as well. Of Jeroboam we read, “he appointed him over all the forced labor of the House of Joseph” (11:28; cf. LXX 12:24b), and in the story of Joseph, “He put him in charge of his household, placing in his hands all that he owned” (Gen 39:4). In the continuation of the story in the AS, Jeroboam (like Joseph) goes to Egypt against his will (11:40; LXX 12:24c; cf. Gen 39:1), and he too ends up in the court of the king of Egypt and rises to greatness (24d-f). He marries an Egyptian woman (24d-f; cf. Gen 41:45), and afterwards leaves Egypt and settles in Mount Ephraim, as did the offspring of Joseph according to what we are told in Genesis and Joshua (24f).[[114]](#footnote-114) The resemblance between the story of Jeroboam, whether in the MT or the AS, and the traditions about Joseph known from the Torah can hardly be a coincidence. It preserves something of the traditions the Ephraimites told about their first king, presenting him in the spirit of the stories about the forefathers of the tribe. The verse that appears in the MT describing the successful young man elevated by his master to greatness apparently was apparently a part of the earliest story of Jeroboam that was not preserved in the AS. Nonetheless, the AS does have indications of an earlier version than the MT in several places. Yet it is not the source from which the MT developed. The two versions developed in parallel from a shared source that told of Jeroboam’s rise.

**Jeroboam in the Court of Shishak (24d-f)**: The next unit in the AS opens with the information that Jeroboam heard about the death of Solomon and wished to return home from Egypt (24d). This verse has a certain parallel in the MT narrative of Jeroboam, but this time too the information in the MT is abridged and out of context. The words “Jeroboam son of Nebat learned of it while he was still in Egypt; for Jeroboam had fled from King Solomon, and had settled in Egypt. They sent for him; and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came” (12:2-3a) are inserted secondarily into the story of the assembly at Shechem; note that Jeroboam plays no significant role in this assembly. The information about him is missing in G\*. The insertion was not done smoothly, for Jeroboam hears about the death of Solomon, which would call for him to return on his own initiative, but the verse states that he “had settled in Egypt,” which does not add new information.[[115]](#footnote-115) Jeroboam’s return is mentioned only in the continuation, as a result of his being summoned by the people: “They sent for him; and Jeroboam … came” (12:3), without connection to what he had “learned” at the beginning of v. 2.[[116]](#footnote-116) It is obvious, therefore, that the notice about Jeroboam’s return was inserted into the MT secondarily and problematically (see also section 3.4 below). By contrast, the AS tells a more complete, coherent story about Jeroboam, which includes details about his stay in Egypt that are lacking in the MT. According to this story, Jeroboam arrived in Egypt at the court of King Shishak, earned the support of the Egyptian king, and even took one of the daughters of the royal house to wife.

This story is not in the MT, which does, however, have a completely different story parallel to it, not about Jeroboam but about a marginal character unknown to the other sources, Hadad the Edomite (1 Kgs 11:14-22). The resemblances between the stories can be seen in the following layout of the main motifs of the stories:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hadad (MT 1 Kgs 11:15-22)** | **Jeroboam (LXX 12:24c-f)** |
| 15 When David was in Edom, Joab the army commander went up to bury the slain, and he killed every male in Edom; 16 for Joab and all Israel stayed there for six months until he had killed off every male in Edom. 17 But Hadad, together with some Edomite men, servants of his father, escaped and headed for Egypt; Hadad was then a young boy. 18 Setting out from Midian, they came to Paran and took along with them men from Paran. Thus they came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house, assigned a food allowance to him, and granted him an estate. 19 Pharaoh took a great liking to Hadad and gave him his sister-in-law, the sister of Queen Tahpenes, as wife. 20 The sister of Tahpenes bore him a son, Genubath. Tahpenes weanede him in Pharaoh’s palace, and Genubath remained in Pharaoh’s palace among the sons of Pharaoh. 21 When Hadad heard in Egypt that David had been laid to rest with his fathers and that Joab the army commander was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, “Give me leave to go to my own country.” 22 Pharaoh replied, “What do you lack with me, that you want to go to your own country?” But he said, “Nevertheless, give me leave to go.” |  24c And Solomon was seeking to put him to death, and he was afraid and ran away to Shishak, king of Egypt, and he was with him until the death of Solomon.24d And Jeroboam heard in Egypt that Solomon had died, and he spoke in the ears of Shishak, king of Egypt, saying, “Send me off, and I will go to my own country,” and Shishak said to him, “Request any request, and I will give it to you.”24e And Shishak had given Jeroboam Ano, the sister of his wife Tahmenes, the Queen, as wife to him; she was the senior among the King’s women, and she bore to Jeroboam Abijah his son.24f And Jeroboam said to Shishak, “No, do let me go, and I will depart.” And Jeroboam departed from Egypt and came to the land of Zererah, which is in Mount Ephraim, and there all the tribe of Ephraim gathered, and Jeroboam built a fortress there. |

Both stories tell of a hero fleeing to Egypt from the King of Israel. In the AS it is Jeroboam, who flees from Solomon; in the MT it is Hadad the Edomite, who flees, with the servants of his father, for fear of the army of David, under the command of Joab, who are killing off every male in Edom (cf. 2 Sam 8:13-14; Ps 60:1-2; 1 Chron 18:12).[[117]](#footnote-117) The two versions refer tersely to the heroes’ reaching the court of the Egyptian king, but both narrators make clear that Jeroboam/Hadad was given asylum, perhaps because both were heroes who arrived from the court of a local king. Hadad was a scion of the king of Edom, and Jeroboam, though of lowly origin, was an official of King Solomon who attempted to rebel against him and to take the kingship in his place. That being said, the two stories differ in their identification of the Egyptian king. In the AS he is called by a specific name, Shishak, and not referred to generically by the title Pharaoh that appears in the MT story about Hadad.[[118]](#footnote-118) The name Shishak, as opposed to the generic “Pharaoh,” which applies to many periods of Egyptian history, does appear earlier in the MT, in the Jeroboam story (1 Kgs 11:40), and is mentioned again in the ensuing description of Rehoboam’s reign (1 Kgs 14:25). Similarly, the Egyptian princess who is the sister of the king’s wife also has a name in the AS, Ano (24g, k, l).[[119]](#footnote-119) The story about Hadad and the story about Jeroboam both recount that the Egyptian king gave the hero a wife from the daughters of the king, but the Jeroboam story in the AS is richer in detail.

In due course, a son is born to the hero by the wife he received from the king of Egypt. In the Hadad story in the MT, the incident is recounted in the straightforward chronological sequence of events, while in the AS the incident is told in a flashback; only when Jeroboam hears about Solomon’s death and seeks to return does the narrator tell us that Shishak’s decision to let him go was not an easy one, since he had given Jeroboam a wife from the royal family, who had even born Jeroboam a son.[[120]](#footnote-120) The flashback obligates the narrator to abridge the conversation between the characters, between Shishak’s attempt to keep Jeroboam with him by saying, “Request any request, and I will give it to you,” and Jeroboam’s insistent response in v. 24f, “No, do let me go.”[[121]](#footnote-121) The narrator’s choice of this construction does not make things easy for the reader, but perhaps it is evidence that this text is early, since it is difficult to assume that an orderly chronological structure (as in the Hadad story) would somehow be changed to the complex order in the AS. Moreover, the story of the son born to the hero makes more sense in the AS. The son born to Hadad plays no role in the plot described in the MT, but the son (called Abijah in this version) who will be born to Jeroboam and his Egyptian wife will yet play a significant role in the plot (see below section 3.3).

The story continues with the return of the hero to his country. In the Hadad/MT story, what occurs is not clearly explained, but the context leads the reader to guess that Hadad returns to Edom and, like Rezon, becomes “an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon” (11:25). Even so, there are no additional details about Hadad and his war against Solomon, since these would conflict with the traditions according to which there was quiet throughout Solomon’s days. In the AS, Jeroboam hears that his master Solomon, against whom he had tried to rebel, is dead, and he asks Shishak to let him return to his country. This fits much more smoothly into the Jeroboam story as a whole.[[122]](#footnote-122)

At the end of the story in the AS, Jeroboam insists on parting from Shishak and returns to Ephraim. Jeroboam assembles the whole tribe of Ephraim under his leadership and erects a fortification (מצורה) or castle (מצודה) there: “Jeroboam departed from Egypt and came to the land of Zererah, which is in Mount Ephraim, and there all the tribe of Ephraim gathered, and Jeroboam built a fortress there” (24f). If the Hebrew behind the term χάραξ was מצור(ה) or מצודה, it could be that this story constitutes a kind of etiology for the name of the city, Zeredah or Zererah, that Jeroboam built.[[123]](#footnote-123) The verse also constitutes an inclusio with regard to the beginning of the story, which started with the building activities of Jeroboam as head of the forced labor of the House of Joseph; now he is building as the independent leader of the tribe, in contention with Solomon’s son.[[124]](#footnote-124) This verse that tells about his return from Egypt and becoming the leader of the tribe of Ephraim (24f) does not appear in the MT, but it was apparently known to G\*, since part of it appears in 11:43, stuck in the middle of a doublet in the text that has no parallel in the MT: “And it happened, when Jeroboam son of Nebat heard (and he was still in Egypt, since he fled from before Solomon and settled in Egypt), he went straight and came to his city in the land of Zererah which is in the hill country of Ephraim.”[[125]](#footnote-125) In the AS, Jeroboam is not crowned king of all the people; he simply becomes a local tribal leader like the leaders in Judges and the beginning of Samuel. Note that the story of the assembly at Shechem (which is also in the AS, as we will see in section 3.4) concludes at last with a rebellion against the overall Israelite kingdom and a return to the old order of leadership by separate tribes (1 Kgs 12:16; 24t).[[126]](#footnote-126)

In light of the many resemblances between the story of Hadad the Edomite in the MT and the story of Jeroboam in the AS, a number of scholars have posed the question of which story is older. The scholars who see LXX 12:24a-z as a text that developed from the MT think that the story of Jeroboam in Egypt is a late and midrashic outgrowth, created on the basis of the Hadad story, either in the Hebrew base text of the AS or by its Greek translator.[[127]](#footnote-127) This approach would explain the growth of the Hadad story as stemming from the phenomenon of literary “attraction” known from folk tales and from the Bible; in such cases, in the course of time narrators tend to lend prominent heroes stories that belonged in earlier stages to marginal characters.[[128]](#footnote-128) According to this explanation, the AS story of Jeroboam grew out of the desire of a later narrator to tell what had happened to Jeroboam when he fled from Solomon to Egypt (MT 11:40); he filled in the details by adopting the plot about a marginal character, Hadad the Edomite.[[129]](#footnote-129)

But there are a number of indications that the AS story of Jeroboam is early. First, there are many problems with the story of Hadad, both in how it is integrated into the MT and in its content: (1) It is not clear why the author devotes serious space to this marginal character, who plays no meaningful role in advancing the plot either in Solomon’s time or in that of his successors; why focus on the marginal character of Hadad, a scion of the king of Edom, instead of (for example) Rezon son of Eliada, who is mentioned later quite tersely (11:23-25)? (2) Despite the fact that the narrator has devoted a relatively extended unit to Hadad, the details of the story are quite vague. For example, when Hadad seeks to return to his country, the story is broken off, and it is not clear what happened next. We are not told what threats or problems Hadad posed to the kingdom of Solomon.[[130]](#footnote-130) Even the purpose of the story about Hadad’s son and the Pharaoh’s sister-in-law, to which the text devotes a difficult verse (11:20), is incomprehensible, and it is not clear whether the son who is born had any role to play in the events that follow, or for what reason at all we are told about this son of Hadad.[[131]](#footnote-131) (3) Moreover, it seems that the next unit in the MT, after the story of Hadad, beginning with the words “Another adversary that God raised up against him was Rezon son of Eliada” (11:23) is not at all aware of the previous story, about Hadad. The word “him” has no antecedent in the Hadad story (since it would have to refer to Pharaoh, Hadad, or Hadad’s son, who are mentioned at the end of that pericope); evidently it goes back to the unit before the Hadad story, that is, the one in vv. 11-13, when Solomon is rebuked by God.[[132]](#footnote-132) (4) The end of the Rezon pericope also appears to have a secondary mention of Hadad: “He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon, **adding to the trouble** [caused by] **Hadad**; he repudiated [the authority of] Israel and reigned over Aram” (11:25). It is not merely that the words “the trouble that Hadad” disrupt the context, which is about Rezon; the insertion itself is poorly worded. It is reasonable to suspect, then, that the story about Hadad, which comes between the rebuke of Solomon and the Rezon pericope, was inserted secondarily, without any preparation for juxtaposing the Hadad and Rezon units, even though whoever added the Hadad story used an introductory phrase similar to that in the Rezon pericope: “He … raised up an adversary.” Support for this assumption comes from the different order in the LXX, where the Rezon pericope (LXX 3 Kgdms 11:14) comes before the Hadad pericope (LXX 3 Kgdms 11:14-25).[[133]](#footnote-133)

Second, the story of Jeroboam in Egypt is more coherent, and even if in the form we have it it is a late composition, it may nonetheless have some memory of northern traditions that glorify Jeroboam and recount heroic stories about him, of the kind appropriate for the king who founded the kingdom of Israel.[[134]](#footnote-134) A few scholars have pointed to similarities between Jeroboam and the traditions about Moses in Egypt.[[135]](#footnote-135) Like Moses, Jeroboam is initially on the side of the king who is enslaving Israel and requiring them to do forced labor (?? cf. Exod 1:11); Jeroboam is the one in charge of “the forced labor of the House of Joseph” (11:28; 24b). The Ephraimites here play the role of the Israelites who are forced to do “the labors of the Egyptians” (Exod 6:6; cf. 1:11; 2:11; 5:4-5) and King Solomon is the royal enslaver, who seeks to kill the hero. It is worth noting the verbal resemblance between this phrase from the story of Jeroboam, “Solomon sought to put Jeroboam to death, but Jeroboam promptly fled to King Shishak of Egypt” (1 Kgs 11:40) and these from the story of Moses, “Pharaoh learned of the matter, he sought to kill Moses; but Moses fled from Pharaoh” (Exod 15:2). Like Moses, Jeroboam in the AS becomes part of the family of the Egyptian king. When Jeroboam hears about the death of the royal enslaver, he seeks to return to his country, just as did Moses (Exod 4:19). In the AS, Jeroboam twice asks the king of Egypt to let him go: “Send me off, and I will go to my own country” (24d); “do let me go, and I will depart” (24f), in language reminiscent of that which Moses uses to Pharaoh (Exod 7:16, 26, etc.). At the end of the Jeroboam story we read, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Ἰεροβοὰμ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου (“Jeroboam departed from Egypt”), a formulation quite similar to that used in the exodus story (e.g., Exod 12:41; 13:3; Num 22:5, 11). It is hard to assume that a later writer would describe Jeroboam so positively, and with an allusion to the character of Moses, on the basis of traditions about Hadad the Edomite, since in the vast majority of biblical and post-biblical literature Jeroboam is considered the prototype of the sinful king (see, e.g., 1 Kgs 16:19, 26; 2 Kgs 17:21-23; m. Avot 5:18). It would seem, then, that even if the AS in its final form describes Jeroboam negatively, it apparently preserves traces of early northern traditions about Jeroboam. The MT, where the Jeroboam tradition is truncated and obscured, is apparently a reworking that sought to mute the memory of the northern traditions about Jeroboam, which also included the transfer of details from his story to the marginal character Hadad, perhaps on the basis of additional materials that the writer had. This might also explain the difficult placement of the Hadad pericope in the MT, as well as its complexity.[[136]](#footnote-136)

At the same time, we should not take this to mean that the AS is the original version of the story of Jeroboam, from which the MT developed, as Adrian Schenker (for example) thinks. In the MT too one can find positive descriptions of Jeroboam, and it may be that these, in some early form, lie behind the story of Jeroboam, even though these particular details are missing from the AS. For example, in the MT Hadad pericope, there are a number of elements reminiscent of the story of Joseph, and it may be that these are based on an earlier tradition of Jeroboam drawn from Ephraimite traditions that glorified their first king with traditions like those about the father of their tribe. These traditions did remain in the Hadad story (perhaps because with a different hero they posed no problem for later scribes), but were dropped from the AS, perhaps in order to reduce the importance of Jeroboam. For example, the MT says of Hadad, “Pharaoh took a great liking to Hadad and gave him his sister-in-law, the sister of Queen Tahpenes, as wife” (1 Kgs 11:19), a formulation reminiscent of what we read about Joseph and Potiphar, who “took a liking to Joseph. He made him his personal attendant and put him in charge of his household, placing in his hands all that he owned” (Gen 39:4). Even the name of the son born to Hadad in Egypt, Genubath, and what we read about him, “Genubath remained in Pharaoh’s palace among the sons of Pharaoh” (11:20) bears a certain resemblance to Joseph’s saying of himself, “For in truth, I was kidnapped [*g̱unnōḇ gunnaḇtı̂*] from the land of the Hebrews” (Gen 40:15).[[137]](#footnote-137) It is not impossible that the tradition about Genubath reflects an ancient, original tradition derived from the early stories about Jeroboam.

At all events, as in additional cases illuminating the relationship between the AS and the MT, here too it is apparent that the versions do not depend one on the other but both depend on an earlier shared source. That is so even though in this particular case the AS preserves many remnants of the Jeroboam story, which was based to some extent on northern traditions, that were intentionally obscured or abridged in the MT. This story leaves its trace in the MT in two ways: in remnants from the story of Jeroboam’s rebellion in 1 Kings 11, and in the surprising story of Hadad the Edomite in that same chapter. It may be that this reflects extensive literary activity or different stages of editing.

**3.3 The Illness of Jeroboam’s Son (24g-n)**

As the story in the AS continues, after Jeroboam returned to Ephraim, settled there, and convened the tribe around him, the son born to him by the Egyptian princess fell ill. Together with the previous episode, the pericope about the boy’s illness constitutes in this version a single sequence of events, but it is not impossible that at first each of these episodes was separate, being assembled differently in the MT and the AS in accordance with the various approaches of the writers. In the MT, the story, which appears only in 1 Kgs 14:1-16, a long time after Jeroboam began to reign over Israel, is attached to the context by means of the phrase “at that time.”[[138]](#footnote-138) Here, the child’s death is understood as a punishment for Jeroboam’s sins, and it foretells not merely the end of Jeroboam’s dynasty but calamity for the country as a whole (14:15-16). In the AS, by contrast, it is simply part of the story of Jeroboam; the child’s illness has nothing to do with punishment. This is a historical, prophetic story about the seer’s role in the events that foretell the end of Jeroboam’s dynasty, but do promise respectable burial for the son who fell ill, guiltless and without any connection to his father’s deeds.[[139]](#footnote-139) In G\*, the story of the boy’s illness is completely missing; for this reason, some scholars have suggested that it was removed from 3 Kgdms 14 after being inserted into the AS section of 3 Kgdms 12, since there was no reason to repeat the story of Jeroboam’s son once it had already been told.[[140]](#footnote-140) However, not all such doublets in the LXX after 12:24a-z were removed—for example, the introductory verses about the kingship of Rehoboam in MT 1 Kgs 14:21-22, which are also there in the LXX. Another opinion has been propounded by Shenkel and others, according to which the story of the illness of Jeroboam’s son was not in the early Hebrew base text of G\* (as we find in MS B); they suggest that the AS was inserted into G\* mostly in order to add the story of the illness, and that this datum assisted in the preservation of the whole AS.[[141]](#footnote-141) But this argument too is not completely persuasive, since it does not explain why the other doublets in the AS remain there. According to this explanation, it would have been enough for the LXX to include the story of the illness alone without the rest of the doublets. In any case, the fact that the story is missing in one of the versions and found in other places can support the assumption that this is an independent episode, connected to Jeroboam’s story in various ways.[[142]](#footnote-142) I shall present the two main versions side by side in order to analyze both what they share and their many differences:

TEXT

**The Shared Story**: If we set aside the obvious differences between the two versions, we find a basic, shared story that resembles a number of other prophetic stories. The beginning of the story reminds us of the stories of Elijah and Elisha, in which the prophet saves a child who is about to die (1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 4), though indeed the end of our story takes the opposite turn.[[143]](#footnote-143) The man of God, who sees all and knows what will happen in the future, works no miracle and offers no prayer that will save the child, nor are we told that this is the reason Jeroboam’s wife came to him. According to the MT, Jeroboam asks his wife, “Go to him; he will tell you what will happen to the boy” (14:3), while in the story in the AS he says, “Arise, and go; ask God about the child, whether he will recover from his sickness” (24g). Such stories, recounting the journey of a person of high station to the prophet to ask whether he will recover from his illness remind us, for example, of the story about Ahaziah, who “fell through the lattice in his upper chamber” (2 Kgs 1:2) and sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether he would recover (he is answered instead by Elijah); or the story about the king of Aram who sent his servant Hazael to ask Elisha if *he* would recover from his illness (2 Kgs 8:7-15).[[144]](#footnote-144) In these two stories, the sender issues an order using the root הלך, frames the question with the root דרשׁ, and asks whether he will live, as in the AS (24g; 2 Kgs 1:2, 8:8-9; cf. MT 14:5). In both stories the questioner is given a negative reply and expects death. In the story of Jeroboam’s son, too, in both main versions, the prophet informs the child’s mother that her son is going to die, and he predicts precisely what will happen when the woman returns home. Jeroboam’s family will be annihilated, but the boy, though he never reigned as king, will be mourned with the greatest respect, “for in him alone of the House of Jeroboam has some devotion been found to the Lord, the God of Israel” (14:13; 24m). In the AS some actual words of mourning are cited: “Woe, O master” (24m; cf. MT 14:13), which indicate that the child is mourned as a king (cf. Jer 22:18; 34:5), despite the fact that he never ascended the throne. Apparently the main purpose of this brief story, like the stories of the other prophets where a man of God is involved with military and political upheaval, was to present the historical occurrence—the end of Jeroboam’s dynasty—as part of a divine plan that the man of God predicts in detail, himself taking part in shaping history.[[145]](#footnote-145)

This story, in its various versions, highlights the motif of the omniscient prophet, who sees everything that will happen in the future while the other characters are powerless to affect reality (cf., e.g., 1 Sam 9:1-10:16; 1 Kgs 6:13-23).[[146]](#footnote-146) Even though Ahijah “could not see, for his eyes had become sightless with age” (14:4; 12:24i), he is described here as a man of God who knows everything that will happen and is even capable of actually seeing what is concealed from ordinary people. In the AS (in a verse that is missing from the MT), Ahijah even sends his servant to meet Jeroboam’s wife when she is making her way to him and inform her that he is expecting her: “Go out to meet Ano the wife of Jeroboam and say to her, ‘Come in and do not stand, for this is what YHWH says, “I am sending harsh things upon you”’” (12:24k). The MT modifies this motif theologically, since while in the description in the AS the vision is particular to the supernatural powers of the prophet alone, the MT says that God informed the seer about the expected visit of Jeroboam’s wife before it occurred: “The Lord had said to Ahijah, ‘Jeroboam’s wife is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, who is sick. Speak to her thus and thus’” (14:5). On the other hand, the MT uses the motif of hidden vision in a different way, missing from the AS. In the MT, Jeroboam commands his wife to go in disguise: “Go and disguise yourself, so that you will not be recognized as Jeroboam’s wife, and go to Shiloh” (14:2). Even though the prophet’s eyes had become sightless and Jeroboam’s wife was disguised, he succeeds in easily identifying her and scolds her about her being veiled: “Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why are you disguised? I have a harsh message for you” (14:6).[[147]](#footnote-147) The prophet’s special power of vision, which appears in both versions, illustrates his awareness of what is to come and his own connection to the future changes in history.

**Differences between the Two Versions**: Apparently the basic story reflected in both versions was expanded both in the AS and in the MT; the expansion was significantly greater in the latter. Some of the differences between the versions stems from the different context in which the stories are located and from the fact that in each version the story was adapted differently. In the AS, it continues the story recounting the rise of Jeroboam, his marriage to an Egyptian princess, and the birth of their son; the episode in v. 24g is a natural continuation of what precedes it: “And his lad was sick with a very severe sickness.” By contrast, in the MT the story is placed at the end of the Jeroboam material, in 14:1, with the linking phrase “at that time,” and it indicates the approaching end of the dynasty. The MT also mentions the name of the boy, Abijah (14:1), while in the AS this name appears only in the story of his birth in the previous episode and does not occur in the story of his illness. It may be that the author of the AS simply did not bother to repeat the name from the previous episode (in 24e), but if the name was not in the sources of the AS, perhaps this detail can be added to the indications that the story of the illness of Jeroboam’s son grew independently and was not originally connected to Jeroboam’s escape to Egypt.

The presentation of Ahijah the prophet is also different in the two versions, being dependent on the context and the reworking of the story. In the AS, Ahijah is presented here for the first time: “And there was a man in Shiloh, and his name was Ahijah, and he was sixty years old, and the word of YHWH was with him” (24h), while in the MT (14:2) Ahijah has already been mentioned. He is the one who made Jeroboam king, by tearing the garment (11:29-31), so Jeroboam relates to their previous encounter: “The prophet Ahijah lives there, the one who predicted that I would be king over this people” (14:2). This results in two different perspectives on the relationship between the prophet and Jeroboam. The MT ends up with a story similar to that of Samuel and Saul. Ahijah did indeed initially appoint Jeroboam, but following his sins (which are evident from the overall arrangement of the story) he dissociates himself from Jeroboam and predicts the destruction of his royal house. Even so, this transformation in his relationship with the king is not presented explicitly; it becomes evident only from reading the sequence and the way the pericopes are juxtaposed. In the AS, these are two completely different prophets. The first, who made Jeroboam king, was Shemaiah, perhaps to be identified as Shemaiah the man of God, who was apparently also the one who stopped the war between Judah and Benjamin, meaning that this prophet always has a positive relationship with Jeroboam. By contrast, the Ahijah mentioned in the AS appears nowhere but in the story of the son’s illness, so his relationship with Jeroboam and his dynasty is always negative.[[148]](#footnote-148)

The presentation of Ahijah in the AS includes also a notice about his being 60 years old (24h), a detail that is not found in the MT. Apparently this is an expansion of the description that follows in both versions of Ahijah as an old man, unable to see: “his eyes had become sightless with age” (14:4; 24i). Age 60, it seems, was understood by the author who added it as indicating old age, in accordance with Lev 27:3-7 and m. Avot 5:21, “at sixty, old age.”[[149]](#footnote-149) This mention is reminiscent of the description of Eli in 1 Samuel, which also includes a numerical age and a report of visual weakness: “Now Eli was ninety-eight years old; his eyes were fixed in a blind stare” (1 Sam 4:15), or the version in 4QSama of 1 Sam 2:22, where the first mention of Eli’s being elderly is preceded by a notice of his actual age.[[150]](#footnote-150)

An additional distinction between the versions is that Jeroboam’s wife disguises herself, as mentioned three times in the MT (14:2, 5, 6); this is missing entirely in the AS. Since this detail is missing in the AS, Jeroboam’s asking his wife to disguise herself would seem to have developed secondarily in the MT. There is no obvious reason for it to have been removed.[[151]](#footnote-151) Moreover, this detail is not necessary for the basic story. In other stories where a king or someone of the sort is in disguise or is trying to do something secretly when he turns to a prophet, there is a conflict or quarrel between the prophet and the visitor, so the visitor cannot reveal his identity, as in the story where Saul disguises himself to consult the woman of En-dor (1 Sam 28:3-25), and the secret meetings between Zedekiah and Jeremiah (37:17-21; 38:14-28).[[152]](#footnote-152) In the Jeroboam story, the prophet does not know Jeroboam’s wife at all, so there was no need for her to disguise herself. On the contrary, in the MT it is Ahijah who made Jeroboam king (14:2), and we have heard nothing about him withdrawing his support.[[153]](#footnote-153) We sense additional difficulties in other places where Jeroboam’s wife’s disguise is mentioned in the MT. The text as we now have it has God telling Ahijah, in a strange Hebrew phrase, “Upon her arrival, she is disguising herself [והיא מתנכרה]” (14:5); some think these two Hebrew words were added by a glossator.[[154]](#footnote-154) Others have suggested that “upon her arrival” is an introductory phrase in the narrator’s voice; even so, they disrupt the flow of the narrative.[[155]](#footnote-155) The third time the disguise is mentioned is when she arrives and Ahijah speaks to her: “Why are you disguised?” (14:6). Here too there is no clear connection between these words and the conclusion of his speech: “I have a harsh message for you.” The formulation in the AS makes much more sense. There, Ahijah sends his servant to meet Jeroboam’s wife and urge her to come to the prophet, who already knows miraculously of her coming to see him: “Come in and do not stand, for this is what YHWH says, ‘I am sending harsh things upon you’” (24k). Here the two parts of the sentence make sense together; the admonition to “come in” and “not stand” is because the prophet is waiting for her; when she enters, he will tell her the “hard things.” It could, therefore, be that the reason for the disguise motif is specific to the MT context of the story, where she is a king’s wife and perhaps must hide from the public the fact that the king’s wife is coming to Shiloh to ask about the heir to the throne, who is apparently on his deathbed. This possibility is made explicit in Jeroboam’s words to his wife, referring in the plural to those who might find out: “lest *they* realize that you are Jeroboam’s wife” (MT, 14:2).[[156]](#footnote-156) In any case, the writer manages in this way also to reinforce the motif of the prophet’s omniscience, seeing through the disguise despite his blindness.[[157]](#footnote-157)

The AS is ordinarily shorter than the MT, but it too contains some expansions, apparently secondary. For example, Jeroboam’s command to his wife to take a present of food to the prophet is similar in both versions (14:3-4; 24h-i), but in the AS the details of the gift are repeated when she actually brings it.[[158]](#footnote-158) Then all the details are repeated yet again in the prophet’s words to her when she arrives: “Why have you brought me bread and grapes and cakes and a jar of honey?” (24l; missing in the MT). In these cases of secondary expansion, it is the AS that is longer.

An additional interesting difference appears in the notice at the end of the story describing Jeroboam’s wife’s return home to find her son dead. In the MT she returns תִרְצָ֑תָה “to Tirzah” (14:17), while in the AS she returns to Jeroboam’s regular place in this version, εἰς τὴν Σαριρα “into Zererah,” reflecting Hebrew צררתה or perhaps צרדתה, matching the name of Jeroboam’s town in the MT. The name of the town is consistent throughout the stories in the AS, and it matches what the MT says about Jeroboam’s home town (11:26) as well as what the LXX says in 11:43, in a verse lacking in the MT, which describes Jeroboam’s return to Zererah from Egypt. The MT “to Tirzah,” by contrast, is unusual. How Jeroboam came to Tirzah is left unexplained. According to the MT, Jeroboam comes from Zeredah (Zererah in the LXX) and after he becomes king of Israel we are told that he built Shechem in Mount Ephraim as his capital, after which he goes to Penuel on the east side of the Jordan (1 Kgs 12:25). After the conspiracy against Jeroboam’s son Nadab, Baasha became king of Israel, and according to 1 Kgs 15:17, he built Ramah north of Jerusalem as his capital, to make things difficult for King Asa of Judah. But when Asa made a treaty with Ben-hadad, Baasha withdrew, basing his capital in Tirzah: “When Baasha heard about it, he stopped building Ramah and settled in Tirzah” (15:21). After that we find reference to the kings of Israel ruling from Tirzah at the beginning of the reign of Baasha (15:33), his son Elah (16:8), and his heir Zimri, who “reigned in Tirzah for seven days” (16:15). The era of Tirzah as the capital of Israel came to a conclusion when Omri moved the capital of the kingdom of Israel to Samaria. According to these references, only from the beginning of Baasha’s dynasty do the kings of Israel reign in Tirzah; we do not hear this about Nadab son of Jeroboam (15:25).[[159]](#footnote-159) Besides Zeredah/Zererah, mentioned in the context of Jeroboam’s origins, the MT names also Shechem and Penuel (12:25) and Bethel (which belongs to traditions of a different kind), but Tirzah is not mentioned again in Jeroboam’s time, nor are we told how or why he chose to settle there. It is reasonable therefore that the AS “to Zererah” here preserves the original reading, and the name of the place in the MT is a graphic mistake, stemming from the resemblance between תרצתה and צררתה and from the identification of this location with the capital of Israel in the next generation.[[160]](#footnote-160) If this assumption is correct, this evidence has great value, since it testifies that the tradition of Jeroboam’s capital being in Zererah was known also to the writers of the version reflected in the MT, even though it has now disappeared (or been obscured), whether by mistake or on purpose.

**Deuteronomistic Expansions**: Despite the fact that the story shared by both versions focuses on the prophecy of the child’s death, in the AS there is an additional brief expansion about the destruction of the entire Jeroboam dynasty: “For thus YHWH says, ‘Behold, I will destroy from Jeroboam everyone who urinates against the wall; anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, the dogs shall eat; and anyone who dies in the field, the birds of the air shall eat’” (24m).[[161]](#footnote-161) Several things identify this as an expansion: first, the second part of v. 24m, about the lamentation for the child’s death, is a direct continuation from the prophecy of his death in v. 24l, which the notice about the dynasty interrupts. It is not merely the topic of the prophecy that changes but the speaker; the prophet names “YHWH” in the third person, while YHWH speaks the prophecy about the dynasty directly in the first person:

**24l** ‘Behold, as you depart from me, and as you enter the gate of Zererah, your maid-servants will come out to meet you and will say to you, “The child has died.” ’

**24m** For thus YHWH says, ‘Behold, I will destroy from Jeroboam everyone who urinates against the wall; anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, the dogs shall eat; and anyone who dies in the field, the birds of the air shall eat.

And they shall lament the child, “Woe, O master,” because in him there is found something pleasing to YHWH.’ ”

Second, the prophecy about the mourning for the boy contradicts the spirit of the prophecy about the dogs and the birds eating Jeroboam’s dead.[[162]](#footnote-162) These are two different kinds of death. The boy’s death will be a natural one, by disease, and the lament for him speaks in that vein; by contrast, the threat to the house of Jeroboam speaks of death in revolution, war, or the like. Similarly, the threat to the dynasty hints that Jeroboam and his family have committed serious sins, but the AS does not mention any of them.[[163]](#footnote-163) Confirmation of these words being a secondary expansion comes from the MT. There too we find long expansions, some even longer, but the lamentation for the boy’s death follows the annihilation of the dynasty (in 14:10-11) and is not interrupted by it: “As for you, go back home; as soon as you set foot in the town, the child will die. And all Israel shall lament over him and bury him; he alone of Jeroboam’s family shall be brought to burial, for in him alone of the House of Jeroboam has some devotion been found to the Lord, the God of Israel” (1 Kgs 14:12-13).

Stylistically, the expansion shows signs of Deuteronomistic language. The threat that the dead in the city will be eaten by dogs and the dead in the country will be eaten by birds (24m; cf. 1 Kgs 14:11) also appears in the prophecy of Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha (1 Kgs 16:4) and that of Elijah against Ahab (1 Kgs 21:24), and in the fulfillment of the prophecy against Baasha (1 Kgs 16:4).[[164]](#footnote-164) The threat to destroy “anyone that urinates against a wall” (24m; 1 Kgs 14:10) does admittedly appear in stories that are not specifically identified as Deuteronomistic, as in the words of David in the story about Nabal (1 Sam 25:22, 34). Still, it must be noted that the verb used in the AS, from the root כרת, along with the expression “urinating against a wall” is much closer to the Deuteronomistic prophecies (1 Kgs 21:21, 22, 24; 2 Kgs 9:8-9) than to the story of Nabal, where a different verb is used.[[165]](#footnote-165) Except for this sentence added in the middle of the prophet’s words (“For thus YHWH says … the birds of the air shall eat,” 24m) there are no other signs of Deuteronomistic editing in the AS version of the story.[[166]](#footnote-166) Since this sentence is anomalous in the AS, it is theoretically possible to suggest that this is a later addition from the longer version of the MT, but since the same sentence appears in more expansive form in the MT (even though it is located slightly differently), this seems to be an early Deuteronomistic or “proto-Deuteronomistic” layer, added to the story in one of the early stages of its formation, while the MT reflects a layer of additional and later reworking.

The short expansion in the AS transfers the focus from the story about the boy’s death to the destruction of Jeroboam’s dynasty as a whole. By doing so, it expands the message of the story, but it does not completely change it. In the MT, by contrast, more complex Deuteronomistic pluses and expansions appear, which do completely change the message of the story. In the MT two long speeches are added to the words of Ahijah that systematically juxtapose to the Tetragrammaton the epithet “God of Israel.” The first speech is found in 14:7 (from “God of Israel”)-9, and the second in 14:13b (from “God of Israel”)-16. The first speech adds an extensive theological dimension, attributing to Jeroboam a greater cultic sin than all who preceded him, contrasting him to David, who represents in these texts the ideal king, who keeps the commandments: “I raised you up from among the people and made you a ruler over My people Israel; I tore away the kingdom from the House of David and gave it to you. But you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments and followed Me with all his heart, doing only what was right in My sight. You have acted worse than all those who preceded you; you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to vex Me; and Me you have cast behind your back” (14:7aβ-9). The expansion in the second speech changes the nature of the story even more, adding a look into the far future that blames the ultimate destruction of the kingdom on the sins of its founder: “Moreover, the Lord will raise up a king over Israel who will destroy the House of Jeroboam, this day and even now. The Lord will strike Israel until it sways like a reed in water. He will uproot Israel from this good land that He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have provoked the Lord by the sacred posts that they have made for themselves. He will forsake Israel because of the sins that Jeroboam committed and led Israel to commit” (14:14-16).

By means of these expansive pluses the prophetic story is turned into a kind of theodicy which blames the destruction on the sins of Jeroboam and the people, even though the story in the basic form shared between the two versions offers no evidence of sins of any kind. The AS focuses on Jeroboam the hero and his family, while the MT views Jeroboam from a broader historical perspective as representing a royal dynasty that will be annihilated and will determine the fate of the Kingdom of Israel and its future destruction. The final verses (15-16) speak of the fate of the people and also of their sins (“the sacred posts that they have made for themselves”), moving even farther away from the restricted context of Jeroboam and his son.[[167]](#footnote-167)

The style of the MT expansions is distinctly Deuteronomistic. For example, the expression “the house of Jeroboam,” which appears four times in the speeches (1 Kgs 14:10, 13-14) and is completely absent in the AS, is extremely characteristic of other Deuteronomistic speeches in the Kings (1 Kgs 13:34; 15:29; 16:7, 13; 21:22; 2 Kgs 9:9, 13:6). The combination “I raised you up … and made you a ruler over My people Israel” in 1 Kgs 14:7 appears again in the prophecy of Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha (1 Kgs 16:2).[[168]](#footnote-168) The expression “tearing away the kingdom” in 1 Kgs 14:8 relates to the Deuteronomistic verses that expand the prophetic story of the tearing of the garment, previously noted when we discussed the rise of Jeroboam (1 Kgs 11:11, 31).[[169]](#footnote-169) The expression “my servant David” in 1 Kgs 14:8, appearing also in the extra layer in the MT to 1 Kgs 11:32 (and completely missing in the parallel text in the AS) appears almost nowhere else but Deuteronomistic texts (2 Sam 7:26; 1 Kgs 3:6, 8:4, 25, 26; 11:32).[[170]](#footnote-170) The expression “keep My commandments” in the same verse (14:8) occurs very often in Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic writings (e.g. Deut 8:2; 30:16; Josh 22:5; 1 Kgs 8:58, 61; 9:6; 2 Kgs 23:3), and so does the expression “with all [someone’s] heart,” which also appears in 14:8 and only rarely outside this corpus (e.g., Deut 4:29; 6:5; 11:13; 13:4; 26:16; Josh. 22:5; 23:14; 1 Kgs 2:4; 8:48; 2 Kgs 10:31). The expression “bringing disaster” (מביא רעה), which appears at the beginning of 14:10 and is missing in the AS parallel (24m) appears only in Deuteronomistic texts or texts that are close to this school (2 Kgs 21:12; 22:16; Jer. 6:19;11:23; 19:3; 45:5).[[171]](#footnote-171)

The second speech (13b-16) also includes Deuteronomistic expressions, some of them influenced by the texts in Deuteronomy that hint at the punishment of exile, such as the threat to uproot (נתשׁ) Israel from its soil, influenced by Deut 29:27 (and see also Jer 12:14).[[172]](#footnote-172) The expression “the good land” (1 Kgs 14:15) appears again only in the Deuteronomistic speech in Joshua 23 (13, 15). The collocation of נתן + לאבות, related to the soil or the land from which the people would be expelled, appearing in 1 Kgs 14:51, is especially found in Deuteronomistic speeches in Kings and Jeremiah (1 Kgs 8:34, 40, 48; 2 Kgs 21:8; Jer 7:7; 30:3).[[173]](#footnote-173) The expression “to anger the Lord” of 1 Kings 14 appears especially in Deuteronomistic texts (Jud 2:12; 1 Kgs 15:30; 16:13, 26, 31; 22:54; 2 Kgs 17:11), as does the expression “the sins of Jeroboam” (usually with the added expression “with which he caused Israel to sin”); both appear here for the first time (1 Kgs 14:16) and afterwards many times in Kings (1 Kgs 15:30; 16:31; 2 Kgs 3:3; 10:31; 13:2, 11; 14:24; 15:9, 18, 24; 15:28; 17:22). Even the short Deuteronomistic expansion that made its way into the AS (24m) appears more extensively in the MT (14:10-11), where it includes the collocation “bond and free [עָצ֥וּר וְעָז֖וּב בְּיִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל]” (14:10), repeated again in Kings and characteristic of Deuteronomistic speeches (1 Kgs 21:21; 2 Kgs 9:8).[[174]](#footnote-174)

In the MT of v. 13 these words were added to the story of the burial of Jeroboam’s son: “All Israel shall … bury him; he alone of Jeroboam’s family shall be brought to burial.” It would seem that this apologetic plus was intended to solve the contradiction between the tranquil and respectable burial of the dead boy, as opposed to the prophecies in the Deuteronomistic layer in the MT threatening the destruction of all Jeroboam’s house on account of his sins and the eating of their corpses by “the dogs and … the birds of the air” (14:11). But even in the AS, there is a similar contradiction because of the plus that entered the prophecy about the animals’ eating of the corpses at a secondary stage; the more massive reworking in the MT, which expresses intense antagonism to the house of Jeroboam, apparently demands an over-justification of the boy’s burial, which was unnecessary in the AS.

The MT also includes an extra verse describing the fulfillment of the prophecy: “They buried him and all Israel lamented over him, in accordance with the word that the Lord had spoken through His servant the prophet Ahijah” (14:18). Even this summary verse apparently came from the Deuteronomist, since it is consistent with the idea of fulfillment of prophecy so characteristic of that work. The saying that an event has taken place “in accordance with the word that the Lord had spoken through his servant” this or that prophet appears frequently (1 Kgs 13:26; 15:29; 16:12, 34; 17:16; 22:38; 2 Kgs 1:17; 10:17; 24:2), sometimes quite awkwardly.[[175]](#footnote-175) Here too, apparently, the AS, which does not contain this concluding sentence, reflects an earlier stage of the story.

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Since the MT includes large, significant Deuteronomistic layers that change the focus of the earlier story, which can be discerned in the similarities between the two versions, it is reasonable to assume that the shorter AS testifies to an earlier stage. Moreover, as I have already noted, this does not say that the MT developed from the AS as we have it.[[176]](#footnote-176) I pointed to the addition of Ahijah’s age (60), reminiscent of a plus in the Samuel scroll from Qumran, and to repetitive pluses (in the description of the offering Jeroboam’s wife brought with her) in the style of the repetitions so common in the Samaritan Torah. Thus in this version too there is a short (proto‑)Deuteronomistic layer that can easily be identified; it is easy to see how it was inserted in a different location in the MT. This therefore necessitates the assumption that, just as in other cases we have seen, here too the two versions grew from a shared source that continued to develop in different ways in the different texts.

From what the two versions share it is clear that the original story knew of the end of Jeroboam’s dynasty and alluded to it while focusing on the prophetic story about the boy who fell ill. Still, there are no allusions in the shared story to sins committed by Jeroboam and it is possible to assume that the story of the boy’s illness is not connected in that story to any specific sins. Severe prophecies of punishment for the house of Jeroboam and the Kingdom of Israel are found only in late layers of both the versions. This story about the death of the boy apparently served as the basis for later expansions in both versions, connected in each case to the destruction of the house of Jeroboam.

**3.4 The Assembly at Shechem**

Despite the fact that the repetition embedded in the stories of the AS deals chiefly with Jeroboam, the story of the assembly at Shechem in its original form, as is evident from an analysis of its internal structure and the differences between its various versions, is not at all connected to Jeroboam. Jeroboam was indeed added, secondarily, in each of the various versions, but he plays no role in what happens. All the appearances of Jeroboam in the story of the assembly in its various versions are secondary.[[177]](#footnote-177) This is actually a story that is in conflict with the story of Jeroboam’s rise, a story that explains the breakup of the united monarchy without Jeroboam’s intervention. This wisdom story teaches that the monarchy split apart on account of Rehoboam’s foolishness and his decision to attend to the hasty advice of his young advisers instead of responding to the people’s request as his older counselors advised him. Following Rehoboam’s decision, the tribes of the kingdom of Israel decided to rebel against the rule of the house of David, and it would seem that they preferred to return to the old tribal order from before the days of the monarchy (1 Kgs 12:16; LXX 12:24t). I will present the main versions now in order to discuss the differences between them:

TEXT

**Differences between the Versions**

**References to Jeroboam**: In the story of the assembly at Shechem, there are many significant differences between the AS, the MT, and G\*, the chief one being how Jeroboam was inserted into each of them. Surprisingly, each version inserts Jeroboam in a different way, though Jeroboam himself actually plays no meaningful role in the plot. In the MT, the story opens with the entire people assembling at Shechem, where Rehoboam is coming to be crowned king. The negotiations that ensue include the king and his advisers on one side and the people as a whole, acting as a single entity, on the other. Immediately after the opening verse, there is a notice about the people’s having summoned Jeroboam, who was in Egypt, to come to the assembly: “Jeroboam son of Nebat learned of it while he was still in Egypt; for Jeroboam had fled from King Solomon, and had settled in Egypt. (3) They sent for him; and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came” (1 Kgs 12:2-3). In G\*, which generally follows the MT, there is no parallel at this point (except in another formulation and another location, 3 Kgdms 11:43, which I will present below) and this information is missing in the AS as well (see also section 3.3). The text of 12:2-3a in the MT has other difficulties as well. First, it is not clear what was the content of the rumor that Jeroboam heard; it is reasonable to assume that Jeroboam heard about Solomon’s death (mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, 11:43) but the text does not say so explicitly and exegetes through the ages have made various suggestions.[[178]](#footnote-178) The most significant problem is found at the end of the sentence, since it is not clear what Jeroboam did after hearing the rumor. The text does not offer any information on this subject; it simply describes Jeroboam’s situation at that moment and mentions what had happened in the past: “Jeroboam was still in Egypt; for Jeroboam had fled from King Solomon, and had settled in Egypt” (12:2b), which had already been noted previously anyway (1 Kgs 11:40).[[179]](#footnote-179) The return of Jeroboam mentioned here does not occur until he is summoned by the people (“They sent for him,” 12:3) and has no connection to the rumor Jeroboam heard according to the beginning of v. 2. An additional problem rises from the contradiction to what is said later: “When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent messengers and summoned him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel” (1 Kgs 12:20). According to these later words, after the failure of the assembly at Shechem and the people’s decision to rebel against the house of David, the people heard about Jeroboam’s return and only then summoned him, while according to 12:2b-3, Jeroboam had already returned from Egypt and joined “all the assembly of Israel” at the assembly at Shechem, in which he even took part.[[180]](#footnote-180) Both texts begin with the words ויהי כשמוע “and when … heard” and continue with וישלחו ויקראו לו/אתו “and they summoned him,” but in 2f., as noted, the wording is unclear. I will discuss 12:20 shortly; but from the contradiction of v. 2f. with v. 20, from the absence of these verses in G\*, and from the internal difficulties of the earlier text itself, there is enough evidence to suspect that MT 12:2-3a was added here secondarily to give the reader the impression that Jeroboam took part in initiating and organizing the assembly at Shechem, even though as the story goes on he plays no role.[[181]](#footnote-181)

Another secondary mention of Jeroboam appears in the continuation of the story in the MT in the description of the people’s return after three days to hear Rehoboam’s answer. In the MT, the people and Jeroboam return together: “Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, since the king had told them: ‘Come back on the third day’” (1 Kgs 12:12). Here too, however, in the dialogue between the people and the king there is no further mention of Jeroboam; he plays no role whatsoever. Similarly, this detail is missing in G\* and in the AS. Apparently, here too the mention of Jeroboam was intended to create the impression that he had some leadership role to play at the assembly, but this does not emerge from the details of the plot, most certainly not in G\*, which does not include these verses.

G\*, in its story of this assembly (12:1-19), reads more smoothly, since Jeroboam is not mentioned at all. In this version, the story begins with Rehoboam going to Shechem in order to get the support of all the people for his kingship, and continues immediately with the people’s request to him, without any mention of Jeroboam, who has no influence over the course of the story. All the same, the notice of his return from Egypt (in MT 12:2-3a) has also been inserted into G\*, but elsewhere and somewhat differently, in the summary of the reign of Solomon, before the story of the assembly (3 Kgdms 11:43):

TEXT

In this version, the information about Jeroboam’s return from Egypt comes before the story of the assembly, so it does not interfere with the flow of the story of the assembly itself. Since it is inserted into the text about the end of Solomon’s reign, it disrupts the received text and the author needed a repetitive resumption in order to insert it.[[182]](#footnote-182) The report about the death of Solomon and his burial with his ancestors, then, appears twice in this verse in the LXX (11:43); the notice about Jeroboam’s return from Egypt appears in between them.

The text that the repetition resumes, as noted, strongly resembles the problematic text in the MT of 1 Kgs 12:2-3a but also includes different information. According to G\*, Jeroboam returned to his town of Zererah in Mount Ephraim: “He went straight and came to his city in the land of Zererah which is in Mount Ephraim” (LXX 11:43), and not to the assembly at Shechem. These things therefore do not contradict 1 Kgs 12:20, where we are told that the people heard about Jeroboam’s return, summoned him, and crowned him king over all the tribes of the north. Yet since in this version too the verse disrupts the flow of the text about Solomon’s burial and is connected to the text by means of a repetitive resumption, it appears to be a secondary attempt to add the information about Jeroboam’s return from Egypt (found also in 1 Kgs 12:2-3a), but without inserting it into the story of the assembly at Shechem.[[183]](#footnote-183) It is interesting that LXX 11:43 also contains information that is not mentioned in the MT, which says that when Jeroboam returned from Egypt he went back to his city in the land of Zererah (called Zeredah in the MT) in Mount Ephraim. Similar information, in a formulation identifying “the land of Zererah which is in Mount Ephraim” is not found in the MT but is found in the AS: καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Ἰεροβοὰμ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου, καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς γῆν Σαρειρὰ τὴν ἐν ὄρει Ἐφράιμ, “And Jeroboam departed from Egypt and came to the land of Zererah, which is in Mount Ephraim” (24f). It is not impossible that all the sources telling about Jeroboam’s return from Egypt (MT 12:2-3a; LXX 11:43; and see the discussion that follows in MT 12:20aα; LXX 12:24d-f) depend on some shared source, on the basis of which various references to Jeroboam were added to locate him in various places in and near the story of the assembly at Shechem.[[184]](#footnote-184)

In the AS version of the story too Jeroboam is inserted secondarily, but in a different way. The appearances of Jeroboam mentioned in the MT do not appear in the AS, where he is instead found at the beginning of the story; it is he who went to Shechem “And Jeroboam went to Shechem, which is in Mount Ephraim, and gathered there the tribes of Israel” (24n), in contrast to the MT, which tells that Rehoboam went to Shechem to establish his rule over the people. Yet in this version Jeroboam has no role to play in what follows. The people as a single entity faces Rehoboam, and there is no space for any individual to be leading the tribes of the north. Moreover, the group preserves tribal custom at the end of the story (24t). We may suppose that here too the verse in the AS mentioning Jeroboam is not an organic part of the story of the assembly.

Jeroboam is inserted in the AS version of the story of the assembly in another way. Immediately after we are told that Jeroboam came to Shechem and convened the public, we read that a prophet revealed himself to Jeroboam and awarded him kingship over ten tribes (24n). This information is apparently told in a flashback to events that occurred earlier but can explain why the people’s request of Rehoboam is so insistent. Yet these events actually have no influence on the assembly. We do not hear that the people at the assembly are aware of the coronation of a king or a leader from any of the other tribes (24t). The tearing of the garment constitutes an independent story, inserted in different places in the various versions, and I shall therefore discuss this separately in the next section (3.5). It may be that the author of the AS inserted this prophetic story precisely here in order to create a contrast to the story of the assembly—the successful coronation of Jeroboam by a prophet versus the failed coronation of Rehoboam confronting the people.

**Deuteronomistic and Chronistic Layers in the Story of the Assembly**: There are additional striking differences between the MT and the AS in the story of the assembly, connected to Deuteronomistic editorial layers or other later layers. V. 15, “The king did not listen to the people; for the Lord had brought it about in order to fulfill the promise that the Lord had made through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat,” is completely missing in the AS. These words are not part of the plot; they are an explanation by the narrator, watching from the wings and analyzing the reasons for Rehoboam’s failure. The verse also largely reshapes the content of the story, since where the original story sought to emphasize Rehoboam’s political error in following the younger advisers rather than the experienced ones, and to criticize his foolishness in doing so, v. 15 exchanges the political perspective for a theological explanation and ascribes Rehoboam’s decision to a divine plan: “The Lord had brought it about in order to fulfill the promise that the Lord had made.”[[185]](#footnote-185) This is a reference to the story of the tearing of the garment and to the words of the prophet that come in the Deuteronomistic layer of the story, found—again—only in the MT and missing in that place in the AS (1 Kgs 11:32-38). The language of the verse includes expressions characteristic of the book of Deuteronomy and of Deuteronomistic writing; for example, the expressions “fulfilling the covenant” (Deut 8:18; 9:5; 29:12; 1 Kgs 2:4; 2 Kgs 23:24; Jer 11:15); and “fulfilling His word” (1 Kgs 2:4; 8:20).[[186]](#footnote-186) It appears, then, that MT 1 Kgs 12:15 belongs to, or is close to the style of, a Deuteronomistic editorial layer in Kings that emphasizes the principles of theodicy and the fulfillment of prophecy.[[187]](#footnote-187) As in other cases, it appears that the AS, which does not include v. 15, reflects here a relatively early form of the story, without a Deuteronomistic editorial layer or Deuteronomistic style.

1 Kgs 12:17, “But Rehoboam continued to reign over the Israelites who lived in the towns of Judah” is another text in the story of the assembly that appears only in the MT and is missing from the AS, and this time from G\* as well. As many have seen, this verse stylistically resembles texts from Chronicles, e.g., “All the congregation of Judah and the priests and the Levites and all the congregation that came from Israel, and the resident aliens who came from the land of Israel and who lived in Judah, rejoiced”; “The men of Israel and Judah living in the towns of Judah” (2 Chron 31:6). This is apparently a late plus, a text in Chronistic style, perhaps even taken from Chronicles itself (2 Chron 10:17), which describes northern Israelites under Judahite rule in the cities of Judah. This verse seemingly retrojects ideological approaches from the time of the return to Zion to the period of the establishment of the northern kingdom. If this assumption is correct, we have additional evidence here of the AS, where this verse is lacking, reflecting a version earlier than that of the MT.[[188]](#footnote-188)

**The Story of Adoram**: An additional important detail in the story of the assembly that is missing in the AS but found in the MT is the story of Adoram and the forced labor (12:18).[[189]](#footnote-189) An examination of this story in the MT shows that it does not fit smoothly into the story of the assembly at Shechem. The story of the assembly concludes with the call of the tribes for rebellion against Davidic rule: “We have no portion in David, no share in Jesse’s son! To your tents, O Israel! Now look to your own House, O David” (12:16; cf. 2 Sam 20:1) after which the tribes scatter to their own places, rejecting the rule of the house of David: “So the Israelites returned to their homes” (12:16).[[190]](#footnote-190)

The action that Rehoboam carries out afterward according to the MT is not exactly what one would expect in such a situation. After the rebellion of the tribes of Israel, one would expect Rehoboam to initiate a military struggle or (alternatively) to understand that he had lost power, but instead we read that he sends Adoram to raise a labor gang from among the Israelites as per routine. The narrator does not explain that Adoram came with an especially large force to exhibit government power, nor does it describe any negotiations.[[191]](#footnote-191) This effort, of course, is met with fierce opposition. The people kill him: “King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was in charge of the forced labor, but all Israel pelted him to death with stones” (18). A synchronic reading of the story can easily explain this move, since Rehoboam has already been presented as politically foolish, making wrong decisions all along the way.[[192]](#footnote-192) But the continuation, in 18b, “Thereupon King Rehoboam hurriedly mounted his chariot and fled to Jerusalem,” reveals an additional difficulty that cannot be explained by a simple synchronic reading. According to the first half of the verse, Rehoboam sent Adoram for the purpose of assembling a group of forced laborers. Since Rehoboam “sent” Adoram (12:18a), it is clear that he is not with Adoram when the latter is being stoned, requiring that Rehoboam remain wherever he was, perhaps even in Jerusalem. It is therefore hard to understand how Rehoboam found himself fleeing for his life, as the second half of the verse says: “Thereupon King Rehoboam hurriedly mounted his chariot and fled to Jerusalem” (12:18b).

The AS, by contrast, presents a smoother sequence of events. In the AS, the part of the verse describing Rehoboam’s fleeing in his chariot comes immediately after the outcome of the assembly at Shechem becomes known. The assembly ends with a call for rebellion: “To your tents, O Israel” (24t), just like the call of Sheba son of Bichri (2 Sam 20:1), and Rehoboam finds himself trapped in the middle of the rebellion, where he finds himself struggling to get into his chariot to flee back to Jerusalem (24u). In this version, then, the story of Adoram has nothing to do with the story of the assembly.[[193]](#footnote-193)

The summary in v. 19 of the MT is apparently the conclusion of the short notice about Adoram, since this verse, like the information about Adoram, is also missing from the AS. The verb פשע in v. 19, “Thus Israel *revolted* against the House of David, as is still the case,” fits the story of the rebellion against Adoram because, though it can simply mean “to commit a crime,” it can also refer to overturning the political obligation of a group, or a kingdom to a sovereign king, as when “Moab *rebelled* against Israel” (2 Kgs 1:1; cf. 3:5). Connecting 18a to 19 as one literary unit, combining sending Adoram to collect forced laborers with that ending (both of these missing in the AS) creates a brief notice like that which tells of Edom’s rebellion against Judah in the days of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and in very similar words: “During his reign, the Edomites *rebelled* against Judah’s rule … Thus Edom *fell away* from Judah, as is still the case” (2 Kgs 8:20, 22).[[194]](#footnote-194)

TEXT

Since the story of Adoram and the forced labor is not constitute stylistically a late editorial note like vv. 15 and 17, it may be that the MT here preserves an additional, competing tradition about the division of the kingdom and the separation of the tribes from the rule of the house of David. Yet this terse notice contains a complete plot in miniature, telling a story characterized by social elements like those reflected in the story of the assembly at Shechem: the tribes of the north were bent under the yoke of forced labor that the Judahite king had imposed on them, and they decided to rebel. In both cases, we are told of agitation amongst the people as the result of forced labor imposed on them by a king of the house of David, followed by rebellion against the kingdom of David without the intervention of any northern leader, since Jeroboam takes no active role in either the tradition of the assembly at Shechem (in its original form) or in the notice about Adoram (12:18a, 19). The story of the assembly and the story of Adoram belong to different genres. The story of the assembly is a wisdom creation and includes dramatic details and a complex plot, while the Adoram story (together with the concluding sentence in v. 19) is a brief notice explaining the split between Israel and Judah as the result of a one-time and spontaneous rebellious event; both stories serve the same function, to explain the reason for the split. If the story of Adoram stood in its origin as an independent notice like that of the rebellion of Edom found in 2 Kings 8, we may understand why it is missing from the AS and how it was inserted into the version reflected in the MT as a sort of compilation, exactly at the point where there is a rebellion in each of the traditions; in the story of the assembly, with the people’s cry, “We have no portion in David!,” and in the Adoram tradition of his being stoned by the Israelites.

**The Elders and the Youths**: The MT presents a conflict between “the elders who had served his father Solomon during his lifetime” (12:6) and “the young men who had grown up with him [and were serving him]” (12:8, 10) or simply “the young men” (12:14). This is a clash between two groups of sages and two different methodologies of wisdom. The elders, in the MT, are the advisers who served previous generations, while “young men,” as Alexander Rofé has shown, is a term from the world of the sages that relates to a group of young advisers in the court of the king, as appears in Daniel (1:4, 10, 13, 15, 17).[[195]](#footnote-195) It is worth noting that in the AS the term “young men” (τὰ παιδάρια) appears clearly only in v. 24s, but not in the expected place; apparently it was added there as a gloss. The two other places where Rehoboam’s younger advisers are mentioned they are called just οἱ σύντροφοι αὐτοῦ (24r, twice, the equivalent of “those who had grown up with him”), without paralleling the term “young men” (24r), and it is hard to know with certainty whether the translator simply omitted it or whether it was missing from the earlier Hebrew base text of this story. But a more significant difference exists with regard to the group of “the elders who had served his father Solomon during his lifetime” (12:6 in the MT); they are mentioned in the AS only as “the elders” or “the elders of the people” (both 24q). It emerges, therefore, that in the AS the disagreement is between these “elders,” representing what is good for the people, and the advisers of the royal court “who had grown up with him” (24r, 24s), that is, a necessary conflict between those who represent the good of the people and those who represent the government, and specifically the young king. In the MT, the story turns into a more distinct sapiential paradigm, and the conflict is between advisers who represent experience and thoughtfulness (12:6) and “the young men who had grown up with him [and were serving him]” (12:8, 10) or simply “the young men” (12:14) who represent simplistic thinking and wisdom without experience. It is not impossible that in this matter the AS represents an earlier stage in the formation of the story, which became more dramatic, more polar, in the version we know from the MT.

**The Conclusion of the Story of the Assembly**: Differences between two versions can be recognized also in the conclusion of the story of the assembly at Shechem, after Rehoboam “hastens” to get into his chariot and flee. In the AS, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin follow Rehoboam (24u), versus the tribe of Judah alone in the MT (12:20b). The AS is consistent in its perspective that the Kingdom of Judah is comprised of two tribes, and so it is here in the story of the assembly, as in the story of the tearing of the garment (section 3.5), and the story of Shemaiah, the man of God, and the Judah-Benjamite war against Israel (section 3.6) to be discussed shortly. The MT, by contrast, highlights the choice of Judah and Jerusalem alone, by contrast to the rest of the tribes, who constitute part of the kingdom of Israel, except for the story of the Judah-Benjamite war (12:22-24) where the MT too considers Judah and Benjamin a single entity (section 3.6). This sometimes creates a rough spot in the MT. In this case, it is also worth noting that G\* as well (3 Kgdms 12:20) reads “Judah and Benjamin” here, as in the AS. But I will discuss this difference after I examine this entire category of differences (see below section 4).

In the MT there is an additional component in this verse that has no parallel in the AS. 1 Kgs 12:20a, which tells of Jeroboam’s return from Egypt and his being crowned king over all Israel, says “When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent messengers and summoned him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel.” As noted above, this verse contadicts the pluses in the MT version of the assembly, which insert Jeroboam into the story. In both the MT and the AS Jeroboam is inserted into the story of the assembly one way or another. These pluses are secondary, making the assumption that Jeroboam has already been summoned by the public, has taken part in the assembly at Shechem, and had a leading role among those who spoke at the assembly. V. 20a, by contrast, says by contrast that only after the assembly did the people hear about Jeroboam’s return, and only at this stage did they call him to come and lead the people. Since in the original tradition the story had no role for Jeroboam to play, it is obvious that this verse was not part of the story of the assembly at Shechem. Perhaps this sentence was composed by the creator of the MT, a version of the story intended to connect all all the traditions about the breakup of the united monarchy, leading to knowledge about the monarchy of Jeroboam.[[196]](#footnote-196) Yet this verse was not created out of nothing. The resemblance between this verse (12:20a) and 21:2-3a makes it possible to think that the verse was based on sources similar to the added component in the LXX to 11:43 and in vv. 24d-f of the AS, both of which tell about Jeroboam’s return and his becoming a leader in Ephraim. In the other sources there is no mention of Jeroboam’s being crowned by the assembly; apparently this detail is the latest component in the sentence. What is especially interesting here is the word עדה ‘assembly’ in this verse, which normally appears in the Bible in the priestly literature; the only other appearances of this word in Kings are in a late layer which is missing from the Septuagint (1 Kgs 8:5).[[197]](#footnote-197) On the other hand, the AS as we have it does tell about the return of Jeroboam to his city Zererah in Ephraim (24f), but it does not include any mention of his being crowned King of Israel. Rather it only tells of the tearing of the garment and the giving of the ten torn pieces to Jeroboam (24o). This apparently is the way in which the writer of the AS recounted the transfer of the kingship to Jeroboam. 12:20a, missing in the AS, is therefore apparently a kind of general insertion of the traditions of Jeroboam’s rise and their conclusion with a notice of Jeroboam becoming king.

**Minor Differences between the Versions**: There are also many other small differences and minor changes between the AS and the MT, more typical of free transmission of the text.[[198]](#footnote-198) For example, the MT repeats the request of the people to lighten the burden that Solomon had imposed on them four times: when Rehoboam presents the request of the people to his young advisers, when the young advisers repeat it in their response, when the advisers tell Rehoboam how to respond, and in Rehoboam’s answer to the people. In the AS, these repetitions are missing or appear in abridged form. Sometimes it is apparent that the briefer version in AS constitutes a shorter and earlier version that was expanded in the MT, perhaps for rhetorical or dramatic purposes. But perhaps some of the abridgement was done inadvertently; for example, in v 10, where the advisers’ repeated counsel to Rehoboam about how to respond to the people, “Speak thus to the people … Say to them …” occurs just once in the AS, and it is theoretically possible that the copyist of the AS (in v. 24r) skipped part of the sentence, or from the first “thus” in the verse to the second. But in most cases it is reasonable to assume that the shorter version reflects an earlier text that was expanded.[[199]](#footnote-199)

Despite the shortness of the AS version, it contains a number of small, interesting pluses, more evidence for my suggestion that the AS too continued to develop independently rather than reflecting the oldest version of the stories. For example, the people’s argument in v. 24p, “Your father made his yoke heavy upon us,” adds to 12:4, the parallel verse in MT, “and the food of his table is weighty,” perhaps on account of the similar text found in the story of the visit of the Queen of Sheba, where she sees “the food of [Solomon’s] table” (1 Kgs 10:5) and the rest of the opulence in his palace and “was left breathless.” Similarly, the description of “Solomon’s daily provisions” in 1 Kgs 5:2-3, found also in miscellanies in 3 Kgdms 2:46e describes such “weighty” quantities of food on the daily menu of Solomon’s palace. The use of the root כבד reminds us of the criticism that Nehemiah makes of his predecessors, which so resembles the description of Solomon’s provisions in 2:46e: “The former governors who preceded me laid **weighty** burdens on the people, and took from them for bread and wine … But I, out of the fear of God, did not do so. … Although there were at my **table**, between Jews and prefects, one hundred and fifty men in all, beside those who came to us from surrounding nations; and although what was prepared for each day came to one ox, six select sheep, and fowl, all prepared for me … yet I did not resort to the governor’s food allowance, for the [king’s] service lay **heavily** on the people” (Neh 5:15-18).[[200]](#footnote-200) It would appear, then, that this small plus was intended to intensify the criticism that the people voiced to Rehoboam, Solomon’s heir.

Another bit of editorial narrative was added in the AS to Rehoboam’s response to the advisers’ counsel that “did not please him” (24r, in response to the advice of the elders) or that “pleased Rehoboam” (24s, in response to the advice of the young men). These phrases were not inserted into the story smoothly, apparently being added in order to expose Rehoboam’s thoughts and to emphasize his involvement and his responsibility for evaluating the advice he was given and coming to a decision. This is still further proof that the AS, though it shows signs of being earlier than the MT, also contains later literary layers, and it is evident that it continued to expand dramatically and literarily.

Another small difference of this kind is found in v. 24t of the AS versus 1 Kgs 12:16 of the MT. The text of the rebellion of the tribes against the house of David ends in the MT with the words “Now look to [ראה] your own House, O David” (12:16; the version reflected in the Septuagint and the Targum may have read רעה instead of ראה),[[201]](#footnote-201) while the AS reads “for this man shall be neither a ruler nor a leader” (24t). It is possible that the text in the shared version that evolved into these two versions was shorter, like that which appeared in the words of Sheba son of Bichri in 2 Sam 20:1, containing three clauses, a fourth clauses being created in each of our two texts independently:

**2 Sam 20:1**

We have no part in David, No inheritance in Jesse’s son!

Every man to his tent, O Israel!

**1 Kgs 12:16 (cf. 2 Chron 10:16)**

We have no part in David, No inheritance in Jesse’s son!

To your tents, O Israel! Now look to your own House, O David.

**24t**

We have no part in David, neither inheritance in the son of Jesse;

to your tents, O Israel, for this man shall be neither a ruler nor a leader.

The fourth clause in the MT parallels the content of the previous clause, emphasizing the limited rule of the house of David, while the fourth clause in the AS emphasizes the failure of Rehoboam and his inability to reign.

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In conclusion, here too it emerges that the AS and the MT grew in parallel from an earlier shared version. Each of them demonstrates various attempts to introduce Jeroboam into the story of the assembly (12:2-3a; 24n), even though the original story did not include him at all, and in fact the story of the assembly provides an alternative answer to the question of how Jeroboam rose to power in the breakup of the united monarchy. The MT includes several distinct later layers; it includes a distinct Deuteronomistic or quasi-Deuteronomistic layer (12:15), a verse in Chronistic style that is missing in all the other versions, and retrojects approaches from Second Temple times (12:17). The MT also includes a short notice telling an additional, competing story about the splitting apart of the Davidic kingdom. This is the story of Adoram, which briefly tells of an outbreak of violent rebellion by the northern tribes on account of the heavy burden of forced labor that the Judahite king imposed on the tribes of Israel (18a, 19). At the same time, the AS also contains later layers. In it too Jeroboam is inserted into the story of the assembly, as is the prophetic story of the tearing of the garment and giving ten pieces of it to Jeroboam, which appears in the MT in completely different form. To this story, which actually foreshadows the transfer of the kingship of Israel to Jeroboam, I turn now.

**3.5 The Tearing of the Garment**

Both versions include the prophet’s symbolic action of tearing a garment in twelve pieces and granting ten of them to Jeroboam (though the prophet who does it is different in each version). The pieces symbolize the transfer of the northern tribes to Jeroboam. This story, in its basic form, apparently derives from prophetic circles and explains Jeroboam’s rise to kingship and the division of the united monarchy from that point of view. But the story is placed in a completely different context in each version and developed differently, as I shall demonstrate below:

TEXT

**Placement of the Stories**: In each of the two versions, this story was placed in a completely different context, but in each it stands as an independent episode; in the AS, as noted, the story was inserted into the story of the assembly at Shechem. According to the AS version of the story, Jeroboam arrives at Shechem and convenes the assembly. True, he takes no active part in the assembly as it is described, but the introduction tells us that it was he who took the initiative to assemble them, and he was present there (see section 3.4). Before the people lay out their request before Rehoboam, the narrator mentions the occurrence that demonstrates plainly that God has already chosen a new king for the northern tribes and ordered Shemaiah the prophet to grant the kingship to Jeroboam. The story describes a symbolic action in which the prophet must take a new garment, never immersed in water, and tear it into twelve pieces; Jeroboam takes ten of the torn pieces; and Shemaiah explains the action and informs him that the ten pieces of the garment symbolize the ten tribes that are being given to him: “This is what YHWH says concerning the ten tribes of Israel” (24o). This is not something that happened during the assembly. The Hebrew Vorlage of the Greek καὶ λόγος Κυρίου ἐγένετο πρὸς, “a word of the Lord *had* come to” Shemaiah (cf. 2 Sam 24:11; 2 Kgs 20:4), indicates that this is a flashback to events that had occurred previous to the convening of the assembly.[[202]](#footnote-202) The reader of the AS admittedly does not find in the context of the story about the assembly any awareness of the prophet’s declaration, but in context the assembly reads as an open rebellion of the northern tribes, who perhaps were aware that God had chosen them a new leader through the prophet. The fact that there is no correlation between the two episodes, and the formulation of the garment-tearing as a flashback apparently detached from the flow of the narrative, show that the prophetic story about the tearing of the garment was an independent story, perhaps even a prophetic version competing with the story of Jeroboam’s rise (3.2) and the story of the assembly at Shechem (3.4). Each of them focuses on Jeroboam’s rise or the breakup of the kingdom from a different angle.

In MT as well the insertion of the garment story is not smooth. The story appears in the middle of the story of Jeroboam’s rebellion (section 3.??), which begins with a description of Jeroboam as a servant of Solomon who rebels against him: “The circumstances under which he raised his hand against the king” (11:27). These words introduce the narrator’s description of the background to the rebellion: a description of Solomon’s construction activities and an observation that Solomon had been impressed with Jeroboam’s abilities right away and had appointed him “over all the forced labor of the House of Joseph” (11:28). Now, on the face of it, the narrator is about to broaden the description of the rebellion, but the story cuts off in a surprising way; the story of the rebellion itself, the chains of events between Jeroboam and Solomon, is missing, and the thread describing them picks up again only in v. 40, when we are told that “Solomon sought to put Jeroboam to death,” but the latter fled to Egypt and lived there until Solomon died. What happened after Jeroboam was appointed over the forced labor and what Jeroboam did to provoke Solomon to seek to put him to death are both unclear. Instead of these details, what comes in between the two parts of the rebellion story is the episode about the tearing of the garment. The description of the prophet’s actions does not continue the narrative line about Solomon’s building activities or the part Jeroboam played in them, nor does it explain what caused Solomon to wish to put Jeroboam to death. The story of the tearing of the garment and the prophet’s declaration takes place in secret, “when the two were alone in the open country” (11:29). There is no indication that these details came to Solomon’s attention and led to his decision to have Jeroboam killed, and it is therefore clear that the prophet’s actions are not connected with the story of the rebellion. Similarly, the garment story is inserted in the MT by means of the words “during that time” (11:29), a technique used elsewhere when biblical authors want to insert side episodes into the narrative flow.[[203]](#footnote-203) It emerges, therefore, from all this data that in the MT just as in the AS the garment story is an independent episode. It was inserted into each of the versions differently.

**Differences between the Versions**: Despite the fact that the basics of the story are identical in both versions, striking differences are found as well. First, the name of the prophet is different. In the MT he is Ahijah the Shilonite, who also appears (in both the MT and the AS) in the story of Jeroboam’s son’s illness. The literary idea reflected in the MT is that the same prophet informs Jeroboam about his gaining kingship and about the eradication of his kingship; the change in Ahijah’s relationship with Jeroboam is not explained. In the AS, it is a different prophet, Shemaiah, called here τὸν Ἐνλαμεὶ, “the Enlamite.”[[204]](#footnote-204) Many scholars have suggested that the Hebrew Vorlage of this Greek text was שמעיה הנחלמי, Shemaiah the Nehelamite, known to us from Jeremiah (29:24, 31, 32), who was active near the time of the destruction of the Temple.[[205]](#footnote-205) Marvin Sweeney, for example, places great importance on this detail, arguing that this is one of the things that demonstrate a late, midrashic reworking of the AS—associating a false prophet with Jeroboam’s rise to kingship. There are, however, a number of problems with this suggestion. First, the name Nehelamite ordinarily appears in the Greek translation of Jeremiah as Αἰλαμείτης. This is not the same as τὸν Ἐνλαμεὶ, the reading in MS B of v. 24o, nor in the MSS of the Lucianic recension and other Greek MSS, which read Ἐλαμείτην; the Greek text does not necessarily reflect Hebrew הנחלמי, “the Nehelamite.” Second, in the AS itself there is not the slightest hint that the word of God that came to the prophet was false or misleading (LXX 12:24o), or that Shemaiah himself made it up. The text is not at all critical of Shemaiah. So it is unclear why the author of the AS substituted a prophet known from a completely different context in a completely different period in the story of Jeroboam. Rahlfs suggested that the Greek text should be corrected to τὸν Ελαμι, and there might well be some corruption due to a gloss of some kind (אלמי, “the Elamite,” perhaps?) intended to identify the Shemaiah mentioned here with Shemaiah “the man of God” mentioned in the MT and in the Anthology (1 Kgs 12:22; LXX 12:24y). If there is any connection between the two Shemaiahs, we are looking at a literary and theological approach that differs from the MT. This is not the same prophet changing his attitude toward Jeroboam depending on the circumstances; rather, it is the same prophet maintaining the same attitude with regard to the divine plan. That same prophet first crowns Jeroboam and then stops the war that Rehoboam king of Judah declares against the northern tribes, since it Jeroboam’s coronation fulfills the divine plan: “‘For this thing has been brought about by Me.’ They heeded the word of the Lord and turned back, in accordance with the word of the Lord” (1 Kgs 12:24; LXX 12:24y-z).

There is a difference between the versions also with regard to the question of the source of the garment and the action of tearing it. The MT’s “He had put on a new garment” (11:29) does not tell us who had put on the garment; as David Kimhi formulates it, “It could be either Ahijah or Jeroboam. It is impossible to determine.”[[206]](#footnote-206) Only from context is it possible to discern that it was Jeroboam’s garment, because the prophet *seized* it, tore it into pieces, and gave Jeroboam ten of them to symbolize the ten parts of Israel that would be given into his power: “Ahijah seized the new garment that was on him and tore it into twelve pieces” (11:30).[[207]](#footnote-207) It is not clear in the MT what is the significance of the fact that the garment was new. Similarly, if the garment was indeed on Jeroboam’s body, the message here is puzzling; Jeroboam gets back ten pieces of his own torn garment, ending up losing rather than profiting by his new kingship. Moreover, the prophet explains that he is tearing *away* the garment: “I am about to tear the kingdom out of Solomon’s hands” (11:31), but since the garment that was torn away was Jeroboam’s, the lack of clarity is strengthened.[[208]](#footnote-208)

The AS presents a clearer procedure; the prophet is commanded to take a new garment, “which has not been immersed in water” (LXX 12:24o). As opposed to the MT, this is not a garment which was “on him” (11:30). In the AS it is not Jeroboam’s garment or even a garment that the prophet was wearing but a garment that was simply used for the symbolic action.[[209]](#footnote-209) The fact that the garment is new has special significance for the symbolism; it apparently represents the Davidic monarchy and the parts of it that will be given to the new dynasty that Jeroboam will establish. It is neither Jeroboam’s garment nor the prophet’s everyday garment, so it can more clearly represent the tearing away of Solomon’s kingdom than it does in the MT. In the AS, Jeroboam is asked not merely to “take for yourself ten pieces” of the garment but also “to cover yourself” (τοῦ περιβαλέσθαι σε) with them, emphasizing his own role in the symbolic action.[[210]](#footnote-210) It is possible that the AS is closer to the original version of the story, and that the story is deliberately blurred in the MT in order to lessen the significance of Jeroboam and of the symbolic action.

In general, the MT version of the story is longer; it contains more detail about Jeroboam going out of Jerusalem and encountering the prophet on the road alone (11:29). These details are missing in the terser AS. In the AS, the prophet’s words are very succinct, meant only to explain the symbolic action: “Take for yourself ten pieces to cover yourself … This is what YHWH says concerning the ten tribes of Israel” (24o). In the MT more significant expansions are evident in the long speeches added to the words of the prophet. In the MT the words of the prophet include an extensive exhortation adding a theological explanation to what is going on. God is tearing away the monarchy from the kings of Judah because they violated the commandments: “For they have forsaken Me; they have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Phoenicians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites; they have not walked in My ways, or done what is pleasing to Me, or [kept] My laws and rules, as his father David did” (11:33). All the same, one piece will remain in Davidic hands, “for the sake of My servant David whom I chose, and who kept My commandments and My laws” (11:34). The more extensive speech also adds words of warning to Jeroboam about the future, instructing him that he must also keep the commandments: “If you heed all that I command you, and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, keeping My laws and commandments as My servant David did, then I will be with you and I will build for you a lasting dynasty as I did for David. I hereby give Israel to you” (11:38).

A certain awkwardness is evident between Ahijah’s long speech in the MT and the quick symbolic action, technically even a contradiction. Though the story talks about the garment being torn into twelve pieces, of which ten pieces represent the ten tribes (11:31), the speech as it appears in the MT emphasizes that what remains in the hands of the Davidic king does not amount to two pieces, as simple arithmetic would suggest; the stress is on the choice of just a single tribe: “But one tribe shall remain his—for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel” (11:32).[[211]](#footnote-211) V. 35 in the speech repeats the story (cf. v. 31), so one might think that was the reason the verse mentions the ten tribes given to Jeroboam: “But I will take the kingship out of the hands of his son and give it to you—the ten tribes,” but the phrase “the ten tribes” does not fit smoothly; the feminine singular pronominal suffix, “give *it*,” clearing refers to the kingship (מלוכה in Hebrew). “The ten tribes” does not fit syntactically either; it interrupts the context. A few scholars therefore think, with justice, that those words are a scribal error, copied unthinkingly from v. 31, or perhaps a late gloss intended to qualify the extent of the kingship given to Jeroboam. Comparison with v. 38 confirms that indeed v. 35 prefers the formulation without qualification: “I hereby give Israel to you.”[[212]](#footnote-212) In any case, the next verse in the speech highlights again only the one tribe instead of the two that would match the garment’s being torn into twelve pieces: “To his son I will give one tribe, so that there may be a lamp for My servant David forever before Me in Jerusalem—the city where I have chosen to establish My name” (11:36). The story, therefore, speaks about ten tribes in the northern kingdom and two in the kingdom of Judah, while the speeches emphasize that there remains only a single tribe, and the city of Jerusalem.

A stylistic analysis of the texts that mention the choice of a single tribe and the other texts that are in the MT but missing from the AS indicates that they are clearly Deuteronomistic.[[213]](#footnote-213) Here are the details: the idea of Jerusalem as the city God had chosen, which appears twice in Ahijah’s speech (11:32, 36) appears in Deuteronomistic texts in Kings (1 Kgs 8:44, 48; 14:21, cf. 2 Kgs 21:7; 23:27) which of course explain the expression in Deuteronomy, “the place that He will choose” (Deut 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26; 14:23, 24, 25; 15:20; 16:2, 6, 7, 11, 15, 16; 17:8, 10; 18:6; 23:17; 26:2; 31:11; cf. Josh 9:27).[[214]](#footnote-214) The continuation of the expression, “[the place chosen] to establish My name,” found in v. 36, is also dependent on Deuteronomy and appears frequently in Deuteronomistic literature (Deut 12:5, 21; 14:24; 1 Kgs 9:3; 14:21).[[215]](#footnote-215) The expression “My/Your servant David” in 11:32, mentioned also in the extra layer (as compared with the AS) in 1 Kgs 14:8, appears almost only in Deuteronomistic literature (2 Sam 7:26; 1 Kgs 3:6; 8:4, 25, 26; 11:32),[[216]](#footnote-216) as does the reverse expression “David, My servant,” which appears three times in the continuation of the speech (11:34, 36, 38; cf. 1 Kgs 8:66; 11:13; 2 Kgs 8:19; 19:34; 20:6).[[217]](#footnote-217) The expression “to walk in the ways of” plus a suffix referring to God, appearing twice in Ahijah’s speech (“they have not walked in My ways,” 11:33; “If you … walk in My ways,” 11:38) appears mostly in Deuteronomy and in Deuteronomistic literature (Deut 8:6; 19:9; 26:17; 28:9; 30:16; 1 Kgs 2:3; 3:14).[[218]](#footnote-218) The collocation of עזב + suffix in v. 33, “they have forsaken Me” is also Deuteronomic and Deuteronomistic (Deut 28:20; 2 Kgs 22:17; Jer 1:16; 19:4).[[219]](#footnote-219) So is “to do what is right in the eyes [of God]” (again in 11:33 and 38), found in this order only in Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic literature (Deut 13:19; 1 Kgs 14:8; 22:43; 2 Kgs 10:30). “My laws and My rules” in v. 33 is certainly based on the same collocation (with pronominal suffixes relating to God) only in Deuteronomy (Deut 11:1; 30:16; cf. 2 Kgs 17:34).[[220]](#footnote-220) “to keep My commandments and My laws” (as David is praised for in v. 34) is identical with the Deuteronomic expression (Deut 28:45; 30:10, 16) and other places in Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic literature (cf. Deut 8:11; 1 Kgs 9:6; 11:34; 2Kgs 17:13; 2Kgs 23:3).

The long speech that appears in Ahijah’s words in the MT contains one verse that is missing not only from the AS but also from G\*, which here generally follows the MT—11:39: “I will chastise David’s descendants for that [sin], though not forever.” This verse does not fit the long speech placed in the mouth of Ahijah the Shilonite speaking about transferring the kingship over the northern tribes from the house of David to Jeroboam. It moves the focus back to the house of David, but in a different context, about a different era. It speaks of far future days, in which David’s descendants will be chastised, after which the period of chastisement will end. The wording in the verse is also anomalous: the expression “David’s descendants [זרע דוד]” does not occur again in Kings, but only in a late layer in Jeremiah (33:22), also missing in the LXX.[[221]](#footnote-221) Many scholars think, correctly, that this verse was written in the Persian period, from the perspective of the return to Zion, and reflects the latest layer of the book.[[222]](#footnote-222) Apparently, then, in these points, and certainly with regard to this verse, the AS reflects an earlier version of the story, without signs of Deuteronomistic editing.[[223]](#footnote-223)

Together with this, despite its briefness, the AS also includes several unique details missing from the MT. Some of them were apparently added in the later stages of the growth of the AS version. Thus, apparently, the emphasis on using a new garment that had not been immersed in water: τὸ οὐκ εἰσεληλυθὸς εἰς ὕδωρ. This detail is not found in the MT and there is no obvious reason for it to have been deleted. Possibly this was an expansion in the spirit of the prophetic symbolic action described in Jeremiah 13, where the prophet is instructed, “Go buy yourself a loincloth of linen, and put it around your loins, but do not dip it into water” (Jer 13:1) and to bury it “in a cleft of the rock” (Jer 13:4). After a long while, the prophet is asked to dig it out, only to discover that it is ruined, to illustrate how God will ruin Judah and Jerusalem (Jer 13:9). In Jeremiah’s prophecy, there is a reason for the garment not to have been immersed in water: it is depicting the process of destruction of a brand new loincloth, not worn by use but ruined only by the time it spent in a cleft of the rock near the streambed.[[224]](#footnote-224) By contrast, in the story of the garment torn in twelve pieces there is no significance to its not having been immersed in water, which demonstrates that this detail is secondary to the story.

It is also worth noting that the descriptions in the story are completely different in the two versions. Most of the story in the MT is the prophetic action taken by the prophet, without any divine command, and what the prophet says afterward (most of which consists of a Deuteronomistic expansion). In the AS most of the story is told through the divine commandment to the prophet, “Take for yourself a new garment … and tear it into twelve pieces” (24o), and just the very briefest notice that the command was actually carried out and that Jeroboam did indeed receive the pieces of the garment given him by the prophet, with some words added to explain the symbolic action: “Jeroboam took them, and Shemaiah said, “This is what YHWH says concerning the ten tribes of Israel’” (24o). It is difficult to decide whether the description of the story as the carrying out of a divine command, as in the AS, is actually a later theological reworking of the original story, in order to add divine intervention to the actions of the prophet and to rule out the idea that the prophet’s actions were done strictly by human initiative,[[225]](#footnote-225) or the opposite—perhaps a later writer who wanted to tarnish the character of Jeroboam covered up the divine intervention in making him king and made the prophetic action the result of a chance meeting with Jeroboam. In any case, the brief explanation in the AS, “This is what the Lord says concerning the ten tribes of Israel,” shows signs of being early, by contrast with the words of the prophet at the same point in the MT, “For thus said the Lord, the God of Israel: I am about to tear the kingdom out of Solomon’s hands” (11:31), which contains Deuteronomistic markings; the phrase “the Lord, the God of Israel” appears also in Deuteronomistic expansions in the story of the illness of Jeroboam’s son (14:7, 13), and the words “I am about to tear the kingdom out of Solomon’s hands” appear to be connected to the words of God in the Deuteronomistic speech of Solomon, “I will tear the kingdom away from you” (11:11).

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Behind the two versions discussed here lies a prophetic story about the kingship of Jeroboam at whose center was a symbolic action of tearing a garment and granting ten pieces of it to Jeroboam. From a genre perspective, this is reminiscent of other prophetic stories in which someone is declared to be a king, like the stories about Samuel (1 Samuel 8-10; 16), Jehu son of Hanani (1 Kgs 16:1); Elijah (1 Kgs 19:16); and Elisha (2 Kgs 8:7-15; 9:1-13).[[226]](#footnote-226) All these focus on prophets from the north, and the story of Jeroboam and the tearing of the garment might also possibly have developed as an early, northern tradition, separately from the other stories about the breakup of the kingdom.[[227]](#footnote-227) But the two versions in the MT and the AS are not a precise reflection of an early tradition. The extensive differences between the versions testify that they both reflect later transmutations of the story that continued to develop in various forms. The larger expansion was added to the MT and includes an extensive Deuteronomistic speech explaining the divine plan reserved (in that world view) for the house of David and, in the conditions cautioning Jeroboam, also alluding to what would happen to his dynasty. In the MT (and in G\*) this story is a continuation of the summing-up of Solomon’s failure. The story in the AS is much shorter, principally consisting of God’s instructions, with just a brief summary of what actually happened, so it could be that the story has been adapted in order to insert it into the story of the assembly at Shechem. As opposed to the failure of Rehoboam to win the support of the people, the prophetic crowning of Jeroboam is described as having occurred at more or less the same time, presenting the opposite picture, in which Jeroboam’s kingship over Israel is recognized by a divine prophecy.

**3.6 The War of Judah and Benjamin**

Both in the AS and in the MT, the story about the war of Judah and Benjamin against the northern tribes and the prophecy of Shemaiah come immediately after the story of the assembly at Shechem, and in both cases this event concludes the story of the assembly that failed, ending with the rebellion of the northern tribes against Davidic rule. As a result, Rehoboam took with him the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and went to war against the tribes of Israel. Shemaiah the man of God sought to end the war and announced that the separation between Judah and Israel was the will of God: “Thus said the Lord: You shall not set out to make war on your kinsmen the Israelites. Let every man return to his home, for this thing has been brought about by Me” (12:24; LXX 3 Kgdms 12:24y). The king and the people heeded these words, and the separation between Israel and Judah/Benjamin was a *fait accompli*. Almost the only difference between the versions is the opening sentence, which inserts the story in the sequence of the text, as can be seen here:

TEXT

In the MT the story of the battle comes immediately after the end of the assembly. Rehoboam goes right back to Jerusalem after the assembly at Shechem, musters “all the House of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin” (12:21), and goes out to battle immediately. In the AS some time passes before Rehoboam attempts to enforce his rule over the northern tribes. From the Greek text καὶ ἐγένετο ἐνισταμένου τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ, which might perhaps be reconstructed as ויהי לתקופת השנה (following 2 Chron 24:24) or ויהי לתשובת השנה (2 Sam 11:1 and elsewhere), both meaning “at the turn of the year,” it appears that Rehoboam in this version waited until the end of the year or for some period of the year before he went forth to battle.[[228]](#footnote-228)

There are several other minor differences between the versions. The MT adds the number of fighters in the army, “180,000 picked warriors” (12:21; cf. 2 Chron 17:18), a number that is not mentioned at all in the AS, and is given as 120,000 in G\*. In the MT Rehoboam is generally identified in this story as “the son of Solomon” (vv. 21, 23) while this epithet is missing in the AS.[[229]](#footnote-229) Except for these details, there is almost no difference this time between the two versions. Even if this story continued to develop independently in each of them, this time its growth was much more insignificant. It cannot be excluded that in the original shared source of the MT and the AS this episode served as the end of the story of the assembly at Shechem and the conclusion of the story of the separation of the kingdom; that would explain why it is largely similar in both versions. The main point at issue in this episode, which has drawn most of the scholarly attention, is the special nature of the story, its origin and its late dating (evident for a number of reasons), and especially its perspective that “Judah and Benjamin” together are an entity making up the kingdom of Judah. I shall expand on this topic in the discussion below on the dating of the unit, and of the AS as a whole and its parallels in the MT (and in G\*).

**4 The Dating of the Stories**

A comparison between the separate units that constitute the AS both in their setting in LXX 12:24a-z and in the parallel texts in the MT and in G\* indicates a complex situation. On the one hand, the AS does not include the Deuteronomistic or other late layers that are found in the MT, so it is difficult to argue that it is a late (midrashic) reworking of the MT. On the other hand, those scholars who find signs of lateness and midrashic reworking in the AS are also correct, in that the AS does sometimes include reworkings that are late by comparison with the MT. It is preferable to assume that the materials in the AS and their parallels developed from a source or sources shared with the MT, and that the stories continued to develop independently in each of the versions. However, this conclusion refers only to the relationship between the versions of the stories and to the question of which of the versions is earlier or later. If both versions depend on a shared source, it is well worth examining the original stories at the basis of the various versions and to try to establish when they came into being and what their basic goals were. These questions are of great importance for understanding the development not only of the AS but also of the parallel stories in the MT and G\*.

The story of Shemaiah the man of God and the Judah-Benjamin war (12:21–24; 24x-z [section 3.6]) is among the materials in this pericope that have received a lot of attention in connection with the question of dating. Many scholars insist that this story has many similarities to material in Chronicles.[[230]](#footnote-230) First, the collocation “Judah and Benjamin” as a single political group representing the Kingdom of Judah as presented in this story (1 Kgs 12:21, 23 [2 Chron 11:1,3]) appears in the Bible only in late literature. A great many texts of the Second Temple era relate this collocation to a political group of returnees to Zion, living around their center in Jerusalem (Ezra 1:5; 4:1; 10:9; Neh 11:4, 36; cf. Neh 12:34). Chronicles retrojects this collocation, using it to describe the kingdom of Judah (1 Chron 12:17; 2 Chron 11:1, 3, 10, 12 ,23; 14:7; 15:2, 8, 9; 25:5; 31:1; cf. 1 Chron 9:3; 2 Chron 15; 34:9). This phrasing in Chronicles and to a large extent also in the story of the war of Judah and Benjamin in 1 Kings 12 (21-24; 24x-z) stands in contradiction to other stories in the Bible in which Benjamin constitutes a separate group from Judah. The story about the Benjaminite Sheba son of Bichri (2 Sam 20:1-22) and his call for rebellion against Davidic rule, “We have no portion in David, no share in Jesse’s son! Every man to his tent, O Israel!” (v. 1 there) constitute a prime example of conflict between Benjamin and Judah. So does the central story of the Torah (especially Genesis 29-50), in all its diverse layers, present Benjamin as the full brother of Joseph, the father of Ephraim and Manasseh. Benjamin, according to this approach, is connected to the northern tribes, not to Judah. This picture reflects the political approach that Benjamin is one of the Joseph tribes that constitute the basis of the kingdom of Israel (cf. also Ps 80:3), and are not part of Judah, described in the Torah as the son of a different mother. Since Benjamite territory was on the seam line between the two kingdoms, it could be that at some particular period various Benjamite territories were disputed between the two kingdoms (see e.g. 1 Kgs 15:22). It is also possible that after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel the inhabitants of Benjamin drew closer, both politically and as a matter of daily routine, to Judah; we can see this, for example,, from Jeremiah, a prophet who originated in Benjamin and was active in Jerusalem (Jer 1:1); fittingly, the book includes many mentions of the territory of Benjamin.[[231]](#footnote-231) Even so, in Jeremiah as well “the land of Benjamin” is something different than “the cities of Judah” (cf. e.g. Jer 6:1; 17:26; 32:44; 33:13; 37:12). The inclusion of the two groups as part of a single political entity is prominent, as noted, only in sources from the period of the return to Zion and onward.

From a literary perspective as well, the story of the Judah-Benjamin war (12:21-24; 24x-z) resembles a great many prophetic stories in Chronicles that have no parallels in Samuel or Kings. As opposed to the stories of the prophets in Deuteronomistic writing, where the prophecies are intended to serve the historiography, where events are presented as fulfillment of the word of the Lord, prophetic stories in Chronicles are didactic, presenting the prophet, as a man of God, ordinarily unidentified, forcefully standing up to the king or to the public as a whole and trying to make a difference.[[232]](#footnote-232) For example, Azariah son of Oded, who encourages Asa to reform the cult (2 Chron 15:1-7); Hanani’s reproof of Asa (2 Chron 16:7-10); the words of the anonymous man of God to Amaziah about the Ephraimite mercenaries he hired (2 Chron 25:5-10); the prophet Oded’s reproof of the army of Pekah son of Remaliah to stop taking captives from the Judahites who had been defeated in battle (2 Chron 28:6-11). There is an additional story in Chronicles about our same prophet Shemaiah (lacking a parallel in Kings) in which he reproves Rehoboam and his officers for having sinned, which brought King Shishak of Egypt up against them, as a result of which they repented and were not destroyed on Shishak’s march (2 Chron 12:5-8). The story of the Judah-Benjamin war and Shemaiah the man of God is much closer to these Chronicles prophetic stories than it is to those in Kings.

The exaggerated, ahistorical number of the soldiers is also in the spirit of the Chronicles stories. (Admittedly, the AS is shorter and does not include the number of soldiers.) The MT notes the number as 180,000 (1 Kgs 12:21; cf. 2 Chron 17:18); the parallel text in G\* has 120,000 (cf. 1 Chron 18:4; 2 Chron 28:6; but also Jud 8:10). Even if these numbers are late elements in the story, they match its Chronistic style.

Moreover, this story is inconsistent with what the continuation in Kings tells us. The story of the Judah-Benjamin war recounts the end of the conflict between Israel and Judah and informs us that the kingdom’s breaking in two was God’s will, yet the continuation tells us about a permanent struggle between Jeroboam and Rehoboam, all their days and the days of Rehoboam’s son (1 Kgs 14:30; 15:6) and continuing into the days of their first heirs (1 Kgs 15:16-20, 32). For all these reasons, many scholars are of the opinion that this is a late plus in the spirit of Chronicles, perhaps even a plus that came into Kings *from* Chronicles, in this version or another.[[233]](#footnote-233)

It is interesting that in other texts in the AS (and their parallels in the MT and G\*) one also finds a similar ten tribes versus two approach, the two—as is apparent from their proximity to this story—being Judah and Benjamin. The story of the tearing of the garment is especially striking in this regard, telling as it does about a symbolic action in which the prophet tears a new garment into 12 pieces and gives 10 of them to Jeroboam (1 Kgs 11:31; LXX 12:24o). This is the short version that is found in the AS and embedded also in the MT. But the MT has an added Deuteronomistic layer, apparently an extremely late one, which emphasizes, in conflict with simple arithmetic, that even though Jeroboam is given 10 of the 12 pieces, the kingdom of Judah is just a single tribe: “But one tribe shall remain his—for the sake of My servant David” (11:32) or “To his son I will give one tribe” (v. 36; see also v. 13).[[234]](#footnote-234) The ill fit between the emphasis on one tribe, in the Deuteronomistic layer, versus the text with 10 pieces out of 12 is the result of a massive expansion in the MT of the older story reflected in the AS. According to the basic layer of the plot, both versions are talking about two tribes making up the kingdom of Judah, evidently Judah and Benjamin.

The story of the assembly at Shechem in the AS also concludes with a mention of Judah and Benjamin: “the whole tribe of Judah and the whole tribe of Benjamin went after him” (24u), while the parallel verse in the MT speaks of a single tribe: “Only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to the House of David” (1 Kgs 12:20b). At first glance, one might assume that the AS reflects a harmonization, that is, an attempt to make the story of the assembly at Shechem, and perhaps also the ten tribes in the story of the tearing of the garment, agree with the story of the Judah/Benjamin war. But a more meticulous look at the versions reveals that the style of MT v. 20b is reminiscent of Deuteronomistic formulations like 2 Kgs 17:18: “The Lord was incensed at Israel and He banished them from His presence; none was left but the tribe of Judah alone.” We may speculate, therefore, that the verse that originally ended the story did include both Judah and Benjamin, as in the AS, and that 12:20 in the MT has been reworked in Deuteronomistic style, adjusting the basic story that told of ten tribes leaving and two remaining (11:30-31) to emphasize that just a single tribe remained, as in other Deuteronomistic texts (11:13, 32, 36).[[235]](#footnote-235) These last arguments indicate, therefore, that it is not just the story of Shemaiah the man of God and the Judah-Benjamite war but also the story of the tearing of the garment (in its original form, without Deuteronomistic layers) and the story of the assembly at Shechem (according to the last verse in the AS and G\*) that view the kingdom of Judah as including two tribes, apparently Judah and Benjamin. This is similar to the way Judah is understood in the era of the return to Zion, since the collocation “Judah and Benjamin” appears in the literature describing this period.

If this assumption is correct, it supports the hypothesis of those scholars who consider the story of the assembly (linked with the Judah-Benjamin war in all three versions) to be late, belonging perhaps to the Persian period.[[236]](#footnote-236) This is not a historical story full of character and detail but a paradigmatic legend seeking to transmit an educational message. The characters in this story are exaggerated types, not real individuals; they are portrayed in black and white to serve a particular idea. The details included are those necessary for constructing the story, like the name Rehoboam, the first king of Judah after the split, and the place where the events occurred, Shechem, the first capital of the kingdom of Israel (1 Kgs 12:25), but it is difficult to view this story as a realistic picture of the Israelite governmental framework from the 10th c. BCE.[[237]](#footnote-237) Alexander Rofé points to additional linguistic and ideological signs testifying to a Persian-period date.[[238]](#footnote-238) The prime example is the term ילדים, appearing in the Bible only in Daniel (1:4, 10, 13, 15, 17). In Standard Biblical Hebrew the word ילדים refers to children,[[239]](#footnote-239) but in late sources like Eccl 11:9-10 and in Mishnaic Hebrew (e.g., t. Suk. 4:1; m. Sot. 1:4) it refers to young adulthood, and the sense of the word in Kings and Daniel apparently stems from this later meaning, which can also fit Rehoboam’s younger advisers, who grew up in the palace with him. In the AS the term ילדים (τὰ παιδάρια) appears clearly just once (v. 24s [above, section 3.5]), but this datum does not change the picture with regard to the final version of the story in the AS. It may be that the story took shape in stages over the course of some centuries, but in its final form (in both versions) especially if the Judah-Benjamin story (which is linked with it both in the MT and in the AS) is part of it, the story apparently belongs to the Persian period.

At the same time, several of the stories about Jeroboam (in the AS and in the MT) are apparently based on an older, northern kernel that may have presented the perspective of people from the Kingdom of Israel who cherished the memory of the first Israelite king. These stories of theirs are reminiscent of other prophetic stories, most of them northern, from Samuel and Kings. But even these, in the form we have them, have apparently undergone later revision.

The prophetic story of the tearing of the garment, for example, which tells od the crowning of Jeroboam by a man of God, is certainly based on a northern kernel. It is very like the stories about the crowning of Saul and David by Samuel (1 Samuel 8-10; 15-16); of Baasha by Jehu son of Nimshi (1 Kgs 16:1), of Jehu by Elisha through one of the sons of the prophets (2 Kgs 9:1-13). Just one step from these are the command to Elijah to anoint Hazael as king of Aram and Jehu as king of Israel (1 Kgs 19:15-16) and the stories of Elisha’s prophecy about the death of Hadad king of Aram and the rise of Hazael as king (2 Kgs 8:7-15). All these tell of prophets or kings from the north, like Jeroboam. A similar motif of tearing a garment to symbolize the tearing away of a kingdom is found in the interaction between Saul and Samuel in 1 Sam 15:26-28. It is reasonable to assume that prophetic stories of this kind were also told about Jeroboam, the first king of the northern kingdom, certainly by the inhabitants of that kingdom, and something of the sort must be at the core of the story about Jeroboam’s being crowned by the prophet in the book of Kings. At the same time, as already noted, at bottom, this story tells of the division of the kingdom between ten tribes in the Kingdom of Israel and two tribes in the Kingdom of Judah. As emerges from what follows, both in the MT and in the AS, the two tribes hinted at here must be Judah and Benjamin. If the idea that Judah and Benjamin were a single political unit exists in this story as well, apparently it reflects the political perspective of the days of the return to Zion.

Viewing this as a late perspective rather than an early tradition stemming from Jeroboam’s own circle can illuminate the growth of the story afresh. As noted, some scholars find it hard to believe that the similarity between *śalmâ* ‘garment’ and *šəlōmō* ‘Solomon’ (both written שלמה in Hebrew) is a coincidence. It could be that the choice of the word *śalmâ*, appearing twice in the story (1 Kgs 11:29-30) constitutes a kind of hidden midrash on the name Solomon, and the story as a whole was created as a midrashic elaboration of the story about tearing the kingship away from Solomon (11:31).[[240]](#footnote-240) We have already seen midrashic elaborations of this kind in the pluses in Chapter 2 that we discussed in Part 1 of the book, and perhaps they bear witness to a later growth of the story, in a quasi-Chronistic scribal school.

The story about the illness of Jeroboam’s son might also include a kernel of a northern prophetic story or at least an imitation of this sort of story. The gist of the earliest version of the story described how the seer not only knew about the death of Jeroboam’s son but understood it as the symbolic end of Jeroboam’s dynasty. The late Deuteronomistic reworking, most notably in the MT, changes the focus of the story from the personal plane, with regard to Jeroboam and his dynasty, to a more general perspective on this dynasty as representing a kingdom born in sin, a perspective that anticipates the exile and destruction of the kingdom as a whole. But the oldest layer of the story might be compared to stories of prophets being asked questions and responding to a king or his agent with news of punishment (2 Kings 1; 8:7-15). Most such stories focus on northern prophets. Some scholars have even identified stylistic linguistic signs in the stories of the northern prophets; for example, the *ketiv* אתי in the MT of 1 Kgs 14:2 for the 2 f.s. pronoun, which can be found elsewhere too in stories with a northern orientation (Jud 17:2; 1 Kgs 14:2; 2 Kgs 4:16, 23; 8:1; but cf. also Jer 4:30; Ezek 36:13).[[241]](#footnote-241) At the same time, the story of Jeroboam’s son’s illness has elements in every version that are reminiscent of Chronicles. Ahijah’s words of profound respect for Jeroboam’s dead son, “And all Israel shall lament over him” in the MT (14:13), or “And they shall lament for the child, ‘Woe, O Lord’” in the AS (24m), or as both versions add, “For in him alone … has some devotion been found to the Lord,” all these are part of the basic layer of the story. These words of respect contradict the Deuteronomistic layers in the story, which prophesy humiliating destruction for the dynasty of Jeroboam. The Deuteronomistic writers were clearly not interested in a respectable burial for anyone in Jeroboam’s family, or in the announcement that there was some good in the child. This detail, about Jeroboam’s son being brought to a respectable burial, belongs to the base level of the story. Linguistically and ideologically, speaking of a “good thing” that was found in the boy recalls certain verses in Chronicles, connected with the Chronicler’s belief in personal reward and punishment. An example is the prophecy of Jehu son of Hanani to King Jehoshaphat that wrath from the Lord had come upon him, but that his fate would nonetheless be a good one because of his constructive actions: “However, there are good things in you, for you have purged the land of the sacred posts and have dedicated yourself to worship God” (2 Chron 19:3). The expression “good things” as a reason there would be no harsh punishment also appears in Shishak’s march against Judah. As it is recounted in Chronicles, Shishak did not destroy Jerusalem because Rehoboam had repented and also because “in Judah, too, good things were found” (2 Chron 12:12).[[242]](#footnote-242) It is not impossible that the author of the base story about the illness of Jeroboam’s son, who told of the bitter end of Jeroboam and his family, was close to early Chronistic circles and perhaps also held the belief in personal reward that obligated him to recount that “a good thing” was found in Jeroboam’s son, and that this was the reason he received a respectable burial.

The story about Jeroboam’s rebellion, his fleeing to Egypt, and his leaving Egypt and rising to the leadership of Ephraim all may be originally based on a northern kernel that came out of royal circles who looked at Jeroboam as the founding king. Traditions about the king who founded the kingdom of Israel were certainly widespread for the length of the long period of his kingship, and the rise of Jeroboam II in the 8th century BCE offer one era in which the character of Jeroboam I certainly must have had something of a renaissance.[[243]](#footnote-243) As many scholars have seen, one can sense the ancient nature of a story that includes allusions to traditions that were recounted in Israel about the ancestors of the people (like the tradition of the exodus from Egypt and the character of Moses). The same applies, as I have shown, to Joseph, the ancestor of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh who constituted the lion’s share of the kingdom, and to Jephthah the Gileadite.

All the same, the story of Jeroboam’s rise as we have it, whether in the AS or in the MT, is not a reflection of the northern tradition about the rise of Jeroboam. The two main versions preserve a very abridged story, in which it is hard to understand all the details; each of the versions seems to be missing something. It is also evident that the story has undergone significant changes in each of the versions and therefore does not faithfully reflect a “northern tradition,” yet on the other hand it is difficult to track down the precise date of the versions that we do have. In the MT we find a very particular reworking of the story of Jeroboam’s rise, in which not only has it been greatly abridged, but parts of it have been transferred to an otherwise unknown, marginal character, Hadad the Edomite. This pericope about Hadad appears in different places in the MT and G\* and apparently was added to Kings at a relatively late stage.[[244]](#footnote-244)

Similarly, the story of Jeroboam’s rise in the AS contains a number of linguistic and stylistic signs of Late Biblical Hebrew, indicating a close relationship to the Chronistic school. This version adds to the description of Jeroboam having been appointed over the forced labor of the House of Joseph the adjective ἄρχων σκυτάλης. The word σκυτάλη is relatively rare in the Septuagint, but in 2 Sam 3:29 it translates פלך (“spindle”), which was apparently also the word in the Hebrew Vorlage of 24b. It seems, therefore, that the Hebrew expression here must have been שר הפלך, “district chief.”[[245]](#footnote-245) This expression occurs only in Late Biblical Hebrew (e.g., Neh 3:14, 15; cf. 9, 12, 16, 17, 18), and if this reconstruction is accurate it is further evidence that the AS continued to develop in the course of the Persian period.[[246]](#footnote-246)

Another example is found in the concluding sentence of the in the AS version of Jeroboam’s rise: “And Jeroboam departed from Egypt and came to the land of Zererah, which is in Mount Ephraim, and there all the tribe of Ephraim gathered, and Jeroboam built a fortress there” (24f). In the Greek text we are told that Jeroboam built a χάραξ, which in the LXX translates the Hebrew words מצור (Deut 20:10), מצוד (Eccl 9:14), מֻצָּב (Isa 29:3), מגור (Isa 31:9), סללה (Isa 37:33; Jer 33:4 [40:4 in the LXX]; Ezek 4:2; 26:8), כר (Ezek 21:27). Most of these Hebrew words, like מצור and מצוד, are generally explained in classical biblical literature as meaning “siege, siegeworks” or some other means of offensive military activity. If that is the meaning of χάραξ, it should be explained here as “an entrenched camp,” used for camping and defense, not offense, so this word does not match מצור and מצוד, which mainly appear in late biblical literature and especially in Chronicles with the meaning “stronghold, fortified city” (מצור: 2 Chron 8:5; 11:5; מצורה: 2 Chron 11:10, 11, 23; 12:4, 21:3).[[247]](#footnote-247) It is interesting that the story about Rehoboam in Chronicles, which does not appear in Kings, emphasizes the building of cities of מצורה (“fortified towns”) and their capture by Shishak (2 Chron 11:10, 11, 23; 12:4) as the reverse of this verse in Chronicles and the AS telling about Jeroboam as one who built מצור or מצורה/מצודה in Zererah/Zeredah. In any case, if the reconstruction מצור(ה) or מצודה is correct, and the Hebrew base text of v. 24f was something on the order of ויצא ירבעם ממצרים ויבא לארץ צררה בהר אפרים ויקבץ את כל שבט אפרים ויבן ירבעם שם מצורה, it could be that we have in the Hebrew verse not only something quasi-Chronistic in terms of vocabulary and knowledge, but perhaps also an implied midrashic alliteration on the name of Jeroboam’s city, Zererah/Zeredah.[[248]](#footnote-248) It appears, then, that in its final form (as we have it), the story of Jeroboam’s return in the MT, even if based on an ancient kernel, underwent some kind of adaptation, and in the AS the story was apparently took a final shape resembling that of the pre-Chronistic texts that we previously encountered telling of the combination of “Judah and Benjamin.”

The dating of the materials that make up the AS and their parallels in the MT (and the other versions) is therefore a complicated task. The anthology of stories about the breakup of the kingdom and the fate of the House of Jeroboam preserved in the AS and in the parallel material in the MT includes material from various eras. These materials may have reached the MT in different stages, and some of them underwent Deuteronomistic editing or late Deuteronomistic adaptation. All the same, the final consolidation of these materials is apparently quite late, and the stories explicitly mention Judah and Benjamin or the division of ten tribes against two tribes, both apparently reflecting the period of the return to Zion. Even in the Kings version of the MT these stories seem to have been inserted in the course of the Persian period, and they underwent a late Deuteronomistic editing. It is possible that the fact that this cycle of stories took final shape at a relatively late stage contributed to its being preserved in the AS as a separate document inserted as a whole, as a doublet, into the Septuagint, next to the other stories that were inserted into a separate edition of the book of Kings. As in Chapter 2, the writer of the LXX found this document that preserved various stories of the breakup of the kingdom in a different version than in his own text, which he copied and sought to preserve complete.

**5 Conclusions: The Formation of the AS and Its Counterparts in MT/G\***

**1. What is the AS?**

One of the claims most pervasive in scholarship is that the AS is a tendentious abridgement and adaptation of the story of Jeroboam and Rehoboam in a version resembling the MT, created with the goal of tarnishing Jeroboam. This perspective is familiar to us from the late biblical texts that viewed Jeroboam as the ultimate sinful king and therefore found it necessary that such adaptations occur also in early literature and in the biblical textual witnesses. Certain verses in the AS support this suggestion. For example, the description of Jeroboam as the son of a prostitute (as opposed to “a widow woman” in the MT) and the absence of any mention of Jeroboam’s father’s name evidenetly serve this tendency to tarnish Jeroboam. But not everything in the AS is an abridgment, and one certainly cannot argue that Jeroboam is tarnished everywhere in the AS. On the contrary, many verses in the AS are devoted to stories about Jeroboam. This version of his story expands the description of his stay in the court of the Egyptian king. Like Solomon, he married an Egyptian wife, one of the king’s daughters, and assumed a respectable position in the court of the Egyptian king. This more extensive story perhaps preserves northern traditions that described Jeroboam’s miraculous rise from the lowliest origins to become the first king of Israel. The story also has motifs reminiscent of the stories of Moses and Joseph. If the aim of the AS was to tarnish Jeroboam, why would stories like those in the AS be told about him, and why were all the Deuteronomistic layers in the story of his son’s illness, enumerating Jeroboam’s sins and prophesying the end of his dynasty and of the kingdom of Israel, removed?

Another suggestion that has been made is that the AS reflects the earliest form of the stories about Jeroboam and Rehoboam, and that the MT developed from this collection. On the face of it, there is certainly evidence for this argument, since large parts of the Deuteronomistic (or Deuteronomistic-like) insertions are missing in the AS, and it is hard to imagine that a late writer who was dependent on the MT could so successfully pinpoint the Deuteronomistic or Chronistic insertions (as in the case of 12:17) and remove them. In many cases, the AS reflects a shorter version, so the principle *lectio brevis potior*, along with other historical and linguistic considerations, supports the idea that this version is early. On the other hand, there are more than a few signs indicating that some elements of the AS are late and secondary by comparison with the MT.

Each of the various possibilities has its pros and cons, but the results of our discussion so far support a different explanation of how the AS came into, one that adopts the advantages of each approach and comprehensively addresses all the problems. According to this explanation, the AS and the MT were both dependent on a *shared source* that continued to develop in different ways in each of the versions. In the MT, the stories from the shared source, or some of them, underwent massive, late Deuteronomistic editing, while this editing left no trace in the AS. Meanwhile, these same stories continued to develop in different ways into the AS, the cycle of stories that was inserted into the LXX as a sort of doublet. The AS and MT versions of the stories of Jeroboam and Rehoboam reflect, then, two parallel, competing formulations of this pericope, each of which was created from shared sources. The two formulations continued to develop in parallel while the version in the MT underwent a late Deuteronomistic adaptation and that in the AS underwent a late adaptation of a different sort. The explanation suggested here is not the simple sort of explanation in which one version developed from the other, but it is the one explanation that solves most of the issues.

The shared source might have been an anthology that included a cycle of stories about the breakup of the kingdom and the fate of the dynasty of Jeroboam. These stories could have been created at various periods but several of them, such as the story of the Judah-Benjamin war, have a distinctly Chronistic style and were inserted in the collection apparently in the period of the return to Zion. Highlighting Judah and Benjamin as part of the early Davidic kingdom might reflect a desire in the era of the return to Zion to retroject their contemporary approach to the First Temple period. The relative lateness of this collection assisted in preserving its development as an independent collection and eventually to its insertion in the Septuagint as a sort of appendix, that is, the AS. In the version reflected in the MT (and G\*) the stories were inserted differently, and there is no way to know precisely when these stories made it into this version. Nor is there any certainty that they were edited together all at once. It could be that some of the stories made it into the MT/G\* version relatively early, yet it is reasonable to assume that some of the stories, like the stories of the Judah-Benjamin war, entered the MT during the course of the Persian period from a late collection like the shared source from which the AS also developed. The story of Jeroboam’s rise was inserted in two different ways in the MT. One of them abridged and obscured the story, since it was inserted in a very fragmentary way in 1 Kings 11, where there is merely a slight allusion to some sort of rebellion initiated by Jeroboam and to his being pursued by Solomon. The other one preserved more parts of the story in more detail, but changed the name of the protagonist, thus creating a new character and plot. In this case, in 1 Kgs 11:14-22 and 25a, Jeroboam metamorphosed into a marginal character, Hadad the Edomite. Possibly the story of Jeroboam’s rise was inserted twice in two different ways in the MT because this took place at two different editorial stages.

**12 The Stories that Make Up the AS: The Traditions about the Breakup of the United Monarchy**

Except for the introduction to the unit (24a), that is, the conclusion of Solomon’s reign and the rise of Rehoboam, formulated in the style of other such conclusions and introductions in the book of Kings, the AS includes five episodes that apparently existed originally as independent traditions: (1) the story of Jeroboam’s rise, which tells about his rebellion against Solomon, his escape to Egypt, and his return from there to Ephraim; (2) the story of the illness of Jeroboam’s son, which tells how Jeroboam sent his wife to a prophet to ask about his son’s illness and was told that he would die; (3) the story about the tearing of the garment, in which a prophet grants ten pieces of the garment to Jeroboam to symbolize his reign over the tribes of Israel; (4) the story of the assembly at Shechem, in which the people ask Rehoboam to ease the burden of forced labor and, after their request is rejected, call for rebellion against Davidic rule; and (5) the story of the Judah-Benjamin war against the tribes of Israel, in which the man of God stops the war by arguing that the situation was the will of God. Since the story about the Judah-Benjamin war concludes the story of the assembly at Shechem in all the existing versions, it appears that these two episodes were combined at a very early stage; they might be considered a single story. The entire cycle of stories actually deals with the question of why the united monarchy broke apart. It presents several competing reasons.

One reason for the kingdom to break apart and for the rise of the kingdom of Israel is found in the story of the rebellion of Jeroboam and his return to Ephraim. This story may preserve something of the northern traditions about the first Israelite king. In the kingdom of Israel they certainly told stories that put Jeroboam’s charismatic personality at the center. He was the man who established the northern kingdom, and these stories put a positive spin on his rise to kingship. Of this, apparently, there remain in the Bible just a few fragments. The stories in the Bible describe the rise of Jeroboam, born to a woman of the lowest social class (“a widow woman” in the MT, or “a prostitute” in the AS), but like Jephthah or Sargon the Great, the famous king of Akkad, Jeroboam succeeded in climbing the ranks, becoming an official in the court of King Solomon, in charge of the forced labor of the House of Joseph. At some stage, Jeroboam rebelled against Solomon and fled to Egypt. After Solomon’s death Jeroboam left Egypt and managed to rise to prominence as an Ephraimite leader. As noted, only a few parts of this story are preserved in the MT (1 Kgs 11:26-28, 40; 12:20); we find more of it in the AS. There, the story is much more extensive, recounting Jeroboam’s stay in Egypt, his marriage to an Egyptian princess, and the birth of his son. In the MT, we have suggested, this story migrated to the marginal character of Hadad the Edomite.

The story of the illness of Jeroboam’s son, which comes next in the AS, does not provide an additional explanation for the rise of the kingdom of Israel. On the contrary, in the MT it envisions the end of the house of Jeroboam and, beyond that, the destruction of the kingdom of Israel. In the AS it continues the story of Jeroboam’s rise. There, the story takes place somewhat after his return to Ephraim and his becoming a leader, yet this version too may hint at the future of the house of Jeroboam even though it occurs at an earlier stage of Jeroboam’s life. The story is also inserted in this anthology because it belongs to the group of stories about Jeroboam at Zeredah and alludes to the tragic end of the house of Jeroboam just a short time after the rise of this royal dynasty in the north.

The story about the tearing of the garment apparently constitutes an additional, separate tradition about the rise of Jeroboam. In the MT this tradition accompanies the story of the rebellion, but as we have explained, the story of the tearing of the garment, which occurred in secret, is not connected to the rebellion, which happened openly. This is an independent tradition about Jeroboam’s gaining the kingship through a prophet. It is reasonable to assume that this is one of the stories that circulated among the prophets, telling how a prophet tore the kingship from Solomon and crowned the first king of Israel. It actually provides a prophetic explanation about the breakup of the united monarchy.

Among the sages and advisers of the biblical period there developed a completely different explanation for the breakup of the united monarchy, conveyed in the story of the assembly at Shechem in 1 Kings 12. This story makes Rehoboam’s stupidity in not being responsive to the people’s request to ease the burden of forced labor, not being attentive to their plight, the reason for the breakup. A comparison of G\* and the AS reveals that Jeroboam is not in the original version of this story. The original version focuses on the people as a body, on the elders who gave good advice, on the young men who gave bad advice, and on Rehoboam, who acted stupidly. It is not merely that he chose the bad advice but that he responded arrogantly with the famous words, “My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins … my father flogged you with whips, but I will flog you with scorpions” (1 Kgs 12:10-11). The people were left with no choice but rebellion against Davidic rule: “We have no portion in David, no share in Jesse’s son!” (1 Kgs 12:16). The story bears a timeless, universal message, one that can be found in many other stories throughout the world that show the failures of a tough approach versus the clear advantage of flexibility and compromise.[[249]](#footnote-249) All the main versions of this story are accompanied by the story of the Judah–Benjamin war, explaining how Rehoboam sought to put down the rebellion, but the man of God stopped the war, asserting that the breakup was God’s will.

Other explanations found in the MT for the breakup of the united monarchy did not make it into the AS. For example, the AS does not have the massive Deuteronomistic layer found in the MT and G\*. As opposed to the stories that focus on the rise of Jeroboam or the failure of Rehoboam, this layer prefers a theological explanation for the breakup of the kingdom, seeing it as the result of Solomon’s sins at the end of his days (e.g. 1 Kgs 11:9–13, 32-39; 12:15). These editorial layers, as noted, are missing in the AS, but they are characteristic of the MT and G\*. Another text missing from the AS version of the story of the assembly at Shechem is the brief notice about Adoram (12:18a, 19). As I suggested above, this notice stands on its own, independently, like the brief notice of Edom rebelling against Judah in 2 Kgs 8:21-22. The notice about Adoram also manages to be an additional, competing explanation for the breakup of the monarchy. According to it, Adoram is sent by Rehoboam (apparently shortly after he becomes king) to raise a labor force from Israel, but he is stoned to death (12:18a). From that moment, the tribes of Israel are no longer part of the Davidic kingdom (12:19). As in the story of the assembly, and as alluded to in the story of Jeroboam’s rise (that early in his career he was in charge of the forced labor of the House of David), the story of Adoram too tells of discontent among the people and the emergence of rebellion as a result of the harshness of the forced labor that the Davidic kings imposed on the tribes of Israel, but each version tells it in a different way.

Neither did a complete unit of stories devoted to tales of Bethel in the Jeroboam era make it into the AS: the story of setting up the golden calves (12:25–33) and the story of the man of God who came from Judah to Bethel (13:1–34). These stories apparently belong to a different source than the previous ones. This may have been a cycle of stories about Jeroboam and Bethel connected in some way to the Deuteronomistic scribal circle. It may of course be that the Bethel unit was originally two separate, independent stories, but both focus on topics that are central to the Deuteronomistic ideology, like worshiping at the high places, non-Levite priests, the altar at Bethel, and the sins of Jeroboam. The story in 1 Kings 13 even mentions Josiah (13:2), the king who most conspicuously implements the Deuteronomistic ideology. The stories of Jeroboam at Bethel come, then, from a different source and there is, therefore, no reference to them in the AS anthology.

The AS is actually, then, a cycle of stories devoted to the breakup of the united monarchy. It presents various reasons and joins together a number of stories connected to Jeroboam and Rehoboam and describes events leading to the development of the two separate kingdoms. The MT preserves additional traditions in the story of Adoram and a late Deuteronomistic layer found in 1 Kings 11–12 and 14. All the same, it is important to emphasize that the historical reality might be completely different. There are signs that testify to the separate, organic growth of these two political entities, Israel and Judah, rather than to a single political entity that split into two kingdoms.[[250]](#footnote-250) But at some point long after the days of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, apparently at the beginning of the Persian period, when the cycle of stories in the AS and the pericope in the MT achieved their final form, these were the stories that biblical tradition chose to feature, and the message one gets from both main versions is combined. Many factors brought about the split: the rebellion of Jeroboam, the leader of the House of Joseph; the stupidity of Rehoboam; the sending of the prophet who crowned Jeroboam as king over Israel. The MT added also a side tradition about the killing of Adoram, and a layer of Deuteronomistic editing that blamed the split on the sins of Solomon.

What is especially prominent in the final form of this collection of stories, whether in the MT or in the AS, is the Judah-Benjamin war. In the Septuagint, that story actually appears twice—once in G\* and, slightly differently, as part of the AS—and the story thus forms a sort of repetitive resumption enclosing the AS. This story, and apparently also the story of the tearing of the garment with its ten tribes (as opposed to two), and the story of the assembly that ends (in the AS and in G\*) with the breaking away of all the tribes except for Judah and Benjamin, describe the Kingdom of Judah from its inception as composed of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as opposed to other approaches in the Bible that see Benjamin as one of the Joseph tribes and part of the kingdom of Ephraim. The collocation of “Judah and Benjamin” as a single political grouping. as we have noted, appears only in late biblical literature, in a long series of texts that relate to the group of returnees to Zion who lived in and around Jerusalem (e.g. Ezra 1:5; 4:1; 10:9; Neh 11:4, 36). Chronicles anachronistically describes the kingdom of Judah this way in First Temple times (e.g. 1 Chron 12:17; 2 Chron 11:1, 3, 10, 12, 23; 14:7; 15:2, 8, 9; 25:5; 31:1), and this is also one of the messages that arises from the stories that appear in the AS and the parallel texts in the MT.

This cycle of stories (in its AS and MT forms) developed over a long period of time, but was completed during the course of the Persian period, when questions of similarity to or differentiation from the surrounding groups, like the Benjamites on the one hand and the Samaritans on the other, created the need to redefine the groups in the stories about the split of the kingdom. Coins from the Persian period tell us that at least one governor of Samaria in this period was named Jeroboam, something that tells us that identity formation in that era involved continuing to engage with traditions about the beginning of the Kingdom of Israel.[[251]](#footnote-251) Some of the stories we have examined preserve unique information about Jeroboam; those that portray him as a second Joseph perhaps even preserve something of the stories that were told in Benjamin and in the north, but the stories that I have mentioned see Benjamin as part of the Davidic kingdom. From this point of view, the collection explains the reasons that led to the breakup of the united monarchy. These texts acquired their final form, in all the versions, out of a desire to describe the Kingdom of Judah in the First Temple period in a way that serves a Second Temple-era ideology that saw the Benjamites as part of the group that had returned to Zion. As opposed to those scholars who consider the Alternative Story of the Septuagint a post-exilic retelling of the story in the MT, it appears that the story in the MT itself belongs to this period. This finding is consistent with the conclusion we have reached here, that in fact the two versions are dependent on a shared source and that the time of the final formulation of the two versions is the Persian period. It is not possible, then, to say that the AS is always either later or earlier than the version in the MT, but it provides a unique perspective on the literary raw materials of the period of the return to Zion, which were integrated into the different versions in different forms.

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195. See the dictionaries … Rofé … for a different opinion with regard to the meaning of the term “young men” and from there also to a different dating of the chapter, see Fox? Fuchs? 1996; Weingart 2020, 143-144; Ueberschaer, *Gründungsmythos*, 169 n. 532. [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
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