

REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

AN ETERNAL FOUNDATION:  
A THEOLOGICAL-EXEGESIS OF ZECHARIAH 6:9-15

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### Translation of Zechariah 6:9-15

**6:9** And the Word of Yahweh<sup>a</sup> came to me saying<sup>b</sup>

**6:10** “Take<sup>c</sup> [an offering]<sup>d</sup> from<sup>e</sup> the exiles<sup>f</sup> from Heldai, and from Tobiah, and from Jedaiah,<sup>g</sup> who came from Babylon,<sup>j</sup> and you,<sup>h</sup> enter on that day,<sup>i</sup> and enter into the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah.

**6:11** And take<sup>k</sup> silver and gold, and make a crown, and set<sup>l</sup> it on the head of Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest.<sup>m</sup>

**6:12** And speak to him saying, “This is what Yahweh of Armies says,<sup>n</sup> ‘Look! A man<sup>o</sup> whose name is Branch<sup>p</sup> and he will branch out from under his place<sup>q</sup> and he will build the temple of Yahweh.<sup>r</sup>

**6:13** He himself<sup>s</sup> will build the temple of Yahweh, even he himself will wear royal robes, and he will dwell, and he will rule on his throne,<sup>t</sup> and so a priest will be on his throne,<sup>u</sup> and the counsel of peace will be between the two of them.<sup>v</sup>

**6:14** And the crown will be to Helem, and to Tobiah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of Yahweh.<sup>w</sup>

**6:15** Now foreigners will come,<sup>x</sup> and they will build the temple of Yahweh,<sup>y</sup> and you will realize that Yahweh of Armies sent me to you, and it will be so if you carefully obey at the voice of Yahweh your God.<sup>z</sup>

### Justification of Translation

- a) This is a scene-setting, clause initial verb beginning a new section, signature of the prophets of Yahweh (1 Sam. 15:10; 2 Sam. 7:4; 1 Kings 13:20, 16:1, 17:2, 21:17, Isa. 38:4, Jer. 1:4, 2:1) and structures Zechariah’s prophecy (4:8, 7:4, 7:8, 8:1, 8:18). Rogland describes this clause as the “reception formula” which helps delineate a structure because it occurs at the beginning of sections, marking the occurrence of the communication event.”<sup>1</sup>
- b) The discourse marker **לְאַמְרָה** (infinitive construct) introduces speech, and in this case, divine speech.<sup>2</sup>
- c) The infinitive absolute (**לְקַדֵּשׁ**) is functioning as a finite verb (imperative). Joüon and T. Muraoka write, “The inf. abs. is especially found in commands given by God or a military commander.”<sup>3</sup> Likewise, Waltke and O’Connor write that the infinitive absolute can be “used as a word of command or as an interjection is asyndetic and begins its clause.”<sup>4</sup> Rogland argues that the use of the infinitive rather than imperative implies that Zechariah is not taking the offering but perhaps the priests.<sup>5</sup> Meyers and Meyers argue, “[Though this] has caused much difficulty for

<sup>1</sup> Max Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 219.

<sup>2</sup> Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroese, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Second Edition. (London; Oxford; New York; New Delhi; Sydney: Bloomsbury; Bloomsbury T&T Clark: An Imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2017), 176.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006), 399.

<sup>4</sup> Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 593.

<sup>5</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 173.

the versions and the commentators ... The verbal form itself, with the infinitive absolute functioning as an imperative, has been so translated in all the ancient versions.”<sup>6</sup> The Old Greek translates it as an imperative (Λάβε), as does the Vulgate (sume).

- d) The editors of the BHS argue that it probably assumes the direct object of שְׁלָמָה (offering)<sup>7</sup> or מָנוֹת (gift).<sup>8</sup> This is a fair assumption, though the addition is not necessarily original since the specific direct object of the taking occurs in the next verse (silver and gold, כְּבָשָׂר). What the narrator has done is emphasized the people in this verse, and then he resumes the action of the taking by repeating the verb (הִקְרַב). In this case, the rule of *lectio difficilior* and the rule of *lectio brevior* apply since the absence of the object is both more difficult (as the verb takes a direct object often), and it is briefer (without the addition). The Old Greek has an article which is perhaps a *via media*, since that article could be substantivized into “the things,” but does not go so far as to verbalize the direct object. Targum Jonathan includes the phrase “from the children of captivity” (בְּבָשָׂר).<sup>9</sup> This is not a direct object but a specification of the group from which something is taken. Given the evidence, I have opted for brackets.
- e) The preposition is a compound of נִנְצָה + תְּנִנְצָה.<sup>10</sup> It is “often used with verbs of acquiring or taking” and is equivalent to נִנְצָה.<sup>11</sup> The act of taking up of the offering of silver and gold (v. 11) could be tied to the offering for the tent of meeting, as the allusions abound (Exod. 30:16, “take silver from the people... for a remembrance ... to make atonement...”).
- f) Though כָּלָלָה is singular, it is translated as plural because it is a collective noun, as seen in the following list. Its plural translation follows from the glosses in lexicons;<sup>12</sup> and, BDB translates it as a plural explaining it to be an abstract use of the term for this passage.<sup>13</sup>
- g) The names are significant for this passage, even if difficult to explain. The names are significant because of how much of the text they constitute. Lessing argues that the names presented at the beginning and end of the prophetic sign-act build an envelope construction, centering the act around witnesses.<sup>14</sup> In addition to that, the names themselves are significant. The Old Greek interprets these names: “from the rulers and from its useful people and from those who are familiar with it” (6:9, NETS).<sup>15</sup>
- h) The MT has emphasis placed by Zechariah’s role by the insertion of the second person singular pronoun (“you,” נִנְצָה). The Old Greek follows this as well (σὺ).

<sup>6</sup> Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 25B of *Anchor Yale Bible* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 337.

<sup>7</sup> William Lee Holladay and Ludwig Köhler, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 217. This noun has a wide semantic range, being used as a signal (Judg. 20:38, 40; Jer. 6:1), as a portion of food (Gen. 43:34), a present for a king (2 Sam. 11:8; Jer. 40:5), taxes (Amos 5:11; 2 Chron. 24:6, 9).

<sup>8</sup> CHALOT, 222–223. This noun is used for offerings for the sanctuary (Exod. 28:38; Lev. 23:38; Numb. 18:6; Deut. 16:17).

<sup>9</sup> Kevin J. Cathcart, Martin McNamara, and Michael Maher, “Editors’ Foreword,” in *The Aramaic Bible: The Targum of the Minor Prophets*, ed. Kevin J. Cathcart, Michael Maher, and Martin McNamara, trans. Kevin J. Cathcart and Robert P. Gordon (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), Zec 6:10.

<sup>10</sup> Holladay and Köhler, CHALOT, 181.

<sup>11</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 173

<sup>12</sup> Ludwig Koehler et al., *HALOT*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 183.

<sup>13</sup> Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 163.

<sup>14</sup> R. Reed Lessing, *Zechariah*, ed. Christopher W. Mitchell, Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2021), 244.

<sup>15</sup> For more on Christian exegesis of the names, see Richard Coggins, “Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi,” in *Six Minor Prophets through the Centuries: Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi*, ed. John Sawyer et al., vol. 29 of *Blackwell Bible Commentaries* (West Sussex, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2011), 165.

- i) The editors of the BHS view this as repetitive and as an addition that should probably be deleted. This seems unnecessary as the role of Zechariah is being highlighted through his entrance into the house. The Old Greek follows the MT (καὶ εἰσελεύσῃ σὺ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ) as does the Targum. The phrase “on that day” can be justified as a translation because the pronoun with the definite article is functioning as a demonstrative; in Arnold and Choi, it is the “deictic” use and has the force of “pointing out.”<sup>16</sup> So, the emphasis is on “that day.” The phraseology of “that day” is reminiscent of eschatological treatises from prophets. Rogland writes, “The phrase **וַיְהִי יְמִינָה** occurs so frequently in prophetic literature that it almost becomes an eschatological formula referring to a time of future blessing or judgment, but the phrase simply means “on that day” and can be used with past narratives (e.g., Gen 48:20; Exod 5:6) or with future-oriented directives.”<sup>17</sup> Whether there is more to this phrase than a future referent (such as an eschatological one) will have to be determined by exegesis at the concept level.
- j) The verbal subject refers back to those exiles from Babylon, Heldai, Tobiah, and Jedaiah. I have strayed from the MT’s syntax in the translation because to an English reader, it is confusing to separate subject from verb. The subject is view is likely all four men (Heldai, Tobiah, Jedaiah, and Josiah).<sup>18</sup>
- k) The verb (**לִקְרָב**) repeats the verb from above, but it is a Qal perfect second masculine singular instead of an infinitive absolute. It takes the force from the imperatival force from above, what Arnold and Choi categorize as a “volitional” weqatal.<sup>19</sup> Merwe, Naudé, Kroeze describe this use as a “Consecutive directive.”<sup>20</sup>
- l) The verbs in this sequence represent a string of Qal perfects with the *Waw* consecutive (since it is in direct speech from Yahweh to Zechariah). Since it is a sequence of *Waw* consecutive with a volitional nature, the string could be categorized as that of succession, meaning the verbal events are meant to follow temporally one after the next.<sup>21</sup> Regarding this construction, Merwe, Naudé, Kroeze writes, “The *wəqātal* forms are typically used in instructions to specify the details of an instruction referred to by means of the initial imperative. This construction is nearly always uttered by speakers towards addressees with a lower status.”<sup>22</sup> The number of crowns is disputed in this passage, partly because the noun is plural (**תְּרוּמָה**), partly because the context, according to critical scholars demands multiple crowns to accommodate Zerubbabel (or to accommodate the action of placing the first on Zechariah’s head and the second in the temple for a remembrance).<sup>23</sup> The number of crowns could be indicated by the two metals to be used as well.<sup>24</sup> The BHS editors argue for an emendation to the singular. Kaiser offers a solution by an appeal to the style of crown.<sup>25</sup> Baldwin likewise describes the crown as one of

<sup>16</sup> Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 40.

<sup>17</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 174.

<sup>18</sup> Ralph L. Smith, *Micah–Malachi*, vol. 32 of *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1984), 216; Anthony R. Petterson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, ed. David W. Baker and Gordon J. Wenham, vol. 25 of *Apollos Old Testament Commentary* (Nottingham, England; Downers Grove, IL: Apollos; InterVarsity Press, 2015), 182.

<sup>19</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 102; cf. Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 530.

<sup>20</sup> van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 195.

<sup>21</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 105.

<sup>22</sup> van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 198.

<sup>23</sup> Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8, AYBC 25B*, 350.

<sup>24</sup> Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8, AYBC 25B*, 350.

<sup>25</sup> Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *The Messiah in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 213.

“excellence .... as magnificent as possible.”<sup>26</sup> The textual history favors a singular crown (i.e., Old Greek and Targum). Given the options, I follow Baldwin and Kaiser who make sense of the textual tradition as we have it rather than basing the interpretation of the passage on conjecture built on a plurality of persons and crowns.<sup>27</sup>

- m) The editors of the BHS recommend a change: “Zerubbabel, Son of Shealtiel” (זְרֻבָּבֶל בֶּן שְׁאַלְתִּיאָל). So, instead of Joshua the High Priest (cf. 3:1-10), they recommend a to Zerubbabel who would fit the scene more properly since he is of the line of David (since he is a grandson to Jehoiachin; cf. 1 Chron. 3:17) and since he built the temple (Zech. 4:6-10). However, the textual evidence for the claim is insubstantial because the Targum renders it as Joshua, son of Jehozadak, as well as the Old Greek, the Vulgate, and the Peshitta. The argument for the emendation to Zerubbabel is based on the singular nature of the crown (Wellhausen, for example, made this argument).<sup>28</sup> As the textual evidence is heavy for the MT’s reading, Joshua, son of Jehozadak seems to be original, and the issue will have to be dealt with at the concept level.
- n) The so-called “Messenger Formula” follows the directive from Yahweh to Zechariah.<sup>29</sup> The speech formula is especially complex with cascading levels of embedded speech (“speak to him ... saying... thus says ... saying...”). The Messenger Formula does not often have this many levels of reported speech (Zech. 7:9; Hagg. 1:2). The significance could be emphasis on the content of the speech as directly from Yahweh, or a sense of validation.<sup>30</sup> The Messenger Formula itself indicates the occurrence of an official communication from Yahweh.
- o) The particle “Look!” (הִנֵּה) is a particle of presentation to turn attention from the shocking sign-act of Joshua’s inauguration to perception of the Branch.<sup>31</sup> The anarthrous noun (וְאַתָּה) shifts the perspective from Joshua, who is a sign, to the signified future figure. The phrase “Look! A man...” introduces a new character in this dramatic reenactment, whose name and type are introduced, “Branch.”<sup>32</sup> This character is not Joshua, since that construction would be second person and articular; moreover, the prophet in Kings introduces the future Davidic king in this construction, “Look! A man of God came out of Judah... A son will be born... Josiah by name...” (1 Kings 13:1-2). In a previous sign-act, Zechariah has prophesied concerning the coming Branch: “Behold, I will bring my servant the Branch” (Zech. 3:8). The Branch is distinct from Joshua the high priest, yet Joshua, as well as the men sitting with him, are a sign (מְנֻעָה) of the servant, the Branch, who will be brought. “We cannot identify the Branch with Joshua the high priest or with any of those who sit before him, for they are symbolic figures;

<sup>26</sup> Joyce G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 28 of *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1972), 142.

<sup>27</sup> “The plural ’ătārōth denotes here one single splendid crown, consisting of several gold and silver twists wound together, or rising one above another, as in Job 31:36, and just as in Rev. 19:12, Christ is said to wear, not many separate diadems, but a crown consisting of several diadems twisted together, as the insignia of His regal dignity.” Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 554. Cf. “Two crowns shall be made of one portion of the great gift for those two worthy chiefs.” Georg Heinrich August von Ewald, *Commentary on the Prophets of the Old Testament*, trans. J. Frederick Smith (Edinburgh; London: Williams and Norgate, 1881), 63.

<sup>28</sup> Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, AYBC 25B, 350.

<sup>29</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 221.

<sup>30</sup> “Meier suggests that there is a kind of ‘emphatic,’ ‘austere,’ ‘and ultimately bombastic’ tone to the phrase (290–91) and that it essentially functions as an emphasizing literary device.” Rogland, *Zechariah 1-8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 223.

<sup>31</sup> Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 676.

<sup>32</sup> Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 559.

to do so would be to identify the symbol with the symbol, not with the reality to which it points.”<sup>33</sup>

p) The phrase can be translated by supplying a relative pronoun, even though it is absent in the Hebrew.<sup>34</sup> The Targum paraphrases this figure’s description: “Behold the man whose name is *Anointed will be revealed, and he shall be raised up.*”<sup>35</sup> The Old Greek translates it non-literally: “Ιδοὺ ἀνήρ, Ἀνατολὴ ὄνομα αὐτῷ” (“Behold a man, east is his name”).<sup>36</sup>

q) The preposition is a complex preposition: “and from what is underneath of him” (pro. suffix + **תְּמַצֵּא** + **מִ** + **י**). Boda writes, “Here it must refer abstractly to one who emerges from his rightful place.”<sup>37</sup> Meyers and Meyers write, “The compound Hebrew word ‘from under him’ or ‘from his place’ serves to indicate the future setting of the dynastic hope. That is to say, from his loins (‘under him’) or ‘after him,’ later on, another Davidide will arise or ‘shoot up,’ *yismāh*.”<sup>38</sup> Petterson provides two options: “It may be that Shoot will replace Joshua (‘him’) as he takes the crown presently on Joshua’s head. Similarly, it may indicate that Shoot will be a legitimate descendant of David (to be understood as ‘him’), unlike Joshua, who simply represents Shoot.”<sup>39</sup> The question is what is the antecedent of the pronominal suffix: is it Joshua or is it Branch? The difference is whether Joshua is typical of this branch, or whether this is a description of the location from where the Branch will come out of.<sup>40</sup> The latter is an abstraction to describe the proper place (Davidic lineage), and the former is a description of the offices held. The complex preposition sits with a clause (“Branch … will branch,” **תְּמַצֵּא** … **תְּמַצֵּא**) that is a type of wordplay to indicate his function. Zechariah is interpreting Jeremiah’s prophecy: “In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch (**תְּמַצֵּא**) to spring up (**תְּמַצֵּא**) for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land” (Jer. 33:15; cf. Jer. 23:5-6). The allusion to Jeremiah is interpretatively significant even for this translation since Jeremiah envisions Yahweh raising up (**תְּמַצֵּא**) a righteous Branch for David (**תְּמַצֵּא**) since “David shall never lack a man to sit on his throne” (Jer. 33:16-17).<sup>41</sup> In conclusion, the complex preposition should be translated as “from under his place,” so as to mean that this man, the Branch, will arise from his proper place—the line of David.

r) The *Waw* consecutive introduces the consequential action of the Branch.<sup>42</sup> The Branch will branch up and build the temple, fulfilling the temple building motif of the Davidic line (2 Sam. 7:13; cf. 1 Chron. 17:12). The construct “temple of Yahweh” (**הַיּוֹדֵל יְהוָה**) is possessive, temple belonging to Yahweh.<sup>43</sup> The temple of Yahweh is a significant theme in the postexilic prophets since the temple of Jerusalem was ransacked in 586 by Babylonian, and their lack of a temple

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Edward McComiskey, “Zechariah,” in *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary*, ed. Thomas Edward McComiskey (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 1078.

<sup>34</sup> A. B. Davidson, *Introductory Hebrew Grammar Hebrew Syntax*, 3d ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902), 192.

<sup>35</sup> *Aramaic Bible: The Targum of the Minor Prophets*, Zec 6:12. Italics are original.

<sup>36</sup> Lessing discusses the Old Greek’s translation, “In both 3:8 and 6:12, the LXX translates **תְּמַצֵּא** with ἀνατολή, which can refer to the ‘east’ as the place of the ‘rising’ of the sun … or of a star (Mt 2:2, 9), but the noun can also refer to the ‘sprout’ of a plant … Basil the Great sees a reference to Christ’s resurrection.” Lessing, *Zechariah*, 247.

<sup>37</sup> Mark J. Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, ed. R. K. Harrison and Robert L. Hubbard Jr., NICOT, (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016).

<sup>38</sup> Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 355.

<sup>39</sup> Petterson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 185.

<sup>40</sup> McComiskey, “Zechariah,” in *The Minor Prophets*, 1113.

<sup>41</sup> Gary Edward Schnittjer, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Guide* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2021), 449.

<sup>42</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 102.

<sup>43</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 13.

had theological consequences, such as the inability to make atonement (Hag. 2:15, 18; 2 Kings 24:13).

- s) The prophecy reiterates the action of temple building, especially focusing on the figure of the Branch through the fronting of the pronoun (וְהוּא).<sup>44</sup> McComiskey writes, “The independent personal pronoun וְהוּא (it is he) forcibly recalls the subject of this lengthy sentence, namely, the Branch.”<sup>45</sup> Such a construction is “indicative of strong emotional heightening.”<sup>46</sup> The fronting of the pronoun alludes to the prophecy of 2 Sam. 7:13, “He will build a house for my name, and I will set him on the throne” // cf. 6:13: הִוא יַבְנֶה־בֵּית לְשָׁמֶן וְכִנְנָתִי אֶת־כְּסֵלָה... עַל־כְּסֵלָה אֶת־הַכִּיל הַנָּה (וְהוּא יַבְנֶה אֶת־הַכִּיל הַנָּה).<sup>47</sup> The construction is situated in a chiasm, centering the temple building: “The central focus of the unit is on Šemah’s role in rebuilding the temple.”<sup>48</sup>
- t) The string of verbs shows what the Branch will accomplish. These actions constellate to constitute his reign. The verb “bear” (אָשָׁר) deserves attention, and since it is a ubiquitous verb, its object is key to interpretation: “royalty” (הַוָּד).<sup>49</sup> The noun is frequently descriptive of Yahweh (Isa. 30:30, Hab. 3:3, Ps. 8:2, 45:4, 96:6, 104:1, 111:3, 145:5, 148:13, Job 39:20, 40:10, 1 Chron. 16:27, 29:11).<sup>50</sup> The term is described of Solomon’s reign at a climactic moment (1 Chron. 29:25). The term is used of Jehoiakim’s downfall (Jer. 22:18). Since this is the background, I follow Kline who translates it as, “he shall wear the royal robes.”<sup>51</sup>
- u) The copulative verb indicates a future event, but more than that, the verbal sequence relates a consequential event.<sup>52</sup> So, the king and the priest refer to an identical figure. The argument for this identification sits on two reasons. First, the figure’s relation to the throne. Both are said to be “on his throne” (וְהוּא עַל־כְּסֵלָה... עַל־כְּסֵלָה). Second, the fact that a priest is on the throne. If peace is between a king and a priest, why is the priest on the throne? The problematic nature of this situation is highlighted by the Old Greek which places the priest at the righthand (ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ). The Targum likewise places the priest at the righthand. However, the D-R translates it, “he shall be a priest upon his throne.” The interpretative problem of identifying the priest as the king on the throne is the following clause, “the counsel of peace will be between the *two of them*.”
- v) The clause “the counsel of peace will be between the two of them” (וְעִצָּת שְׁלוֹם תָּגַנְתָּ בֵּין שְׁנֵיהֶם) is difficult to a degree. The word for “counsel” (נַצְחָה) can be glossed as “counsel, advice,

<sup>44</sup> van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 294.

<sup>45</sup> McComiskey, “Zechariah,” in *The Minor Prophets*, 1116.

<sup>46</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 178.

<sup>47</sup> Rose provides a distinction between citation and allusion. He argues for an allusion because of the terminological difference. Wolter H. Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel: Messianic Expectations in the Early Postexilic Period*, vol. 304 of *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 161.

<sup>48</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 179.

<sup>49</sup> Meyers and Meyers writes, “the combination of the two is unique and suggests great care in providing a new idiom to characterize the future legitimacy of the Davidic scion.” *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 358.

<sup>50</sup> Hamilton writes, “Preponderantly the substantive is connected with God. ... This glory is part of God’s wardrobe (Ps 104:1). It can be heard (Isa 30:30; Ps 8:2). God bequeaths this to the man who lives in fellowship with him: Ps 21:6; 1 Chr 29:25 (Solomon)” “482 זְהָה,” TWOT, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 209.

<sup>51</sup> Meredith G. Kline, *Glory in Our Midst: A Biblical-Theological Reading of Zechariah’s Night Visions* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 221.

<sup>52</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 102.

deliberation, decision.”<sup>53</sup> “Counsel” is in construct with peace (םִשְׁׁלָה). The construct relationship is a genitive of result: “The counsel resulting in peace.”<sup>54</sup>

w) The text-critical problems with this clause arises from a difference in the names listed when compared to verse 10. The secondary problem arises from the LXX’s rendering. The difference in the list of names is the name of Heldai (הַלְּדָי), or Helem (הַלְּמָן). The Targum and Vulgate have the latter, and the Syriac the former, and the Syriac has “Josiah” instead of “Hen.” Klein offers a solution: “One of the simplest solutions suggests that the different names constitute alternate names for the same individual, a practice not unknown in the Old Testament.”<sup>55</sup> Baldwin argues that the change is likely original especially for Helem, but the change for ‘Josiah’ to ‘Hen’ is difficult but could be explained through the interchangeability argument (since a connection between ‘salvation’ and ‘grace’ exists conceptually).<sup>56</sup> Sweeney explains the reasoning behind an intentional change: “Perhaps there was some concern that Josiah ben Zephaniah would be confused with King Josiah ben Amon.”<sup>57</sup>

x) The subject is fronted in the clause and linked with a *Waw* conjunction. The clause is marked because the subject is fronted. The marked clause indicates an entity being activated: this new type of people.<sup>58</sup> The subject is a substantivized adjective, far-off-ones (גָּרוּקִים).<sup>59</sup>

y) The noun “temple” is functioning as the direct object of the verb, even though it is not marked by the direct object marker; it is instead marked by the בְּ preposition indicating involvement: “Zc 6.15 וּבְנָם בְּנֵיכֶל יְהוָה and they will take part in the reconstruction of the temple.”<sup>60</sup>

z) Significantly for interpretation, the person of addressee switches from third to second (“they... you...”). The type of Perfect for the verb ‘to know’ (יְדַע) is experiential.<sup>61</sup> This experiential knowledge confirms the validity of the prophetic ministry of Zechariah (Deut. 18:18-22). The conditional construction could lack the apodosis, since Zechariah’s syntactical construction is unattested, if taken as an apodosis followed by the protasis.<sup>62</sup> The difference is minimal because both substantially allude to the Deuteronomistic theme of obedience.

<sup>53</sup> David J. A. Cline, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press; Sheffield Phoenix Press, 1993–2011), 6:528.

<sup>54</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 16.

<sup>55</sup> George L. Klein, *Zechariah*, vol. 21B of *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2008), 205.

<sup>56</sup> Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*, 146.

<sup>57</sup> Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets & 2*, ed. David W. Cotter, Jerome T. Walsh, and Chris Franke, vol. 1 of *Berit Olam Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 633.

<sup>58</sup> van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroese, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 500.

<sup>59</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 34.

<sup>60</sup> Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 419. Emphasis is original.

<sup>61</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 67.

<sup>62</sup> Rogland writes, “Unless one wishes to claim that Zechariah has completely changed the syntax of the original citation, it is best to understand this as an incomplete sentence or the rhetorical device of aposiopesis in which a sentence is deliberately left unfinished, requiring the reader or hearer to fill in the gap.” *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 184.

## Introduction

The exile shattered eschatological expectations for the Kingdom of Israel.<sup>63</sup> The exile revealed the problems of the Old Covenant, such as the problems of the human heart, the dispersion of the people of God, the destruction of Jerusalem, the defilement of the temple and priesthood, and the absence of a Davidide on the throne. These problems plagued the people of God. A central problem is the requirement of a mediator (Heb. 9:15). Saul transgressed his office when assuming the responsibility of a priest and offering burnt offerings (1 Sam. 13:9-12; cf. 2 Chron. 26:16-21). David, however, offers burnt offerings in a linen ephod (2 Sam. 6:17-18). David marked a development in the relationship between the offices, even in his own theological reflection, as he reflected on his position before Yahweh and the precedent in Melchizedek (Pss. 110, 132; cf. Gen. 14:18-20, Jer. 33:14-26). The development in David corrects the apparent rule shown in Saul's life that the offices are distinct and not to be joined. David demonstrates that it is the right person who can join the offices. David's demonstration is confirmed in a negative example when the wrong person, Uzziah, meets opposition from the priests and dies (2 Chron. 26:16-21). And so, what is needed is a true and better David who can merge these two offices and effect peace.

### *Thesis*

The prophets in the postexilic period proclaimed the promises of God to the people of Judah, and their proclamation was shaped by a deep reading of prior revelation. The ministry of Zechariah marks a continued development in Messianism from this deep reading.<sup>64</sup> Zechariah presents a portrait of a Messiah who merges the offices of priest and king, who atones for sin by

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<sup>63</sup> ‘Equally as significant as exile for Israel’s experience of redemption is their restoration after exile.’ O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets*, 280.

<sup>64</sup> Andrew T. Abernathy and Gregory Goswell, *God’s Messiah in the Old Testament: Expectations of a Coming King* (Grands Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020), 165-180; Anthony Robert Petterson, *Behold Your King: The Hope for the House of David in the Book of Zechariah*, T & T Clark Library of Biblical Studies, (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 110.

being pierced, and who is the good shepherd (Zech. 6:9-15, 9:11-17, 12:10-13:1, 13:7-9). In the way that Isaiah merges the offices of prophet and king (Isa. 61:1-3), Zechariah does for the offices of priest and king.<sup>65</sup> In this merging, Zechariah presents a developed model of the Messiah of the Old Covenant, marking a significant development toward Jesus Christ, who is the greatest fulfilment.<sup>66</sup> Zechariah merges the offices of priest and king in his portrait of the Messiah through a prophetic sign-act. The significance of this development is that Zechariah presents a priest-king Messiah who can affect peace through a counsel of peace. In this paper, I will argue that Zechariah's portraiture reveals an eternal covenant between Yahweh and his Messiah, what is deemed the Covenant of Redemption.<sup>67</sup>

### Historical Context

Zechariah (whose name means “Yahweh remembers”) was a priest of the house of Iddo (Neh. 12:16). Zechariah was a postexilic prophet of the sixth century who ministered to the returnees who were under the reign of Darius of Persia around 520.<sup>68</sup> His ministry concerned the rebuilding of the temple (Zech. 4:9), and so the temple textures his theological outlook, as it does with Haggai and Malachi's ministry (6:12-15, 8:9; Hag. 2:15, 18; Mal. 3:1). The building project

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<sup>65</sup> Dempster writes, “[In] Zechariah the roles of the king and priest develop together, echoing Jeremiah and Isaiah.” *Dominion and Dynasty: A Biblical Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, NSBT, (Downers Grove, IL; Inter Varsity Press, 2003), 186.

<sup>66</sup> How the New Testament authors use the prophecy of Zechariah shows how significant a role this postexilic played in the theological reflection of the Messiah. Zechariah supplied a robust framework for Christ as a shepherd (Zech. 13:7; cf. Matt. 9:36), as an ultimate atoning sacrifice (Zech. 12:10-13:1, 3:9; cf. John 19:37, Rev. 1:7), as an efficacious priest (Zech. 3:8; Heb. 7:24), as a gentle yet righteous king (Zech. 9:9; cf. Matt. 21:5, Mark 11:7, Luke 19:35-36, John 12:15), who frees on the basis of the blood of the covenant (Zech. 9:11; cf. Exod. 24:8, Matt. 26:28).

<sup>67</sup> Discussions of the Covenant of Redemption is outside the scope of this project. But the working definition, I will use from Vos: “The agreement between the will of the Father in giving the Son as head and redeemer of the elect and the will of the Son in presenting Himself for them as surety.” *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. and trans. Richard B. Gaffin Jr. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012–2016), 90. For more on the Covenant of Redemption, see Guy M. Richard, “The Covenant of Redemption,” in *Covenant Theology: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Guy Prentiss Waters, J. Nicholas Reid, and John R. Muether (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 43-62.

<sup>68</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 508.

has stalled out, requiring an eschatological and apocalyptic outlook on the hope of Israel—as seen in the Night Visions (Zech. 1:17-6:15).

While the building project of the temple occupied a central role in the hope of the postexilic prophets, the hope of a Davidide does not die out but like a lamp unextinguishable continues (1 Kings 11:36, 15:4; 2 Kings 8:19; 2 Chron. 21:7). VanGemeren writes, “God’s promise to remain loyal to David and his house obsessed the prophets.”<sup>69</sup> Thus, the two main hopes were the temple and the throne.<sup>70</sup> These hopes were not contradictory nor competitive but coalesced in the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34, Ezek. 36:22-36; cf. Ezek. 34:23, Jer. 33:14-22). Yet, questions and problems remained, such as purification of the priestly line (Zech. 3:1-10), the person and work of the Messiah in the line of David (Zech. 6:9-15, 9:9, 13:7; cf. Ezek. 34:23), and the day of atonement facilitated at the facilities of the temple (Zech. 13:1; cf. Ezek. 36:24, Jer. 31:34).<sup>71</sup> These problems are what Zechariah addresses in his prophetic ministry. The temple and the throne feature prominently in our sign-act, providing the infrastructure for peace. The Messiah will participate in temple building and ruling from a throne, fulfilling these major themes in the hope of Israel.

### *Literary Context*

The latter half of the book of Zechariah presents three major figures: the coming king (9:9), the good shepherd (13:7-9), and the pierced Messiah (12:10).<sup>72</sup> Along with these three, the former

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<sup>69</sup> Willem VanGemeren, *The Progress of Redemption: The Story of Salvation from Creation to the New Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1988), 308.

<sup>70</sup> Aaron Chalmers, *Interpreting the Prophets: Reading, Understanding and Preaching From the Worlds of the Prophets* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 59.

<sup>71</sup> Regarding the problem of atonement, O. Palmer Robertson writes, “With no ark, there can be no mercy seat (Lev. 16:11-17 [NIV, “atonement cover”]; Ex. 25:17-22; Lev. 23:26-32). Without a mercy seat there can be no sprinkling of the atoning blood of the substitutionary sacrifice. … Without the covering for sin by the sprinkled blood, there can be no forgiveness. Without forgiveness there can be no peace with God.” *The Christ of the Prophets*, Abridged edition. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2008), 284-285.

<sup>72</sup> Iain Duguid, “Messianic Themes in Zechariah 9-14,” in *The Lord’s Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts*, eds. Philip E. Satterthwaite, Richard S. Hess, and Gordon J. Wenham, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 265.

half presents the cleansed priest (3:1-10) and the priest-king (6:9-15). These five portraits combine to be a coherent “sign” of the Branch, constituting a coherent figure because of how Zechariah sketches these figures in a way that shows significant overlap between them. For example, the priest who is cleansed and the priest on the throne are both portrayed through a sign-act, sharing much language and imagery (“Joshua,” “priest,” “Branch”). The role of this priest who participates in the removal of iniquity in a single day (3:9), and who participates in establishing the covenantal blessing of everyone living under fig trees (3:10). The coming king will establish the covenantal blessing over the land (9:16-17). The single day of cleansing from sin will come by way of the pierced Messiah (13:1), and on such a day, the shepherd is struck (13:7). This compilation of images portrays the Messiah who will participate in the establishment of the reign of God on the Day of the Lord (14:9). These images build and develop one another.<sup>73</sup> This coherent compilation signals a remarkable development in Messianism. This interpretation is confirmed by New Testament authors (Matt. 21:5, Mark 14:27, John 19:37). Zechariah’s messianism is deeply Christocentric. This context prepares for a Christocentric typology of the Branch (6:9-15).

### ***Setting: Zechariah’s Word from Yahweh (v. 9)***

The sign-act is set within the context of the Night Visions. These eight visions have created a context of apocalyptic urgency, where Yahweh has peeled back the curtain to show his divine plan. Yahweh’s horseman has patrolled the earth, seen its status of rest, and Yahweh has promised comfort and cities of prosperity, mercy and even his own house built (Zech. 1:7-17). Yahweh’s craftsmen will scatter the enemies of God’s people (Zech. 1:18-21). Yahweh will dwell amidst his people, choosing Jerusalem (2:1-13). Then Zechariah introduces a sign-act of Joshua the High Priest who receives ceremonial cleansing for cultic activity, a sign of the Servant who will provide

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<sup>73</sup> For a deeper dive into this figural exegesis, see Duguid, “Messianic Themes in Zechariah 9-14,” 265-280.

cleansing in a single day (3:1-10). Yahweh's temple has begun construction in the light of a lampstand (4:1-14). Yahweh's judgement is upon covenant breakers, and the wickedness of the land will be transported out, shown by a flying scroll and a basket (5:1-11). Then chariots were shown who patrol the earth, a symbol of military might (6:1-8).<sup>74</sup> These visions set the stage for God's intrusion through his Messiah, who will build, who will rule, who will cleanse (6:13; cf. 3:9, 13:1). Kline argues that 6:9-15 is the central hinge of Zechariah, of which the Messianic portraiture is centered.<sup>75</sup>

Out of this context, Yahweh's word comes to Zechariah. The so-called "reception formula" sets this sign-act apart; it is a scene-setting, clause initial verb beginning a new section (cf. 3:1, where much more continuity is maintained through the syntax, "Then I saw Joshua...").<sup>76</sup> This section is the climactic point, where the Word of Yahweh has come to the prophet, not the word of an angel. The default of the Night Visions is the word of the Angel (בְּאֵלָנָגֶל, 1:9, 14, 19; 2:3, 3:6, 4:1, 5:5, 10; 6:5). Yet, this reception formula is marked because it stands at the outset of the scene, not the point of exhortation (4:8). This supports the centrality and significance of this scene.

### *Act: Zechariah's Task from Yahweh (vv. 10-11)*

The task Zechariah receives from Yahweh is to take from the exiles silver and gold for the forging of a diadem, a diadem to be placed on the head of Joshua, the High Priest. The command "to take" (לְקַח) is somewhat of a grammatical oddity since it is an infinitive absolute instead of an

<sup>74</sup> Iain M. Duguid, *A Study Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*, EP Study Commentary (Darlington, England; Carlisle, PA: Evangelical Press, 2010), 122.

<sup>75</sup> "Common to the three hinge passages is a focus on the figure of the coming Messiah and in particular on his priest-king office." Meredith G. Kline, *Glory in Our Midst: A Biblical-Theological Reading of Zechariah's Night Visions* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 219.

<sup>76</sup> "The introductory formula, 'Now the word of Yahweh came unto me,' identifies the pericope as an oracle, but it is a special kind of oracle—a sign-oracle." Ralph L. Smith, *Micah–Malachi*, WBC (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1984), 217.

imperative, though it is repeated in the next verse as a perfect. Joüon and T. Muraoka write, “The inf. abs. is especially found in commands given by God.”<sup>77</sup> The main exegetical ambiguities of this section relate to role the crowd who come, the crown, and Joshua. The crowd who comes is referred as “exiles” (גָּזָב) and “those who arrived from Babylon.” Their identification relates to their role in the sign-act. These exiles are experiencing a return and like Joshua, they are a proleptic sign of the future, since they participate in the forging of the diadem, a symbol of royal return and a prerequisite for temple building. The crowd is not shown to build the temple, but to bear gifts for the diadem. Boda shows their priestly lineage from Ezra.<sup>78</sup> Meyers and Meyers prove from extrabiblical material the existence of the Tobiad line.<sup>79</sup> Zechariah includes their names because they were known entities, who were priestly and even exiles. Now there is an ancient tradition that interprets these names as significant in of themselves. The so-called Septuagint translates it as, “from the rulers and from its useful people and from those who are familiar with it” (6:10, NETS).<sup>80</sup> The significance of names in this passage is compelling, even if that particular tradition overinterpreted them. The names of historical figures emphasized the gracious (i.e., Hen) and good (i.e., Tobiah) faithfulness of Yahweh. Most significantly, they structure the sign-act with witnesses, enveloping the central act of building the temple.<sup>81</sup>

The crown is a heavily disputed entity. The main complexifying elements are its plural morphology, its mixed metallurgy, and its singular recipient. The major views are as follows. The first view argues for two crowns and two recipients on the basis of the plural morphology and

<sup>77</sup> Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006), 399.

<sup>78</sup> Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, 391.

<sup>79</sup> Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 341.

<sup>80</sup> For more on this interpretative tradition, see Richard Coggins, “Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi,” in *Six Minor Prophets through the Centuries: Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi*, ed. John Sawyer et al., vol. 29 of *Blackwell Bible Commentaries* (West Sussex, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2011), 165.

<sup>81</sup> R. Reed Lessing, *Zechariah*, ed. Christopher W. Mitchell, *Concordia Commentary* (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2021), 244. Petterson argues for a chiastic structure as opposed to an envelop, but in either case, the point remains: temple building is centra. Cf. Petterson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 183.

metallurgy, and they emend the text to include Zerubbabel because he laid the foundation of the temple (Zech. 4:10).<sup>82</sup> The theological significance for the sign-act is confidence in co-operation between priest and the Branch-king, thus symbolizing a dyarchy.<sup>83</sup> So, the exhortation alternates between Joshua and Zerubbabel. The problem for this view is that it is based on a textual emendation nowhere supported in the textual history. But the grammar can be interpreted differently. The second view argues for two crowns and one recipient on the basis of the plural morphology and metallurgy. The two crowns are intended for Joshua and for the temple as a memorial, as shown by the actions and by the different metals, which had not been previously mixed. Against many who argued for an emendation for a plural, this view argues that the second crown is spelled defectively as a singular (תְּמִימָנָה).<sup>84</sup> The problem for this view is that the plural form takes singular verbs, so it is not necessarily multiple crowns. If Joshua assumed the silver crown, it implies a lesser authority since it is without precedent and a lesser metal. Additionally, a diarchal interpretation of priest and king is tenuous as an expectation. Meyers and Meyers to this problem: “As an interim measure, the ascendancy of the priesthood could surely be supported by everyone in the interests of self-preservation, peace, and accommodation to Persian domination.”<sup>85</sup> The second view is stronger than the first, yet the third is what is most compelling.

<sup>82</sup> Peter Ackroyd is representative for this view. He writes, “The original text would then have been changed as a result of later events, either, if the theory of Persian intervention is accepted, because Zerubbabel fell from favour, and so the prophetic oracles had to be worked over, or as a result of still later developments in the place of the high-priesthood.” *Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1968), 196.

<sup>83</sup> Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.*, 198.

<sup>84</sup> Meyers and Meyers are representative of this view. They write, “Therefore it is likely that the collection of silver and gold for the purpose of making crown(s) meant that two separate crowns were made, one of silver and one of gold.” Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 350. Meyers and Meyers present a compelling case for the lack of historical precedent of a multi-metal crown. They show that the royal and priestly crowns were made of gold, not silver. But this fact presents a problem for their view as well since, according to them, Joshua is given a silver crown, a less precious metal.

<sup>85</sup> Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 371.

The third view of the crowns is that it is a composite crown intended for Joshua the High Priest. The task of taking offerings from the returnees is reminiscent of the offering for the tabernacle (Exod. 28:5) as well as the despoiling of the Egyptians (Exod. 12:25), and so it has “second exodus connotations.”<sup>86</sup> The crown is described in a plural because it is a crown *par excellence*, a majestic crown made of materials prophesied of previously to be components for peace (Hagg. 2:8). Baldwin writes, “In the absence of a superlative form, Hebrew used the plural as one way of denoting excellence... The crown belongs to this sacred realm. It was to be as magnificent as possible.”<sup>87</sup> The composite crown is unprecedented because its theological import is unprecedented: a melting together to form an alloy in the mold of a priest-king Messiah. Now, this expectation is not without precedent (i.e., Psalm 110) but its forceful clarity is. Kaiser describes the crown as, “It may well point to the double-ringed priestly and royal tiara. If so, then it points to the Messiah, who will come as both priest and king.”<sup>88</sup> If only one crown is forged, only one individual is crowned: Joshua, the High Priest, who is a type of Christ. This interpretative is confirmed because the ultimate Messiah, Jesus Christ is pictured as having a majestic, multi-layered crown (Rev. 19:12).

### ***Speech: Zechariah’s Charge for Joshua from Yahweh (vv. 12-14)***

After the act portion of the sign-act, Zechariah is commanded to give a charge to Joshua, who is a sign of the one to come (Zech. 3:8). The command is followed by the Messenger Formula.<sup>89</sup> The speech formula is especially complex with cascading levels of embedded speech

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<sup>86</sup> Petterson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 184. Cf. “The second exodus had begun like the first with the ‘despoiling’ of their captors.” Smith, *Micah–Malachi*, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 218.

<sup>87</sup> Joyce G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 28 of *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1972), 141.

<sup>88</sup> Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *The Messiah in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 213.

<sup>89</sup> “Both formulae [Reception and Messenger] indicate that a communication act has occurred, identify the message sender, and frequently introduce direct discourse.” Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 221.

(“speak to him … saying… thus says … saying…”). The Messenger Formula does not often have as many levels of reported speech (Zech. 7:9; Hagg. 1:2). The significance is an emphasis on the content of the speech as directly from Yahweh, having the sense of a stamp by the Great King himself.<sup>90</sup> The Messenger Formula itself indicates the occurrence of an official communication from Yahweh. The charge consists of a shift in perspective for identification of the Branch, and through a sequence of *Waw* consecutives shows the destiny of the Branch. The overall point for this section is to designate the destiny of Davidide, a priest-king who establishes a counsel of peace with Yahweh. The main interpretative question concerns the quantity of individuals and of thrones: whether a priest is on a throne and a king is on a throne, or whether this priest-king is a single individual. The main interpretative complexity is the nature of the counsel of peace between *the two of them* (מִנְתְּשָׁנָה). The answer lay in the description of the identity and destiny of the Branch as well as the broader redemptive historical network.

#### *Description*

The description opens dramatically by a particle of presentation (מִתְּבָא). This particle shifts the perspective from Joshua as a sign to the signified, the Branch.<sup>91</sup> This Branch situation is newsworthy.<sup>92</sup> This presentation structure mimics the presentation of the prophecy concerning King Josiah: “Look! A man of God came out of Judah… A son will be born… Josiah by name…” (1 Kings 13:1-2). The phrase “Look! A man…” introduces a new character in this dramatic reenactment, whose name and type are introduced, “Branch.”<sup>93</sup> This is cohesive with the sign-act

<sup>90</sup> “There is a kind of ‘emphatic,’ ‘austere,’ ‘and ultimately bombastic’ tone to the phrase (290–91) and that it essentially functions as an emphasizing literary device.” Rogland, *Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 223.

<sup>91</sup> Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 676.

<sup>92</sup> Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroese, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Second Edition. (London; Oxford; New York; New Delhi; Sydney: Bloomsbury; Bloomsbury T&T Clark: An Imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2017), 410.

<sup>93</sup> Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006), 559.

since Joshua the High Priest is a typological figure.<sup>94</sup> Petterson writes, “Instead, Zechariah uses the term ‘Shoot’ to point away from current historical figures (who are elsewhere named) and towards a future Davidic king.”<sup>95</sup> This particle is suggestive to the interpretive question of characters in play. The particle suggests that a third character has arrived in the scene.<sup>96</sup>

The new character has a name: Branch (פָּנָס). The “Branch” name and imagery is significant for the prophetic corpus (Isa. 4:2, 61:11; Jer. 23:5, 33:15; Ezek. 16:7, 17:9-10). The arboreal theme runs through Scripture, and the Branch imagery belongs in the arboreal domain: garden, trees, vineyard, a shoot and branch, fruit, being fruitful (Gen. 2:8, 9, 1:28; Isa. 5:1, 11:1; Ezek. 36:8, 35; 1 Kings 4:25; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10, cf. Col. 1:10; Rev. 22:2).<sup>97</sup> Now, Zechariah building on this theme, especially in light of Isaiah and Jeremiah, develops the Messianic nature of the Branch figure. The term “branch” (פָּנָס) includes the concept of sprouting, especially sprouting caused by an agent such as Yahweh.<sup>98</sup> The sprouting is “from under his place” (מִתְּחִזְקָה), meaning the Branch will arise from the proper place, David’s line. Crucial to understanding this passage is David’s last words: “For does not my house stand so with God? For he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For will he not cause to prosper (פִּתְּחָה) .

<sup>94</sup> In an earlier Night Vision, Zechariah witnessed the high priest Joshua undergo a cleansing ceremony. In the interpretative component, the Angel of Yahweh provides this hermeneutic: “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant, the Branch” (Zech. 3:8). Joshua and his friends are a sign (מְלֵאָה), who signify what is to come—the Branch. So, Joshua is not meant to be a stand-in for Zerubbabel in the present but for another in the future. Joshua, therefore, plays a typological role in our sign-act.

<sup>95</sup> Petterson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 186.

<sup>96</sup> Boda writes, “When this phrase appears in direct speech elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, it does not refer to the one addressed, but rather to a third party who may be approaching from a distance (2 Sam 18:26), may be present in the scene (1 Sam 9:17), may be absent but accessible (1 Sam 9:6), or may have been encountered at an earlier point (1 Kgs 20:39). Thus, פָּנָס (Zemah) cannot be Joshua to whom the speech is addressed.”, “Oil, Crowns and Thrones: Prophet, Priest and King in Zechariah 1:7–6:15,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures: Volume 3* 3.10 (2000–2001): 16.

<sup>97</sup> For more on the redemptive historical significance of arboreal imagery, especially as it pertains to kingship, see G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 68.

<sup>98</sup> *HALOT*, 1034. The lexicon gives an expanded definition: “a particular shoot, referring to an individual person, a descendant of David and of the king in the Messianic era of salvation.” Likewise, Kaiser writes, “There are thirty-two occurrences of this verb and half as many different translations involving the ideas of growing, budding, and sprouting.” “פָּנָס,” *TWOT*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 769.

all my help (‘יְמִיעָד) and my desire?”” (2 Sam. 23:5). David rests assured in the eternal covenant, assured that Yahweh will cause salvation to branch. These intertextual echoes form a connection to the Davidic Covenant Network.<sup>99</sup> The imagery means that sovereign salvation will be sprouted by Yahweh in his servant. This salvation is in organic connection to the new creation, a concept described in arboreal terms (Zech. 3:10, 8:12, 9:17). Significantly, Kaiser argues that the sprouting is not merely caused by Yahweh, but it is described as if the sprout is from Yahweh. He argues for divine implication in the nature of the sprout.<sup>100</sup> This character is the salvific agent from Yahweh.

### *Destiny*

Having sprouted from his proper place, the Branch will build the temple, fulfilling the temple building motif of the Davidic line (2 Sam. 7:13; cf. 1 Chron. 17:12). The *Waw Consecutive* introduces the consequential action of the Branch.<sup>101</sup> This *Waw Consecutive* introduces the destiny of the Davidide. He will build Yahweh’s temple, an action reserved for the king who coaxes the land to rest (1 Chron. 28:3). The destiny is conveyed through a pair of imperfects and perfects: build (יָבַנְה) and wear (אָשַׁף), sit (בָּשַׁבַּע) and rule (לְשַׁבַּע). Meyers and Meyers write, “The latter pair explicate and augment the preceding statement about the bearing of royal majesty: the king fulfills that statement by sitting on the throne and exercising his rule.”<sup>102</sup> The pair of verbs enforce the nature of the temple building, and its attendant dominion. The central action is temple building, especially focusing on the figure of the Branch through the fronting of the pronoun (אַתָּה).<sup>103</sup> This construction is “indicative of strong emotional heightening.”<sup>104</sup> Temple building is significant to

<sup>99</sup> Gary Edward Schnittjer, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Guide* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2021), 449.

<sup>100</sup> Kaiser, *The Messiah in the Old Testament*, 157.

<sup>101</sup> Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 102.

<sup>102</sup> Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AYBC, 358.

<sup>103</sup> van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroese, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 294.

<sup>104</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, 178.

the hope of Israel. Boda writes, “The temple-building role outlined here for the Davidic line is highly significant and brings to mind a broader complex of hopes attached to the royal stream.”<sup>105</sup> This destiny is deeply situated within the Davidic hope and covenant.

The verb “bear” (נָשַׂר) deserves attention, and since it is a ubiquitous verb, its object is key to interpretation: “royalty” (רַגְלָה).<sup>106</sup> The noun is frequently descriptive of Yahweh (Isa. 30:30, Hab. 3:3, Ps. 104:1, 111:3, 145:5, 148:13, Job 39:20, 40:10, 1 Chron. 16:27, 29:11).<sup>107</sup> The term is described of Solomon’s reign at a climactic moment: “And the Lord made Solomon very great in the sight of all Israel and bestowed on him such *royal majesty*” (1 Chron. 29:25). The term is used of Jehoiakim’s downfall: “Therefore thus says the Lord concerning Jehoiakim … ‘Ah, his majesty!’” (Jer. 22:18). What Solomon possessed, and what Jehoiakim dispossessed, the Branch will repossess. Boda writes, “Like Haggai does, Zechariah reverses Jeremiah’s condemnation of the line of Jehoiachin.”<sup>108</sup> This royal majesty is not abstract but concrete: the Branch will wear royal robes, royal regalia. Kline writes, “Such investiture in royal robes would be a natural accompaniment of the bestowing of the crown.”<sup>109</sup> What Jehoiachin lost, the Branch will gain. The Chronicler typifies this return of royal robes when he, Jehoiachin, “puts off his prison garments” (2 Kings 25:29).<sup>110</sup> Only the true Messiah could wear the royal robes and rule (Jer. 23:5).<sup>111</sup>

### *Debate*

<sup>105</sup> Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, NICOT, 403.

<sup>106</sup> Meyers and Meyers writes, “the combination of the two is unique and suggests great care in providing a new idiom to characterize the future legitimacy of the Davidic scion.” *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AYBC, 358.

<sup>107</sup> Hamilton writes, “Preponderantly the substantive is connected with God. … This glory is part of God’s wardrobe (Ps 104:1). It can be heard (Isa 30:30; Ps 8:2). God bequeaths this to the man who lives in fellowship with him: Ps 21:6; 1 Chr 29:25 (Solomon).” *TWOT*, 209.

<sup>108</sup> Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, 400.

<sup>109</sup> Kline, *Glory in Our Midst*, 221.

<sup>110</sup> For more on the nature of Jehoiachin’s typology, see Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, 154-156.

<sup>111</sup> “The only place in the OT where the combination ‘sit … rule … throne’ appears is Jer. 22:30, the passage that denies these things to Jehoiachin just before the prophecy of the righteous Shoot (Jer. 23:5).” Petterson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 186.

Having understood the description and the destiny of the Branch, we are prepared to enter into the debate concerning the counsel of peace between the two of them. This debated territory has spawned multiple views for who these two individuals are. The first view argues for a dual structure, a dyarchy: the individuals are a king and a priest.<sup>112</sup> The second view argues for a dual office wedded in the Branch.<sup>113</sup> The third view argues for a wedding of priest and king but argues that the reference to the two of them is a reference to the Messiah, who is priest-king, and Yahweh.<sup>114</sup> I will argue that the two of them is descriptive of Yahweh and the Messiah who establish the counsel of peace.

The first view is premised on a dual structure of authority in the Yehud. Meyers and Meyers argue that the post-exilic community reverted back to a premonarchical political structure.<sup>115</sup> Boda argues that this dual conception of structure is redeeming the dual structure of the king and queen mother, who provides counsel (1 Kings 2:19-24), by positing a priest and king structure, resulting in peace.<sup>116</sup> The priest and king offices can be filled by Zerubbabel and Joshua.<sup>117</sup> The tertiary

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<sup>112</sup> Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, NICOT, 406; Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AYBC, 362; David L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Commentary*, ed. Peter Ackroyd et al., First edition., OTL, (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1984), 278; John Merlin, Powis Smith and Julius August Bewer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah*, ICC, (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1912), 188.

<sup>113</sup> Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 555; Joyce G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 28 of *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1972), 145; Barry Webb, *The Message of Zechariah: Your Kingdom Come*, ed. Alec Motyer and Derek Tidball, *The Bible Speaks Today* (Nottingham: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 109; Michael Bentley, *Building for God's Glory: Haggai and Zechariah Simply Explained*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 1989), 152–153.

<sup>114</sup> Kline, *Glory in Our Midst*, 222;

<sup>115</sup> Meyers and Meyers write, “His view of the future as well as his support for the contemporary structure of leadership in Yehud are based on what he believes to have been the pattern in premonarchic times.” *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, AYBC, 362.

<sup>116</sup> Boda writes, “In the OT, the only other figure who is pictured alongside a king wearing a crown and sitting on a throne (see above on crown) is a queen mother. The presence of the priest instead of the queen mother signals a new day for the Davidic court, one not typified by the poor advice of the queen mother in the preexilic court, but rather by the good advice of the priest.” *The Book of Zechariah*, NICOT, 406

<sup>117</sup> On the basis of text-critical reconstructions, scholars argue that this was a hope, though it surrendered and recontextualized for alternative candidates. Smith writes, “At one stage of the tradition the prophet probably thought of both Zerubbabel and Joshua being co-rulers.” *Micah–Malachi*, WBC, 218.

problem is that it can depend on tenuous textual reconstructions.<sup>118</sup> The secondary problem for this view is that it depends on appeals to this dual structure: “One must take liberties with the text to defend the notion of a diarchy, a concept that neither biblical nor historical sources support.”<sup>119</sup> The primary problem is that even without these tenuous assumptions (i.e., Boda, who does not rely on these assumptions), but rather, the theological significance is lacking. For example, is the center of Zechariah’s prophetic Night Visions really only about political structures, backgrounded by a king-queen mother relationship? The exile, and preventing a second, final exile, requires a better solution, rooted in Messianic hopes.

The second view is compelling. Keil and Delitzsch write, “The Messiah, who unites in Himself royalty and priesthood, will counsel and promote the peace of His people.”<sup>120</sup> This view is a typological interpretation finding its fulfilment in the person and work of Jesus Christ (Heb. 7:11-28). The only insufficiency in this view is its lack of accounting of the covenantal language latent in the sign-act and its conceptual background, as well as the covenantal structure of the book of Zechariah.<sup>121</sup> Specifically, the covenantal language of the “counsel of peace,” as well as the connections to the Davidic Covenant and the New Covenant, which promises the Branch to bring the new creation (Isa. 4:2, 11:1, 60:21; Jer. 23:5, 33:15). Zechariah conceives a priest-king Messiah, but this final phrase of revelation is about what is more foundational than the wedding of the two offices.

The counsel of peace between them has its referent (“two of them”) in the priest-king Messiah and Yahweh. This view coheres with the conceptual framework of the sign-act, which is

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<sup>118</sup> Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.*, 196.

<sup>119</sup> Klein, *Zechariah*, NAC, 204.

<sup>120</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 555.

<sup>121</sup> For more on the covenant theology of Zechariah, see: Kline, *Glory in Our Midst*, 222; Petterson, “The New Covenant in the Book of the Twelve,” in *Reading the Book of the Twelve Minor Prophets*, ed. David G. Firth and Brittany N. Melton, Studies in Scripture & Biblical Theology (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Academic, 2022), 115–116; Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets*, 303-11.

Psalm 110. Petterson argues that the conceptual framework for this sign-act is crucial since it features: Messiah and Yahweh in dialogue, a priest-king's present, and David's coregency with Yahweh.<sup>122</sup> The verbal and conceptual correlation between these passages confirm this framework, as well as the Davidic Network in which both passages firmly belong.<sup>123</sup> Even more persuasive is the connection between Zechariah and Jeremiah, where Jeremiah describes the Davidic covenant, which has an eternal dimension (Jer. 33:14-18; cf. Jer. 32:40, 50:5). Schnittjer writes, "Evidence for an interpretive allusion between Jer. 33:14–18 and Zech. 6:12 is strong."<sup>124</sup> This conceptual framework of priest-king and covenant provides an interpretative grid. Along with this conceptual framework, this view fits the redemptive-historical situation: how will the persistent problem for Israel be solved? The problem is the sinful human heart (Ezek. 36:26). A king like the nation's only amplified the idolatrous sin, and though exile has purified, yet exile is again on the horizon if Israel persists in its apathy and idolatry.<sup>125</sup> The problem for Israel is not that priests and kings do not cooperate; it is that they are not efficacious and faithful.<sup>126</sup> The problem for Israel is *not* that the kings and priests do not cooperate with each other, but the problem is that the kings and priests do not cooperate with Yahweh. They instead lead the people in sin and into exile and are unable

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<sup>122</sup> Petterson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 187; Kline, *Glory in Our Midst*, 227.

<sup>123</sup> For more on the Davidic Covenant Network see Gary Edward Schnittjer, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Guide* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2021), 879. In Ezekiel, the New Covenant is described through similar vocabulary: "I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore" (Ezek. 37:26, 34:25; cf. Heb. 13:20). Now, this language is descriptive of the priestly-Levitical covenant (Num. 25:12; Jer. 33:21). This eternal covenant results in peace, just as this counsel of peace.

<sup>124</sup> Schnittjer, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament*, 450.

<sup>125</sup> "Continuation in unrepented sin will eventuate in a repetition of the awesome judgment of exile that they have already experienced. From this second exile there can be no expectation of return." Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets*, 288–289.

<sup>126</sup> "Lacking these two essentials of the Mosaic theocracy, the kingship and the properly functioning priesthood, the people of the restoration could not legitimately claim that the Mosaic theocracy had been reconstituted." Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets*, 285.

to cleanse their people.<sup>127</sup> What is needed to break this impasse? A king-priest who can co-reign with Yahweh to effect peace. What is needed is the perfect Solomon (הַמְלָךְ) who affects peace (מְלָךְ).

Even though the view of a covenant between Yahweh and Yahweh's Messiah has a cogency in redemptive historical context as well as a precedent in Psalm 110 (cf. Heb. 7:20-25), the sign-act itself presents four reasons for this position. First, the figure in the passage, namely, the Branch is a single individual who is meant to be seen as the priest-king, even though Joshua the High Priest is present; his presence only indicates a typological sign or foreshadowing. The singular pronouns and verbs indicate this singular individual (הִנֵּה): "and he will be a priest by his throne."<sup>128</sup> The *Waw Consecutive* refers back to the Branch.<sup>129</sup> Second, whose throne is in view? The throne in view is Yahweh's, since the throne is pictured within the temple complex, a temple repeatedly described as belonging to Yahweh (Isa. 6:1; Ezek. 43:7, Rev. 3:21).<sup>130</sup> Kline writes, "Architecturally, temple and throne belong together. The temple is a sacred palace; it houses God's throne. The Lord identifies the eschatological temple as 'the place of my throne' (Ezek 43:7)."<sup>131</sup> Third, the governing preposition **ל** can be taken as "by" or even "beside," rather than "on."<sup>132</sup> Fourth, the counsel of peace is a construct of result.<sup>133</sup> The concept of peace flowing from a counsel is covenantal: "to enter into a covenant is to make peace (cf. Deut. 2:26; 20:10-18; Josh. 9:15;

<sup>127</sup> Petterson describes this contrast: "the implicit contrast is with the kings of the past (such as Jehoiachin in Jer. 22:24–30 and Zedekiah in Ezek. 21:30) who ruled without regard for God and brought about the exile." *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 187.

<sup>128</sup> Petterson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 182.

<sup>129</sup> Petterson, *Behold Your King: The Hope for the House of David in the Book of Zechariah*, T & T Clark Library of Biblical Studies, (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 110.

<sup>130</sup> In the Solomonic temple complex, even Solomon's throne is built in proximity to the temple. See Leen Ritmeyer and Kathleen Ritmeyer, *Understanding the Holy Temple of the Old Testament: From the Tabernacle to Solomon's Temple & Beyond*, Understanding the Bible (Carta Jerusalem, 2016), 29.

<sup>131</sup> Kline, *Glory in Our Midst*, 224. Cf. Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets*, 310.

<sup>132</sup> Fesko, *The Trinity and the Covenant of Redemption* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Mentor Publishing, 2016), 72; Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 134; HALOT, 826; DCH, 6:385; Petterson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 182.

<sup>133</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 16.

10:1-4; 2 Sam. 10:19)."<sup>134</sup> Summing up, the Branch is the priest-king who sits by Yahweh's throne in his temple as his co-regent, effecting covenantal peace.<sup>135</sup>

The conclusion of the sign-act is the memorialization of the crown. The conclusion is syntactically separate since its clause is introduced by a simple *Waw* with a noun fronted. The fronting of the noun (crown) activates its centrality.<sup>136</sup> McComiskey writes, “The crown did not remain on the head of the high priest … the symbolic diadem resided in the temple.”<sup>137</sup> The participants are listed to commemorate their participation in the revelation of the plan of Yahweh.

## ***Coda: The Building of the Temple (v. 15)***

After the glorious typological presentation of the Yahweh and Yahweh's Messiah plotting their peace, the audience shifts from Joshua to the broader audience, and attention is given to the result of counsel of peace and the role of the priest-king temple builder. The result is that the "far-off-ones" will participate in the building project. The identity of this assembly is in question. While the immediate identified assembly may be Jews in exile, it can easily be expanded to Gentiles, as the term "far-off-ones" is used of both peoples (Dan. 9:7, cf. Ezek. 22:5, Jer. 25:26). The New Testament identifies this assembly as constituted by both Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:11-22; cf. 1 Pet. 2:4-10, Rev. 21:2). The command within the condition is to obey, a command emphatically reinforced by an infinitive absolute (גָּמְלָה לְעָשֵׂה), as well as a Deuteronomistic allusion (Deut. 28:1). Zechariah's introduction of this Deuteronomistic theme is an immediate application of the prophecy, combining divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

## *Theological Synthesis: The Covenant of Redemption*

<sup>134</sup> Fesko, *The Trinity and the Covenant of Redemption*, 72.

<sup>135</sup> Pettersson, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, 187; Kline, *Glory in Our Midst*, 224; Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets*, 310.

<sup>136</sup> van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 500.

<sup>137</sup> McComiskey, "Zechariah," in *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary*, ed. Thomas Edward McComiskey (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 1118.

The main theological doctrine to be developed in this sign-act is the doctrine of the Covenant of Redemption, otherwise known as the *pactum salutis* or, taking Zechariah's terminology, the Counsel of Peace. Myers defines the doctrine: "The counsel of peace is the eternal, intra-Trinitarian covenant in which the triune God secures the redemption of his people."<sup>138</sup> The doctrine posits that the triune God eternally covenanted to redeem a people. Despite general agreement within Reformed circles on the validity of the intratrinitarian, pre-temporal covenant, Zechariah 6:9-15 as a prooftext has fallen on hard times. Bavinck writes, "The classic text (Zech. 6:13) cited in support of this doctrine does not prove anything and only states that the Messiah, who unites in his person both the kingship and the priesthood, will consider and promote the peace of his people."<sup>139</sup> However, the use of this text in support of the doctrine has found significant support, and it has historical precedent as a prooftext.<sup>140</sup>

With the latter party, I concur, that the Covenant of Redemption is properly defended and developed from Zechariah 6:13. Zechariah 6:13 presents a priest-king Messiah and Yahweh counseling together a plan of peace, not between themselves but between the triune God and a people. Joshua the High Priest on Yahweh's throne is a type of Christ.<sup>141</sup> This typical presentation

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<sup>138</sup> Stephen G. Myers, *God to Us: Covenant Theology in Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2021), 94.

<sup>139</sup> Herman Bavinck, John Bolt, and John Vriend, *Reformed Dogmatics: Sin and Salvation in Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 213. For those who dethrone this passage as the *locus classicus*: Geerhardus Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. and trans. Richard B. Gaffin Jr. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012–2016), 84; L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans publishing co., 1938), 266. Berkhof describes its use as a prooftext as a "clearly a mistake."

<sup>140</sup> Herman Witsius, *The Economy of the Covenants between God and Man: Comprehending a Complete Body of Divinity*, trans. William Crookshank (London: T. Tegg & Son, 1837), 139; Petrus van Mastricht, *Faith in the Triune God*, ed. Joel R. Beeke, trans. Todd M. Rester and Michael T. Spangler, vol. 2 of *Theoretical-Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2019), 539; Joel R. Beeke and Paul M. Smalley, *Reformed Systematic Theology: Man and Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 591; Guy M. Richard, "The Covenant of Redemption," in *Covenant Theology: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Perspectives*, 52; Willemus à Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, ed. Joel R. Beeke, trans. Bartel Elshout (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 1992), 254; Fesko, *The Trinity and the Covenant of Redemption*, 77.

<sup>141</sup> John Calvin and John Owen, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 158.

shows an eternal conversation (cf. Psalm 110) between the Father and the Son in their divine plotting of redemption. The prophet is privy to a plan of redemption anchored in eternity. This eternal plan was revealed in time, organically connected to God's to the unfolding redemptive historical plan which is propelled by the Covenant of Grace. Kline writes how these scenes point "behind the historical, earthly unfolding of redemption in its successive covenant administrations to their foundation in the eternal intratrinitarian covenant."<sup>142</sup> It is in the Counsel of Peace that we find an eternal foundation.

### Conclusion

The modern application of this exegetically developed doctrine is threefold. First, praise is an apt response, since in Zechariah, we have perceived into the marvelous mystery of the Triune God in his plan of redemption, and we have more seen more of God's glory (cf. Moses' response on Sinai, Exod. 34:8). Second, as the people of God for whom this peace has been planned and executed, we must realize the eternal foundations of our redemption. By realizing the foundation, we can find the deepest security, knowing with our hearts that God eternally planned to go public with his glory by creating and redeeming a people for his own possession. Third, we understand how we are to be active participants in the divine drama of this unfolding redemption, like the Jews in Zechariah's day. Our participation means obedience to heed the voice of Yahweh in obedience, as we continue to be secondary participants in the building of the temple, namely, the Church of Christ (Eph. 2:11-22). Finally, blessed be the God who made "known to us the mystery of his eternal will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan" (Eph. 1:9-10).

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<sup>142</sup> Kline, *Glory in Our Midst*, 227. He further writes, "What Zech 6:13e is declaring in particular is that the exaltation of the Branch to fellowship and joint reign with Yahweh on his throne is the outworking of previous covenantal commitments of the two to one another."<sup>142</sup>

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