

Vetting the Priest in Zechariah 3: The Satan between Divine and Achaemenid Administrations

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VETTING THE PRIEST IN ZECHARIAH 3: THE SATAN BETWEEN DIVINE AND ACHAEMENID ADMINISTRATIONS*

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INTRODUCTION

The development of angelology and demonology within Second Temple Judaism has long been a popular focus of scholars exploring Iranian influence upon Judaism and Christianity.¹ This is particularly true of the development of the character of Satan from obscure and inconspicuous mentions in the Hebrew Bible to the arch-villain of Medieval Christianity.² An obvious and popular parallel for Satan's eventual role in various forms of Judaism is the

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¹ E.g., A. Kohut, *Über die Jüdische Angelologie und Dämonologie in ihrer Abhängigkeit vom Parsismus* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1866); D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (London: SCM, 1964), 258–62; S. Shaked, "Iranian Influence on Judaism: First Century B.C.E. to Second Century C.E.," in W.D. Davies and L. Finkelstein (eds.) *The Cambridge History of Judaism* (4 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 1:308–25 (314, 317–18)

² E.g., H. Vorländer, "Der Monotheismus Israels als Antwort auf die Krise des Exils," in B. Lang (ed.) *Der einzige Gott* (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1981), 84–114 (106); P.J. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Mechireša?* (CBQMS, 10; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981); P.L. Day, *An Adversary in Heaven* (HSM, 43; Atlanta: Scholars, 1988), 63.

character of Angra Mainyu, the polar and ontological opposite of Ahura Mazda in Sasanian Zoroastrianism.³ This paper, however, argues for Persian influence on the formation of Satan from an entirely separate ground and source: that of the practical administration of the Achaemenid Empire.

This argument continues a working hypothesis started elsewhere, namely that various forms of Judaism in the Second Temple Period modeled their ideas of YHWH's heavens upon the Achaemenid Empire (rather than upon the Zoroastrian heavens *per se*). This paper's contribution to the building of this hypothesis will move in the following steps. First, the paper summarizes the author's previous argument concerning the angelic Watcher class and the King's Eye.⁴ Second, it explores the language around "the Satan" in the Hebrew Bible, focusing on Zech 3 in particular. Third, this language will be compared and contextualized by what is currently known of Achaemenid administrative structures. This context is then used to argue that Zech 3 should be understood as a satrapal confirmation hearing and the Satan as the administrative accuser within the satrap's court, rather than as a priestly consecration or investiture. Fourth, the important contextual theme of hubris is explored for both the Yahwistic heavens and the Great King's court. Lastly, the paper concludes by making preliminary suggestions of implications for a pro-Persian priesthood and for Iranian influence.

The method for reconstructing Achaemenid practices used here is described in more detail in the author's previous work.⁵ The

³ E.g., J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *The Western Response to Zoroaster* (Ratanbai Katrak Lectures; Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), 91–92; Russell, *Method and Message*, 260–62; D. Winston, "The Iranian Component in the Bible, Apocrypha, and Qumran," *History of Religions* 5 (1966): 183–216 (192–93, 212); M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism: Under the Achaemenians* (HO 8.1.2.2A.2; Leiden: Brill, 1982), 195; Day, *An Adversary in Heaven*, 63; P. Evans, "Divine Intermediaries in 1 Chronicles 21," *Biblica* 84/4 (2004), 545–58 (546). This is the form of influence typically rejected as well, e.g., N. Wyatt, "'Attar and the devil,'" *Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society* 25 (1976), 85–97 (86–87); S.L. Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1995), 130 n. 26; C. Breytenbach and P.L. Day, "Satan," *DDD* (2d rev. ed.), 726–32 (728).

⁴ In J.M. Silverman, *Persepolis and Jerusalem* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 558; London: T&T Clark, 2012), 171–74, 192. The parallel of the King's Eye was expanded from brief suggestions by J. Teixidor, review of J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave I. A Commentary*, *JAOS* 87/4 (1967), 633–36 (634); A.L. Oppenheim ("The Eyes of the Lord," *JAOS* 88/1 [1968], 173–180).

⁵ Silverman, *Persepolis and Jerusalem*, esp. 39–75; précis available in "Iranian Influence on Judaism," *The Bible and Interpretation*. Cited 7/17/14. Online: <http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/sil358017.shtml>. Compare its applications in J.M. Silverman, "Iranian Details in the Book of Heavenly Luminaries (1 Enoch 72–82)" *JNES* 72/2 (2013), 195–208; idem, "Was There an Achaemenid 'Theology' of Kingship?," in D.V. Edelman,

nature of the evidence available for the Achaemenid Empire involves assessing varied kinds of evidence deriving from diverse settings, locations, and even eras (e.g., Greek and Latin historiography, administrative dockets, and archaeology). Each of these has particular difficulties in interpretation and must therefore be weighed together to gain a more comprehensive picture; “native” Iranian sources are fragmentary and sparse, while classical sources often carry particular “baggage.” This is no less true for Achaemenid administration as it is for Achaemenid religion. Therefore, a search for situations, systems, and methods of interpretation can be more fruitful for exploring the impact of the Persians upon Judaeans than just a search for direct textual parallels. This method requires complex case-building based on probabilities, and it necessarily admits recognition that unexpected new evidence could alter the reconstruction. The present method tries to begin with the more fragmentary “Iranian” evidence and then move to the fuller, but more ideologically difficult, Classical sources. Although this carries a danger of collapsing chronological development and regional variations, it enables a broader picture of the empire to emerge. Underlying the entire method is a hermeneutical understanding of human traditions.

STEP ONE: THE WATCHERS AND THE KING’S EYE

The most famous appearance of the Watchers is in the *Book of Watchers* (1 *En.* 1–36), where the interest of the writers is in Watchers who fell from heaven. However, this Enochic version is likely a combination of a pre-existing class of angels with a separable tradition of fallen beings, and therefore the class’s origins should be analyzed independently of the negative fallen motif.⁶

A. Fitzpatrick-McKinley and P. Guillaume (eds.), *Religion in the Persian Period: Emerging Judaisms and Other Trends* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming).

⁶ Western literature, with its Judeo-Christian heritage, resonates with myths of fallen angelic figures and their impact on humanity, most famously in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and Dante’s *Divine Comedy*. This functions as a classic explanation for earthly evil (theodicy). Although recurrent in various Jewish and Christian traditions, this myth is not directly extent in the Hebrew Bible. Christian exegesis has often conflated the oracles of hubris in Isa 14 and Ezek 28 with Luke 10:18, although the mythic connotations and backgrounds behind these passages are obscure. A.Y. Reed (*Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 116 n. 81), considers these proof texts as used solely by Christians. D.B. Martin, (“When Did Angels Become Demons?” *JBL* 129/4 [2010], 657–77 [658]), suggests this motif was later used to vilify Hellenistic paganism by Christians. A number of texts display a variety of similar motifs related to fallen angel-like figures, often related to hubris of some kind. Cf. Isa 14:12; Ezek 28:11–19 esp. v. 17; Rev 9:1, 12:9; *Sibylline Oracle* 5.512–31 (J.J. Collins, “The Sibylline Oracles,” in J.H. Charlesworth [ed.], *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* [New

When investigated separately from the myth of fallen beings, the Watchers' appearances in Daniel (4:10, 14, 20) and *The Book of Watchers* (esp. 9:1–10:15, 15:2, 20:1–8) can be described as beings

York: Doubleday, 1983], 317–472 [405]); the Latin version of *Life of Adam and Eve* 12–16 (M.D. Johnson, “Life of Adam and Eve: a New Translation and Introduction,” in J.H. Charlesworth [ed.], *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Vol. 1, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* [2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1985], 1:249–95 [262–64]); Luke 10:18; and 2 (Slavonic) Book of Enoch 18, 29:4–5, 31:3–6 (F.I. Andersen, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in J.H. Charlesworth [ed.], *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Vol. 1, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* [2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1983], 1:92–221 [130–32, 148, 154]). For Ezekiel, e.g., W. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2* (trans. J.D. Martin; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 92–95. For Isaiah, e.g., B.S. Childs, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 126; J.B. Geyer, *Mythology and Lament: Studies in the Oracles about the Nations* (SOTSM; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 29–37. For some discussion, see A. Yarbro Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation* (Eugene, Oreg.: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 81–82; A.M. Reimer, “Rescuing the Fallen Angels: The Case of the Disappearing Angels at Qumran,” *DSD* 7/3 (2000), 331–53 (349–50). P.D. Hanson (“Rebellion in Heaven, Azazel, and Euhemeristic Heroes in 1 Enoch 6–11,” *JBL* 96/2 [1977], 202–13) would prefer to link it to a “rebellion in heaven” motif. This motif, however, finds extended treatment in the Ethiopic pseudepigraphon known as *1 Enoch*, particularly in the first section, *The Book of Watchers*. Unlike most Christian tradition, which referred to a Lucifer figure (from translation of Isa 14:12’s הילל בן־שחר, “Morning Star, Son of the Dawn”), the Enochic tradition names the culprits as *Šemiḥazah*, *’asa’el*, and their hosts (שמִיחָזָה, עֵשָׂאֵל), “*Šemiḥazal’*” is fairly standardized, whereas “*’asa’el*” fluctuates between the homophonic עֵשָׂאֵל and עֵסָאֵל. See F. García Martínez and E.J.C. Tigchelaar (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1:403, 405. The later variant עֵזָאֵל likely explains its eventual assimilation to עֵזָאֵל. Cf. 4Q203 and the comment on the form “Azazel” in L.T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants from Qumran* (TSAJ, 63; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 77–79. The Watcher class appears to be distinct from other contemporaneous classes (Seraphim, Cherubim, and Ophanim). The Watchers myth was known to early Christian (Jude, 2 Peter) and Rabbinic (Targum Pseudo-Jonathan) writers, although they do not use the class-name. The term and concept of the angelic “Watcher” itself is not dependent on the motif of the fall from heaven, however, and most likely preceded its attachment to said motif in the *Book of Watchers*, there based on Gen 6:1–4. Interestingly, although the basis for *1 Enoch*’s myth of the fallen Watchers was Gen 6:1–4, this interpretation of Genesis seems to have been resisted by Christians in the West. For an amusing discussion of the interpretation-history of this passage published in Dublin, see J. Fleming, *The Fallen Angels and the Heroes of Mythology* (Dublin: Hodges, Foster, and Figgis, 1879). For more modern discussions, see P.S. Alexander, “The Enochic Literature and the Bible: Intertextuality and its Implications,” in E.D. Herbert and E. Tov (eds.), *The Bible as Book* (London: British Library, 2002), 57–69, and the dissenting voice in P.R. Davies, “And Enoch was Not, For Genesis Took Him,” in C. Hempel and J.M. Lieu (eds.), *Biblical Traditions in Transmission* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, 111; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 97–108.

charged with monitoring and reporting on both praiseworthy and damnable actions towards YHWH. In this role they parallel the “eyes of the Lord” in Zech 4:10b and 2 Chr 16:9. Following the suggestions of several scholars, it was proposed that the Watcher class was created as a divine counterpart to the Achaemenid surveillance system known as the King’s Eye.⁷

On the institution of the King’s Eye, the evidence of the Greek historians and the appearance of the word “listener” (גושכיא) as an officer in Egypt were combined to argue that the King’s Eye was an important official whose job was to work along and perhaps coordinate an informal network of informants, praising and blaming the king’s subjects to the king.⁸

For the present purposes there are three key points. First is that the Watchers played both a positive and negative role: they could praise as well as blame. Second, it is an angelic class based on Achaemenid political rather than religious structures *per se*. Third, there is a connection between both the Watchers and hubris on the one hand and the King’s Eye and hubris on the other—which will be addressed in a later section.

STEP TWO: LANGUAGE AND STRUCTURE OF THE SATAN IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

The term “satan” has long been an interpretive crux in the Hebrew Bible.⁹ At present, the author is aware of thirteen pericopes of rele-

⁷ Both Teixidor and Oppenheim cited above, as well as C. Mitchell, “Earth-Empire in Haggai–Zechariah and Persian Imperial Inscriptions” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, New Orleans, 2009), and D. Smith-Christopher “Can we Speak of the Socio-Psychology of Exile in the Bible?” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Boston, 2008). Cf. N.H. Tur-Sinai, *The Book of Job: A New Commentary* (Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher, 1957), 40. Subsequently this interpretation has been supported by J. Blenkinsopp, *David Remembered: Kingship and National Identity in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2013), 92–93.

⁸ Cited were Aeschylus, *Pers.* 980; Herodotus, *Hist.* I.114.2; Plutarch, *Art.* XII.1; Xenophon *Cyr.* VIII.2.10–12, 6.16, Pseudo-Aristotle, *De Mundo* 398a; for the Egyptian evidence regarding the term גושכיא, see TADAE 4.27 (B. Porten and A. Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* [4 vols; The Hebrew University Department of the History of the Jewish People, Texts and Studies for Students; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1986], 1:62).

⁹ For overviews, see Day, *An Adversary in Heaven*; C. Beytenbach and P.L. Day, “Satan,” *DDD* (2d rev. ed.), 726–32; D.R. Brown, “The Devil in the Details,” *CBR* 9/2 (2011), 200–27; D. Rudman, “Zechariah and the Satan Tradition in the Hebrew Bible,” in M.J. Boda and M.H. Floyd (eds.) *Tradition in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah 1–8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies, 475; London: T&T Clark, 2008), 191–209.

vance that use the root שָׂטַן.¹⁰ Since Day's study it has been standard to consider the root to refer to an adversary in a general or legal sense.¹¹ The language of the appearances in Job and Zech 3 (and sometimes Chr) are generally agreed to indicate a legal-judicial setting.¹² Further, Ps 109:6–7 appears to use court-room language similar to Zech 3 for an accuser, and Ezra 4:6 uses the same root for a formal written accusation against Yehud.

While certainly an important diachronic question is whether the meaning of the term remains constant in the Hebrew Bible or whether it shows development towards a technical, demonic term before the New Testament, this is beyond the scope of this paper. For the present purposes the relevant question is whether the language relates to a particular political and/or legal setting or merely belongs to a more general ANE one. This article argues for a specifically Achaemenid setting. A few points which suggest the import of the Persian Empire rather than other structures will be noted here, and then Zech 3 will be looked at more closely.

The first consideration is the often overlooked instance of the root in Ezra 4:6. In a list of local hurdles to the rebuilding of the temple, this verse claims that during the reign of Xerxes they “wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem” (כתבו שטנה על־יְשֵׁבֵי יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם). The word for the written accusation here is *śīṭnā* (שטנה), a *dis legomenon* but singular in this usage,¹³ which uses the same root as “the Satan.” This potentially

¹⁰ Num 22:22, 32; 1 Sam 29:4; 2 Sam 19:23; 1 Kgs 5:18; 11:14; Job 1:6–12, 2:1–7; Ezra 4:6; 1 Chr 21:1; Ps 38:21; 71:13; 109:6–7; Zech 3:1–2.

¹¹ Day, *An Adversary in Heaven*, 15, especially in terms of the (Ugaritic) divine council. Cf. N.L.A. Tidwell, “*Wā’ōmar* (Zech 3:5) and the Genre of Zechariah’s Fourth Vision,” *JBL* 94/3 (1975), 347–54.

¹² E.g., D.L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8* (OTL; Westminster John Knox, 1984), 189–90; Day, *An Adversary in Heaven*, 33; C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8* (AB 25B; Hartford, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004), 182–83. Note, however, that F. Kreuzer, (“Der Antagonist: Der Satan in der Hebräischen Bibel—eine bekannte Größe?” *Biblica* 86/4 (2005), 536–44) argues it is merely a literary abstraction in both Job and Zech. The recent attempt to claim all uses of the root relate to attacking or execution is unconvincing due to a lack of engagement with the legal parallels. See R.E. Stokes, “Satan, YHWH’s Executioner,” *JBL* 133/2 (2014), 251–70.

¹³ Not noted by J. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1988). L.L. Grabbe (*Ezra-Nehemiah* [London: Routledge, 1998], 19) notes that it is a *hapax*, but considers the meaning and relation to root to be merely a guess; he further opines that it is possibly a fragment from something longer. L. Batten (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* [ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1913], 159–60) preferred to understand the meaning via the Greek translation as a letter. A. Lange (“The Significance of the Pre-Maccabean Literature from the Qumran Library for the Understanding of the Hebrew Bible,” in A. Lemaire [ed.], *Congress Volume Ljubljana 2007* [VTSup, 133; Leiden: Brill, 2010], 206) thinks Ezra 4:6 corroborates the figure as a

places the root within official Achaemenid administrative structures reporting activities to the king or his satrap.

The appearance of the Satan in Job 1–2 also has ties with an administrative context beyond just a general divine council, if one accepts the link between the Watchers and the King’s Eye. When YHWH asks the Satan what he has been doing, he replies “I have been roaming the earth and going to and fro upon it” (Job 1:7, 2:2: **מההלך בה בארץ**).¹⁴ The verb “roam” (**שוט**) used here is the same as that used for the “Eyes of the Lord” in 2 Chr 16:9 and in Zech 4:10b, both of which can be connected to the King’s Eye’s method of surveillance. The form of *halak* (**מההלך**) used here (the *Hitpa’el*) also occurs in Zech 6:7 for the four spirits, tying the character into the surveillance system, suggesting that the Satan here is more than just a general legal figure.¹⁵ This also suggests an Achaemenid setting.

The famous replacement of Yahweh with (a) Satan in 1 Chr 21:1 (| | 2 Sam 24:1) is certainly at least of Persian period; whether or not it is understood as a distinct “person” in that passage the instance plausibly places the nominative within Persian period usage, though in this case within a less obviously legal context.¹⁶ Other than the general accusers in Ps 71:13 and Shimei in 2 Sam 19:23, all the other occurrences of the root appear to be used as general opposition rather than deriving from a particular context and so will not be discussed here.¹⁷ Given the Persian period usages of the root and the chronological remoteness of the Ugaritic form

prosecutor of the heavenly assembly. The same word and vocalization also appears in Gen 26:21, though BDB give them as two different lemma. Note, however, that the Gen passage is also in the context of a **ריב**. The Targumim appear to leave **שטנה** unchanged in Genesis (B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onqelos to Genesis* [ArBib, 6; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988], 98; M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* [ArBib, 1B; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992], 92; M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1* [ArBib, 1A; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992], 132).

¹⁴ Identical responses in the verses, except the spelling of **שוט**.

¹⁵ Contra L. Tiemeyer (“Zechariah’s Spies and Ezekiel’s Cherubim,” in M.J. Boda and M.H. Floyd [eds.], *Tradition in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah 1–8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology* [Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies, 475; New York: T&T Clark, 2008], 117), this does not mean that the Satan is identical to the King’s Eye, only that it is a related system.

¹⁶ Although some commentators take “stand against” (**על + עמד**) as a technical legal formula, which it can be. E.g., Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 189–90; Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 182–83.

¹⁷ I.e., Num 22:22, 32; 1 Sam 29:4; 1 Kgs 5:18; 11:14, 23, 25; Ps 38:21. Although the instance in 2 Sam 19:23 [Eng. 1:22] is quite interesting in the context of this paper (accusation against an official to King David), the dating of the “succession narrative” and its editing is too complex to be dealt with here.

of the divine council, it is legitimate to seek a more directly Achaemenid setting to this figure.¹⁸

ZECHARIAH 3

The occurrence of the Satan in Zechariah is in a textually difficult location. The Satan appears in vv. 1–2 of Zech 3, a vision commonly noted to be formally different from the others in Zech 1–8.¹⁹ The narrative seems to commence *in media res*, and, further, the text near the end of the chapter appears to have been dislocated from somewhere, perhaps chapter four.²⁰ These issues cannot be dealt with directly here. The text as it stands does not grant the Satan any action or voice, so his actions and role must be inferred from the rebuke given to him by the Angel of YHWH and the setting.

The chapter opens with the Satan standing at the right hand of Joshua “the great priest” before the Angel of YHWH (את־יהושע) (הכהן הגדול עמד לפני מלאך יהוה והשטן עמד על־ימינו לשטנו). YHWH’s angel²¹ rebukes the Satan in v. 2, repeating the rebuking twice, and giving the reasons as the choice of Jerusalem and that Joshua is a “brand plucked from the fire” (זה אוד מצל מאש). The Satan then disappears from the scene, and Joshua has his scatologically filthy clothes (צואים) removed and replaced with robes (מחלצות) and a turban (צניף טהור). This is followed by a condition, a promise, and a sign.

The language of this passage belongs to a legal court setting.²² Most immediately obvious is the term “standing before” (עמד לפני),

¹⁸ This is not to deny the relevance of the divine council; rather, it is to see the divine council as an element that has been remodeled on Achaemenid terms, in line with the hermeneutical principle laid out in J.M. Silverman, “On Cultural and Religious Influence,” in idem (ed.), *A Land Like Your Own* (Eugene, Oreg.: Pickwick, 2010), 1–12.

¹⁹ Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 187; R. L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi* (WBC, 32; Waco, Tex.: Word Press, 1984), 199; Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 179–80, 213; M. Hallaschka, “Zechariah’s Angels: Their Role in the Night Visions and in the Redaction History of Zech 1,7–6,8,” *SJOT* 24/1 (2010), 13–27 (16).

²⁰ There is no end to hypotheses in this regard, e.g., M.H. Floyd, “Zechariah and Changing Views of Second Temple Judaism in Recent Commentaries,” *RelSRev* 25/3 (1999), 32, which summarizes five opinions; German scholarship traditionally views more, e.g., M. Hallaschka, *Haggai und Sacharja 1–8* (BZAW, 411; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 193–219, which sees a seven-stage process in additions; however, T. Pola (“Form and Meaning in Zechariah 3,” in R. Albertz and B. Becking [eds.], *Yahwism After the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era* [Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2003], 156–67) argues the entire chapter is a unity.

²¹ Accepting the emendation of the MT given by Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 186–87.

²² Commonly noted, e.g., Tidwell, “*Wā’ōmar* (Zech 3:5),” 347; W. Harrison, “The Trial of the High Priest Joshua: Zechariah 3,” *Eretz Israel* 16 (1982): 116*–24* (119*); Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 191; Day, *An*

as well as the function of accusation (לשטן). The Satan's standing at the right hand also implies a legal setting (cf. Ps 109:6).²³ Moreover, the overall structure of the chapter matches well the description of Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid period court practice in Babylonia as described by Magdalene.²⁴ The short appearance of the accuser at the beginning only, the use of a conditional verdict, and the use of a sign all find parallels within this tradition.²⁵ This legal tradition carried through the majority of the first millennium, leaving a question whether the passage merely reflects a common *Zeitgeist* or whether there is a more particular background, i.e., the Persians. Indeed, the description of the trial of Tiribazus in Diodorus is rather similar.²⁶ While the continuities from previous eras should not be underestimated, a particular feature of the Achaemenid system was the adaptation of pre-existing structures to their own ends; it is the task of this paper to attempt to fit Zech 3 into a particularly Persian setting, even if it had Neo-Babylonian precursors.

Several features of this passage should be noted, before turning to an exploration of Achaemenid systems. First, the setting appears to have a singular judge in the person of the מלאך יהוה. This is peculiar, as the standard Mesopotamian court involved a college of three to five judges.²⁷ The Hebrew of v. 2 is missing the expected "מלאך" as in vv. 1, 3, 5 and 6, but it is in the Syriac and the lack could be explained by homoioteleuton.²⁸ Joshua the "Great

Adversary in Heaven, 33; J.C. VanderKam, "Joshua the High Priest and the Interpretation of Zechariah 3," *CBQ* 53/4 (1991), 553–70 (555); M.H. Floyd, *Minor Prophets 2* (FOTL, 12; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 374; Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 179, 182.

²³ Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 189.

²⁴ F.R. Magdalene, *On the Scales of Righteousness* (BJS, 348; Providence, R.I.: Brown Judaic Studies, 2007), esp. 55–94; F.R. Magdalene, "Judicial and Legal System i. Achaemenid Judicial and Legal Systems," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 15/2 (2009), 174–77. On Neo-Babylonian law see also J. Oeslner *et al.*, "Neo-Babylonian Period," in R. Westbrook (ed.), *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law* (2 vols; Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1, The Near and Middle East, 72; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 1:911–74; M. Jursa, *Neo-Babylonian Legal and Administrative Documents: (Guides to Mesopotamian Text Record, 1; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2005)*; S.E. Holtz, *Neo-Babylonian Court Procedure* (Cuneiform Monographs, 38; Leiden: Brill, 2009).

²⁵ On the accuser being restricted to earlier portions of the proceedings, see Magdalene, *On the Scales of Righteousness*, 74; on conditional verdicts, *ibid.*, 88; on use of signs and records as proof, see Oeslner *et al.*, "Neo-Babylonian Period," 925; Holtz, *Neo-Babylonian Court Procedure*, 273.

²⁶ Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica* XV.8.3–5, XV.10.1–11.2. There are three judges attested in this trial. For further explication, see below.

²⁷ See, Oeslner *et al.*, "Neo-Babylonian Period," 919; Magdalene, *On the Scales of Righteousness*, 57; Holtz, *Neo-Babylonian Court Procedure*, 254–63. Note there were three in the trial in Diodorus above as well.

²⁸ As argued by Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 186–87, cf. Harrison, "Trial of the High Priest Joshua," 118*; rejected by A.S. van der Woude, *Zacharia* (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1984), 63–64; R. Hanhart, *Dodeka-*

Priest,” a term perhaps originally associated with fiscal projects,²⁹ is the accused, while the mysterious “the Satan” is the accuser. Although the accusation itself is not stated, the general tenor is implied by the content of the rebuke: a claim that YHWH chose Jerusalem and that Joshua was a “brand plucked from the fire.”³⁰ Guilt may be implied, as Joshua then has his defiled robes removed and he is given some sort of headgear. These suggest that the accusation concerned Jerusalem itself or its priesthood in general and Joshua and/or the exiles in particular.

This is followed by a conditional verdict based on obedience to YHWH (v. 7). The chapter concludes with (a likely garbled) sign. While the chapter clearly concerns the suitability of Joshua for temple service, it is otherwise rather obscure, and the figure of the Satan even more so. However, contra Kreuzer, the oblique reference to the Satan suggests a known referent rather than a newly-minted literary trope.³¹ Now it is time to turn to placing it within a broader context of the Achaemenid Empire.

STEP THREE: ACHAEMENID STRUCTURES

Space does not allow for a comprehensive discussion of the administration of the empire.³² In the broadest terms, the Great King ruled through satraps (“viceroys”) who had the function of representing the king in the various regions (known traditionally in scholarship as “satrapies”).³³ Many of these regions continued pre-

propheten 7.1 Sacharja 1–8 (BKAT, 14.7.1; Neukirchener-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1998), 168. The MT and the LXX both only read “YHWH” in v. 2. Sadly, the text of v. 2 is not preserved either in 4QMinorProphets^e or 8HevXIIgr.

²⁹ As argued by Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 180. However, D.W. Rooke (*Zadok's Heirs: The Role and Development of the High Priesthood in Ancient Israel* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000], 29) thinks the term originally merely meant the most senior priest. Pola (“Form and Meaning in Zechariah 3,” 163 nn. 46–47) merely sees the term as an indication of post-exilic date. The antiquity of the position of high priest cannot be discussed here.

³⁰ This does not include “the Davidic ruler” as argued by Pola, “Form and Meaning in Zechariah 3,” 163.

³¹ Kreuzer, “Der Antagonist.”

³² For much more comprehensive discussions, see C. Tuplin, “The Administration of the Achaemenid Empire,” in I. Carradice (ed.), *Coinage and Administration in the Athenian and Persian Empires* (BAR International Series, 343; Oxford: BAR, 1987), 109–58; C. Tuplin, “Managing the World: Herodotus on Achaemenid Imperial Organization,” in R. Rollinger, B. Truschneegg and R. Bichler (eds.), *Herodot und das Persische Weltreich. Herodotus and the Persian Empire* (Classica et Orientalia, 3; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), 39–64; H. Klinkott, *Der Satrap* (Oikumene Studien zur antiken Weltgeschichte, 1; Frankfurt: Verlag Antike, 2005).

³³ The term “satrap” derives from OP *xšaçapāvan(t)*, “protector of rule/empire.” The term “satrapy” is at present only attested in classical sources. On the problem of delimiting the satrapies, see e.g., A.R. Mead-

vious political divisions. Under the satraps were a varied array of governors, commanders, and officials responsible to the satraps and in theory directly to the king himself. Typically, regional systems were maintained while being integrated into a wider imperial system, and thus they admitted much regional variation at the sub-satrapal level albeit with discernible patterns. Only some aspects deemed relevant to the present issue will be discussed. The topics here will be a few particular officers or roles that highlight the function of accusation, the prevalence of administrative rivalries in the empire that were semi-routinized within the satrapal system, and the official marking of loyalty to the king. These will then be compared with Zech 3.

OFFICERS

The most suggestive, though sadly fragmentary, evidence comes from a satrapal archive found in Bactria. In the Bactrian documents recently published by Naveh and Shaked, two interesting terms occur, *petiyar* (פתיר) and *peqida* (פקידא). The first term is fascinating, but uncontextualized. It appears in Tally D7, an accounting docket which merely gives five notches and the text “with Patiyara, from Abudi, in the year three of Darius” (עם פתיר מן אבודי בשנת 3 (דריוהוש מלכה).³⁴ Naveh and Shaked relate the name “Patiyara” to Middle Persian *petyārag*, which is a term for Angra Mainyu meaning “adversary,” noting that this is a peculiar personal name. This term also appears in Avestan as *paitiiārem* in the *Videvdāt* 1 to describe Angra Mainyu’s counter-creations to Ahura Mazda’s creations: with every good thing created, Angra Mainyu “opposes” it with a negative creation of his own.³⁵ Naveh and Shaked also cannot explain the name *Abodai*. It can be suggested that both are titles rather than names, relating *Abodai* to the word *’āvad* (אבד), “lose, destroy, kill, perish,”³⁶ in an unclear formation³⁷ and keeping

ows, “The Administration of the Achaemenid Empire,” in J. Curtis and N. Tallis (eds.), *Forgotten Empire* (London: British Museum, 2005), 181–209; K. Ruffing, “Die ‘Satrapienliste’ des Dareios: Herodoteisches Konstrukt oder Realität?,” *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan* 41 (2009), 323–39; B. Jacobs, “The Achaemenid Satrapies,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. Cited 7/18/14. Online: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/achaemenid-satrapies>.

³⁴ Text and translation, J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Aramaic Documents from Ancient Bactria from the Khalili Collections* (London: Khalili Family Trust, 2012), 246.

³⁵ *Videvdāt* 1:1–20. The counter-creations appear in the context of obscure geographical references, which have drawn the majority of scholarly attention, see, e.g., M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism: Vol. 1, The Early Period* (3 vols; HO, 8.1.2.2A.1; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 1:274; W. Vogelsang, “The Sixteen Lands of Videvdāt 1: *Airyânem Vaejah* and the homeland of the Iranians,” *Persica* 16 (2000), 49–66; cf. D.D. Kapadia, *Glossary of Pahlavi Vendidad* (Bombay: Kapadia, 1953), 498, 501.

³⁶ *BDB*, s.v. אבד, 2, 1078.

petiyar as the “adversary.” The docket then would relate to the official job of the *petiyar*, and not be two personal names. This would imply a very specific role or office. However, the nature of the attestation in a mere docket means proper contextualization at present is impossible, and it remains as pure speculation. Nevertheless, the appearance of a word with a similar semantic denotation and connotation to שטן in an Achaemenid administrative context is highly suggestive. If taken as a title or name of a role within the satrapal administration, *petiyar* would be an Achaemenid linguistic analogue to Hebrew *satan*.

The use of *peqida*’ (פקידא), however, is more illuminated by the Bactria archive. Four documents (A1, A5, A6, C5) attest to the satrap’s oversight and investigations of one of his governors, Bagavant, in addition to the role of the “knower/master of the command” already known from the Aršama archive.³⁸ In A1 a subordinate officer complained several times to the satrap about the governor and “magistrates” (or judges, דיניא), to which the satrap responded several times.³⁹ In A5 a command to Bagavant is also given to a messenger (אזגנדא) and a foreman.⁴⁰ Document A6 is a command to Bagavant due to the report of Vahya-atar, “the officer who is in Dastakani and Vahumati, my servant.”⁴¹ He is called both *peqida*’ in a particular jurisdiction (פקידא זי) and “my servant” (עלימיא). This officer accuses the governor Bagavant of not following previous orders that do not appear to concern Vahya-atar directly, other than being within one of his jurisdictional areas (as they are also within the governor’s and the satrap’s). It would seem that Vahya-atar was either simply a “tattle-tale,” or his job for the satrap involved reporting on the obedience of officials to orders. The title, built from a root which includes inspection among its meanings,⁴² is already known as a Persian official title in Imperial

³⁷ It resembles Hebrew infinitive; a similar form appears in the Yerusalmi, Palestinian Talmud, Tractate 2, Page 2, Column 1, 53:d.83 63, as on the *Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon*. Cited 7/18/14. Online: <http://cal1.cn.huc.edu/showachapter.php?fullcoord=53300367b42%200>. Perhaps, then, meaning “his loss/destruction”? Alternately, one might see it as a very early Aramaic logogram for Old Persian *vi-kar*, “to destroy,” or Avestan *nasaṭ*, “lost,” *skandō*, “destruction,” or similar, though this is very early. H. Humbach (“Epigraphy i. Old Persian and Middle Iranian Epigraphy,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 8/5 [1998], 378–488 [481]) thinks the use of Aramaic logograms probably started in the late Achaemenid period.

³⁸ I.e., *b’l t’m*. See Naveh and Shaked, *Aramaic Documents*, 50.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 68–75.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 104–6.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 112–16.

⁴² E.g., *HALOT*, s.v. פקד, §1, 3:955; *BDB*, פקיד, §1, 824 on the disputed Hebrew root. For its use in Achaemenid administration, see G.R. Driver, *Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1954), 7–8; B. Porten, *Archives from Elephantine* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1968), 54–55.

Aramaic. An officer with this title (פקידא) appears in the Aršama archive in a similar situation (AD 4).⁴³ However in this text the officer's accusation to the satrap involves failure to obey the officer's orders, albeit concerning Aršama's household, rather than separate orders directly from Aršama. The new complaint attested in the Bactrian archive is more than just self-protection as it was in AD 4. The activity of Vahya-atar suggests, then, a more systematic use of accusation within the satrapal administration.

For the context of Yehud it is interesting to notice that Vanderhoof thinks a seal inscription attests to a Persian period פקד of Yehud, but this is unfortunately uncertain.⁴⁴ Perhaps it is of relevance to note that in Neh 11:22–24 there was a פקד over the Levites in Jerusalem, who had a “royal order” (מצות המלך), while there was a separate official advising the king.⁴⁵ While the term cannot be reduced to a technical term, it seems to connote something related to a project or remit more than a rank or office *per se*. Those called by the title certainly were able to accuse other government functionaries. The example of Vahya-atar makes this more administratively important than simple rivalry, and Nehemiah's פקד with a “royal order” over the Levites implies Judean cultic functionaries were also part of this system, at least by the reign of Artaxerxes.

Lastly, from this archive, there is an obscure report related to the roads in C5⁴⁶ and a reference to some sort of official related to punishment, which Naveh and Shaked interpret as *sraušiā in C3,⁴⁷ a root meaning “obedience” related to an important Zoroastrian deity.⁴⁸ These two dockets show the extent of supervision that must have existed but is only incidentally attested in the extant sources. Various levels of oversight are certainly illustrated in this

⁴³ Driver, *Aramaic Documents*, 16–17; also in J.M. Lindenberger, *Ancient Aramaic and Hebrew Letters* (SBLWAW, 14; Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 86–87.

⁴⁴ D. Vanderhoof, “New Evidence Pertaining to the Transition from Neo-Babylonian to Achaemenid Administration in Palestine,” in R. Albertz and B. Becking (eds.), *Yahwism After the Exile* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2003), 219–35 (232). Citing seal 838 from N. Avigad and B. Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1997), 313. Avigad and Sass think it is a name and seventh century, though they cite an earlier opinion like Vanderhoof's. A similar form פקדיהו appears on another bullae, which has been interpreted as a name as well. See G.I. Davies, *Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions* (2 vols; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 2:77, 210 (no. 101, 192). Note that on p. 254 he gives it as the same as Avigad and Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals*, no. 707F, which appears to be incorrect.

⁴⁵ Cf. Neh 11:9, 14. However, it is worth noting that the term פקד only indicates a special commission in Esth 2:3 and 2 Chr 24:11.

⁴⁶ Naveh and Shaked, *Aramaic Documents*, 214–15.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 195–6.

⁴⁸ E.g., G. Kreyenbroek, *Sraoša in the Zoroastrian Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 1985).

sample, with numerous administrative titles, many of which remain obscure. The above Iranian sources suggest rather widespread mechanisms of accusation within Achaemenid administration, but their fragmentary attestation makes them difficult to use. The more comprehensive picture drawn by some classical authors can help make more sense of how they likely operated in particular situations. Indeed, the above situation fits the picture painted by Xenophon on imperial administration.

In *Cyr.* 8.6.16 Xenophon describes yearly inspections by an officer with an army to correct “negligence in the delivery of tribute, or the protection of the inhabitants, or the cultivation of the soil, or indeed any omission of duty whatsoever.” Xenophon connects these inspections with language concerning the king’s “brother,” “eye,” and “son.” This is the system which is generally known as the King’s Eye. However, it is worth noting that, more broadly, Xenophon attributed to Cyrus the appointing of multiple kinds of overseers,⁴⁹ implying that the “King’s Eye” was only one particular manifestation of the Achaemenid imperial oversight. Presumably the “watcher-listeners” on the palace walls in Pseudo-Aristotle are a specialized part of this system.⁵⁰ The various terms attested in Bactria appear to confirm this situation.

Much more interesting for the present purpose, however, is Xenophon’s description of how Cyrus set “intimate friends” against “truants” within his court, making them rival each other for his favor.⁵¹ While this story is in the context of attendance at the court, Xenophon describes the same principle in legal situations slightly later on.⁵² Here he claims that parties in a suit had to agree on the choice of judges, which resulted in the seeking of friendly and influential judges and a lack of loyalties beyond those to the king. The picture presented by Xenophon, then, is one which has various layers of officials directly responsible to the king combined with an encouragement or facilitation of elite rivalries for the king’s favor, with the latter potentially having administrative repercussions. Indeed, in his *Economics*, Xenophon has Socrates posit two classes of officials—civic and military—whose duties are intertwined in such a way as to cause them to accuse each other when negligence arises. Both of these duties fall under a satrap’s authority.⁵³ This recalls the accusations leveled by the *peqidaš* noted above. While Xenophon is suspect for perhaps being too molded by his own philosophy of leadership,⁵⁴ it fits with other similar

⁴⁹ Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.9.

⁵⁰ Pseudo-Aristotle, *De Mundo* 398a. Cf. M. Brosius, “New Out of Old?” in A.J.S. Spawforth (ed.), *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 29.

⁵¹ Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.i.16–20.

⁵² Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.ii.26–28.

⁵³ Xenophon, *Oec.* 4.9–11.

⁵⁴ That Xenophon has a distinctive agenda is well known, e.g., C. Tuplin, “Xenophon and His World: An Introductory Review,” in *idem* (ed.),

pictures of the way the administration functioned *vis-à-vis* individual officials.

Such administrative rivalries of course have numerous parallels,⁵⁵ though the Achaemenids apparently attempted to use these as one of their mechanisms of imperial control. A useful example of them in an Achaemenid context with legal repercussions can be found in the trial of Tiribazus in Diodorus Sicculus (XV.8.3–5, XV.10.1–11.2). While the highly ranked Tiribazus engaged the rebel Evagoras, the lower-ranked Orontes accused him of disloyalty to the king. This accusation was taken seriously, and Tiribazus was arrested. The latter requested a trial, and he was granted one before three royal judges. The trial began with the letter of accusation being read by accusers (*κατηγοροῦντες*), who declared the accusation sufficient for trial. Tiribazus was allowed to defend himself, and he was cleared of charges. The King queried the judges on their legal reasoning, and Orontes was punished for making a false accusation. Several things about this case are worthy of comment: it involves high Persian officials, rather than lower-level ones, which may make it a more elaborate situation. Indeed, the negotiations with non-Persian, lower-ranked Evagoras were conducted by Tiribazus alone, without recourse to the royal judges.⁵⁶ It is likely that the mechanisms for similar charges lower down on the administrative scale were handled more simply by the relevant satrap on behalf of the king. Secondly, it is worth noting that the accusation was written in a letter which was both sent directly to the king *and*

Xenophon and His World (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2004), 13–31 (20); for studies of aspects of his ideas of leadership see V. Azoulay, “The Medo-Persian Ceremonial,” in Tuplin (ed.), *Xenophon and His World*, 147–74; G. Danzig, “The Best of the Achaemenids,” in F. Hobden and C. Tuplin (eds.), *Xenophon: Ethical Principles and Historical Enquiry* (Mnemosyne Supplements, 348; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 499–540; for a few studies trying to trawl Xenophon for Achaemenid material see, e.g., C. Tuplin, “Persian Decor in *Cyropaedia*: Some Observations,” in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and J.W. Drijvers (eds.), *Roots of European Tradition* (Achaemenid History, 5; Leiden: NINO, 1990), 17–29; C. Tuplin, “Xenophon and the Achaemenid Courts,” in B. Jacobs and R. Rollinger (eds.), *Der Achämenidenhof* (Classica et Orientalia, 2; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 189–230.

⁵⁵ Probably nigh universal. They are attested in administrative letters from Neo-Babylonian Uruk, e.g. K. Kleber, *Tempel und Palast* (AOAT, 358; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008), 118–23. The author is grateful to Bastian Still for pointing out this parallel. Similar sorts of rivalries, not yet integrated into administration, can be seen in Mari as well (J. Sasson, “‘Nothing So Swift as Calumny,’” in T. Boiy *et al.* (eds.), *The Ancient Near East, A Life!* (OLA, 220; Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 525–42 (531–35). For a discussion of administrative rivalries in the Achaemenid system, see, e.g., L.S. Fried, “Because of the Dread Upon Them,” in J. Curtis and S.J. Simpson (eds.), *The World of Achaemenid Persia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 457–70.

⁵⁶ Brosius (“New Out of Old?,” 30) also thinks there were different systems for court-level and sub-satrapal officers.

was read out and commented upon by “accusers” during the trial. These are distinct from Orontes, who was the original accuser. It was the latter who was punished directly by the king for making a false accusation. A similar observation can be made in Plutarch’s first account of the trial of Darius for rebelling against Artaxerxes, where “others brought the indictment” (ἐτέρων κατηγορησάντων) in place of the king.⁵⁷ This appears to require an official office or at least a function in the satrapal judicial courts and oversight of subordinates, designed to ensure the likely future loyalty of officials. The situation depicted by Diodorus shows two kinds of accusers—general administrative and a specific function within a legal procedure, the latter with written and oral reflexes. The mechanism seen in this trial will prove a useful setting for this article later.

LOYALTY CEREMONIAL?

There is no doubt that holding office within the empire was predicated on loyalty to the king, and this likely involved declarations of loyalty, at appointment and perhaps also periodically confirmed. Was such loyalty proclaimed in official oath ceremonies? Briant suggests there may have been, though Tuplin rejects the idea.⁵⁸ The giving of loyalty oaths and pledges is to be expected, and they are mentioned briefly by Xenophon and Ctesias in various situations.⁵⁹ An incident in the *Anabasis* has a tantalizing anecdote which might hint at a loyalty oath ceremony which involved the “altar of Artemis,” an apology, and the giving and receiving of pledges.⁶⁰ The material, however, is too allusive to be certain what it might have really involved (and Tuplin rejects the inference).⁶¹ Another hint of Achaemenid ceremonies around declarations of loyalty is the famous demand for “earth and water.”⁶² As Kuhrt has analyzed, this demand symbolized a sort of vassal status for states not

⁵⁷ Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 29.3–7; R. Bichler and R. Rollinger, “Greece v. vi. The Image of Persia and Persians in Greek Literature,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 11/3 (2002), 198–201.

⁵⁸ P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander* (trans. P.T. Daniels; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 325; C. Tuplin, “All the King’s Men,” in J. Curtis and S.J. Simpson (eds.), *The World of Achaemenid Persia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 51–62.

⁵⁹ Xenophon (*Anab.* 2.5.3) has pledges between Persians and Clearchus; Ctesias, frg. 9 §8 (trans. L. Llewellyn-Jones and J. Robson, *Ctesias’ History of Persia* [Routledge Classical Translations; London: Routledge, 2010], 173) has Cyrus require oaths of allegiance while setting up the succession of Cambyses.

⁶⁰ Xenophon, *Anab.* 1.6.7.

⁶¹ Tuplin, “All the King’s Men,” 51–62.

⁶² A. Kuhrt, “Earth and Water,” in A. Kuhrt and H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (eds.), *Method and Theory* (Achaemenid History, 3; Leiden: NINO, 1988), 87–100; Tuplin, “All the King’s Men,” 44. Cf. E. Badian, “Herodotus on Alexander I of Macedon,” in S. Hornblower and E. Badian (eds.), *Greek Historiography* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 107–30.

directly governed by the Great King, and in this she sees a close parallel to Assyrian *adê* oaths.⁶³ On the basis of a late text she suggests a ritual involving an ordeal-like element was involved.⁶⁴ Although again too allusive to reconstruct a precise ceremony, for the present purposes it indicates that ritualized mechanisms for ensuring officials' loyalty to the king existed, and that these could be administered by the king in person or by an official representing him.⁶⁵ There are very ancient precedents for ceremonies as part of loyalty treaties in the ANE,⁶⁶ but the evidence sadly is non-existent after the Neo-Assyrian Empire.⁶⁷ A text published by Weisberg from the early reign of Cyrus could potentially relate to royal charters, but it hard to know whether this is either an accurate inference or even relevant at all to the establishing of officials such as priests.⁶⁸

It is certain, however, that oaths were still widely used, even if the best official examples appear to be Neo-Assyrian.⁶⁹ In the Assyrian context, offices and even professional groups swore oaths of fealty with elaborate ceremonies held at either temples, city gates, or other official areas.⁷⁰ A hint of a loyalty oath to Cyrus is preserved in the so-called *Verse Account of Nabonidus*, where the

⁶³ Kuhrt, "Earth and Water," 96–98.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁶⁵ If the actions of the Greek world are relevant, perhaps this would have been done only in the name of Persian deities as well. See the comments on Herodotus, *Hist.* V.106 and the later Athenian practice in A. H. Sommerstein and A. J. Bayliss, *Oath and State in Ancient Greece* (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde, 306; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 165–66. This seems suspect, though, as in I.C. Torrance's analysis ("Oath's and the Barbarian," in Sommerstein and Bayliss, *Oath and State in Ancient Greece*, 307–22) there is no distinction between Greek and "barbarian" oath practices in the Greek sources.

⁶⁶ For various ceremonies see K.A. Kitchen and P.J.N. Lawrence, *Treaty, Law, and Covenant in the Ancient Near East* (3 vols.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 1:1–16 (treaty no.1); cf. the articles by J. Cooper, J. Eidem, S. Parpola, and R. Westbrook in *idem*, *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law* (vol.1). A Neo-Assyrian text envisions quite an array of possible rituals involving treaties (setting a table, drinking from a cup, kindling fire, water, oil, holding breasts), see S. Parpola and K. Watanabe, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths* (SAA, 2; Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1988), 35.

⁶⁷ Kitchen and Lawrence (*Treaty, Law, and Covenant*, 3:262, 264) see the "solemn ceremony" disappear from first millennium treaties and think the Persian system of governance made it redundant.

⁶⁸ Text is given D.B. Weisberg, *Guild Structure and Political Allegiance in Early Achaemenid Mesopotamia* (Yale Near Eastern Researches, 1; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1967), 5–12; remainder of the book argues it is a guild monopoly charter.

⁶⁹ See M. Sandowicz, *Oaths and Curses* (AOAT 398; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2012), 81–86.

⁷⁰ Sandowicz, *Oaths and Curses*, 81–91.

Neo-Babylonian officials Rēmūt and Zēria bare their heads while swearing an oath.⁷¹ Waerzeggers has argued that this scene, usually interpreted as groveling to Nabonidus, instead ought to be read as a scene of submission to Cyrus.⁷² Moreover, the removal of head-gear is abnormal for Babylonian tradition,⁷³ and thus could be seen as a Persian innovation of a long tradition of loyalty oath ceremonies. Under Darius, some Babylonian officials may have been required to confirm their loyalty at his new capital in Susa.⁷⁴

Better attested for the Achaemenid era is another phenomenon that implies at least a modicum of ceremonial setting. It is certainly known that the king gave gifts, often luxurious clothing and jewelry, as marks of honor, status, and loyalty.⁷⁵ Briant has described this system at length, and there is not space to go into it in detail here.⁷⁶ The key point for the present argument is that one element in the system established by the Persians for maintaining loyalty was royal gifts which conspicuously marked high status individuals as both royally favored and thus necessarily also royally loyal. Overall from this brief discussion, although the exact mechanisms are difficult to reconstruct, it is clear that the Achaemenid system involved multiple overlapping strategies to ensure loyalty to the king: these include multiple systems of administrative oversight, with ad hoc and official accusatory figures, royal gifts for loyalty, and hints of official ceremonies related to affirming loyalty.

⁷¹ Noted by Sandowicz, *Oaths and Curses*, 101. Text available in J.B. Pritchard (ed.), *ANET* (3d ed.; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), 312–15; H. Schaudig, *Die Inschriften Nabonids von Babylon und Kyros des Grossen* (AOAT, 256; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2001), 563–78.

⁷² C. Waerzeggers, “Very Cordially Hated in Babylonia?: Zēria and Rēmūt in the Verse Account,” *AoF* 39/2 (2012), 316–20.

⁷³ So argued *ibid.*, 319.

⁷⁴ C. Waerzeggers, “Babylonians in Susa: The Travels of Babylonian Businessmen to Susa Revisited,” in B. Jacobs and R. Rollinger (eds.), *Der Achämenidenhof/The Achaemenid Court: Akten des 2. Internationalen Kolloquiums zum Thema. Vorderasien im Spannungsfeld klassischer und altorientalischer Überlieferungen. Landgut Castelen bei Basel, 23.–25. Mai 2007* (Classica et Orientalia 2; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 777–813 (809). Thanks to Caroline Waerzeggers for suggesting this as a potential additional context.

⁷⁵ E.g., Ctesias F24§15.2 (Llewellyn-Jones and Robson, *Ctesias’ History of Persia*, 206) where Mithradates is given clothing, chains, bracelets, and a sword; cf. L. Allen, *The Persian Empire* (London: British Museum, 2005), 91–94. For a basic description of physical Achaemenid jewelry (albeit with orientalist shading) see D.T. Rice, “Achaemenid Jewelry,” in A.U. Pope (ed.), *A Survey of Persian Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), 1:377–82. For the present purposes it is noteworthy that Briant calls robes and jewelry the “archetypal royal gifts” (Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 305).

⁷⁶ Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 302–38, esp. 302–15; cf. Brosius, “New Out of Old?,” 39, 54–57. For court ceremonial in general, see M. Brosius, “Das Hofzeremoniell,” in B. Jacobs and R. Rollinger (eds.), *Der Achämenidenhof* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 459–71.

COMPARISON OF ZECH 3 AND ACHAEMENID STRUCTURES

Although the evidence discussed so far is less precise than is desirable, the general nature of the Achaemenid system is sufficient to provide a new way of viewing Zech 3 and the appearance the Satan therein.

Authority to Install the High Priest

In pre-exilic times the (Davidic) king chose the (high) priest.⁷⁷ Common claims of a kingless era notwithstanding, this implies that in the postexilic period the new high priest would also have had to have been appointed by the king. In the Achaemenid era, that would mean the priest would be chosen by the Great King. In practical terms, however, most of such kingly duties were fulfilled by royal surrogates, the satraps.⁷⁸ That the satraps represented the king and even attempted to replicate the Great King's court in miniature is well-known.⁷⁹ That the satraps had the authority to appoint priests in the place of the king—and some of the process (at least in Egypt)—is indicated by P-Rylands 9.⁸⁰ Vittmann notes that in this document the Pharaonic prerogative to appoint priests was held by the satrap or delegated to his subordinate *sentī*. A similar indication, also from Egypt, comes from the so-called Pherendates correspondence, satrap under Darius I.⁸¹ Pherendates

⁷⁷ E.g., 1 Kgs 2:27, 35; cf. D.W. Rooke, "Kingship as Priesthood," in J. Day (ed.), *King and Messiah* (JSOTSup, 270; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 187–208; Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs*; Pola, "Form and Meaning in Zechariah 3," 163; I. Duguid, "Nehemiah: The Best King Judah Never Had," in I. Provan and M.J. Boda (eds.), *Let Us Go Up to Zion* (VTSup, 153; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 261–72; J.W. Watts, "Scripturalization and the Aaronide Dynasties," *JHS* 13/6 (2013), 1–15 (5). The pertinent point here is the royal prerogative over the priesthood, rather than whether or not the high priesthood *per se* is pre- or post-exilic.

⁷⁸ E.g., Kleber, *Tempel und Palast*, 5; E.R.M. Dusinberre, *Empire, Authority, and Autonomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 34.

⁷⁹ Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 345–47, 502–3, 668, 926; Klinkott, *Der Satrap*, 412–14; Brosius, "New Out of Old?," 36, 56.

⁸⁰ G. Vittmann, "Rupture and Continuity," in P. Briant and M. Chaveau (eds.), *Organisation des pouvoirs et contacts culturels dans les pays de l'empire achéménide* (Persika, 14; Paris: de Boccard, 2009), 89–122 (91). Text translated in G. Vittmann, *Der Demotische Papyrus Rylands 9* (Ägypten und Altes Testament, 38; 2 vols.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998), 1:115–203. This reading is based on M. Chaveau, "La chronique familiale d'un prêtre égyptien contemporain de Darius I^{er}," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 61/1–2 (2004), col. 21–2, which translates the relevant clause as the *sentī* appointing rather being appointed. This is most likely a delegation of satrapal duty, e.g., Kleber, *Tempel und Palast*, 5.

⁸¹ For the texts, see G.R. Hughes, "The So-Called Pherendates Correspondence," in H.-J. Thissen and K.-T. Zauzich (eds.), *Grammata Demotika* (Würzburg: Gisela Zauzich, 1984), 75–87; C.J. Martin, "The Demotic Texts," in B. Porten (ed.), *The Elephantine Papyri in English* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 289–93.

instructs the priests of Khnum in the qualities that make a *lesonis* priest acceptable for nomination, and insists on his prerogative to vet the candidates (seemingly in person).⁸² The qualities include social standing and prior demonstrated competence, and the letter indicates a vague command of Darius concerning such matters. Nevertheless, a subsequent letter (P 13582) from the priests of Khnum appears on first glance to indicate their nomination of a *lesonis* four months before dispatch, without official satrapal approval. Briant thinks this shows more of a non-onerous ideal than one of active vetting, though Kuhrt sees this in the context of taxation of their activities.⁸³ Fried, however, has noted that this happens after two nominations *had already been rejected previously by the satrap*. Further, she argues that P 13582 shows that the final candidate had been already vetted by the local garrison commander prior to the report to the satrap.⁸⁴ Fried is surely correct. There would be no point in the satrap affirming his authority over the final approval of a priestly candidate and then ignoring it in the follow-through. An empire which allowed direct orders to be ignored in such a manner would not long last. The Pherendates correspondence, then, provides very important information on the satraps' direct authority over the appointment of priests, with their own, "civic" criteria. Thus, even when a local body had traditional criteria for a priestly position, the Achaemenid administration retained ultimate approval.⁸⁵ It was noted above that in Zech 3 Joshua stands before the Angel of YHWH rather than before YHWH himself (unlike in Isaiah). The temporal authority which the satrap had to install and confirm priests as a royal proxy is in Zechariah transferred to the heavenly realm, where the Angel of YHWH fulfills the same role *vis-à-vis* YHWH himself. In other words, Zech 3 would represent a court of a lower scale than in the pre-exilic period; the king is now only involved by proxy, and so is YHWH.

***PRIESTLY INVESTITURE OR LOYALTY
CEREMONY/CONFIRMATION HEARING?***

Often the vision in Zech 3 is described as an investiture or consecration ceremony for Joshua.⁸⁶ Yet the terminology argues against

⁸² For the implication that the satrap wishes to retain a personal interview, see Hughes, "The So-Called Pherendates Correspondence," 79–80.

⁸³ Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 474; A. Kuhrt, "The Problem of Achaemenid 'Religious Policy,'" in B. Groneberg and H. Spieckermann (eds.), *Die Welt der Götterbilder* (BZAW, 376; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007), 117–42 (129).

⁸⁴ L.S. Fried, *The Priest and the Great King* (Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, 10; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 82–86.

⁸⁵ This is true regardless of the assertion of Klinkott (*Der Satrap*, 261–80) that despite connection with the satrapal administration, the satraps did not interfere with cults.

⁸⁶ Most see the scene as one of investiture and/or consecration. E.g.,

this. Indeed, Joshua is described as already “Great Priest,” and the scene appears to be dealing with an accusation. Surely these are abnormal for a priestly consecration. If, however, the scene is understood as a “confirmation hearing” of Joshua before the satrap, several features fit better than if understood as consecration. First, the scene does not correspond with the biblical literature on consecration.⁸⁷ There is no oil, nor sacrifice, nor priestly regalia (see below). Second, Joshua is before the Angel of YHWH instead of YHWH himself, and this parallels the place of the satrap in the empire. Third, there is the odd response to the Satan in v. 2. Petersen compares the last phrase in Zech 3:2, “brand plucked from the fire” to a similar image in Amos 4:11.⁸⁸ Indeed, the images and wording are similar but not exact. Amos reads **מִשְׂרֵפָה כְּאוֹד מִצֵּל** while Zech has **זֶה אוֹד מִצֵּל מֵאֵשׁ**. Both use the word “brand,” but the source of the brand differs. The use of the metaphor in Amos is one clearly of judgment and destruction, since it is in the context of a reference to Sodom and Gomorrah. Hence the use of “burning.” Yet it is not immediately clear that in Zech 3 the metaphor has the same force. Indeed, it would seem to be an unusual way to refute an accusation by referring to a previous, negative judgment. Perhaps the change to “fire” in a Persian context is significant. Unlike the traditional ANE usage of fire, in which fire was an agent of purification, within the Persian tradition fire itself needs protection from impurity.⁸⁹ Indeed, fire has a particular link to the Great King himself in the Achaemenid iconography. If taken seriously,

Tidwell, “*Wā’ōmar* (Zech 3:5),” 353; VanderKam, “Joshua the High Priest,” 557–58; Floyd, “Zechariah and Changing Views,” 257 (this is the opinion of both the commentators reviewed in this article and of Floyd himself); M.J. Boda, “Oil, Crowns, and Thrones,” *JHS* 3/10 (2001), 1–36 (4–5); L. Tiemeyer, “The Guilty Priesthood (Zech 3),” in C. Tuckett (ed.), *The Book of Zechariah and Its Influence* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 1–20. T. Pola (*Das Priestertum bei Sacharja* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002], 192, 196–98; idem, “Form and Meaning in Zechariah 3,” 164) critiques the view that it is an investiture, though he still sees it as one of purification.

⁸⁷ Such as Exod 29; Lev 8. On these, see J. Milgrom, “The Consecration of the Priests: A Literary Comparison of Leviticus 8 and Exodus 29,” in D.R. Daniels and U. Gleßmer (eds.), *Ernten, was man sät: Festschrift für Klaus Koch zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991), 273–86. On discussions of the incongruence (typically appealing instead to Ezekiel or the day of atonement), see Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 197–201; VanderKam, “Joshua the High Priest,” 556–57; Hanhart, *Sacharja 1–8*, 184–89; Floyd, *Minor Prophets 2*, 373–74; Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 192–93.

⁸⁸ Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 192.

⁸⁹ On the purity of fire in later Sasanian and modern Zoroastrianism, see M. Boyce, “On the Sacred Fires of the Zoroastrians,” *BSOAS* 31/1 (1968), 52–68; cf. J. Rose, *Zoroastrianism: An Introduction* (I.B. Tauris Introductions to Religion; London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 54, 129, 153. For further discussion on the complex issue of fire in the Achaemenid era, see J. Silverman, “Persian Fire?,” forthcoming.

the Angel of YHWH's comment would mean that Joshua was just acquired from a holy, pure source, rather than it being an image of judgment. This of course fits with his installation afterwards. Such an Achaemenid era resonance is still relevant even if one wishes to maintain the phrase derives from Amos and is reinterpreted here. Nevertheless, the dirtiness of his robe (using such strong language) requires that this process involves a surprising change of status for Joshua.⁹⁰ Perhaps it emphasizes the import of royal/divine election or a change of social class. Indeed, status was one criterion noted in the Pherendates correspondence. The use of the removal of a culturally defiling robe would then signify that Joshua was acceptable from both a civic and cultic perspective by the satrap.

Further, the ceremony involves elite rather than priestly clothing. That Zech 3 uses rare terms for the turban and robe here is often noted.⁹¹ This makes a priestly ordination unlikely. Rather, it fits in with known antecedents for being honored by the Achaemenid king. Both of the terms appear in Isa 3:18–23, which describes the removal of a long list of elite clothing items as an act of judgment.⁹² This passage is part of a general diatribe against Judahite society and especially its elite. Therefore, it indicates that these two items are more noteworthy for their monetary value than for their sacred value. Similarly, the appearance of “turban” in Job 29:14 is in parallel to clothes and cloak; elite, due to the Joban context, to be sure, but certainly not royal or priestly *per se*.

In Isa 62:3, Zion is described as a “glorious crown” and a “royal turban,” the latter using the same word as Zech 3. This connection is often used to argue that the turban is a way of Joshua gaining royal prerogatives. Yet, it ought to be noted that both of these words in Isa 62 are described as in the hand/palm of YHWH, *not* on the heads of Zion or the Judaeans. Moreover, the greater context of the verse is in a description of triumphal victory celebrations. The terms here ought to be understood, therefore, as emblems of honor and victory, most likely from a king, rather than in terms of royal coronation. If the scene in Zech 3 is understood

⁹⁰ Van der Woude (*Zecharia*, 65) thinks צַיִם refers to Joshua's guilt. Petersen (*Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 192–4, 196) thinks צַיִם refers to Joshua's survival, like soot from a fire and that the force of the image is a change in status rather than from unclean/clean. Meyers and Meyers (*Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 187–88) also see it as a change in status related to having been in an unclean land (Babylonia). VanderKam (“Joshua the High Priest,” 555–57) thinks it relate to Joshua's guilt from being in Babylonia. Rudman (“Zechariah and the Satan Tradition,” 193–95) thinks rather that it refers to the fitness of the priesthood wholesale. Tiemeyer (“The Guilty Priesthood,” 1–20) relates the entire chapter (and thus the guilt) to Hag 2:10–14's charge of idolatry.

⁹¹ E.g., Boda, “Oil, Crowns, and Thrones,” §2.3.2.1; M. Jauhiainen, “Turban and Crown Lost and Regained,” *JBL* 127/3 (2008), 501–11 (506 n. 27).

⁹² The מחלצות in v. 22 and the צניפות in v. 23.

as a satrapal appointment to office, then the robe and turban make sense as marks of *royal favor* rather than of a priesthood usurping *royal rights*. As noted above, both elite robes and jewelry were well-known markers of royal Persian favor.

SIGN ACTS AND SYMBOLS OF LOYALTY

Boda has noted that Zech 3:8 involves a “sign act,”⁹³ whereby the fellow priests both teach a lesson and symbolize a future event, the force of which is to make the coming of the “Branch” dependent on loyalty (to YHWH). Since the verse uses the key royal words “branch” and “servant,” this promise has been seen as part of the regalization of the priesthood.⁹⁴ Yet there are two key problems. First, the language only grants Joshua rule over the temple, as argued by Segal.⁹⁵ Second, this rule is predicated on loyalty first. As we discussed above, there are hints of rituals (or “sign-acts”) that accompanied Achaemenid oaths of loyalty, following ANE precedents. If this scene belongs within such a situation, then this sign-act would be merely authorizing a monopoly over the Jerusalem temple predicated on loyalty to the Persian king. The presence of the other priests would then be in line with the common ANE feature of witnesses to contracts and oaths. In this regard one should not forget that Isaiah used royal language for Cyrus, implying the legitimacy of the Persian throne. Perhaps more pertinent in the present context is the fact that Darius would no doubt have been particularly keen to ensure the loyalty of officials, given the circumstances of his accession.⁹⁶ Perhaps there is a vague hint that long-term loyalty could be rewarded by installation of dynast, but that is not certain and complicated by the textual displacement anyway. Zech 3 then alters this act of political loyalty and applies it to YHWH instead of the king.

THE SATAN AND LOYALTY OATHS

If Zech 3 is read as a scene of satrapal confirmation, then the figure of the Satan would correspond to the accusers who read the written accusation against Tiribazus in Diodorus. They were separate individuals who nevertheless had the role of both reading the accu-

⁹³ Boda, “Oil, Crowns, and Thrones,” 9–11.

⁹⁴ Typically discussed in the context of “messianic” language, e.g., Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 201; van der Woude, *Zacharia*, 74; Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism*, 132–33; Floyd, “Zechariah and Changing Views,” 258; W.H. Rose, “Messianic Expectations in the Early Postexilic Period,” in R. Albertz and B. Becking (eds.), *Yahwism After the Exile* (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2003), 168–85; J.C. Vanderkam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2004), 31. The term also appears in Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zech 6:12; and Isa 11:1.

⁹⁵ M. Segal, “The Responsibilities and Rewards of Joshua the High Priest,” *JBL* 126/4 (2007), 717–34.

⁹⁶ Assuming the dates in Haggai and Zechariah 1–8 are accurate.

sation and commenting on its legal force. The machinations around Tiribazus were at the level of the court, and so the king himself was involved in the proceedings. However, at a sub-satrapal level, the process was likely simpler, with the satrap representing the king.⁹⁷ One can, however, still understand a process whereby the satrap consulted other officials for objections to new appointments before confirming them and acquiring their oaths of loyalty. Indeed, the above-noted Pherendates correspondence included a list of criteria for priestly candidates, a number of which were based on the individuals' social standing and career record. Such criteria would need some form of interrogation to be established. Pherendates did insist on his right to see the candidates in person, and the *šīṭnâ* in Ezra 4:6 would then likely correspond to a written version prior to oral proceedings, as in Diodorus. In this understanding, the Zech passage depicts the moment where Joshua was vetted by the satrap and then had to profess loyalty to the king and in return was allowed to set-up and/or run a recognized civil cult, regardless of how he had been chosen for the priestly position by the Judaeans. This was then in the Zechariah chapter given a theological interpretation wherein the priest did the same towards YHWH's angel. The political reality was the mirror of the theological reality.

In summary, the Satan in Zech 3 corresponds to the satrap's officers who leveled legal objections against official nominees within the satrapal administration, when one combines the picture of the mechanisms portrayed in Tiribazus's trial with the logistical necessities implied by Pherendates and the hints of such offices in the Bactrian archives. Joshua is depicted as receiving royal favor predicated on loyalty, but does so before YHWH's royal proxy, the Angel of YHWH, paralleling the satrap as the Great King's proxy. The demonstration of loyalty likely involved some sort of loyalty oath and possibly even a specific ceremony.

If the above is accepted, then from this beginning context it is easy to see how the Satan became a celestial figure as the scene itself was transposed heavenwards in line with the older heavenly assembly tradition. The Satan as a reflex of an administrative role would help explain why the term became a class rather than a proper name at first,⁹⁸ a phenomenon more difficult to explain if the origins are postulated as Angra Mainyu. This does not exclude, of course, later interaction with Angra Mainyu traditions by later Jews and Christians during the Parthian and Sasanian eras.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ In general, see Klinkott, *Der Satrap*, 141–47.

⁹⁸ Cf. Lange, "The Significance of the Pre-Maccabean Literature," 211–13.

⁹⁹ As argued analogously by the author for Ezek 37; Silverman, *Persepolis and Jerusalem*, 130–35.

STEP FOUR: THE THEME OF HUBRIS

While the traditions regarding angels and their fallen brethren in Second Temple Judaism were complex and multifarious, likely drawing on a variety of myths, it seems at least two classes of angel (Watchers and Satan[s]) were based on the imperial structure of the Achaemenid Empire (and possibly its Hellenistic heirs). The most famous literary appearance of the Watcher classification related it to the trope of fallen heavenly beings, and later forms of Satan are anti-YHWH as well. Perhaps significantly, a theme of pride and subsequent punishment is recurrent to a number of these related traditions. Hubris is charged against several kings as well as angelic figures (a king of Tyre by Ezekiel; some Mesopotamian king by Isaiah; Nebuchadnezzar by Daniel; the Watchers by *1 Enoch*; Satan in *Life of Adam and Eve*, Luke, and Revelation). Certainly a critique of imperial structures finds a home in many of these texts, but, despite the plethora of political targets, the Persians seem to be surprisingly immune. That the Enochic tradition (perhaps with the exception of the *Animal Apocalypse*) seems to ignore the Achaemenid's rule and that Daniel is also not overly concerned are perhaps significant silences.¹⁰⁰ Is this omission minor evidence of the depth of Iranian influence on contemporary Judaeon conceptions of YHWH's heavens?

Since part of the Achaemenid function of the King's Eye was to punish hubris against the king and the Satans to prevent it, the positions are a political analogue to an attractive theological theme. Moreover, this theme might align certain Judaeon angelologists' potential interests with the Great Kings'. It certainly aligns with the position of the priests in their role in the Great King's administration. If this idea was borrowed during their rule, it may imply that it was borrowed within the temple cult at Jerusalem; King and YHWH punish pride, as do their "Watchers." Perhaps such an understanding is supported by the linguistic link of עִיר to the Psalms, which are likely liturgical texts.¹⁰¹ If the concept of heavenly Watchers played a significant role in the temple elites' ideology, one may wonder whether parallels were drawn between the Watchers' role in heaven *vis-à-vis* YHWH and the priests' role *vis-à-vis* the Great King, either by the priests themselves (as legitimation) or their opponents (who would likely combine it with a fall motif). If such were the case, it might add weight to Suter's contention that a critique of the temple lay behind the *Book of Watchers*'s version of

¹⁰⁰ This observation holds true even in light of the nuancing of this picture offered by Gruen, "Persia through the Jewish Looking-Glass," in idem (ed.), *Cultural Borrowings and Ethnic Appropriations in Antiquity* (Orients et Occidens, 8; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2005), 90–104.

¹⁰¹ Perhaps the most famous proponent of a liturgical understanding of the Psalms was Mowinckel; see S. Mowinckel, *Psalmstudien* (2 vols.; Amsterdam: Schippers, 1961), 1:134–59.

the tale.¹⁰² Certainly the *Animal Apocalypse* rejects the validity of the Second Temple wholesale, having occurred under the rule of “blind shepherds” (1 *En.* 89:72–73).¹⁰³ In light of such considerations, further research ought to be done into the restoration of the temple in Jerusalem;¹⁰⁴ deeper analysis of the literary response to the temple may yet uncover remarkable Achaemenid underpinnings of the renewed cult in Jerusalem—and its dissenters.

The implications of this are twofold. Not only did the Yahwistic heavens become modeled on the Great King’s empire, but the Persian period priesthood were deeply involved in colluding with Persian ideology, much like Udjahorresnet in Egypt. Just as the priests had to swear loyalty to the Persians before an accuser (the Satan) and beware charges of hubris (from the King’s Eyes), so YHWH had angels fulfilling the same functions. Such an appropriation of imperial perspectives by local elites towards their own ends is, of course, an essential element in the construction and maintenance of empires, what Dusinberre calls an “authority-autonomy framework.”¹⁰⁵ This is neither an instance of priests losing their “Judaeaness” nor of “Xeroxing” Achaemenid ideology, but of their social position within the Achaemenid hierarchy fundamentally informing the ways in which they imagined themselves and imagined YHWH’s heavens.

CONCLUSIONS

If the above analysis is sound, then the narrative in Zech 3 reflects more than just general first millennium ANE law. Rather, it is a vision which uses ANE law and structures as they were adapted by the Achaemenids to ensure and maintain loyalty throughout their large realm. Originally “the Satan” was not “demonic” at all, merely a functionary designed to ensure local officials were unlikely to commit treason against their overlords.¹⁰⁶ This was a separate function from the informers known as the “King’s Eye,” though, of course, their jobs were related and perhaps sometimes combined in particular individuals. In Zech 3 (and Job 1–2) this political and administrative role was combined with the previous heavenly council tradition and translated into a heavenly realm. From there and

¹⁰² E.g., D.W. Suter, “Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest,” *HUCA* 50 (1979), 115–35, although causes other than purity could lay behind such a rift.

¹⁰³ Cf. P.A. Tiller, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch* (SBLJL, 4; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 39–40.

¹⁰⁴ Potentially along the lines of Mitchell’s work, cited above. The author is presently working on this elsewhere.

¹⁰⁵ Dusinberre (*Empire, Authority, and Autonomy*, 4–8) describes this as a way of understanding how authority makes legitimacy through subjects’ agencies.

¹⁰⁶ Similar in many ways to the vision of H.A. Kelly, “Satan the Old Enemy: A Cosmic J. Edgar Hoover,” *Journal of American Folklore* 103 (1990), 77–84, of Satan as a “cosmic J. Edgar Hoover.”

over time the political aspects were lost, and the unpleasant aspects of accusation meant that Satan continued on his way into demonology. If one may wonder why the long-term human tendency to view the divine in terms of the earthly is here so wedded to the Persian context, it is likely due in large part to the fact that the Persian system was present contemporaneously with the appearance of written scripture as a religious phenomenon within Second Temple Judaism. In line with the decontextualizing effects of writing, the content (the Satan) was retained within the tradition but the original context (Achaemenid loyalty structures) were lost.