

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH

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Canonical Zechariah falls into several fairly distinct divisions: (1) an oracular exhortation (Zech 1:1-6); (2) a series of visions with oracles interlaced (1:7-6:8); (3) a symbolic action performed by the prophet (6:9-15); (4) oracular instruction (chaps. 7-8); (5) a pair of "burdens" (chaps. 9-14; cf. *maššā*², 9:1; 12:1).

Our treatment of 6:9-15 as a separate major section calls for comment. The section is set off from 1:7-6:8 by its own introductory formula (6:9; cf. 4:8; 7:4; 8:1, 18) and by the fact that it is not a vision like the preceding material. It is also distinguished from what follows in chaps. 7-8 by the date formula in 7:1, which, like those in 1:1 and 1:7, clearly marks a new division. Addressing the question of the precise role of 6:9-15 in the composition of Zechariah will take us to the heart of our proposal concerning the overall structure of the work.

I. THE THREE-HINGE FRAMEWORK

A key structural device of the book emerges with the recognition that 6:9-15 shares with two other passages (3:1-10; 11:1-17) a peculiar set of formal and thematic characteristics. Common to these passages and to them alone in Zechariah is the formal feature of symbolic action in which the prophet personally participates and specific historical individuals are involved.¹ Further, these three passages are thematically unified: In each the prophet participates in a coronation, an investiture to theocratic office. Indeed, all three portray Messiah's commissioning to his royal-priestly task. Moreover, in addition to sharing exclusively this striking set of features, each of these passages occupies a central position either in the book as a whole or in one of its two main blocks of material.

Before showing more particularly how each of the three passages in turn exhibits the distinctive characteristics mentioned above, I would like to state at once the hypothesis at which I arrive, following the direction pointed to by these data. My proposal is that the book of Zechariah is a diptych with 6:9-15 as its primary hinge or central spine and that the main

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¹ In 6:9-15 the symbolic action is apparently a real external transaction, while it is performed within a vision in 3:1-10 and 11:1-17.

part of each side panel of this diptych is itself a diptych formation with 3:1-10 and 11:1-17 as the hinges of the night visions and the burdens respectively.

1. *Zech 3:1-10*. Located in the middle of the night visions, 3:1-10 stands apart from the formulary scheme that provides a framework for the preceding and following visions.² So distinctive is this passage in style and substance that some exclude it from the numbered sequence of visions and assign it a separate status within the structure of Zechariah 1-6.³ In my proposal, that special status of 3:1-10, the fourth vision in my numbering, consists in its function as one of the trio of hinges in the macrostructure of the book.

Unlike the visions before and after it, 3:1-9 does not introduce imaginary objects to symbolize the earthly realities but presents actual living persons (Joshua and his priestly colleagues). Though historical people—like the oppressor nations, the Israelites in exile, and so forth—are referred to in the other visions in the oracular interpretation of symbolism, they are not seen as figures in the vision. This is true even of the reference to Zerubbabel in Zechariah 4.⁴ The other visions do include in their visual content heavenly persons, divine and angelic. Some of these are represented symbolically (e.g. the horsemen of Zechariah 1), but the divine angel appears in these visions, as in Zechariah 3, in the form he assumed elsewhere in nonvisionary theophany. Nevertheless Zechariah 3 remains distinctive in its inclusion of actual earthly persons in the visual action.

Closely related to this is the other formal point of similarity between *Zech 3:1-10* and the other main hinge sections. Elsewhere in the night visions Zechariah's role does not go beyond the reception of revelation and inquiring into the meaning of the symbolism.⁵ But in 3:1-10 the prophet plays an active role in forwarding the dramatic action. When the angel of the Lord orders the reclothing of the redeemed high priest in his official vestments, Zechariah speaks out urging on the climactic coronation act of setting the miter on Joshua's head (v. 5).

This motif of donning royal-priestly regalia and acquiring the accouterments of office is itself one of the features peculiar to the three main hinges. In the case of Joshua in Zechariah 3, the replacement of his soiled attire with garments of holy glory signified his reinstatement as Israel's high priest (vv. 3-5; cf. Exodus 28-29). Thus invested anew with authority for

² For details see below.

³ See e.g. C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8* (AB 25B; New York: Doubleday, 1987) lv-lvii, 179, 213 ff. We will be interacting particularly with this work because it gives considerable attention to compositional questions.

⁴ Underestimating the significance of this difference in the treatment of Joshua (Zechariah 3) and Zerubbabel (Zechariah 4), Meyers takes these two visions together as a centerpiece of the night visions (cf. *Haggai* liv ff.). That, however, conflicts with Meyers' own inclusion of Zechariah 4 in the count of the visions, thereby associating it with those visions over against Zechariah 3, not so included.

⁵ Assisting is an interpreting angel, present in each of the other visions but significantly absent from 3:1-10 (and the other two hinges).

governance, set over the council of priests for judicial oversight of God's courts (Zech 3:7-8a), Joshua was declared a sign of "my servant the Branch" (v. 8b). Joshua typified the coming Messiah in his twofold office, the suffering servant who undergoes extreme humiliation to accomplish a priestly sacrifice for sin and then experiences the highest exaltation as the royal Branch of David (cf. Isa 52:13-53:12; Jer 23:5; 33:15). Special attention is directed to the miter bearing the golden gemstone badge of royal-priestly dignity (Zech 3:9a; cf. Exod 28:36-38; 29:6; Lev 8:9), the item for which Zechariah had expressed particular interest (Zech 3:5). Crowned with this, Joshua prefigured Christ, the priestly remover of iniquity (v. 9b) and the royal restorer of paradise and of man as God's glory-image (vv. 9b-10). Such portrayal of Messiah in his priest-king mission is also found in the other two hinge passages.

2. *Zech 6:9-15*. In our examination of this primary hinge passage we will note first the formal marks that distinguish the three hinges. Going beyond his role in 3:5, the prophet here is himself the main actor in the symbolic drama. He receives the offertory materials (vv. 10-11a),⁶ he takes part in the preparation of the crown (v. 11b)⁷ and possibly its later disposition (v. 14), and he is the agent in the coronation (v. 11c), whose typological meaning he expounds (vv. 12-13). As for the participation of other actual persons, there are several returned exiles, cited by name, who provide precious metals for the crown, and Josiah son of Zephaniah (vv. 10, 14). Also, Joshua is again recipient of the crown (v. 11c).⁸

Clearly evident from the above comments is the presence in 6:9-15 of the thematic distinctive of the hinge sections, the coronation investiture of a messianic prototype. This motif, obvious in the crowning act in v. 11c, may also be alluded to in the statement: "He shall bear the glory" (v. 13b). This may refer to investiture with the total regalia of office, imagery that is prominent in Zechariah 3, because *hōd*, the term used for the "glory" to be "borne" (*nš'*), is at times a majesty in which somebody is clothed (cf. e.g. Job 40:10; Ps 104:1), and *nš'* is used in the sense of wearing the ephod, which is similarly a vestment signifying authority (cf. 1 Sam 2:28; 14:3; 22:18).

Moreover, the coronation is the commissioning of one who typifies Christ. As in Zech 3:8, Joshua's experience is interpreted as a foreshadowing of the messianic Branch (v. 12). Also, the role of the returned exiles in

⁶ Reception of voluntary silver and gold contributions from individual leaders for cultic objectives by someone not a Levitical priest is attested in Exod 25:2 ff. (cf. 35:5); Num 31:51-54; 2 Kgs 12:3-17. A close literary parallel to Zech 6:10-11 is Num 3:45-47 (the *t* in v. 46 being equivalent to the *m't* in vv. 49, 50). The genre is a kind of divine requisition adapted from commercial dockets.

⁷ We cannot here discuss the notion that two crowns are in view. I assume there was a single crown, probably one composed of separate circlets of gold and silver. See further the next note.

⁸ I regard reconstructions of the text that would substitute or add the figure of Zerubbabel as unwarranted conjecture. But even if such a view were adopted, the observations we are making about the formal and thematic characteristics shared by 6:9-15 in common with the other two hinge sections would still hold true.

contributing to the restoration of the Jerusalem cultus is interpreted as prefigurative of analogous developments in the messianic age (vv. 14-15).

Emphasized in the 6:9-15 treatment of the typological commissioning of the Messiah is the union in him of the royal and priestly offices. The addition of the kingly dimension to the priestly is expressed in the designating of the one prefigured by Joshua the high priest as the Branch, a title associated (as noted above) with the Davidic dynasty. Also, the term for the crown (*trh*) is ordinarily used for royal rather than priestly insignia.

Further, the prefigured Branch (re)builds the temple, an enterprise associated with the legitimation of kingship in the ancient Near East and certainly a royal function in the Biblical tradition. The succession of Solomon to David's throne as recorded in 1 Chronicles 29 (which itself combines the themes of temple building and validation of succession) provides the more specific background of the declaration in Zech 6:13 that the Branch, the builder of the temple of Yahweh, "will bear the glory (*hōd*) and sit and rule on his throne." 1 Chron 29:25 refers to the majesty (*hōd*) God bestowed on Solomon as he magnified him in Israel. And in 29:23 the throne occupied by Solomon, anointed successor of David, is called the "throne of Yahweh." Echoing this background Zech 6:13 affirms that the majestic priest who "shall build the temple of Yahweh . . . shall sit and rule upon his [Yahweh's] throne (*l-ks'w*) and shall be a priest upon his [Yahweh's] throne (*l-ks'w*)." ⁹

In the Israelite theocracy, David's throne was an earthly representative of God's heavenly throne, and the throne in the Holy of Holies, to which the high priest had access, was also a typological replica thereof. In the ultimate heavenly reality Yahweh's temple and palace thrones are one, and that throne is the place of Christ's session at the right hand of God. Zech 6:13 refers to this throne of Yahweh and this session of the messianic priest-king. The last clause in that verse, "the counsel of peace shall be between them both," is not to be taken as a personification of the two separate offices of the priest-king. It refers to two persons; the second is Yahweh himself. The royal one who builds the temple of Yahweh, site of the throne of Yahweh, sits as a priest at the right hand of Yahweh, ¹⁰ and these two reign together in perfect accord to accomplish the *šalōm* of God's kingdom (cf. Pss 45:6-7; 110:1; Heb 1:3, 13; Rev 5:6). ¹¹

This reception of Messiah into the presence of the throne of God is another theme common to Zech 3:1-9 and 6:9-15. In the former the equivalent idea is expressed in the promise to the messianic prototype that he would be accorded access among the attendant throne angels of the heavenly court (3:7). The presidency of Joshua over his colleagues referred

⁹ The repetition of *l-ks'w* demands that it is a single figure, a priest-king who is depicted here as sitting on Yahweh's throne.

¹⁰ The LXX rendering of the second *l-ks'w* of MT, as if reading *l-ymynw*, possibly suggests the interpretation of the throne as Yahweh's.

¹¹ In 1 Chronicles 29, the background passage, the peace of Solomon's reign is described, a time of prosperity and loyalty (v. 23). Note too that conjoined to the statement of Solomon's anointing as king is that of Zadok's appointment as priest (v. 22).

to in 3:8 was an earthly replica of the heavenly reality of Messiah in the midst of the angelic council.

The Zecharian prophetic portrayal of the coming Christ, the priest-king, reaches its zenith here—appropriately, for this passage is structurally the central hinge of his work.

3. *Zech 11:1-17*. In this third major hinge section the personal involvement of the prophet in the symbolic action is the most intense of all. That action, again an investiture commissioning to royal-priestly office, is not simply urged on by the prophet or even performed by him on somebody else. He is here called upon to be himself the one so commissioned. He is instructed to play the part of the messianic priest-king, specifically the good shepherd sent on mission to the flock—"shepherd" being a familiar image of kingship.¹² In keeping with the shepherd motif, the imagery of coronation and royal investiture found in 3:1-10; 6:9-15 is translated into that of donning the outfit and taking accouterments suited to tending flocks. The shepherd's staff (11:7, 10) replaces the scepter, but the basic theme of official investiture is present again in this passage.¹³ So too is the other formal feature of the involvement of actual individuals, whether contemporary or future (cf. vv. 5, 6, 8, 12, 13). These features are not found in the burdens before or after 11:1-17 but are peculiar to the three hinges.

Various other correspondences supplement this formal thematic evidence of the interrelationship of 11:1-17 with 3:1-10; 6:9-15. Critical action transpires in the house of the Lord in the third section (11:13) as in the first (3:7) and second (6:12-14). Access to the divine council, noted above as linking the first two hinge sections, is experienced by Zechariah in 11:1-17 as recipient of the direct communication assigning his symbolic role. The royal role, common to all three hinges, takes the particular form of judicial functioning in the courts of God's house in the first (3:7) and here in the third, where the good shepherd enters into judgment against the false shepherds (11:8; cf. v. 17).¹⁴ Also characteristic of the hinge passages are judgments evaluating the royal-priestly figure in terms of gold and silver. In the first the Lord's judgment of Joshua culminates in the bestowal of the golden crown, the "stone" on his priestly turban, engraved by the Lord himself (3:9; cf. v. 5). In the second the crown that honors the Lord's anointed is composed of both silver and gold, tributary gifts of the grateful worshipers restored from exile (6:11). In the third the judicial assessment is made by rejecters of the good shepherd, who set his value at thirty pieces of silver (11:12-13), which, like the crown in 6:14, ends up in the temple (11:13). This hostile assessment of the messianic figure in Zechariah 11 (prophetic

¹² Before his visionary experience is concluded, Zechariah is also obliged to impersonate the false shepherd (11:15-17).

¹³ P. F. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) 337, entitles this section, to which he attaches 13:7-9, "A Commissioning Narrative Transformed into a Prophecy of Doom." On the distinctiveness of this section within Zechariah 9-14 see P. L. Redditt, "Israel's Shepherds: Hope and Pessimism in Zechariah 9-14," *CBQ* 51/4 (1989) 634.

¹⁴ This becomes more explicit in the resumption of the theme of the afflicted shepherd in 13:7.

of the betrayal of the Lord by Judas when Satan entered into him) matches the malicious accusation of the satanic adversary against Joshua in 3:1. And corresponding to the Lord's rebuke of Satan in 3:2 is the divine judgment of the despisers of the good shepherd portended by his repudiation of the despicable wages (11:13). In short, significant topical correspondences are discovered that weave 11:1-17 together with 3:1-10 and 6:9-15 in their identity as a special trio in structuring the Zecharian composition.¹⁵

II. PARALLELISM OF THE SIDE PANELS

We shall now explore the two panels flanking the central hinge (6:9-15), noting how they match each other in formal structure and thematic patterns. Such balancing of the structure around 6:9-15 supports the analysis of Zechariah as a diptych hinged on that passage.

1. *Formal correspondence of 1:1-6:8 and 7:1-14:21.* Each of these main side panels consists of an introduction (1:1-6 and chaps. 7-8) and an extended block of stylistically homogeneous materials: visions in 1:7-6:8, burdens in chaps. 9-14. The introductions require particular discussion here; the other sections will be dealt with further below.

Similarities between the two passages identified as introductions include the following:¹⁶ an opening date formula for the revelation to Zechariah (1:1 and 7:1, 4); recollection of lessons from past covenant history, accented by references to the lawsuit complaint of earlier prophets and the exile punishment (1:2-6 and 7:7-14; cf. 8:14); exhortation to fulfill present duty (1:3-4 and 8:16-17); promise to the repentant of new evidences of the Lord's favor, replacing curses with blessings (1:3 and 8:2-15, 18-23).

Zechariah 7:1-8:23, though patently similar to the 1:1-6 introduction, is not usually viewed as another introduction (to chaps. 9-14), certainly not by those who attribute the latter to a different author.¹⁷ But if we accept the integrity of the canonical composition and recognize the nature and role of the hinge sections in the total work, then the location of chaps. 7-8 right after the central hinge and immediately before the burdens, plus its observed similarity to 1:1-6, argue for regarding it as introductory to the material that follows it.

As for the stylistic difference between chaps. 7-8 and the burdens, this is akin to that between the 1:1-6 introduction and the visions. Moreover there are shared features of various sorts that connect chaps. 7-8 with what follows. Significantly, ties are particularly strong with the opening and closing portions of chaps. 9-14. The theme of festival and fast days, which

¹⁵ Some of the parallels are particularly between the two side hinges. Also, the first and third passages are visionary in nature, whereas the central hinge is nonvisionary. A concentric pattern is thus exhibited by the hinge sections.

¹⁶ See Meyers, *Haggai* lii, for a chart of some of the terminological and topical correspondences.

¹⁷ They, however, face the redactional problem that 7:1-8:23 was hardly intended as the conclusion of a work restricted to chaps. 1-6 apart from chaps. 9-14.

opens and closes chaps. 7-8, is resumed in the prophecy of the eschatological celebration of Tabernacles at the climactic conclusion of Zechariah (cf. 14:16). The inclusio thus formed by chaps. 7-8 and the conclusion of the burdens orients the former toward chaps. 9-14. Similarly, the promises that Zion will be the "holy mountain" in 8:3 and that total holiness will characterize God's house in Jerusalem in 14:20-21 form another such inclusio bond.¹⁸ With respect to the prophetic prospects of God's people, chaps. 7-8 and the chapters that follow are alike in giving attention to aspects like the following: (1) ultimate divine judgment of the nations—including, however, a remarkable conversion of a remnant of the Gentiles, who henceforth come to Jerusalem to worship the Lord of Hosts¹⁹ (8:20-23 and 9:1-8, esp. v. 7; 10:11; 12:2-8; 14:13 ff., esp. v. 16); (2) God's strengthening presence with his people in the conflict, resulting in their deliverance and universal worship of Yahweh (8:23 and 9:8, 15; 10:8-12; 12:8; 14:4); (3) regathering of the exiles from far countries for happy reinstatement in their heritage (8:7-8 and 9:12; 10:8-10); (4) Jerusalem become the ideal city at last, fully inhabited, the delight of young and old (8:3-5 and 12:6; 14:11). A telling point in the area of diction is the phrase "so that no one passed through or returned," which is found in identical Hebrew form in 7:14 and 9:8 and nowhere else in the OT. Divine blessing and curse are expressed in terms of agricultural success and failure (8:12 and 9:17; 10:1; 14:8, 17-19). The use of *hwšy*^c for God's work of salvation appears first within Zechariah in 8:7, 13 and is then resumed in the burdens in 9:16; 10:6; 12:7 (cf. 9:9). Moreover the associated terms and ideas are similar in these contexts. Connected to the saving is the strengthening of the saved (8:9, 13 and 9:13-15; 10:6; 12:8). In 8:7, 13 the object of this saving and strengthening is God's "people," "the house of Judah," "the house of Israel." Similarly in 9:16 it is God's "people," in 10:6 "the house of Joseph and the house of Judah," and in 12:7 "the tents of Judah." The *hwšy*^c usage in the burdens is clearly a development of its introductory appearance in 8:7, 13.

I conclude that the panel following the 6:9-15 hinge, like the panel before it, contains an introduction and a main unit. The balanced nature of these two panels will be further evidenced as we examine the relationship of the contents of the visions unit (1:7-6:8) to the burdens unit (chaps. 9-14).

2. *The diptych structure of the visions and burdens.* Repeating the overall structure of the book on a secondary level, both the visions and burdens assume a diptych form centering respectively on 3:1-10 and 11:1-17, the passages whose striking correspondences to the 6:9-15 hinge have been detailed above. Such a remarkable structural parallelism in the major units on either side of 6:9-15 demonstrates again the identity of the latter as the primary central hinge of the entire work. Our examination of these

¹⁸ R. A. Mason notes several ways in which Zechariah 8 and 14 give prominence to Zion, suggesting that "proto-Zechariah" has influenced the formulation of "deutero-Zechariah"; cf. "The Relation of Zechariah 9-14 to Proto-Zechariah," ZAW 88 (1976) 227-231.

¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.* 234.

secondary diptych forms will disclose that their panels also match each other formally and thematically, so supporting our identification of 3:1-10 and 11:1-17 as secondary hinges.

The visions (1:7-6:8) exhibit a balanced diptych form. Examination of the scheme of introductory formulae indicates conclusively that there are seven visions with 3:1-10 as the fourth, standing between two triads. These formulae are located at 1:7-8; 2:1; 2:5; 3:1; 4:1-2; 5:1; 6:1. The patterns of the two triads match. The first members describe the revelatory setting in terms of a night or sleeping situation (1:8 and 4:1).²⁰ The second and third members of each triad have identical introductions. Moreover, the second pair (5:1 and 6:1) is the same as the first (2:1 and 2:5), except for the addition of "again" (*w'swb*), which characterizes the entire second triad (cf. *wyšb* in 4:1). Observe also that all six visions of the two triads include the phrase "I saw, and behold" but that this is absent at 5:5 where many would begin a second vision within chap. 5 and so set the total count at eight.²¹ If we are not to disregard the scheme of the introductory formulae with their pattern of parallel triads, we will see Zechariah 5 as a compound vision of the flying scroll and flying ephah.²² There are then seven, not eight, visions, with two triads flanking the central fourth, whose distinctive opening phrase is one of the things that set it apart from the visions before and after it.

An inner coherence further marks each of the triads as a distinct subset within the seven visions. So, for example, the two elements in the divine declaration at the climax of vision 1 are treated in the rest of the first triad, the Lord's displeasure with the oppressor nations (1:15) in vision 2 and his determination that Jerusalem be prospered as his chosen temple site (1:16-17) in vision 3. Unifying the second triad is the use of imagery derived from the temple, its architecture and furnishings. Also, the guaranteed completion of the program of the kingdom house of the Judge of all the earth (vision 5) is carried out in his judicial advance through the covenant land (vision 6) and then on to the world center (vision 7).²³

A concentric (ABA') arrangement of the visions in each triad underscores its coherence as a discrete subset of the night visions and constitutes a formal point of correspondence between the two triads. Upon examination this correspondence is found to entail parallels in topic and idea.

²⁰ In view of this relationship, "by night" (1:8) is not a symbolic detail in vision 1 but refers to the prophet's experience in reception of all seven visions. Likewise the date in 1:7 belongs to the entire series.

²¹ A phrase akin to that found in 5:5a is found elsewhere in the middle, not beginning, of a vision (cf. 2:7). The language of lifting up the eyes and seeing is in 5:5b, but (unlike 2:1; 2:5; 5:1; 6:1) in the form of an imperative (cf. 6:8).

²² This is, in fact, another feature in the parallelism, for 2:1-4, the corresponding second vision of the first triad, is also a compound vision (cf. the four horns and the four craftsmen).

²³ Because of space restrictions we are obliged here and throughout this essay to limit ourselves to a partial account of supportive data. We will simply try to give enough of the evidence to establish our analysis as an attractive working hypothesis for further testing, elaboration and, hopefully, corroboration.

Formally, all the A-sections (visions 1, 3, 5, 7) include direct divine oracles that interpret and make application of the visions in which they are inserted. The B-sections (visions 2, 6), as noted above, are both compound visions. Topically the A-sections all portray the divine presence, whether in the messianic Angel or the Glory-Spirit theophany, while the B-sections present symbols of secondary agents of the divine action. When we trace out this topical pattern somewhat further, parallel developments emerge in the two triads. The first vision in each triad (1, 5) contains the elements of divine presence in the midst of paradisiacal trees of life (the Angel in the midst of the myrtles and the Spirit over the *mēnōrā*, "lampstand"), with allusion to re-creation in the image of God.²⁴ The second visions (2, 6) concern the removal of aliens and apostates from the covenant land through instruments of divine judgment (cf. esp. 2:4; 5:4, 9-11). The third visions (3, 7) prophesy a mission of the Glory-Spirit to the hostile nations (cf. esp. 2:12; 6:8), particularly to the land of the north (2:10; 6:6, 8), which results in the establishment of God's holy sovereignty from Zion to Babylon.

The balance of the triads flanking the fourth vision is also exhibited in a concentric (ABCDC'B'A') pattern, the contents of visions 1-3 being reflected in visions 5-7, but now in reverse order. This chiasm is signaled by the clear correspondence of the first (A) and last (A') visions, both of which portray a world mission of the Lord of Hosts under the imagery of variously colored horses. In both, *hthlk* in its judicial sense is used to describe the world traversing of the heavenly horsemen (1:10; 6:7). Answering to the vision 1 situation, where nations insensible of Yahweh's sovereign claims are at rest (1:11), is the vision 7 picture of God's Spirit now at rest, for his sovereignty has been enforced in judgment on those nations.

Picking up the trail thus disclosed by the outside visions and following it toward the center, we observe that the focus or range moves from the world in visions 1 and 7 to the land of Judah-Israel in 2 and 6 (cf. 2:2, 4; 5:3, 6)²⁵ and to Zion, the very heart of the theocracy, in 3 and 5.²⁶ This progressive inward movement of the thematic focus as we move inward in the literary structure of the visions reaches its climax in the Holy of Holies in the central fourth vision, where we behold the Lord himself at his throne site, accompanied by his angelic court and dispensing judgment. Zech 3:1-10, the hinge passage of the visions, is the central point of their chiasmic pattern.

As for the B-B' pair of visions (2, 6) in this chiasm, we have already mentioned certain correspondences: their composite nature, the absence of

²⁴ Cf. M. G. Kline, "The Rider of the Red Horse," *KERUX* 5/2 (1990) 2-20; 5/3 (1990) 9-28; *Images of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980) 86-90.

²⁵ In 5:3, 6 *ṛš* refers to the holy land, from which covenant breakers are being removed and banished to Babylon.

²⁶ Vision 3 pictures the rebuilding-perfecting of Jerusalem, the temple-city, and vision 5 takes us into the temple with its lampstand symbolism expounded in terms of a rebuilding and completing of God's house.

an oracular element, focus on the holy land and concern with the removal of unholy elements from it. Observe also the motif of lifting up and casting or setting down in this pair (cf. 2:4; 5:4, 7-11).

In the case of the C-C' pair (visions 3, 5) divine presence, focus on the center of the theocracy, and oracular proclamation have been noted above as parallel features. In addition both set forth the presence of God as the glory and power of his kingdom people (2:9-10, 14-16; 4:6). Prominent in both is the theme of judicial reversal: The spoilers of God's people become a spoil to them (2:12-13), and the haughty world mountain becomes a lowly plain (4:7). Both have building imagery: In C the messianic figure holds a measuring line (2:5), and in C' Zerubbabel—a messianic prototype—holds a plummet line (4:10). Both stress the consummating of God's program, whether in the completion of Jerusalem (2:8-9, 14-16) or the temple (4:7-8). In both, this triumph of redemptive judgment and restoration is cited in validation of the divine authorization of Messiah's mission: "You will know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me" (2:13, 15; 4:9).

As with the visions, the burdens (9:1-14:21) also exhibit a balanced diptych form. The headings in 9:1 and 12:1 identify the materials in chaps. 9-10 and 12-14 as two burdens.²⁷ Attesting the inner coherence of each burden are the concentric pattern of its contents and the chiasmic arrangement that is evidenced when the two burdens are taken together, along with their central hinge (11:1-17)—the same remarkable complex of literary patterns observed in 1:7-6:8.

Though the more obvious kind of formal evidence that demarcates the visions is not available for determining the precise bounds of the units within each burden, there is a clear enough broad ordering of major themes into the patterns just mentioned. Genre analysis also helps.

In the first burden Hanson identifies 9:1-17 and 10:3-12 as divine-warrior hymns set in the conflict-myth scheme.²⁸ The intervening verses he identifies as a *rib* against the unfaithful shepherds.²⁹ In the second burden Hanson again identifies two extended passages (12:1-13:1; 14:1-21) that draw upon the ancient ritual pattern of the conflict myth. Concerning the material between them he suggests that 13:2-6 may not be an original part of the composition beginning at 12:1 and that 13:7-9 belongs with 11:4-17, as its original conclusion or perhaps an early addition.³⁰

Genre analysis thus discloses a matching concentric triadic structure (ABA') in each of the burdens. This conclusion is corroborated by other

²⁷ On the recognition of the distinctiveness of 11:1-17, see above.

²⁸ Hanson, *Dawn* 292 ff., 325 ff. Hanson's form-critical observations are of value but cannot sustain his speculations on the development of apocalyptic eschatology and its sociological setting. Moreover, his genre history is warped by misdating of important blocks of Biblical evidence.

²⁹ Relevant to the question of the exact bounds of this middle section are considerations like the presence of the flock motif in 9:16 and the continuation of the theme of the Lord as the true shepherd-provider (10:1) to 10:4. This unit is here taken as 10:1-4, but see also n. 31 below.

³⁰ Hanson, *Dawn* 338, 354 ff., 371 ff. I regard 13:2-9 as a unit (within the integral Zecharian whole) but cite Hanson in support of the basic point of the tripartite form of the second burden.

patterns discernible in Zechariah 9-14. Of special interest is the relation of the two B-units (10:1-4; 13:2-9) to the central hinge of the burdens (11:1-17). Like the latter they contain the shepherd-flock motif³¹ and develop it in terms of the conflict of the true (messianic) and false shepherds, the suffering of the former and condemnation of the latter, the sustaining of those of the flock identified with the messianic shepherd and the dispersion of the others associated with the false shepherds. It thus appears that these three passages, one the hinge between the two burdens and the other two the middle units in each burden, closely reproduce within Zechariah 9-14 the main structural feature we have identified in the book as a whole—namely, the three hinge sections, all dealing with the messianic coronation and commissioning, and functioning together as the framework for a diptych with concentric side panels. The repetition of this extraordinary overall structure of Zechariah within the second half of the prophecy argues for one mind behind the whole. It would be difficult to take seriously the assumption that a later author-redactor wrote chaps. 9-14 and attached it to the materials of chaps. 1-8 that he found at hand, so producing as redactor this remarkable scheme in the compound work overall as well as in the half that he authored.

Certainly also the concentric pattern of each of the two burdens is evidenced by this distinctive character of their middle (or B) members. Moreover the A and A' members within each burden exhibit the correspondence appropriate to such a pattern.

In the first burden, both A (9:1-17) and A' (10:5-12) foretell subjugation of hostile nations and, correlative thereto, the restoration of God's people to Zion as a divine protectorate. More specific correspondence is seen in a cluster of elements in both 9:4-6 and 10:11. Included are God's smiting the sea, loss of king/scepter, and humiliation of the proud. Conspicuous in both A and A' (and forming an inclusio for A') is the imagery of the military strengthening of the faithful: They become mighty warriors and weapons.

Found only here in Zechariah is *gbwr*, "mighty warrior" (9:13; 10:5, 7; cf. *hgbyr* in 10:6, 12). Both A and A' speak of the Lord's favor resulting in joy, expressed by the verb *gyl* (9:9; 10:7), not used elsewhere in Zechariah. Other terms used in both these passages and only in them in this book are *nwgs*, "oppressor" (9:8; 10:4); *qšt mlhmh*, "battle bow" (9:10; 10:4); *tyt hwswt*, "mire of the streets" (9:3; 10:5); *kmw-yyn*, "as through wine" (9:15; 10:7). Note too the similar references to the domain of Yahweh, with the double use of *ym*, "sea," and the north-south boundaries, in 9:10 and 10:11.

The correspondences between 12:1-13:1 and 14:1-21, the A and A' members of the second burden, are obvious. Both deal with the final gathering of the world forces against Jerusalem. The term *sp*, "gather," that describes the siege in 12:3 and 14:2 (cf. v. 14) is used only here in Zechariah.

³¹ The key term *š'n*, "flock," is found in Zechariah only in these three passages (10:2; 11:4, 7, 11, 17; 13:7) plus the transitional 9:16. Note also the three appearances of *hrb*, "sword," in Zechariah in 9:13; 11:17; 13:7. Do these data suggest that the beginning of the B-unit of the first burden might better be put earlier? Cf. Redditt, "Israel's Shepherds" 634.

In both passages there is a sustained emphasis on the universal scale of the assault, expressed as "all the nations" (12:9; 14:2, 16), "all the peoples" (12:3; 14:12), "all the peoples around" (12:2, 6) and "all the nations around" (14:14), "all the nations of the earth" (12:3) and "the families of the earth" (14:17). Also common to both are the following: Judah is identified with Jerusalem in the siege (12:2, 5; 14:14); God is present and fights for his people, defending Jerusalem, his protectorate (esp. 12:4, 9; 14:3); confrontation with the divine warrior strikes panic into the enemy ranks (12:4; 14:13); animals are affected along with men in the judgment (12:4; 14:12, 15); God's judgment issues in the destruction of the gathered nations and the secure settlement of Jerusalem (12:6; 14:11).

Formally balanced by their common ABA' structure, the two burdens also manifest thematic parallelism. Their B-members, as observed above, both contain the shepherd-flock theme (present in the 11:1-17 hinge also). The A- and A'-members of both burdens all portray the Lord's judgment of the world powers as he restores Zion, establishing it forever as the place of his presence and favor. More specific parallels like the following are also found: the motif of God's opening his eyes upon the distress of the faithful as a prelude to their judicial vindication and deliverance (in the two A-members, at 9:8 and 12:4); the imagery of an escape passage produced by the divine act of dividing, whether of sea or mountain (in the two A'-members, at 10:11 and 14:4).

Further important evidence of the balanced diptych form of Zechariah 9-14 and of the hinge role of 11:1-17 between the two burdens is an ABCDC'B'A' scheme, with 11:1-17 as the central (D) member of the chiasm.

The correspondences between the A and A' pair (9:1-17 and 14:1-21) are conspicuous. In each there is a dramatic advent of the Lord as King (9:9; 14:3-4). His rule extends to the ends of the earth (9:10; 14:9). He engages in military judgment against the nations that would occupy the covenant heritage (9:1 ff.; 14:3 ff.). The defeated foe loses its amassed wealth, its silver and gold becoming a spoil for God's people (9:3; 14:1, 14). Out of the ranks of the enemy nations a converted Gentile remnant is incorporated into the redemptive covenant, observing its cultic stipulations (9:7; 14:16). Preserved by the Lord's encompassing guardianship, his protectorate at last dwells safe from affliction (9:8; 14:9-11).

The B and B' pair (10:1-4 and 13:2-9) in this chiasm were also the two B members of the ABA' formations on either side of the 11:1-17 hinge, and their notable correspondences have already been detailed above.

The chiastic nature of Zechariah 9-14 is thus firmly established by the manifest parallelism that marks the A-A' and B-B' pairings, as well as the clear role of 11:1-17 as the central point, and comparison of the passages that remain (10:5-12; 12:1-13:1) indicates that they qualify as the matching C-C' pair that fills out this inverse parallelism. Beyond their general similarity in theme—namely, the Lord's restoration and defense of his people and the humbling of their foes—are specific parallels in topic and terminology. The Lord's afflicted people strengthen themselves in him (10:6, 12;

12:5) and are thereby made like great heroes in battle (10:7; 12:8). In the enemy army, the riders of horses are confounded (10:5; 12:4) as the Lord acts to save the house of Israel (10:6; 12:7).

3. *Parallelism between the visions chiasm and burdens chiasm.* We have seen that the visions and burdens are both arranged in seven-unit chiasms. It remains to observe that the corresponding units of these two chiasms parallel each other topically. This evidence adds weighty support both to the case for the unitary character of the book of Zechariah and to our particular analysis of this work as a diptych with 6:9-15 as its central hinge.

The centerpieces (D-units) of the two ABCDC'B'A' schemes (3:1-10; 11:1-17) are, of course, the hinges in the middle of the diptych side panels of the overall diptych. We are already well acquainted with their remarkable similarities.

Each of the A-units of the two chiasms (1:7-17; 9:1-17) presents a mounted³² Messiah figure: the Lord of angels on the red horse (1:8), and the king of Israel on the donkey of covenant ratification (9:9). He is the ruler over all the nations (1:11; 9:10). The Lord engages in a worldwide surveillance through heavenly agents known as his eyes (1:8-11; 9:8) and threatens to overthrow the nations arrogantly secure in their strongholds, indifferent to the God of Israel (1:15; 9:2-6). Military imagery makes allusion to the history of the conquest of Canaan (1:8 [cf. Josh 5:13]; 9:1-6). The Lord refers to "my house," promising to restore and defend it (1:16-17; 9:8).³³ Proclamation of good and joyful tidings to Jerusalem is commanded and performed (1:13-14; 9:9).

That the opening unit of the burdens chiasm exhibits such numerous and notable parallels to the corresponding A-unit in the visions chiasm gives an unmistakable signal of the author's intention to conduct us again along the same route traversed in the earlier part of his work. The second half of the overall diptych turns out to be an apocalyptic recasting of the prophetic visions in the first half.³⁴

The B-unit of the chiasms under review (2:1-4; 10:1-4) is each relatively brief. Topically they match, both speaking of the dispersal of Judah (cf. 2:2, 4; 10:2) and the Lord's judgment on those responsible for that, whether the foreign powers without or the false prophets within.

³² In both cases *rōkēb* is used.

³³ In both passages *‘ōd*, "yet," occurs; cf. Mason, "Relation" 229.

³⁴ In addition to the correspondences in the successive individual units we may note the structural parallelism between the ABC group in each of the chiasms—that is, between the first three visions and the first of the burdens. We observed above that the two themes of the oracle that closes the first vision are developed in turn in the following two visions. Similarly in the tripartite burden of 9:1-10:12 the second unit (10:1-4) resumes the shepherd-flock motif introduced in the closing divine proclamation of the first (cf. 9:16-17), while the third (10:5, 12) develops the theme of the Lord's strengthening his people for battle, central to that same proclamation (cf. 9:13-15).

In both the C-units (2:5-17; 10:5-12) a divine summons to return to the homeland is issued to those in distant exile (cf. 2:10-11; 10:11). This return, accomplished through divine intervention, is depicted as a new exodus (cf. 2:12-13; 10:5, 8-11). Emphasis falls on the astounding expansion of the covenant people (2:8, 10, 15; 10:8-10). By reason of the multitudes Jerusalem will be like an unwallled city (2:8), and the land will not be sufficient for them (10:10). This restoration will register anew the covenantal election (2:12, 16; 10:6) and will be an occasion of joy and song (2:14; 10:7).

Continuing the comparison of the chiasitic units into the triad beyond the central D-hinge, we observe that both C'-units (4:1-14; 12:1-13:1) present the Lord as the power source for the victory over the world and the completion of the temple-kingdom (esp. 4:6; 12:5, 8). By his might the world power is brought low (4:7), its attack on Jerusalem resulting in its own destruction (12:3, 9). Salvation is attributed specifically to the Spirit (4:6; 12:10) and involves a spiritual work of grace, a display of divine favor (4:7; 12:10).³⁵ The Spirit transforms God's people into the likeness of his own fiery Glory theophany; they are likened to burning lamps (4:2) and flaming torches or firepans (12:6; cf. 12:8; Gen 15:17). Messiah, mediator of the Spirit and salvation, is portrayed under the figure of representatives of the royal house of David: Zerubbabel in Zech 4:7-10, David himself in 12:8. A shared motif is the Lord's eyes looking with fostering favor on his servants in their kingdom struggles (4:10; 12:4).

The common message of the B'-units (5:1-11; 13:2-9) is judgment within the covenant realm, referred to in both as "all the land" (5:3, 6; 13:8). Apostates are cut off from their place in the holy land (5:4, 9-11; 13:8). Associated with this removal is the motif of uncleanness, the unclean stork (5:9) and the unclean spirit (13:2). Prominent in the indictment is swearing or speaking lies in the name of the Lord (5:4; 13:3).

Establishment of God's universal eschatological reign is the subject of the A'-units (6:1-8; 14:1-21). Revelation of the divine sovereignty in universal judgment (6:5; 14:2, 9, 14) is a *parousia* event, a day of the Lord, an advent with the heavenly hosts (6:5, 8; 14:1, 3-5).³⁶ All the points of the compass are referred to in depicting the fulfillment of the kingdom sanctions (6:6-8; 14:4, 8). A shared image is the two mountains identified with the site of the Lord's *parousia* (6:1; 14:4-5).

III. CONCLUSION

The latter portion of canonical Zechariah, to which fashionable higher criticism would assign a different provenance than the first eight chapters, is found to be structurally interlocked with those earlier chapters by means of an intricate triple-hinge mechanism. Within this framework the two parts alleged to be of different origins constitute the finely balanced side

³⁵ Here are the only two appearances of *hn*, "grace," in Zechariah.

³⁶ Both use *yṣʿ*, "go forth," for the advent; cf. 6:1, 5, 6, 7; 14:3.

panels flanking the central hinge. Such a curious overall structuring is rather clearly to be attributed to an original master plan for the whole work, not to a secondary redactional development, particularly since the central hinge is located in the supposedly earlier part.

Something beyond the interests of literary artistry was involved in this compositional creation. At all the key hinge points in this arrangement the theme of the messianic priest-king is not only present but dominant. The formal structure was evidently designed to highlight the figure of the coming Christ, ordained to priestly sacrifice and subsequent highest royal glory, the one who is the central hinge and focus of prophetic revelation.