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“Oil, Crowns and Thrones: Prophet, Priest and King in Zechariah 1:7-6:15”

Oil, Crowns and Thrones: Prophet, Priest and King in Zechariah 1:7-6:15¹

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.** Throughout the monarchial history of Israel and Judah, three functionaries come to the fore consistently in the sociological structure of the society: king, priest, and prophet.² The scope of and relationship between these three types, however, is not constant, but fluctuates between personalities and generations throughout the history of Israel.³ In some circumstances prophets and priests are closely tied to the royal court (2 Sam 6-7) and prophets join priests in the temple courts (Lam 2:20).⁴ At other times the relationships are strained as prophets function removed from the palace and temple criticizing the royal and priestly offices (Hos 5:1) and priests act in defiance of royal authority (2 Kgs 11).
- 1.2.** In the closing moments of the state of Judah, biblical texts reveal the endurance of these three types in the Judean community. Lists throughout Jeremiah regularly place kings, priests and prophets together.⁵ The narrative in Jeremiah 37 reports that the king Zedekiah sent the priest Zephaniah to enquire of the prophet Jeremiah (37:3). This narrative reveals the strained character of the relationship between these three functionaries in the closing moments of the state of Judah.⁶
- 1.3.** There is little evidence of the status of these various types during the post-587 exilic crisis. The attempt by the Babylonians to foster some form of Judean leadership under Gedaliah centred at Mizpah, met with disaster (Jeremiah 40-41).

The Mesopotamian context was no more favourable for the expression of political royal leadership (without a kingdom) and temple priestly leadership (without a temple), although it appears that the prophetic function could be exercised in a limited way, as evidenced in the book of Ezekiel.⁷

- 1.4. The Persian Cyrus, however, introduced new conditions for identity for the various peoples. The opportunity to return to the land and restore the religious infrastructure was for many Jews an occasion for renewing communal identity and intertwined with such renewal was the restoration of a leadership core. The book of Haggai bears witness to this renewal by emphasizing the triumvirate of prophet, governor and priest: Haggai, Zerubbabel, and Joshua (Hag 1:1, 12-14; 2:1-2, 4, 21, 23),⁸ which appears to be an echo of the preexilic prophet, king and priest.⁹
- 1.5. Such renewal of leadership in the era of Darius, however, would not have been without its challenges. The return of successive waves of Jews to the land to join many who had remained or already returned would have been an occasion for defining the various leadership roles. Even if the roles corresponded to preexilic archetypes, the particular definition of these roles certainly would have been under negotiation on a sociological level.
- 1.6. Zechariah 1:7-6:15 is testimony to sociological upheaval and reconfiguration in early Persian period Yehud. While Haggai focuses particular attention on various leaders in the Jewish community, such focus is not immediately apparent in the night visions and oracles of Zechariah.¹⁰ In contrast, the majority of visions treat

the broader concerns of the community without reference to leadership figures (1:7-17; 2:1-4; 2:5-17; 5:1-4; 5:5-11; 6:1-8).

- 1.7.** On three occasions, however, such reference can be discerned. Zech 3:1-10; 4:1-14 and 6:9-15 mention individuals connected to the leadership class as the prophet offers direction for the definition of the various functionaries in the Persian period. Not surprisingly, these three texts have attracted the attention of many seeking to delineate the sociological structure of the early Persian period community and to explain the development of that structure in the following centuries. Hanson's review of Israelite religion in the early Persian period represents a consistent trend in the interpretation of these texts. After commenting on Zechariah 3 and 4 and before considering 6:9-15, Hanson states:

Zechariah thus bears witness to a stream of tradition in the early postexilic period that synthesized royal and priestly elements in a well-defined program of restoration and, for reasons no longer transparent to us, expanded the authority of the Zadokite priests so as to encompass areas earlier controlled by prophets and kings. The history of the growth and transmission of the book of Zechariah thus gives us a glimpse of the development of the Jewish community from a diarchy under a Davidic prince and a Zadokite priest to a hierocracy under a Zadokite functioning as high priest.¹¹

- 1.8.** Although differing on many details, this viewpoint is a consistent feature in other works on Zechariah 1:7-6:15. Carol and Eric Meyers note: "The sixth century saw developments that anticipated the fifth-century events. Prophets and Davidides were still visible and vocal, but they were already moving toward the sidelines--especially the latter, since there was no longer a kingdom."¹² So also Anti Laato concludes that the "High Priest during the Persian period was regarded as

representative of the Davidic dynasty,”¹³ while Rex Mason suggests that “there are priestly, royal and prophetic overtones about Joshua and presumably, the postexilic line of which he is (re)founder, forerunner and representative.”¹⁴

- 1.9.** These various scholars are representative of a major strain of research on Zech 1:7-6:15 which uses Zech 3, 4, and 6 to argue for an expansion of priestly control into arenas of royal and prophetic influence.¹⁵ But is this justifiable in light of these texts? The focus of this paper is to examine afresh these three primary texts from the early Persian period in order to understand the perspective of the Zecharian tradent community on the socio-political structure of the nascent Persian province of Yehud.

2. Prophet, Priest and King in Zechariah 3

2.1 Orientation

- 2.1.1.** Many throughout the history of interpretation of Zech 1:7-6:15 have noted the unique character of the vision found in Zech 3.¹⁶ Although it contains some of the characteristics of the other visions, the introductory verse contrasts those found in the other visions. In addition, the scene involves a historical figure contemporary with Zechariah (Joshua), rather than enigmatic objects or characters and the interpreting angel, המלאך הדבר בי = “the angel who talked with me”,¹⁷ a faithful and helpful guide in other scenes, is absent. Furthermore, the prophet enters the visionary action, demanding that Joshua be clothed with a turban.
- 2.1.2.** Zech 3 represents an amalgamation of several socio-ritual types evident elsewhere in Hebrew literature, plucked from the royal, priestly and prophetic worlds. First,

the scene itself reflects the proceedings of a legal court scene in the heavenly royal council. Secondly, the consistent use of vocabulary from priestly rituals strongly suggests that the scene reflects the investiture and atonement rituals of the high priest. Thirdly, our consideration below will show that the entire scene functions as a prophetic sign act. Thus in terms of socio-ritual types alone, Zech 3 reflects a convergence of three key functionaries evident throughout the history of Israel: prophetic, priestly and royal.

2.2. Past Interpretation

2.2.1. This observation of a convergence of types on the socio-ritual level raises the question of the relationship between these various functionaries in restoration Yehud. Several elements in Zech 3 have been used by those who argue for an expansion of the priestly role into prophetic and royal areas. First, the focus in the chapter is on the instatement of the Zadokite high priest affording great exposure to this office. Secondly, the prophet instructs the divine council to place a **צַנִּיף** ("turban", 3:5) on Joshua's head, a term which some have suggested has royal overtones.¹⁸ Thirdly, the angel speaks of the figure Zemah in a speech directed to the priests, intimating that for Zechariah this figure is priestly (3:8).¹⁹ Fourthly, the angel of the Lord promises Joshua **הַעֲמַדִּים בֵּין הָאֱלֹהִים** a phrase often translated as "a way/right of access among those standing here", that is, access to the heavenly council (3:7). For some this is seen as evidence of Joshua receiving "prophet-like authority."²⁰

2.2.2. But does this evidence in Zechariah 3 sustain the weight of the argument? Is

Zechariah a priestly promoter, advocating hierocratic intrusion into prophetic and royal arenas?

2.3. Evaluation

2.3.1. Prophet and Priest: מהלכים-- "a right of access"? (3:7)

2.3.1.1. Zech 3:6 marks an important transition in this vision as the angel launches into a speech directed to Joshua. The initial section presents a series of four conditions, the first two of which are more general in nature and the second two specific to priestly duties.²¹ There is nothing surprising in this charge. Such a commission is expected in an investiture context. What is surprising is the promised consequence that appears at the end of 3:7. If such conditions are met the angel promises the high priest מהלכים בין העמדים האלה ("a right of access among those standing here").

2.3.1.2. The identity of העמדים האלה ("those standing here") is certain since the participle עמד ("standing") has been used six times in the vision in reference to members of the heavenly council (3:1, 3, 4, 5). Jeremiah asserts that "to stand" (עמד) in the divine council is "to see and to hear his word" (23:18), that is, to participate in the deliberations of the heavenly court.

2.3.1.3. Challenging, however, is the meaning of the first word in the Hebrew text, מהלכים ("right of access"). Most have traced this plural word to the singular form מהלך ("passage/walk/journey") that is used in three other texts to refer to a passageway or journey (Ezek 42:4; Jonah 3:3-4; Neh 2:6), by positing the gloss:

“access”. However, not only is this gloss unattested, but the vowels in the Hebrew text are not the ones expected for the plural of this word and even if they were it is difficult to explain why this would be rendered in the plural. Taking the lead from the ancient versions which attest participial forms, it appears that this Hebrew form is the plural participle of the *piel* of הלך and with the verbal clause ל + נתן (“give you”, Zech 3:7) refers to the angel providing “those who move between those who stand.”²²

2.3.1.4. Rather than giving Joshua “access”, the angel is providing for Joshua individuals who already enjoy such access. Considering the only individuals who have access to the heavenly council in the Hebrew Bible are the prophets, this would suggest that God will restore temple prophecy, a conclusion which would explain the presence of “prophets” with “the priests of the house of the Lord Almighty” in Zech 7:3.²³ Therefore, Zechariah is not granting the Zadokites prophetic authority or function, but rather securing an enduring role for the prophet in the future operation of the temple cult.

2.3.2. Priest and King

2.3.2.1 צַנִּיף -- Royal Turban? (3:5)

In 3:5, Zechariah surprises the reader by participating in the scene, commanding the attendants to set a clean turban on Joshua’s head.²⁴ The term used (צַנִּיף, “turban”) is not the normal term in the Torah for the headgear of the high priest (מִצְנֵפֶת, “turban”; cf. Ex 29:6; Lev 8:9; Num 20:26-28) but is one used only three other times in the Hebrew Bible, none of them in reference to a priest (Job 29:14;

Isa 3:23; 62:3).²⁵ However, although the word צַנִּיף does appear with the terms מַלְכוּת ("royal") and עֲמֻדָּה ("crown") in Isa 62:3, words often used in connection with royalty, the occurrences in Job 29:14 and Isa 3:23 lack such royal vocabulary.²⁶ On the other hand, מִצְנֵפֶת ("turban" of the high priest in the Torah), is not limited to the High Priest for in Ezek 21:31 it is used with a prince. One cannot confine either of these words to royal or priestly contexts. צַנִּיף ("turban", Zech 3:7) has no more royal overtones than the term מִצְנֵפֶת ("turban", Ex 29:6).

2.3.2.2 מִצְנֵפֶת -- Men of Signs (3:8)

With the clothing ceremony completed in 3:5, the angel delivers two speeches. The reference to מִצְנֵפֶת ("an omen of things to come") in the second of these speeches, links this entire scene to the prophetic sign act form (Ezek 12:6, 11; 24:24, 27; cf. Isa 20:3), with the investiture ceremony serving as the prophetic action and the angelic speeches as the interpretive components.²⁷

Such sign acts are intended to teach a lesson or symbolise a coming event and both intentions can be discerned in the interpretive comments of the angel. First, he commissions Joshua for his role as high priest in 3:6-7. Secondly, he expands his address to the entire Zadokite priesthood in 3:8-10 with his reference to רֵעֶיךָ הַיֹּשְׁבִים לְפָנֶיךָ ("your associates sitting before you"), a phrase which most likely does not refer to additional priests in the visionary scene but rather to priests who assist Joshua in his duties.²⁸ This is most likely an allusion to the instatement of the Zadokite priesthood in the priestly service as promised by Ezekiel 44. 3:8-10 moves the discussion beyond teaching a lesson to symbolizing a coming event.

This future event, to which the instatement of the Zadokite priesthood points, is the arrival of someone whose is called עֶבֶד יְצַמַּח ("my servant, the Branch", hereafter "my servant, Zemah").²⁹ Zech 3:8, by preceding it with עֶבֶד יְ ("my servant"), clearly identifies יְצַמַּח (Zemah) as a person. Jer 23:5-6 and 33:15-16 are the only passages outside of Zech 1-8 which use this image to refer to a person and in these cases he is clearly a descendant from David, one who was regularly called by God, עֶבֶד יְ ("my servant"; Jer 33:21; cf. 2 Sam 3:18; 7:5; 1 Kgs 11:13, 32, 34, 36, 38; 14:8; 2 Kgs 19:34; 20:6).³⁰ A closer look at one of these two Jeremianic prophecies about יְצַמַּח (Zemah), Jer 33:15-16, will help clarify the relationship between these priests and יְצַמַּח (Zemah).

Jer 33:15-16 is a piece of prophetic poetry set within a larger prose piece focussed on the restoration of Judah and Israel from captivity (33:7).³¹ The larger prophecy promises not only a return to and resettlement of the land, but a cleansing of the people's sin (עוֹן, "sin/sins"; 33:8 twice) and a restoration of the fame of Jerusalem (33:9). These points of connection can also be traced in the vision of Zech 3:1-5 where עוֹן (3:4, 9; "guilt") connected with the exile is removed and Jerusalem is chosen once again. After describing the resettlement of the land, the prose prophecy cites the poetic piece about the Davidic descendant. At the close of this piece, however, we find a fascinating development: the promise to David is intimately linked with the promise to "the levitical priests" (33:17-18). Jeremiah 33 does not collapse the Davidic house into the Priestly, but rather links their fate together: both enjoy perpetual covenants. By playing off this earlier prophetic message, the vision in Zechariah 3 reveals that the instatement of the Zadokite

priesthood foreshadows the ultimate arrival of a Davidic king and the era he will inaugurate.³²

2.4. Summary

Although the greater focus of the vision in Zech 3 is on the renewal of the priestly house in restoration Yehud, through it the prophet clarifies the relationship between royal, priestly and prophetic personnel in this new era. Rather than promoting priestly extension or usurpation of prophetic and royal prerogatives, this vision-sign act advocates a balance of influence, sustaining preexilic patterns.

3. Prophet, Priest and King in Zechariah 4

3.1 Orientation

Zechariah 4 consistently appears in discussions of the role of governor and priest in the early Persian period. In this passage the prophet is granted a vision of a lampstand fueled by oil flowing directly from two olive trees. Although there are many enigmatic features to this vision, greatest attention has been focussed on the meaning of 4:14, the explanation of the two olive trees. The angel reveals:

אלה שני בני־היצהר העמדים על־אדון כל־הארץ (“these are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth”). Clearly this shows that the olive tree imagery symbolizes two individuals (בני־היצהר; “the two anointed ones”) intimately linked to the “Lord of all the earth,” (אדון כל־הארץ).

3.2 Past Interpretation

Past interpretations consistently have identified these two individuals as Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua, the high priest.³³ This has been based on the imagery of anointing with olive oil, a ritual practice setting apart royal and priestly figures in Hebrew tradition (e.g., 1 Sam 16:13; Ex 29:7), and on the strong tradition of Zerubbabel and Joshua as inheritors of the royal and priestly lines in the Persian period (Ezra 2-6; Hag 1-2). However, a closer look at this Hebrew text casts doubt over this interpretive strain.

3.3 Evaluation

3.3.1. בני־יהוֹיָצָהֹר: Anointed Ones? (4:14)

3.3.1.1. First of all, one needs to revisit the phrase בני־יהוֹיָצָהֹר ("the two anointed ones").

The term for oil here (יֹצָהֹר, "anointed") is never used elsewhere for anointing, a role reserved for the Hebrew word שֶׁמֶן.³⁴ The term here is one reserved for unmanufactured oil from the olive tree, appropriate because it flows directly from tree to lampstand. Thus even if the oil here was used for "anointing," it is not received by the two figures, but rather flowing from the two figures.

3.3.1.2. Secondly, the position of these two individuals in the vision needs to be noted carefully. They "stand by the Lord of all the earth". This combination of the verb עָמַד ("stand") with the preposition עַל ("by") followed by a reference to deity, is found elsewhere only in 1 Kgs 22:19 (//2 Chr 18:18).³⁵ In this instance the prophet Micaiah observes God deliberating with the host of heaven, the divine council of angelic spirits who are "standing" (עָמַד) "by" (עַל) God.³⁶ It is

instructive that Micaiah has access to this scene and the calls of other prophets reveal that the prophet was the one human allowed into this privileged position (Isa 6; Ezek 1-3; Jer 23:16-22; Am 3:7; cf. Ps 89:6-7; Job 15:8).³⁷

3.3.1.3. This evidence brings into question the traditional connection between Zech 4:14 and Zerubbabel and Joshua. If these two individuals are human beings in this passage they are most likely prophetic figures.³⁸ The prominence of Haggai and Zechariah in the traditions of the early Persian period community and their crucial role in the rebuilding of the temple may explain the presence of two prophetic figures in this vision (Hag 1-2; Zech 8:9-13; Ezra 5:1-2; 6:14).

3.3.1.4. The vision of the lampstand and olive trees, thus, emphasizes the role of the prophet in the restoration of the early Persian period. The lampstand, signifying the position of the temple as the location from which God's presence and sovereignty emanates throughout the earth, is fueled by oil supplied by the prophets. Therefore, at the center of the vision complex lies a strong reminder of the importance of the prophetic office and word within the restoration community.³⁹

3.3.2. בְּרוּחִי -- By my spirit (4:6)

This approach sheds new light on the reason for the insertion into the centre of this vision of two oracles addressed to Zerubbabel (4:6b-10a). The power of the Spirit, well associated with the prophetic office in the Hebrew Bible and linked to the empowerment of the royal office, is promised to Zerubbabel who undertakes the temple building project in the first oracle. The promise of the prophet confronts the skepticism against Zerubbabel in the second oracle. Surely the

empowering “oil” of prophecy fueled the building project, bringing the presence of God on earth.

3.4 Summary

Therefore, rather than affirming a diarchy in the political structure of early Persian Yehud, Zech 4 highlights the key role that prophecy will play within the Jewish community both in the royal task of rebuilding the temple structure (Zerubbabel, 4:6b-10a) as well as in the priestly responsibility for the enduring temple cult (Lampstand, 4:1-6a, 10b-14).

4. Prophet, Priest and King in Zech 6:9-15

4.1. Orientation

The third pericope in Zech 1:7-6:15 that alludes to the leadership of Persian Period Yehud is 6:9-15. This passage appears to be linked to the night visions/oracles by the final editors of Zech 1-8 because of its position prior to the superscription of 7:1. In addition, Zechariah 6:9-15 shares several points of similarity with 3:1-10 and 4:1-14.⁴⁰ The same cast of characters from ch. 3 appears: prophet, Joshua, צֶמַח (“the Branch”, Zemah), and priestly associates while Zerubbabel is noticeably absent. Furthermore, one can discern here allusions to socio-ritual types drawn from royal, priestly and prophetic contexts: a royal investiture ceremony, a priestly temple memorial rite, and a prophetic sign act. So also it will be demonstrated that the prophetic empowerment of the royal building program highlighted in chapter 4 is accentuated in 6:9-15. This array of

characters, rituals and themes provides another opportunity to consider the relationship between the various functionaries in restoration Yehud.

4.2. Past interpretation

4.2.1. Past approaches have exploited 6:9-15 for evidence of tension between royal and priestly groups in the Persian period. In this pericope the prophet describes a sign act involving three recent priestly exilic returnees (Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah)⁴¹ whose precious cargo is to be made into crowns. At least one crown is to be placed on the head of Joshua.⁴² The speech to Joshua which follows this sign act speaks of the figure of זמח (Zemah) who will build the temple and to whom is attributed words often associated with royalty: "bear majesty...sit and rule on his throne" (והוא ישא הוד וישב ומשל על כסאו). Then in the fourth poetic couplet of this speech the prophet declares "he will be a priest on his throne" (והיה כהן על כסאו).⁴³

4.2.2. These features have led some to conclude that this sign act is extending priestly control over royal prerogatives. It is argued that an oracle which originally affirmed either a diarchy between priest and prince or possibly the ascendancy of the prince over priest, has been transformed into one which heightens the profile of the high priest either to undermine the royalist cause or to explain the absence of the royal line.⁴⁴ Is such a negative view of the present Hebrew text (MT) defensible? Does this pericope really betray the deep rifts in the Persian period community that have been suggested? Another look at this pericope will chart a new course.

4.3. Evaluation

4.3.1. Two figures or one?

Two lexical features of the prophetic speech, one at the beginning and the other at the end, help clarify the number of individuals referred to in the speech. At the end of the prophetic speech directed to Joshua Zechariah tells the priest:

וְעֵצָת שְׁלוֹם תְּהִיָּה בֵּין שְׁנֵיהֶם (“with peaceful understanding between the two of them”), a clear reference to two distinct people.⁴⁵ At the beginning of the speech in 6:12, Zechariah is instructed to speak אֵלָיו (“to him”), referring to Joshua the high priest who has just been introduced in the preceding phrase (6:11b). The speech which is then directed to Joshua begins with the words: הִנֵּה-אִישׁ (“Here is a man”). 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).⁴⁶ Thus, צִמָּח (Zemah) cannot be Joshua to whom the speech is addressed. It is possible that צִמָּח (Zemah) could be someone in the scene (one of the four men mentioned or Zerubbabel who is not mentioned), but it is more likely that צִמָּח (Zemah) is not present at all because in the one instance where the individual is in the scene the article accompanies the noun (הִנֵּה-אִישׁ, “Here is the man”, 1 Sam 9:17), unlike Zech 6:12.⁴⁷

4.3.2. Relationship between these two figures

4.3.2.1. These two initial pieces of evidence reveal that 6:9-15 refers to two distinct individuals, one of which is צמח (Zemah) who is not equated with Joshua.⁴⁸ The speech itself, modeling the cadence of poetic verse, appears to refer to two individuals in its four parallel lines.⁴⁹ The first line plays off of the root צמח ("to branch out", better "to grow") identifying the name.⁵⁰ The second line identifies the initial role of the צמח (Zemah) in the rebuilding project. The third line identifies the enduring role of the צמח (Zemah) in royal rule. With the fourth line, however, we are introduced to a priestly figure who sits on a throne in the first colon,⁵¹ before the second colon defines the relationship between this priest and צמח (Zemah).

4.3.2.2. This relationship is defined as עֲצַת שְׁלוֹם ("with peaceful understanding"), a phrase unique to Zech 6:13. Petersen has argued that the term עֲצַת ("understanding") is not used elsewhere to indicate a "joint situation" or a "relationship" but rather "counsel received by a king" (2 Sam 15:31, 34).⁵² The term "peaceful" describes this counsel which will be characterized by peace (positive counsel) or possibly result in peace/prosperity (counsel which produces peace). It appears then, that the speech speaks of two individuals, צמח (Zemah) and priest, the latter functioning in the role of counselor for the former.

4.3.2.3. The appearance of a priest in close proximity to the royal צמח (Zemah) figure is not surprising if one remembers again the צמח (Zemah) passages in Jeremiah (Jer 23; 33) where the revelation of the צמח (Zemah) figure is connected with God's return of a remnant from captivity to a rebuilt and prosperous city filled with

inhabitants (23:3, 8; 33:7-13). There is little question that 6:12-13 is alluding to the Jeremianic צמח (Zemah) tradition. Both Zechariah and Jeremiah employ identical vocabulary: combining the verbal form (צמח, “to branch out”) with the nominal form צמח (Zemah, Jer 33:15-16; Zech 6:12),⁵³ focussing on renewal using the verbal root בנה (“to build”)⁵⁴ and employing vocabulary often associated with the royal office (והוא יושב הודו וישב ומשל על־כסאו; “royal honor...sit upon his throne...rule”; Jer 22:18, 30; Zech 6:13).⁵⁵

4.3.2.4. As already noted the section which follows and elaborates the צמח (Zemah) prophecy in Jer 33:15-16 (33:17-26), intertwines the fortunes of the Davidic house and the “levitical priests.”⁵⁶ This section never combines the two lines (royal and priestly) but rather argues that both covenants are as secure and eternal as the coming of day and night. The oracle in Zech 6:9-15, therefore, plays off of this Jeremianic tradition proclaiming that as the prophecy of priestly reinstatement is being realized, so also the prophecy of royal reestablishment will be fulfilled.⁵⁷ It also assures the priestly house that they will have a place of privilege and counsel within the Davidic court, while reminding them of the supremacy of the royal line in authority in the community and responsibility in the building project.

4.3.3. Crowns and Thrones: Royal Allusions?

4.3.3.1. The Jeremianic tradition gives us a precedence for the reference to two individuals in 6:9-15. But this does not fully explain two other aspects of this text which appear to grant the priest royal status: the fact that a crown⁵⁸ is placed on Joshua's head in the sign act of 6:11 and that the priestly figure is seated on a throne in the prophetic speech of 6:13.

4.3.3.2. The word for crown in 6:11, 14, **עֹמֶרֶת** ("crown") often refers to the literal crown on a king's head (2 Sam 12:30//1Chr 20:2; Ps 21:3; Jer 13:18; Ezek 21:26; SoS 3:11). In the majority of cases the word is employed metaphorically, as an extension of the literal meaning drawn from the royal court, usually with the sense of honour or beauty: Isa 28:1, 3, 5; 62:3; Ezek 16:12; 23:42; Job 19:9; 31:36; Prov 4:9; 12:4; 14:24; 16:31; 17:6; Lam 5:16. In two places, however, the crown is placed on figures associated with the royal court: the queen mother (Jer 23:18) and an honored high official (Esth 8:15). This review reveals that **עֹמֶרֶת** has strong royal connotations, but is not limited to the king in his court. Even in literal court contexts, it can be used for a lesser member of the royal court.⁵⁹ Thus, to set a crown on the head of the high priest appears to have royal connotations, but does not necessarily signify that he is becoming a king.⁶⁰

4.3.3.3. The presence of a priest on a throne in 6:13 also needs to be explained. Many have struggled with the appearance of a priestly figure on a **כִּסֵּא** ("throne"), a term used in the previous phrase to refer to the seat of the royal Zemah figure and used regularly to refer to a royal throne throughout the Hebrew Bible, either in literal (e.g., Jer 1:15; 1 Kgs 22:10) or figurative ways (e.g., 1 Kgs 16:11).⁶¹ The presence of two people on thrones is attested elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible in contexts where royal figures are taking counsel either from another king (1 Kgs 22:10) or from another figure in the court (1 Kgs 2:19, Queen Mother). In these cases one figure is clearly dominant over the other. Thus, as with the crown so also with the throne, it is possible for someone other than a king to be associated with this royal symbol, even in the presence of a king.⁶²

4.3.3.4. This analysis has shown that the two figures assumed by the phrases at the beginning and end of this speech are royal and priestly.⁶³ The priestly figure, cast in the role of counsel, is subordinated to the royal figure that will be responsible for the building of the temple. The identity of the priestly figure is never revealed, although the fact that Joshua the high priest is the addressee suggests he is either the figure or a symbol of a future figure.⁶⁴ The identity of the royal figure is never offered, but there is reason to believe that his arrival is not far off. Looking at instances which employ the phrase **וְהִנֵּה אִישׁ** ("here is a man") reveals that this person is within close spatial and temporal range and will soon be encountered (see above). Most likely then this is a reference to Zerubbabel who had not yet arrived from Babylon and whose efforts in the rebuilding project are highlighted elsewhere in Zechariah (Zech 4:6b-10a) and in other Persian period books: Haggai and Ezra 1-6.⁶⁵

4.3.3.5. In the closing verse of this pericope, 6:15, the prophet drives home his key point.⁶⁶ Those who are far away will come and build the temple. The priests, eager to begin the temple project, are encouraged to await the arrival of **זִמָּה** (Zemah) and his entourage from exile. Rather than expanding priestly powers, the prophet is carefully delimiting them and subtly using his prophetic authority (you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you) to accomplish this.

4.4. Summary

While Zech 6:9-15 has often been paraded as evidence of the expansion of priestly authority in restoration Yehud, this paper has argued that the passage does not sustain the weight of this conclusion. While Zechariah does provide a positive

vision of the contribution of the priestly caste to the restoration community, he carefully distinguishes between priestly and royal roles. The fortunes of priest are intimately linked to those of the future king.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1.** In the past scholars have detected within Zechariah 1:7-6:15 a prophetic justification for hierocratic aspirations.⁶⁷ This justification has been located either in the original prophetic declarations of the prophet Zechariah or in an elaborate scheme of redactional revisions to that prophet's visions and oracles. This paper has disputed this approach and argued that the Zecharian prophetic tradition retains clear distinctions between prophetic, royal and priestly offices by relying on the Jeremianic tradition of the future of the royal and priestly lines.⁶⁸
- 5.2.** If there is an agenda in the Zecharian tradition in relation to leadership, it appears to be to curb priestly aspirations through emphasizing the key role that prophetic and royal streams must continue to play in Yehud. In this we may be observing the beginning phase of a trajectory, placing the prophetic stream on a collision course with the priestly. This growing tension may be reflected in Zechariah's strong indictment of the priests along with the people of the land in Zech 7:5 and possibly also help explain the addition of Zech 9-14 to chs. 1-8.

6. Endnotes

¹ Versions of this paper were presented at Pacific Northwest SBL Regional Meeting (Edmonton, AB), European Association of Biblical Studies (Rome, Italy), and Currents in Biblical and Theological Dialogue (St. John's College, University of Manitoba). Thanks to various participants in those conferences and especially to my colleague A. Reimer (Regina).

² Cf. R. DeVaux, *Ancient Israel*, 2 vols. (New York: Darton-Longman-Todd, 1961); L. L. Grabbe, *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages: A socio-historical study of religious specialists in ancient Israel* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1995).

³ Grabbe emphasizes ideal types but notes that "such types seldom existed as such in society" as he proceeds to note relationships between and within type groups; *Ibid.*, 193.

⁴ For cult prophecy, see G. W. Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult of Jerusalem*, vol. 21, *VTSup* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971); W. H. Bellinger, *Psalmody and prophecy*, vol. 27, *JSOTSup* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984); A. R. Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1962); A. R. Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet and Israel's Psalmody* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1979); R. J. Tournay, *Seeing and Hearing God with the Psalms: The prophetic liturgy of the second temple in Jerusalem*, vol. 118, *JSOTSup* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991); R. R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

⁵ See M. J. Boda, *Praying the Tradition: The origin and use of tradition in Nehemiah 9*, ed. O. Kaiser, vol. 277, *BZAW* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), 205-208; cf. Neh 9:32.

⁶ Such tension is not only evident between the various offices, but also within the various offices; see Grabbe, *Priests, Prophets*.

⁷ Although Niehr stresses continuity in leadership throughout the Sixth Century the evidence is not compelling; H. Niehr, "Religio-Historical Aspects of the 'Early Post-Exilic' Period," in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times*, ed. B. Becking and M. C. A. Korpel (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 228-44.

⁸ Rooke notes that the coupling of Zerubbabel and Joshua in Haggai "need not imply that their actual authority in practical terms was equivalent," D. W. Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs: The Role and Development of the High Priesthood in Ancient Israel*, *OTM* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 129-130.

⁹ Zerubbabel's connection to the Davidic line and hope is clear in Hag 2:20-23 because of the combination of terms found there; cf. M. J. Boda, *Haggai/Zechariah, NIVAC* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, forthcoming); J. E. Tollington, *Tradition and Innovation in Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, vol. 150, *JSOTSup* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 135-144; contra W. H. Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel: Messianic Expectations in the Early Postexilic Period*, vol. 304, *JSOTSup* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 208-243.

¹⁰ For other differences between Haggai and Zechariah see M. J. Boda, "Zechariah: Master Mason or Penitential Prophet," in *Yahwism After the Exile*, ed. B. Becking and R. Albertz, *Studies in Theology and Religion* (Assen: Van Gorcum, forthcoming).

¹¹ P. D. Hanson, "Israelite Religion in the Early Postexilic Period," in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, ed. P. D. Miller, P. D. Hanson, and S. D. McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 498.

¹² C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8: A new translation with introduction and commentary*, vol. 25b, *AB* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1987), 201.

¹³ A. Laato, *A Star is Rising: The historical development of the Old Testament royal ideology and the rise of the Jewish messianic expectations*, vol. 5, *USFISFCJ* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 203.

¹⁴ R. Mason, "The Messiah in the Postexilic Old Testament Literature," in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. J. Day, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplements* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 345, cf. 349.

¹⁵ Cf. M. Bic, *Die Nachtgeschichte des Sacharja: Eine Auslegung von Sacharja 1-6*, vol. 42, *BS* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener (GmbH), 1964), 70; D. L. Petersen, "Zechariah's visions: a theological perspective," *VT* 34, no. Ap (1984), 204-205; Niehr, "Aspects," 233; R. J. Coggins, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, OTG* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 45-46; For a very different approach to the two figures in view in Zechariah see Barker who identifies here two priests, not a priest and king; M. Barker, "The Two Figures in Zechariah," *HeyJ* 18 (1977), 38-46. Floyd retains distinctions between the various offices but consistently gives the upper hand to the priestly caste, by arguing that Zechariah is using the Davidide (Zerubbabel/Zemah) to bolster priestly status; M. H. Floyd, *Minor Prophets, Part 2*, vol. 22, *FOTL* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 375, 406-407. Similarly, Tollington sees enhancing of Joshua with little support for restoration of monarchy under Zerubbabel; Tollington, *Tradition*, 178-179. Rooke has recently challenged the consensus of a priestly take-over of monarchical powers both through a fresh look

at Zechariah (151, and other ancient corpora) as well as a revaluation of the Fourth Century coinage data (219-237). The only evidence she can find for encroachment on an office is the royal infringement on priestly duties in the preexilic and Maccabean periods; Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs*; cf. D. W. Rooke, "Kingship as Priesthood: The Relationship between the High Priesthood and the Monarchy," in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. J. Day, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplements* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 187-208. Also Cook calls the claim of priestly ascendancy to "governmental hegemony": "overstated"; cf. S. L. Cook, "The Metamorphosis of a Shepherd: The Tradition History of Zechariah 11:17 + 13:7-9," *CBQ* 55, no. 11 (1993), 453-66. Rose's recent consideration of the passages dealt with in this paper lends positive support to my conclusions. On most issues we agree and so I will not provide detailed noting of his work. There are some differences in opinion on details and on the relationship between Zerah and Zerubbabel as will become evident in this paper; Rose, *Zerah*.

¹⁶ See list in C. Jeremias, *Die Nachtgesichte des Sacharja. Untersuchungen zu ihrer Stellung im Zusammenhang der Visionsberichte im Alten Testament und zu ihrem Bildmaterial*, vol. 117, *FRLANT* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 201-203.

¹⁷ English translations follow the NRSV, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

¹⁸ So also, Petersen: "The use of *sanîp* gives royal overtones to this scene. Clearly, the prerogatives of Joshua were noteworthy, especially now that there was no invested king on the throne," D. L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8: A commentary, OTL* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), 198; Meyers: "an official headpiece with monarchic associations... a conscious departure from priestly terminology... Joshua as 'high priest' both continues the traditional role of 'chief priest'... and also incorporates into the scope of his office some responsibilities previously assumed by the Judean kings," Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai*, 192; Mason (on Zech 3): "Now no dyarchy is envisaged. All the attention is on the priesthood that, by divine appointment, has taken over all the old pre-exilic royal privileges and prerogatives. A 'messianic hope' is indeed expressed, but attached in no way to Zerubbabel," R. Mason, *Preaching the Tradition: Homily and hermeneutics after the exile* (Cambridge: University Press, 1990), 208; cf. Laato, *Star*, 203; J. C. VanderKam, "Joshua the high priest and the interpretation of Zechariah 3," *CBQ* 53, no. 4 (1991), 553-70.

¹⁹ So Bic, *Nachtgeschichte*; Coggins, *Haggai*, 46; cf. Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs*, 142n50.

²⁰ So Petersen, who adds that the priest "might even be entrusted with a definitive word for a particular situation, as were the prophets," Petersen, *Haggai*, 208. Cf. Meyers who claim: "it

appears as if Joshua himself were to have the same privileges as prophets," Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai*, 196-197; also Conrad who translates this as "goings [or walkings]" and concludes: "That the high priest will have access to those who like the messenger of the Lord, the standing ones, suggests that Joshua will also gain the status of messenger by walking among the messengers"; E. W. Conrad, *Zechariah, Readings, a new biblical commentary* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 94-95; E. W. Conrad, "Messengers in Isaiah and the Twelve: Implications for Reading Prophetic Books," *JSOT* 91 (2000), 96. Tollington follows the "access" approach, but does not see prophetic authority but rather an invitation to intercede for the people; cf. Tollington, *Tradition*, 160-161. Mason links the granting of "access" to a royal function Mason, *Preaching*, 207; but see contra Tollington, *Tradition*, 160n3, 161n2. Jeremias notes links to prophetic call genre here which would grant him access to the divine council; Jeremias, *Nachgesichte*, 203-205.

²¹ There has been considerable debate over how many of the clauses in v. 7 are part of the protasis of this condition. There is no question that the first two clauses are part of the protasis (condition) because they both begin with the Hebrew particle **אִם** ("if") and quite clearly the final clause ("I will give you a place among these standing here") is part of the apodosis (consequence). The controversy circles around the middle two clauses ("you will govern my house...have charge of my courts"), both of which begin with the particle **וְגַם** (often translated "and also"). While a conditional relationship can be created by juxtaposing **אִם** + protasis (condition) with **וְגַם** + apodosis (consequence) as in Gen 13:16; Jer 31:36, 37, there are no cases where the apodosis is introduced by **וְגַם**. Rather when **וְגַם** appears after the conditional particle **אִם** ("if") it denotes an additional member of the protasis (1 Sam 12:14) or the apodosis (Ex 8:17; 18:23; Mal 2:2). This evidence means that the third and fourth clauses in 3:7 belong to the protasis (condition), a position bolstered by the fact that in the final clause the subject changes from Joshua ("you") to the Lord ("I"). Some have seen in these conditions an expansion of priestly powers into royal areas; cf. Rose, *Zemah*, 79-83; but based on Deut 17:8-11, Tollington argues that such responsibilities were priestly in former times; Tollington, *Tradition*, 158-160.

²² See the excellent discussion of this in Rose, *Zemah*, 73-83. Rose notes that for the *Piel* participle one would expect **מְדַבְּרִים** (p. 77). The Septuagint translates this word as a masculine plural participle of the verb ἀναστρέφω and results in the translation: "those who dwell among these standing here" (ἀναστρεπομένους ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἑστηκότων; similarly Syriac and Vulgate). In Ezek 3:15; 22:30, two other cases where this same word and form are used in the

Septuagint, one finds references to a person who stands with or for another. On the other hand, in those passages where the MT has מַלְאָךְ, LXX has περίπατος (Ezek 42:4, passageway), πορεία (Jnh 3:3, 4; Neh 2:6, journey). Vanderkam suggests it may be an Aramaic loanword "in which the causative participial form has an intransitive meaning" VanderKam, "Joshua"; cf. also W. A. M. Beuken, *Haggai-Sacharja 1-8* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1967), 293-296 who translates "Männer, die gehen". See also the Aramaic participial forms in Dan 3:25; 4:34 and the Hebrew participle in Eccl 4:15. Cf. Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 375.

²³ Thus, as Vanderkam has suggested, it removes Joshua one step from the divine council for he is "given individuals who have direct access to the divine presence" and intimates: "In fact, the promise may refer to the ongoing presence of people such as Zechariah," VanderKam, "Joshua," 560. Rose identifies these as angelic beings, cf. Rose, *Zemah*.

²⁴ Some see this interjection as an addition (cf. T. Pola, "Form and Meaning in Zechariah 3," in *Yahwism After the Exile*, ed. B. Becking and R. Albertz, *Studies in Theology and Religion* (Assen: Van Gorcum, forthcoming). Some have opted to emend this text with the ancient translations (LXX, Syriac, Vulgate, Targums, e.g., Petersen, *Haggai*, 197) to "he said", but Tidwell has demonstrated the appropriateness of a first person interjection of this sort in similar divine council texts; N. L. A. Tidwell, "Wa'omar (Zech 3:5) and the genre of Zechariah's fourth vision," *JBL* 94, no. S (1975), 343-55.

²⁵ VanderKam, "Joshua," 557 refutes those who see in Zechariah's choice of the word מַלְאָךְ, a more royalist nuance, but rather argues that both this term and the technical high priestly term (מַצְנֵן פַּת) have royal connotations (cf. Ezek 21:31H [26E]).

²⁶ See also Tollington, *Tradition*, 157.

²⁷ The term מוֹפֵת is used often in the Hebrew Bible to refer to God's visible signs before humanity, and regularly in a word pair with מֵאֲלֵה. It is employed for the great acts the Lord performed through Moses before Pharaoh (Ex 7:3, "signs and wonders"), but also for signs promised by a prophet (Deut 13:1, "omens or portents"). The word does not necessarily refer to miraculous demonstrations of divine power, for it is used in connection with the sign acts or object lessons of the prophets. See K. G. Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's sign-acts*, *Journal for the study of the Old Testament Supplement series*; 283 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); K. Friebel, "A Hermeneutical Paradigm for Interpreting Prophetic Sign-Actions," *Didaskalia*, no. Spring (2001), 25-45; cf. G. Fohrer, "Die Gattung der Berichte über symbolische Handlungen der Propheten," *ZAW* 64 (1952), 101-20; G. Fohrer, *Die symbolische Handlungen*

der Propheten, vol. 54, *ATANT* (Zurich: Zwingli Verlag, 1968); W. D. Stacey, *Prophetic Drama in the Old Testament* (London: Epworth Press, 1990). Thus Isa 20:3 reveals that Isaiah's act of going naked and barefoot was an **אוֹת וּמוֹפֵת** ("a sign and a portent") against Egypt and Cush. Similarly, Ezekiel's acts of packing his belongings and digging through the wall (Ezek 12:6, 11, "sign") and his silence at the death of his wife (Ezek 24:24, 27, "sign") are called **מוֹפֵת** (so also Isa 8:18 for Isaiah and his children, "signs and portents"; cf. P. R. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration: A study of Hebrew thought of the sixth century B.C.*, *OTL* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968], 188-189). In these examples from the prophets we have a precedence for human beings being **מוֹפֵת** as in Zech 3, and of the two Ezekiel is the closest to Zech 3 because it consistently uses the word **מוֹפֵת** ("wonders") without **אוֹת** ("signs"). This evidence confirms that Zechariah 3 has been influenced by the prophetic sign act form.

²⁸ The term **רֵעַ** ("colleague") is common in the Hebrew Bible and can be used for anyone from a close friend or mere acquaintance to a fellow-citizen or other person. Thus, based on this word alone, the angel could be referring to fellow priests, members of the Jewish community, or even other human beings within the divine council, that is, the prophets. However, these associates are modified by the phrase "seated before you", a surprising development because there has been no mention to this point in the vision of any other humans, besides Joshua and Zechariah. This phrase does not necessarily mean that there were other humans in the divine council for it appears in 2 Kgs 4:38; 6:1 to describe the relationship between a religious figure and his disciples. The technical nature of this phrase in such contexts becomes clear in 2 Kgs 6:1 where Elisha's disciples refer to their meeting place as "the place where we live under your charge" (**הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי וְיְשָׁבִים שָׁם לִפְנֵיךָ**). So also in Ezek 33:31; cf. 8:1; 14:1; 20:1 it is used to speak of the prophet declaring the word of the Lord to the elders of Israel in exile. Thus "your colleagues who sit before you" are Joshua's priestly associates who assist him with the temple justice and ritual and who need not be present in the visionary scene. Tollington cites Gen 43:33 to argue that this idiom points to the supremacy of Joshua over the other priests; Tollington, *Tradition*, 161n3.

²⁹ The traditional translation of **צִמָּח** as "branch" is inappropriate and an imposition of the royal expectation of Isaiah 11:1 (where **נֹצֵר** appears). See Rose for a superb argument on the translation of this word; Rose, *Zemah*, 91-120.

³⁰ See also Laato, *Star*, 201. In these passages Zemah is identified as a Davidic descendant who is called "The Lord our righteousness" (**יְהוָה צְדִיקָנוּ**), a play on the name of the final king over

Judah, Zedekiah; cf. R. P. Carroll, *Jeremiah: A commentary, OTL* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 445-447; contra Barker, "Two Figures." Barker seeks to eliminate the Davidic connection by drawing in other passages which do not use Zemah to refer to a Davidic descendant (e.g., Isa 4:2). However, the connections to the Jeremianic tradition, especially in Zech 6:12-13 are far stronger.

³¹ According to Grothe, Jer 33:14-26 represents "the longest continuous passage which is present in the MT but lacking in the LXX." Grothe argued for the originality of Jer 33:14-26 based on trends in Alexandrian treatment of priestly texts; J. F. Grothe, "An Argument for the Textual Genuineness of Jeremiah 33:14-26 (Massoretic Text)," *Concordia Journal* 7 (1981), 188-91. In contrast, Tollington sees Jer 33 as late and postdating Zech 1-8; Tollington, *Tradition*, 170n2. This pericope appears to be playing off of the earlier Zemah oracle in Jer 23:5-6 and expanding it to consider the durability of the priestly line; cf. M. A. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 471-474. Jer 33:14-26 speaks of הַכֹּהֲנִים הָלְוִיִּם (Jer 33:18, 21; notice reversal in v. 21), which is found regularly in Dtr literature (Deut 17:9, 18; 18:1; 24:8; 27:9; Josh 3:3; 8:33) and then appears in Persian period literature (1 Chr 9:2; 2 Chr 5:5; 23:18; 30:27; Ezra 10:6; Neh 10:29, 35; 11:20). It is used in Ezekiel (43:19; 44:15), but in both cases a phrase referring to the descendants of Zadok is appended. Zechariah thus appears to be the later text and represents a reading of Jer 33 through the lens of the Ezekielian tradition; see also D. K. Stuart, "The Prophetic Ideal of Government in the Restoration Era," in *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration: Essays in Honor of Roland K. Harrison*, ed. A. Gileadi (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 283-92. In the end, however, no matter how one treats Jer 33:14-26 and its relationship to Zechariah it remains as early evidence of the linkage without amalgamation of royal and priestly lines.

³² Baldwin notices the important role that Jer 33 plays in Zechariah's interpretation of Zemah, but misinterprets the Jeremiah passage: "Already in Jeremiah's usage the term combines priestly and kingly functions. The priestly aspect is to the fore in Zechariah's first use of the term (3:8)..." J. G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: An introduction and commentary*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-varsity Press, 1972), 135. In this I agree with Laato who concludes: "the High Priest and his colleagues serve as a good omen of the coming messianic era" Laato, *Star*, 207.

³³ See most commentators; cf. R. T. Siebeneck, "Messianism of Aggeus and Proto-Zacharias," *CBQ* 19, no. JI (1957), 321 and Laato, *Star*, 201. See Barker for the view that two priestly lines are in view; Barker, "Two Figures"; Morgenstern for the view that high priest and assistant are in

view; J. Morgenstern, "A Chapter in the History of the High-Priesthood," *AJSLL* 55 (1938), 5. Halpern (see also Tollington) suggests a pun here on the Levitical clan **צִדְקָה** (cf. Exod 6:18, 21; Num 3:19; 16:1; 1 Chr 5:28; 6:3, 23; 23:12, 18); B. Halpern, "The Ritual background of Zechariah's temple song," *CBQ* 40, no. Ap (1978), 177; Tollington, *Tradition*, 177n4.

³⁴ It is used for anointing kings (I Sam 16:13; I Kgs 1:39), priests (Lev 8:12; Ex 30:23-33), and the tabernacle (Lev 8:10). **שֶׁם** is the more general term encompassing all forms and uses of oil while **צִדְקָה** is reserved for the unmanufactured state. Cf. K. A. Strand, "The two olive trees of Zechariah 4 and Revelation 11," *AUSS* 20, no. Aut (1982), 257-261; Petersen, *Haggai*, 230; Tollington, *Tradition*, 177; contra W. Rudolph, *Sacharja 9-14* (Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser, 1976), 107-108; Jeremias, *Nachgesichte*, 184; R. Mason, *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi*, CBC (Cambridge: University Press, 1977), 48; Baldwin, *Haggai*, 124; S. Niditch, *The symbolic vision in Biblical tradition* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983), 108-118; E. H. Merrill, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, An exegetical commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 155. Redditt has noted that word **שֶׁם** ("oil") is used in a similar phrase (son of word **שֶׁם**, as here son of **צִדְקָה**) in Isa 5:1 and there designates very fertile. He proposes that here the image is of olive trees sated with oil; cf. P. L. Redditt, "Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the night visions of Zechariah," *CBQ* 54, no. Ap (1992), 251; van der Woude suggests fertility figures; A. S. van der Woude, "Die beiden Söhne des Öls (Sach 4:14): messianische Gestalten?" in *Travels in the world of the Old Testament: Studies Presented to M. A. Beek*, ed. H. van Vos, H. ten Cate, and N. A. van Uchelen (Assen: van Gorcum, 1974), 262-68. Rooke directs similar criticism to mine against the traditional interpretation, but retains Zerubbabel and Joshua as referents, seeing them as the source of blessing on Yehud. Even then, however, she is careful to note that there is no proof in Zech 4 of the High Priest taking on royal power nor of diarchy; Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs*, 136-137, 145; cf. Ackroyd, *Exile*, 193; contra Tollington, *Tradition*, 178.

³⁵ Gen 18:8 also pictures Abraham "standing" (**עֹמֵד**) "by" (**עַל**) divine beings, but this is an appearance of God in human form and Abraham is pictured as serving these beings food.

³⁶ This combination also occurs in Zech 3:1, but there it is difficult to determine if the adversary is standing beside the angel of the Lord or beside Joshua. Notice also the similar construction in the prophetic call experience in Isa 6:1-2, **עַל** + **עֹמֵד** for the position of the Seraphim.

³⁷ See Rose, *Zemah* for detailed evidence on these combinations. Niditch sees the connection to the divine council and 1 Kgs 22:19, but not the prophetic nuance; Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 113.

³⁸ Interestingly when elements within this vision are taken up in Rev 11, these two individuals are clearly seen as prophetic not royal or priestly figures; cf. Strand, "Olive Trees," 257-261; M. G. Kline, "By My Spirit," *Kerux* 9, no. D (1994), 29; C. A. Evans, "'The two sons of oil': Early evidence of messianic interpretation of Zechariah 4:14 in 4Q254 4 2," in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Technological innovations, new texts, and reformulated issues*, ed. D. W. Parry and E. Ulrich, *Studies on the texts of the Desert of Judah* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 567; although see *Ibid.* for Rabbinic and Qumran interpretations of Zech 4:14 (priest/king). Rose identifies them as angelic beings, Rose, *Zemah*, 202-206.

³⁹ Baldwin struggles with any interpretation that would suggest that olive trees signifying humans (for her Joshua and Zerubbabel) could be the source of the lamps signifying divine presence. However, the prophet is well aware that any resources of the prophetic office are derived from God.

⁴⁰ Ackroyd notes similarity between 3:8-10 and 6:9-15 Ackroyd, *Exile*, 199.

⁴¹ Although it is difficult to ascertain the precise identities of these men in 6:10, the few connections that can be discerned reveal links to priestly families; cf. Boda, *Haggai/Zechariah*. Their priestly background is suggested by the later practice of Ezra. In Ezra's return, the priests were given care of the silver and gold collected from the Persian authorities and Jewish exilic community for safe travel to Palestine (8:24-32) and upon their arrival the materials were deposited at the temple into the care of other priests (8:33-34).

⁴² There is no question that the second phrase ("set on the head of Joshua") refers to the placement of a crown on the head of Joshua. The Hebrew text does not have an object here, but it is quite certain that it is the crown which is placed on the head because of the phrase "on the head." Van der Woude suggested that the normal expression for putting something on someone is **בְּרִאשׁוֹ** rather than **עַל**, which provides an opportunity for him to suggest an Akkadian expression which means "put at the disposal of somebody", thus, "you shall hand (it) over to Joshua"; A. S. van der Woude, "Zion as primeval stone in Zechariah 3 and 4," in *Text and context: Old Testament and Semitic Studies for F. C. Fensham*, ed. W. Claassen, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplements* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), 247n31. However, the same construction as here ("set on the head of") is used for Xerxes' crowning of Esther in Esth 2:18, another Persian period text. See also the use of the synonym **נָתַן** with **בְּרִאשׁוֹ** in Ezek 16:12 following two phrases which use the combination **נָתַן** with **עַל**; cf. Rose, *Zemah*, 48-50.

⁴³ This is a better translation than the NRSV which has here “there shall be a priest by his throne”. A review of other instances where this phrase appears על־כִּסֵּא, the preposition speaks of “on” not “by”. One would expect either “right” or “left” if “by” was intended (cf. 1 Kgs 2:19).

⁴⁴ Cf. Siebeneck, “Messianism,” 323; Laato, *Star*, 206-207. Rooke's concern about the traditional emendation is that it would produce a text addressed to Zerubbabel be about Zerubbabel and encourages interpretation of the “text as it stands” Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs*, 146-147. Although her encouragement is appropriate, her concern is misguided because it is not sensitive to the fact that this is a prophetic interpretation of a sign act and could be using subtle rhetoric.

⁴⁵ In the vast majority of cases, the Hebrew construction, “two of them” is used to refer to two people (Gen 2:25; 3:7; 9:23; etc.). However, in a few instances it speaks of two inanimate items (Num 7:13; Ezek 21:24; Prov 27:3), activities (Prov 17:15; 20:10); or body parts (Prov 20:12) and in a couple of places is used abstractly (Eccl 4:3: the dead and the living; Isa 1:31: a man and his work). These two instances may allow for an interpretation that would identify the “counsel of peace between two of them” as an allusion to the combining of two offices (see New American Standard Bible). However, when the preposition “between” (Hebrew בֵּין) is used with “two of them” (as in Zech 6:13) elsewhere it refers to two people (2 Kgs 2:11; Ex 22:10). The second instance (Ex 22:10) has nearly the same construction as here: noun construct chain (an oath of the Lord) with הָיָה (imperfect, “will be”) with “between the two of them”.

⁴⁶ This phrase is used as a narrative technique to introduce or progress a scene (1 Kgs 13:1, etc.) or as an apocalyptic device to introduce or progress a visionary description (Zech 1:8; 2:5; Ezek 40:3; Dan 10:5). In these cases it is accompanied by verbs for sight: “looked”, “saw”. Cf. the plural form in Josh 2:2.

⁴⁷ Baldwin notes the lack of article as key, but mistakenly excludes Zerubbabel as a candidate J. G. Baldwin, “Tsemach as a technical term in the prophets,” *VT* 14, no. 1 (1964), 95. That the referent is not in the scene accords well with the only other allusion to Zemah in the book of Zechariah (3:8), in a speech also addressed to Joshua which refers to Zemah as someone whom the Lord Almighty “is going to bring.”

⁴⁸ Contra Baldwin who sees צִמְחָה as a future figure who combines both priestly and royal offices into one person; *Ibid.*, 96-97.

⁴⁹ BHS structures this differently.

⁵⁰ Some have seen in the phrase “from his place” a reference to Joshua’s displacement of the royal line or to the lowly stature of the royal line. The construction without “from” is used to

describe one's dwelling or position when displacing someone either physically, as in the conquest (Deut 2:12, 21-23), or officially, as in the succession of a king (Gen 36:33-39) or priest (Ex 29:30; Lev 6:15). However, when used with the verb "grow" (צמח) it refers to the place from which something grows (Gen 2:9; Ex 10:5; Ps 85:12H [11E]; Job 5:6; 8:19).

⁵¹ Laato says this priest cannot be Joshua for the speech is addressed to Joshua, but this conclusion is not sensitive to the fact that the prophet is interpreting the sign act, Laato, *Star*, 202.

⁵² Petersen, *Haggai*, 278.

⁵³ One difference is that Jeremiah uses the *hif'il* while Zechariah uses the *qal*. Thus in Zech 6 the emphasis lies on the Zemah who is growing rather than the Lord who will cause the growth as in Jer 33.

⁵⁴ The building in Zech 6, however, is slightly different. The one who builds in Jer 33:7-9 is the Lord, while in Zech 6 it is Zemah. Additionally, the activity in Zech 6 is focussed on the building of the temple of the Lord, rather than the city and province in general.

⁵⁵ Note the correspondences: to be clothed with majesty (Ps 21:5; 45:4; Jer 22:18); to sit and rule on his throne (Jer 22:30; 1 Kgs 1:46; 16:11). Jer 22 is a passage that prepares the way for the first of the two prophecies of Zemah in Jeremiah (Jer 23:5-6). Jer 22:18 speaks of the loss of "majesty" (הדר) for Jehoiakim and 22:30 of the condemnation of Jehoiachin (Jehoiakim's son) whose sons would not "sit on the throne...or rule (יָשֶׁב עַל-כִּסֵּא דָוִד וּמָשַׁל עוֹד בִּיהוּדָה).

This is the only other place in the Hebrew Bible where the combination יָשֶׁב מָשַׁל appears. The revelation of the Zemah who would come from David in the following chapter of Jeremiah is the answer to the disaster of the Davidic line proclaimed in the previous chapter. This confirms the Davidic lineage of the Zemah and the royal character of this couplet in Zech 6; contra Tollington who plays down the royal significance by misses the Jeremianic connections; Tollington, *Tradition*, 173-174.

⁵⁶ See discussion of this phrase and passage above under Zech 3.

⁵⁷ This may explain why the oracle refers to "priest" rather than "high priest," because Jer 33 says nothing about a "high priest."

⁵⁸ There have been some challenges in discerning the number of crowns mentioned in this passage. The present Hebrew text (MT) reads the plural "crowns" at both 6:11, 14, while the versions reproduce several different combinations (e.g., Syriac Peshitta has the singular in both cases, the Greek Septuagint has the plural [11] and the singular [14], the Latin Vulgate the singular [11] and the plural [14]). In the Hebrew text the only verb associated with the word is

written in the singular (14, כִּסְיֵי הָ). This diversity in textual witness and disagreement in syntax have led to a cacophony of interpretations. By retaining the Hebrew vocalic text (MT), some have argued that both references to crowns are plural. This would mean that multiple crowns were made and placed either on the heads of Joshua and Zemah/Zerubbabel or on the heads of the four individuals named in 6:10, 14. The first view is the traditional reading, while the second is argued by Redditt, P. L. Redditt, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*, NCB (London: M. Pickering/HarperCollins, 1995), 72-73. The use of a singular verb with the plural subject ("crowns") in v. 14 is not a problem since this is possible in Hebrew (cf. GKC 464k). Accepting the witness of the ancient versions, some have suggested reading the words here as singular, either as "plurals of excellence", referring to the excellence of a single crown (see New American Standard Bible, "ornate crown"), or as descriptions of a composite headpiece, similar to the expression "many crowns" (διαδήματα πολλά, Rev 19:12), or as an archaic singular form which looks like the plural and is attested in other Semitic languages as well as in Hebrew. The common feminine plural ending, וֹת - is found on the singular noun, חִכְמוֹת (Prov 1:20; 9:1; 14:1; "wisdom"), which also has another form in the singular, חִכְמָה. This parallels the suggestion here: a feminine noun with the usual ending (הָ ; עֲטֹרָה), also has a less common form (וֹת, עֲטֹרוֹת). Cf. A. Petitjean, *Les Oracles du Proto-Zacharie* (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1969), 281; Rose, *Zemah*, 47-48. A further option is that the first one is a plural referring to two crowns (v. 11a), one of which is placed on Joshua's head (v. 11b) and the other in the temple awaiting the coming of Zemah (v. 14). This may explain why the first use of crown has the plene spelling of וֹת-while the second has the defective form. Cf. Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai*, 363. The rules of text criticism would favour the Hebrew text (MT) as the preferred reading (the more difficult text) and the ancient versions as attempts to clarify this original text. Thus it most likely that the text should read "crowns" in both 6:11, 14, a conclusion that will be bolstered by further observations below.

⁵⁹ Notice how the Late Biblical Hebrew word for crown (כִּסֵּי) is placed on queens (Esth 1:11; 2:17) and honored officials (6:8).

⁶⁰ Cf. Rose, *Zemah*, 51-56. A headdress word which would have bridged the high priestly and royal offices in Israel is כִּסֵּי ("diadem") a term used of the golden crown plate attached to the high priest's turban (identified with כִּסֵּי, "plate", Ex 29:6; 39:30; Lev 8:9) and for the "crown" on a monarch's head (2 Sam 1:10; 2 Kgs 11:12//2 Chr 23:11; Ps 89:40; 132:18; cf. Zech 9:16; Prov 27:24). The most common term for the ceremonial headdress of the high priest is מִצְנֵף פֶּתֶחַ

("turban") which was made of fine linen (Ex 28:24, 37, 39; 29:6; 39:28, 31; Lev 8:9; 16:4). However, Ezek 21:31H [26E] connects this word with a royal figure (wicked prince), parallel to עֲטָרָה. The term מִצְנֵפֶת is to be distinguished from the מִגְבַּעַת which was worn by Aaron's sons ("headdress"; Ex 28:40; 29:9; 39:28; Lev 8:13). Two other general words could signify common or priestly headdresses: פֶּאֶר ("headdress"; common: Isa 3:20; Ezek 24:17, 23; Isa 61:3; priestly: Ex 39:28; Ezek 44:18; Isa 61:3); צִנֹּף ("turban"; common: Isa 3:23; 62:3; Job 29:14; priestly: Zech 3:5). Rooke's view on the crown as symbolic of the rebuilt temple is odd, especially considering it is mentioned in a passage with so much royal language connected to צִמָּה (Zemah); Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs*, 147-148.

⁶¹ There is another priest, however, who sits on a throne: Eli in 1 Sam 1:9; 4:13, 18 and thus there is a precedent for someone other than a king, and particularly a priest, to sit on a throne.

⁶² Quite clearly the Septuagint did not see Joshua as king for rather than translating "he will be a priest on his throne," it produces "there will be a priest on his right hand" (ἔσται ὁ ἱερεὺς ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ). See B. A. Mastin, "Note on Zechariah 6:13," *VT* 26, no. 1 (1976), 113-116. Beuken follows LXX; Beuken, *Haggai*, 281. It is interesting that both royal terms associated with the priest in this passage: "crown" (6:11) and "throne" (6:13) are used of the queen mother in the preexilic royal court (Jer 13:18; 1 Kgs 2:19). Several texts indicate that the queen mother held a specific rank in the court. This is true of Solomon (2 Sam 11:3; 12:24) and the Kings of Israel (1 Kgs 11:26; 16:31; 22:52; 2 Kgs 3:2; 9:22), but especially of the Kings of Judah (1 Kgs 14:21; 15:2, 10; 22:42; 2 Kgs 8:26; 12:1; 14:2; 15:2; 15:33; 18:2; 21:1, 19; 22:1; 23:31, 36; 24:8; 24:18). Asa's need to remove his queen mother from her position (1 Kgs 15:11-13) and Athaliah's ability to order the murder of the Davidic family members (2 Kgs 11:1) reveals not only rank but also considerable power and influence in the court. The precise role is difficult to discern but it appears to have had at least two aspects: political and religious. Politically the queen mother is depicted as involved in domestic affairs, as a key figure at the beginning of her son's rule to ensure transfer of power from her husband to her son (1 Kgs 1-2), but also wielding influence throughout his reign. However, there also appears to be a religious role for the queen mother for there are several examples of these figures introducing and supporting rival cults (1 Kgs 15:13; 1 Kgs 18-19). This second aspect may explain why the oracle associates the high priest with a "crown" and "throne." In place of the queen mother, who led preexilic Davidic kings away from pure religion, the high priest would sit with the king to offer advice and keep him faithful to the Lord. See further the great reviews of Schearing and

Andreasen; L. S. Schearing, "Queen," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. N. Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 585-586; N. A. Andreasen, "The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite Society," *CBQ* 45 (1983), 179-94.

⁶³ This speaks against those who have argued for an amalgamation of the priestly and royal offices in Zemah; cf. Baldwin, "Tsemach"; Baldwin, *Haggai*, 136-137. Merrill argues for two separate figures here, but then contradicts this with reference to the amalgamation of priest and king in Davidic (Ps 2:2, 6-8; 110:2, 4) and Christian tradition (Heb 5:1-10; 7:1-25); Merrill, *Haggai*, 199-201. It should be noted that the Christian tradition of king-priest is not based on a Davidic-Zadokite amalgamation, but rather the Melchizedek-Davidic tradition of Jerusalem.

⁶⁴ Contra Rose, *Zemah*, 60.

⁶⁵ See Ackroyd for similar redactional dating, Ackroyd, *Exile*, 189, 197; contra Tollington and Rose who see as future figure; Tollington, *Tradition*, 172-173; Rose, *Zemah*.

⁶⁶ In the sign act genre there is often an interpretation that accompanies the action (see note above). This is not to be disregarded as a later addition, but rather is intimately linked to the coming of Zemah.

⁶⁷ For discussion of the impact of Zech 1:7-6:15 on later messianic views (Qumran, Rabbinic, Christian), see: F. F. Bruce, "The Book of Zechariah and the Passion Narrative," *BJRL* 43 (1960-61), 167-90; Strand, "Olive Trees"; S. Kim, "Jesus - the Son of God, the stone, Son of man, and the servant: the role of Zechariah in the self-identification of Jesus," in *Tradition & interpretation in the New Testament*, ed. G. Hawthorne and O. Betz (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 134-48; W. Harrelson, "Messianic expectations at the time of Jesus," *Saint Luke's Journal of Theology* 32, no. D (1988), 28-42; H. Lichtenberger, "Messianic Expectations and Messianic Figures in the Second Temple Period," in *Qumran-Messianism: Studies on the Messianic Expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. J. H. Charlesworth, H. Lichtenberger, and G. S. Oegema (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 9-20; C. A. Evans, "Jesus and Zechariah's Messianic Hope," in *Authenticating the Activities of Jesus*, ed. C. A. Evans and B. D. Chilton, *NTTS* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 373-88; Evans, "Sons of Oil"; C. A. Evans, "Did Jesus Predict his Death and Resurrection?," in *Resurrection*, ed. S. E. Porter, M. A. Hayes, and D. Tombs, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 82-97; D. Stökl, "Yom Kippur in the apocalyptic imaginaire and the roots of Jesus' high priesthood. Yom Kippur in Zechariah 3, 1 Enoch 10, 11QMelchizedeq, Hebrews and the Apocalypse of Abraham 13," in *Transformations of the inner self in ancient religions*, ed. J. Assmann and G. G. Stroumsa, *Studies in the History of Religions* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 349-66.

⁶⁸ For the influence of the Jeremianic tradition on the prose inclusio of Zech 1:1-6; 7:1-8:23, see Boda, "Penitential Prophet".