In recent years interest in the post-exilic period, and in the Chronicler’s History, has accelerated rapidly. Viewpoints have appeared differing significantly from the “scholarly orthodoxy” of the first part of the twentieth century. To a degree these new views are the results of new data, such as the Wadi-ed-Daliyeh papyri, or mark the continuing results of textual and epigraphical studies relating to the Dead Sea Scrolls. But at another level they reflect continuing discontent with the current state of studies in this area, and have their basis in the desire to arrive at a more satisfactory understanding—literary, historical, and theological—of one of the most perplexing bodies of material in the Old Testament.

These new studies have already begun to occasion new emphases in the study of the Chronicler’s theology. As early as W. Rudolph’s commentary, less emphasis was being placed upon the position of the Levites in the book 1). It is now rare to find the opinion voiced that the author was a Levite, perhaps even a member of the temple choir. There has been a renewed interest in matters relating to the monarchy, to the relationship between David and Solomon, to messianism and eschatology, and to the Chronicler’s attitude toward foreigners in general and the north and Samaritans in particular. Through it all, however, retribution has continued to function as a convenient label under which many of the features unique to the Chronicler, in particular 2 Chron. x-xxxvi, may be grouped.

It is my understanding that, with the exception of the monarchy, some degree of consensus has been attained on these significant items so far as their occurrence in the two books of Chronicles is

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1) *Chronikbücher* (Tübingen, 1954), pp. 13-16; “Problems of the Books of Chronicles”, *VT* 4 (1954), pp. 401-9. As Rudolph has indicated, most of the passages commonly used to support the Chronicler’s supposed dedication to the Levites are best considered later expansions.
concerned 2). With new possibilities now at hand for considering the literary structure of Ezra-Nehemiah, and with literary and linguistic studies at something of a standstill 3), I propose that we reinvestigate these areas of primary concern in Chronicles and compare the results with Ezra-Nehemiah, hoping thereby to gain additional perspectives into the unity and extent of the Chronicler’s History. I shall arrange the study under three headings: (1) Retribution; (2) Samaritans and Foreigners; and (3) Monarchy and Temple.

In considering the theology of Chronicles, I shall disregard portions of the books often considered later additions, such as 1 Chron. i-ix and xxiii-xxvii. Moreover, I shall consider only those portions of Chronicles which have no parallel in Samuel-Kings, both because of the textual difficulties inherent in such a study and because of the likelihood that the author’s own thoughts would appear more clearly in portions of the work where he appears to be composing independently of known sources 4).

I. The Theology of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah

A. Retribution

Retribution has long been considered a major facet of the theology of Chronicles. However, insufficient attention has been given to the unique manner in which the Chronicler expresses the positive and negative aspects of this dogma. The message voiced repeatedly in Chronicles, introduced already in David’s programmatic speech to Solomon, is “If you seek him [Yahweh], he will be found by you;

2) Although R. Mosis, Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistenschen Geschichtswerkes (Freiburg, 1973), pp. 201 f. et passim, has inveighed against a particular theory of individual retribution, in my opinion unsuccessfully.
