

Turban and Crown Lost and Regained: Ezekiel 21:29–32 and Zechariah's Zemah

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The visions and prophecies recorded in the book of Zechariah have long puzzled scholars.¹ Among the more challenging ones are the prophetic sign-acts connected to the appearance of צִמָּח in Zechariah 3 and 6:9–15. Who is this enigmatic figure? What is his relationship to Joshua and the priesthood? In this essay, I will first offer a brief summary of earlier attempts to answer these questions and then proceed to suggest a new interpretation of the data. I will argue that, among other texts, Ezek 21:29–32 (Eng. 21:24–27) presents us with an interpretative key to these two passages from Zechariah.

I. PAST INTERPRETATION

As is the case with most exegetical puzzles, there are a number of variations also among the solutions offered to the puzzle of צִמָּח (hereafter Zemah),² Joshua,

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¹ See Ralph L. Smith (*Micah–Malachi* [WBC 32; Waco: Word Books, 1984], 167), who cites the Jewish scholar Abrabanel (d. 1508): “The prophecies of Zechariah are so obscure that no expositors however skilled have found their hands in the explanation.”

² Translations usually use “Branch,” “Sprout,” “Shoot” or some such name in order to bring out the wordplay between צִמָּח and צִיָּח in Zech 6:12. In adopting a simple transcription instead, I am following Wolter H. Rose (*Zemah and Zerubbabel: Messianic Expectations in the Early Post-exilic Period* [JSOTSup 304; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000], 91–120 and passim); similarly Mark J. Boda (“Oil, Crowns and Thrones: Prophet, Priest and King in Zechariah 1:7–6:15,” *JHS* 3, no. 10 [2001]; reprinted in *Perspectives on Biblical Hebrew: Comprising the Contents of Journal of Hebrew Scriptures, Volumes 1–4* [ed. Ehud Ben Zvi; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2006], 379–404). I agree with Rose that one should not confuse צִמָּח of Zechariah 3 and 6 with the “shoot” (חֵטֶר)

and Zerubbabel (who appears only in Zechariah 4). However, it is nevertheless possible to identify a majority view.³ According to this view, Zechariah 3 and 6 envisage a form of diarchy, a shared rule of the high priest and a Davidic king, and these chapters thus testify to the rise of the Zadokite priesthood as a political power in the postexilic Jewish community.⁴ As for Zemah, the original oracles referred to Zerubbabel—or even Joshua—instead, but for one reason or another, this was changed in the process of redaction.

This traditional reading of the data has recently been challenged by more than one interpreter. A major contribution has been offered by Wolter H. Rose, whose monograph focuses on Zemah and Zerubbabel.⁵ Some of his main conclusions are as follows:⁶ (1) Zemah is a future messianic figure and not to be identified with Zerubbabel (or Joshua); (2) attempts to consider parts of the oracles in ch. 3 and 6:9–15 as secondary may appear to solve some problems but are based on “dubious grounds”;⁷ (3) although the high priest’s influence in the temple is expanding (ch. 3)

or “branch” (נֶצֶר) of Isa 11:1. However, I am not sure about his claim that there is a clear contrast between the Davidic dynasty’s making its own contribution to its future (Isa 11:1) and its future being guaranteed only by a divine intervention (Jer 23:5; Zechariah 3; 6) (Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 120).

³ See, e.g., David L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984); Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 25B; New York: Doubleday, 1987); Janet E. Tollington, *Tradition and Innovation in Haggai and Zechariah 1–8* (JSOTSup 150; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993); Paul L. Redditt, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi: Based on the Revised Standard Version* (NCB; London: Marshall Pickering; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); Antti Laato, *A Star Is Rising: The Historical Development of the Old Testament Royal Ideology and the Rise of the Jewish Messianic Expectations* (South Florida Studies in Formative Christianity and Judaism 5; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997); Rex 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; JSOTSup 270; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 338–64; Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 2 (Berit Olam; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000); and John J. Collins, “The Eschatology of Zechariah,” in *Knowing the End from the Beginning: The Prophetic, the Apocalyptic, and Their Relationship* (ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Robert D. Haak; JSPSup 46; London/New York: T&T Clark, 2003), 74–84.

⁴ The two olive trees of Zechariah 4, usually also listed in support of this view, are outside the focus of this essay. For three different nontraditional readings of ch. 4, see Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 177–207; Boda, “Oil, Crowns and Thrones,” 392–94; and Marko Jauhiainen, *The Use of Zechariah in Revelation* (WUNT 2/199; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 46–49.

⁵ Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*.

⁶ For a convenient summary of his conclusions, see *ibid.*, 248–51.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 249; cf. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer (“The Guilty Priesthood [Zech 3],” in *The Book of Zechariah and Its Influence* [ed. Christopher Tuckett; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003], 1–19), esp. 1–2; and Collins (“Eschatology of Zechariah,” 77–80), both of whom disagree with Rose yet do not refute his arguments. While I do not deny that (some or even all of) the visions and oracles recorded in Zechariah 1–6 may have had a prehistory, I am attempting to make sense of the shape

and he may possibly function as a counselor to the coming ruler (ch. 6), there is no evidence in the book of Zechariah for diarchy or the emergence of the priesthood as a political power.

Another nontraditional reading has been proposed by Mark J. Boda, who agrees with Rose on most issues but sees Zechariah as emphasizing the continuing influence of prophetic and royal streams in texts traditionally interpreted as promoting the extension of priestly prerogatives.⁸ According to Boda, Zechariah has been influenced by—and clearly alludes to—the Jeremianic tradition of enduring but separate royal and priestly lines.⁹ Zechariah's agenda vis-à-vis the leadership is thus to restrain priestly aspirations rather than endorse them as has been argued in the past.¹⁰

It is beyond the scope of this essay to offer a detailed response to these three readings, but I will interact with them where appropriate. My own interpretation follows in many ways the freshly beaten path of Rose and Boda, yet departs from it at certain key points.¹¹

II. A NEW PROPOSAL

Zechariah's wide knowledge and use of earlier books and traditions is well known.¹² Indeed, many details and motifs of Zechariah can be fully appreciated

and meaning of the present form of the text (similarly Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets*; and Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*). In case of any remaining uncertainties, I would rather confess my present inadequate understanding of the text than posit a well-meaning but clumsy redactor—a figure that is often too quickly called to the aid of a puzzled interpreter. My approach thus differs greatly from that of Redditt (*Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*), for example, who sees Zechariah as a collection of very different and often contradictory materials arising from many different hands and possibly at different times, assembled in several stages by two or more redactors representing different groups within postexilic Judaism. For two very different attempts to reconstruct the postexilic social setting partly on the basis of the book of Zechariah, see Stephen L. Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism: The Postexilic Social Setting* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995); and Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975).

⁸ Boda, "Oil, Crowns and Thrones."

⁹ *Ibid.*, 389–91, 398–99.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 404.

¹¹ The reading I am proposing here was adumbrated in my doctoral dissertation, later published as *The Use of Zechariah in Revelation* (2005).

¹² See, e.g., M. Mathias Delcor, "Les sources du Deutéro-Zacharie et ses procédés d'emprunt," *RB* 59 (1952) 385–411; Meyers and Meyers (*Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 35), who even claim that Zechariah 9–14 "surpasses any other biblical work in the way it draws from existing tradition"; Tollington, *Tradition and Innovation*; Konrad R. Schaefer, "Zechariah 14: A Study in Allusion," *CBQ* 57 (1995) 66–91; Risto Nurmela, *Prophets in Dialogue: Inner-Biblical Allusions in Zechariah 1–8 and 9–14* (Åbo: Åbo University, 1996); Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*; Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets*; Boda, "Oil, Crowns and Thrones"; and Rex Mason, "The Use of Earlier Biblical Material in

only when seen in light of their treatment by earlier prophets, and the present pericopae are no exceptions. While this is not the occasion for an extended survey of Zechariah's employment of existing traditions, a couple of comments are nevertheless appropriate, given the topic of the essay.

First, the very opening "word of Yahweh" (1:1) coming to Zechariah refers three times (vv. 4–6) to the earlier prophets and their words.¹³ These (and later references, 7:7, 12) suggest both Zechariah's familiarity with earlier prophetic traditions and their importance to the interpretation of his own message. As Michael Fishbane has noted, "a learned preoccupation with older prophetic language is characteristic of late biblical prophecy," and Zechariah is no exception.¹⁴

Second, while some of Zechariah's prophetic language is clearly stereotypical and it is possible to discern "simple allusions" and "echoes" in the text, there are also allusions that evoke a specific earlier text or tradition that can shed light on the text containing the allusion.¹⁵ These allusions seem to range from quite obvious to very subtle, and they can function in different ways. For example, Paul Hanson has pointed out how Zech 11:7–17 clearly seems to reverse many of the promises of Ezek 34:1–31 and 37:15–28.¹⁶ Boda, on the other hand, has identified a far subtler allusion in Zech 6:13:¹⁷ Zemah is Zechariah's answer to the disaster of the Davidic line announced in Jeremiah 22. He will regain the "majesty" (הוד) lost by King Jehoiakim (v. 18) and "sit on the throne" and "rule," unlike the descendants of Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim's son (v. 30).

The usage of Jeremiah pointed out by Boda is not the only example of Zechariah showing how the coming king will be the very opposite of the last king(s) of Judah before the destruction of Jerusalem. A similar reversal of an earlier

Zechariah 9–14: A Study in Inner Biblical Exegesis," in *Bringing Out the Treasure: Inner Biblical Allusion in Zechariah 9–14* (ed. Mark J. Boda and Michael H. Floyd; JSOTSup 370; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 1–208.

¹³ The reference to the "former prophets" in 1:4 does not refer only (or even primarily) to the earlier Minor Prophets (Hosea through Zephaniah or Haggai), as some have suggested (see, e.g., Edgar W. Conrad, *Zechariah* [Readings; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999], 49–54). Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel are especially influential, although Zechariah seems to be drawing from a wide range of texts and traditions.

¹⁴ Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 498.

¹⁵ I am using "simple allusion" to denote "a hint to a known fact"; that is, there is no specific text that is being alluded to. An "echo" may be traceable to a single text, but the identification of this text does not lead to an activation of extra elements between the two contexts. For further discussion of these and related terms, see Jauhiainen, *Use of Zechariah*, 18–36.

¹⁶ Hanson, *Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 343–45. Thus, instead of the ideal shepherd (34:23; 37:24), the people will have a worthless shepherd (11:15–17); instead of Yahweh saving and gathering the sheep (34:9–16), he will not have pity on them but will let them be scattered (11:6; 13:7); instead of peace and prosperity (34:26–31), there will be desolation (11:16; 13:8); cf. the classic case of prophetic reversal, Mic 4:3//Isa 2:4 vs. Joel 3:10 (MT 4:10).

¹⁷ Boda, "Oil, Crowns and Thrones," 399 n. 55.

prophecy of judgment takes place in Zechariah's use of Ezek 21:29–32. We will first take a brief look at the passage and then examine its significance for the interpretation of Zechariah 3 and 6:9–15.

Ezekiel 21:29–32

The oracle of the sword in Ezek 21:23–32 (Eng. 21:18–27) is not dated but gives the impression that the fall of Jerusalem is not very far away.¹⁸ Zedekiah has rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar,¹⁹ and the Babylonians are ready to move against the city. All the people are guilty (v. 29), but the “prince” of the people is singled out as especially wicked (v. 30). The attacking enemy will terminate both his vile behavior and his kingship, the latter action being symbolized by the removal of his turban (מצנפת) and crown (עטרה) (v. 31).²⁰ As for the concluding words of the oracle,²¹ commentators seem to agree that it draws on Gen 49:10,²² but there is some debate concerning the way Ezekiel is using this ancient prophecy. Are the turban and the crown—that is, kingship—withdrawn temporarily and given later to the coming righteous king, “my servant David” (Ezekiel 34),²³ or is Ezekiel giving the sacred patriarchal word a cruel twist by announcing that Nebuchadnezzar will be Yahweh's agent of judgment?²⁴

The latter possibility would seem to fit the context well. On the other hand, the long history of the messianic interpretation of v. 32 (Eng. 27), possibly reflected already in the LXX rendering,²⁵ testifies to the ambiguous nature of the text itself. Moreover, even if Ezekiel has given the original prophecy an ironic twist, it is always possible that Zechariah either misinterpreted him or chose to transform his oracle

¹⁸ Daniel I. Block suggests that the oracle reflects the situation in late 588 or early 587 B.C.E. (*The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24* [NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997], 685 n. 167).

¹⁹ MT נבוכדנאצר in Ezekiel.

²⁰ MT Ezek 21:31 (Eng. 21:26): כה אמר אדני יהוה הסיר המצנפת והרים העטרה. This verse is the only place where מצנפת does not denote the high-priestly turban. Interestingly, the Targum removes the turban from Seraiah the high priest, and only the crown is taken from Zedekiah the king.

²¹ MT Ezek 21:32 (Eng. 21:27): גִּם־זֹאת לֹא הִיא עַד־בֹּא אֲשֶׁר־לִי הַמִּשְׁפָּט וְנִתְּחִי.

²² The interpretation of this verse in itself is much debated; see the discussion in Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50* (WBC 2; Dallas: Word Books, 1994), 477–78.

²³ On the messianic interpretation of Ezek 21:32 (Eng. 21:27), see the discussion in Block, *Book of Ezekiel*, 692 n. 192, and the references cited therein.

²⁴ So, e.g., Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48* (WBC 29; Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 20; Block, *Book of Ezekiel*, 692–93; ESV (English Standard Version); and NET (New English Translation).

²⁵ Block, *Book of Ezekiel*, 692 n. 192, referring to Laurent Monsengwo-Pasinya, “Deux textes messianiques de la Septante: Gen 49,10 et Ez 21,32,” *Bib* 61 (1980): 357–76; and Johannes Lust, “Messianism and Septuagint: Ez 21,30–32,” in *Congress Volume: Salamanca 1983* (ed. J. Emerton; VTSup 36; Leiden: Brill, 1985), 174–91.

of judgment into a prediction of hope. To be sure, it is impossible to access Zechariah's mind and thus tell the difference between these two options; we must examine the texts he left us and try to come up with a plausible explanation of how he is using the turban and crown motif from the book of Ezekiel.

Zechariah 3

The fourth of Zechariah's night visions shares three important features with Zech 6:9–15 that need to be highlighted at the outset: (1) Joshua and Zemah appear only here in the whole book. (2) As to their form, both passages consist of a prophetic sign-act and an accompanying oracular utterance. (3) While the recipient of the sign-act is Joshua, the sign-act is closely connected to, and interpreted in terms of, Zemah and the events that will take place when he comes. If we lose sight of these features, we may either fail to appreciate the close relationship between these two pericopae or miss their internal integrity.

Zechariah 3 begins with a heavenly courtroom scene, in which Joshua, the high priest and representative of the people, stands accused by the satan (v. 1). He is clothed with filthy garments (v. 3)—symbolizing his iniquity (v. 4)—but instead of being condemned, his iniquity is taken away and he is clothed with a festal robe (v. 4). There is a general consensus that all this speaks of the cleansing of the (high) priesthood that is necessary for the temple ceremonies to recommence once the temple rebuilding process has been completed.

If being cleansed from iniquity is symbolized by being clothed with pure vestments, why does Joshua also receive a clean turban?²⁶ Assuming that Zechariah 3 is portraying something like the ordination rite of the high priest, the inclusion of the turban perhaps has a natural explanation.²⁷ But even in that case it may be serving a double duty, for what happens to Joshua is closely connected to the coming

²⁶ As v. 4 indicates, the turban is not part of the cleansing process; cf. the list of fine things to wear in Isa 3:18–23, which shows that “turban” (צניף) is not part of the “festal robe” (מחלצות) either. In Job 29:14, צניף symbolizes Job's justice, in parallel with his righteousness. The fourth and last occurrence of the word in the Hebrew Bible is in Isa 62:3, where Jerusalem is a royal צניף in God's hand at the time when righteousness shall “sprout up” (צמח) (v. 1) and the nations shall see its righteousness (v. 2).

²⁷ So, e.g., Sweeney (*Twelve Prophets*, 593–98), though he himself acknowledges that the vocabulary used (צניף, מחלצות) appears neither in Exodus 29 nor in Leviticus 8, which describe such ceremonies, including how the high priest is dressed. True, my proposal suffers from the same weakness as Sweeney's because Ezek 21:31 uses the high-priestly מצנפת for turban—though Zechariah's choice of words is probably more embarrassing for those who argue that the high-priestly connotations exhaust the symbolism in the reception of the turban in Zech 3:5. I agree with Meyers and Meyers (*Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 192) that the shift from מצנפת to צניף is intentional but would suggest the prophetic expectation of Isa 62:1–3 as the primary influence (cf. n. 26 above).

of Zerah, as commentators usually point out. If Zerah is Zechariah's answer to the disaster of the Davidic line announced in Jeremiah 22, as Boda has argued, why not also to a similar disaster announced in Ezekiel 21? Thus, Joshua is not only cleansed and prepared for the temple service as a high priest, but he also receives the turban as a token of the coming servant of Yahweh—Zerah, “to whom it”²⁸ belongs.”²⁹ According to this view, just as the removal of the turban (and crown) from the wicked king represented the fate of the last king of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem, so the giving of the clean turban (and the fashioning of the new crown [6:9–15]) symbolizes the coming of the messianic king and the associated restoration of the fortunes of God's people.

The exact nature of some of the details in the prophetic utterance following the sign-act is not entirely obvious, but the overall picture is clear enough. Joshua is given a conditional promise³⁰ and then told that his associates³¹ are “men of portent,” living signs³² of things to come: Zerah, a Davidic king and a servant of Yahweh;³³

²⁸ That is, kingship and the turban (and crown) symbolizing it.

²⁹ Genesis 49:10bα (so, e.g., NET, NIV, NLT [New Living Translation], and RSV); similarly Ezek 21:32 (ASV, CJB [Complete Jewish Bible], JPS, KJV, NASB, NIV, NJB, NKJV, NRSV, and RSV).

³⁰ There is some debate over whether v. 7 contains two or four conditions. Most scholars consider only the first two clauses as part of the protasis (e.g., Hinckley G. Mitchell in idem, John Merlin Powis Smith, and Julius A. Bewer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah* [ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1912], 154; Peter R. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration* [OTL; London: SCM, 1968], 186–87; Wilhelm Rudolph, *Haggai – Sacharja 1–8 – Sacharja 9–14 – Maleachi* [KAT 13.4; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1976], 93 n. 6; Smith, *Micah–Malachi*, 198 n. 7a; Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 194); contra Boda, “Oil, Crowns and Thrones,” 385 n. 21; see the recent discussion in Tiemeyer, “Guilty Priesthood,” 12. I follow Meyers and Meyers (*Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 194) in reading the third and fourth statement as denoting the scope of Joshua's authority, which will be dependent on his obedience, that is, the first two statements.

³¹ The majority of scholars see these men as Joshua's fellow priests (Tiemeyer, “Guilty Priesthood,” 4 n. 25). The text would seem to identify only the associates as אֲנָשֵׁי מוֹפֵת, but some (e.g., Rose, *Zerah and Zerubbabel*, 44) consider Joshua included as well.

³² It is not explained in what sense these men are “portents,” but on the basis of other “human portent” passages we may assume that it is the priests' behavior and actions that function as a sign to others (cf. Isa 20:2–6 and 8:1–20; Ezek 12:3–15; 24:15–27). The context here would suggest that the priests will be positive signs, but in the other passages the portents are ominous; cf. Mal 1:6–14; 2:7–8.

³³ In referring to Zerah, Zechariah is drawing from Jeremiah 23 and 33, where Zerah/צֶרֶחַ is the righteous Davidic king whom Yahweh will send to the people when he restores Jerusalem, Judah, and Israel. The designation “my servant” recalls Yahweh's “servant” in Isaiah 40–55 and “my servant David” in Ezekiel 34 and 37; cf. Boda (“Oil, Crown and Thrones,” 389–90), who emphasizes its Davidic connotations in 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, and 2 Kings instead. Some take עֲבָדִי as a reference to Zerubbabel in Hag 2:23; so, e.g., Tiemeyer (“Guilty Priesthood,” 1–2), who recognizes the problem of identifying the coming servant with Zerubbabel, who has arrived already, and therefore concludes that Zech 3:8b must be secondary.

the removal of the iniquity of the whole land in a single day;³⁴ and conditions reminiscent of the golden days of King Solomon (1 Kgs 4:25). The reference to Zemah is very brief, however, and the picture must be complemented by Zech 6:9–15.

Zechariah 6:9–15

The word of Yahweh completing the night visions features the same main characters as Zechariah 3 but provides us with a little more information on Zemah and his role. Zechariah is instructed to take silver and gold from some of the returned exiles and to fashion them into a crown.³⁵ He is to set the crown on the head of Joshua and to deliver Yahweh's message to him. The precise content of this message, especially the phrase *והיה כהן על־כסאו ועצת שלום תהיה בין שניהם* (v. 13), is the focus of much debate. What is the relationship between the priest and Zemah, identified in v. 12 as one who will build the temple of Yahweh?³⁶

The two most common interpretations are (a) that this passage envisions a diarchic leadership (the high priest and the Davidic governor/king) in Judah, and (b) that the coming ruler Zemah also functions as a priest, and there is harmony³⁷ between the two offices that Zemah holds.³⁸ The biggest lexical/syntactical problem with the latter proposal is that *שניהם* and the context seem to suggest two *persons* rather than offices.³⁹ The former view, on the other hand, suffers from a number of other problems, as Rose has demonstrated.⁴⁰

³⁴ The removal of iniquity in v. 9b seems to be somehow closely connected to the mysterious stone in v. 9a. According to Meyers and Meyers, the two primary lines of interpretation see it either as part of Joshua's high-priestly garb (cf. Exodus 28) or as a stone used in the construction of the temple (cf. Zech 4:7, 10; *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 204–5). Agreement is also lacking with regard to the seven *עינים* and the sense in which they are “on” the stone, that is, whether they are eyes focused on, or engraved in, the stone, or facets of the stone. The emphasis on the temple-(re)building project in Zechariah and the important antecedent “single stone” texts (e.g., Gen 28:22; Ps 118:22; Isa 8:14; 28:16) probably tip the balance in favor of associating the stone with the future temple that Zemah will build (6:12–13), the eyes being focused on the stone rather than being part of it.

³⁵ On the number of crowns and other related issues, see Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 349–53; contra Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 46–55. I agree with Rose (*Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 46–48) that the simplest explanation for the present shape of the text is to read *עטרות* in v. 11 and *עטרת* in v. 14 as singular forms.

³⁶ On the “man” Zemah in Zech 6:12, and on “man” as a term with messianic associations, see William Horbury, *Messianism among Jews and Christians: Twelve Biblical and Historical Studies* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 144–51.

³⁷ *עצת שלום*, “peaceful understanding,” lit., “counsel of peace.”

³⁸ See the extended discussion in Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 59–68, and the references cited therein.

³⁹ Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 362; Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 60; Boda, “Oil, Crowns and Thrones,” 396–97.

⁴⁰ Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 46–68; see also Boda, “Oil, Crowns and Thrones,” 395–403.

Rose's own proposal is that there are two persons, but the priest is there only to offer counsel to the king (rather than to co-rule with him).⁴¹ However, this is merely another variant of the same "diarchic" view that he rejects.⁴² Yet the fact that vv. 12–13 first mention Zemah and then go on to tell what he will do (ומשל . . . וישב . . . ישא . . . יבנה . . . ובנה) would lead one to think that the immediately following verb in the same form (והיה) also has Zemah as its subject.⁴³ Thus, rather than first assuming that the subject abruptly changes, and then asking about the relationship between the two subjects, we should ask a completely different question: To whom does שניהם refer, if not to two offices or to a priest and Zemah?

The simplest solution is to translate the problematic phrase (6:13b) straightforwardly, "and he will be a priest on his throne, and a counsel of peace shall be between the two of them,"⁴⁴ but to take the other person to be Yahweh, who is not only mentioned twice in the list of things that Zemah will do but also is the only other person mentioned in vv. 12b–13 and therefore the nearest possible candidate for the second party of שניהם. Of course, the original puzzle—that is, the precise import of v. 13b—still remains, but it can now be approached from a completely different angle.

I suggest that the same interpretive key we applied earlier to Zechariah 3, the loss of both the turban and the crown in Ezek 21:29–32, also helps to unlock Zech 6:9–15. Zemah is the one who will ultimately regain the kingship represented by the turban and crown. In the restoration of God's people—which is the main focus of the book of Zechariah⁴⁵—the cause and effects of the exile will be undone. Yet there is also development: Zemah will not only be the king; he will also be a priest on his throne.⁴⁶ The עצת שלום is between Yahweh and Zemah and is thus set in stark con-

⁴¹ Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 68; similarly Boda, "Oil, Crowns and Thrones," 398.

⁴² What Rose has effectively demonstrated is that, when considered alone, 6:13 does not require to be interpreted as evidence for diarchy. Yet if one is already convinced that the overall picture in Zechariah 3; 4; and 6 is about the rise of the Zadokite priesthood as a political power, then it is entirely possible to read 6:13 as supporting one's view. In other words, once the possibility of Zemah functioning as a priest is excluded, it is difficult to differentiate between the traditional reading and Rose's reading on the basis of v. 13.

⁴³ That is, כהן does not have to be the subject of והיה; it can also be its predicate.

⁴⁴ A similar translation has been adopted by several English translations (e.g., RSV, NIV, NASB, NLT, and NKJV) and a number of scholars (see the list in Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 59 n. 42).

⁴⁵ See Jauhiainen, *Use of Zechariah*, 37–61.

⁴⁶ Rose draws attention to the absence of the article (והיה כהן), concluding that the priest cannot be Joshua, who, after all, is *the* (high) priest (cf. Zech 3:8) (*Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 60–64). Boda, on the other hand, suggests that the oracle does not refer to "high priest" because it responds to the tradition in Jer 33:15–26 (which does not mention the high priest), according to which the fortunes of the priestly and royal lines are intertwined. As one is reinstated, so also the other will be reestablished ("Oil, Crown and Thrones," 399 n. 57). The problem with this proposal is that,

trast to the relationship between Yahweh and the wicked king, who brought about the exile.⁴⁷

The symbolic crowning of Joshua in Zech 6:9–15, therefore looks forward to the coming messianic priest-king, rather than reflects an elevation of the high priesthood or other such concern. On one hand, Joshua thus merely stands in for Zemah,⁴⁸ but on the other hand, his faithfulness—and the faithfulness of those he represents as high priest—is tied to the coming of Zemah. The crown is not worn by Joshua but is to be kept in the temple⁴⁹ as a reminder of the promise, which “shall come to pass, if you [pl.] will diligently obey the voice of the Yahweh your God” (6:15b). This charge, which is a partial quotation of Moses’ warning to the people of Israel to choose blessing rather than curse,⁵⁰ both ends Zech 6:9–15 and functions as a frame to the series of night visions, complementing the call to repentance at the beginning of the book.⁵¹

while Jeremiah 33 expects David’s descendant to sit on the throne, the Levitical priests are expected to *minister in the temple*. Zechariah 3 may play off of the latter expectation, but 6:13b does not quite look like a fulfillment (or restatement) of this Jeremianic tradition. There is another tradition, however, that provides a better explanation for the lack of specificity in the mention of the priest: in v. 4 of Psalm 110 (entitled *מְזֻמָּר*), Yahweh addresses the anointed king, “You are a priest forever” (*אתה־כהן לעולם*). The idea of a messianic priest-king is thus neither unique nor novel in Zechariah. Moreover, Zemah’s priestly role may also partly explain his appearance in Zechariah 3 and his connection to the cleansing of the land.

⁴⁷ The phrase may also be further illuminated by Ezek 34:24–25 and 37:25–26, both of which predict that when “my [i.e., Yahweh’s] servant David” becomes king, Yahweh will establish a *ברית שלום* with his people.

⁴⁸ So also Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 58.

⁴⁹ There are basically two solutions to the problem of apparently conflicting references throughout Zechariah to the temple and the process of building it: (1) all the references are to the same temple, but the redactor has been rather inept; or (2) some of the references are to the temple that is in the process of being built (and for which Zerubbabel, the governor, is responsible), and some are to a more glorious, future temple—or at least a significant expansion of the present temple (see Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel*, 136–9)—which will be built by Zemah, the coming king. The latter explanation is supported by the facts that the building of the temple was usually seen as an activity of kings in the ancient Near East (see Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 250–51, 356–57) and that the present temple did not seem to have met expectations (cf. Ezra 3:12–13; Zech 4:10; Ezekiel 40–48).

⁵⁰ Cf. Deut 28:1; similarly Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration*, 205.

⁵¹ Later the books of Malachi and Ezra–Nehemiah testify to the presence of problems both within the priesthood and in the returned community at large. If the message of Zechariah is taken seriously, then these could be interpreted as reasons for the nonrealization of Zechariah’s hopes of restoration (see further Jauhainen, *Use of Zechariah*, 58–60). Historically, then, the rise of the Zadokite priesthood as a political power took place somewhat later and *despite* Zechariah, not because his visions imagined it (or even reflected a process already well under way).

III. CONCLUSION

The majority of scholars have seen Zechariah 3 and 6:9–15 as evidence for the expansion of the authority of the Zadokite priesthood at the expense of the Davidic dynasty. This has recently been called into question by Rose and Boda, both of whom argue for a far more moderate role for the priestly line. In this essay, I have gone a step further in the same direction by proposing that the prophetic sign-acts and their close connection to Zemah in these two chapters should be interpreted in light of Ezek 21:29–32 (Eng. 21:24–27). Joshua's role is both to stand in for Zemah and, together with his fellow priests, to be a living sign of the coming restoration by walking in the ways of Yahweh and keeping his charge. Zemah is the coming Davidic king who will regain the kingship—symbolized by the turban and crown—lost by the wicked king when Jerusalem fell. If there is any expansion of authority in Zech 6:13, it is not Joshua sharing the rule of Zemah but rather the latter also being a priest on his throne. Ezekiel 21 prophesied judgment on Jerusalem and the wicked king, but the relationship between Zemah and Yahweh will instead be characterized by שלום.