

## A Literary Commentary on Zechariah 1-8 By Jacob Rennaker

### Zechariah<sup>1</sup>

#### Israel Urged to Repent<sup>2</sup>

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo, saying: <sup>2</sup>The LORD was very angry with your ancestors. <sup>3</sup>Therefore say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts: Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>4</sup>Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, Return from your evil ways and from your evil deeds." But they did not hear or heed me, says the LORD. <sup>5</sup>Your ancestors, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? <sup>6</sup>But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your ancestors? So they repented and said, "The LORD of hosts has dealt with us according to our ways and deeds, just as he planned to do."

#### First Vision: The Horsemen

7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo; and Zechariah said, <sup>8</sup>In the night I saw a man riding on a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen; and behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. <sup>9</sup>Then I said, "What are these, my lord?" The angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they are." <sup>10</sup>So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, "They are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth." <sup>11</sup>Then they spoke to the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have patrolled the earth, and lo, the whole earth remains at peace." <sup>12</sup>Then the angel of the LORD said, "O LORD of hosts, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you have been angry these seventy years?" <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD replied with gracious and comforting words to the angel who talked with me. <sup>14</sup>So the angel who talked with me said to me, Proclaim this message: Thus says the LORD of hosts; I am very jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion. <sup>15</sup>And I am extremely angry with the nations that are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they made the disaster worse. <sup>16</sup>Therefore, thus says the LORD, I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; my house shall be built in it, says the LORD of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. <sup>17</sup>Proclaim further: Thus says the LORD of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity; the LORD will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.

#### Second Vision: The Horns and the Smiths

18 And I looked up and saw four horns. <sup>19</sup>I asked the angel who talked with me, "What are these?" And he answered me, "These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." <sup>20</sup>Then the LORD showed me four blacksmiths. <sup>21</sup>And I asked, "What are they coming to do?" He answered, "These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no head could be raised; but these have come to terrify them, to strike down the horns of the nations that lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter its people."

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<sup>1</sup> For an analysis of these chapters' unity, see Excursus.

<sup>2</sup> NRSV translation and section headings

### **Third Vision: The Man with a Measuring Line**

2 I looked up and saw a man with a measuring line in his hand. <sup>2</sup>Then I asked, "Where are you going?" He answered me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length." <sup>3</sup>Then the angel who talked with me came forward, and another angel came forward to meet him, <sup>4</sup>and said to him, "Run, say to that young man: Jerusalem shall be inhabited like villages without walls, because of the multitude of people and animals in it. <sup>5</sup>For I will be a wall of fire all around it, says the LORD, and I will be the glory within it."

### **Interlude: An Appeal to the Exiles**

6 Up, up! Flee from the land of the north, says the LORD; for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven, says the LORD. <sup>7</sup>Up! Escape to Zion, you that live with daughter Babylon. <sup>8</sup>For thus said the LORD of hosts (after his glory sent me) regarding the nations that plundered you: Truly, one who touches you touches the apple of my eye. <sup>9</sup>See now, I am going to raise my hand against them, and they shall become plunder for their own slaves. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me. <sup>10</sup>Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion! For lo, I will come and dwell in your midst, says the LORD. <sup>11</sup>Many nations shall join themselves to the LORD on that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in your midst. And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. <sup>12</sup>The LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

13 Be silent, all people, before the LORD; for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

### **Fourth Vision: Joshua and Satan**

3 Then he showed me the high priest Joshua standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. <sup>2</sup>And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this man a brand plucked from the fire?" <sup>3</sup>Now Joshua was dressed with filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. <sup>4</sup>The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." And to him he said, "See, I have taken your guilt away from you, and I will clothe you with festal apparel." <sup>5</sup>And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with the apparel; and the angel of the LORD was standing by.

6 Then the angel of the LORD assured Joshua, saying <sup>7</sup>"Thus says the LORD of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here. <sup>8</sup>Now listen, Joshua, high priest, you and your colleagues who sit before you! For they are an omen of things to come: I am going to bring my servant the Branch. <sup>9</sup>For on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven facets, I will engrave its inscription, says the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the guilt of this land in a single day. <sup>10</sup>On that day, says the LORD of hosts, you shall invite each other to come under your vine and fig tree."

### **Fifth Vision: The Lampstand and Olive Trees**

4 The angel who talked with me came again, and wakened me, as one is wakened from sleep. <sup>2</sup>He said to me, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it; there are seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. <sup>3</sup>And by it there are two olive trees, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." <sup>4</sup>I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" <sup>5</sup>Then the angel who talked with me answered me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." <sup>6</sup>He said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by

might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>7</sup>What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and he shall bring out the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'

<sup>8</sup>Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, <sup>9</sup>"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. <sup>10</sup>For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel.

"These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range through the whole earth." <sup>11</sup>Then I said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" <sup>12</sup>And a second time I said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which pour out the oil through the two golden pipes?" <sup>13</sup>He said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." <sup>14</sup>Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

### **Sixth Vision: The Flying Scroll**

<sup>5</sup> Again I looked up and saw a flying scroll. <sup>2</sup>And he said to me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits." <sup>3</sup>Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land; for everyone who steals shall be cut off according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be cut off according to the writing on the other side. <sup>4</sup>I have sent it out, says the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of anyone who swears falsely by my name; and it shall abide in that house and consume it, both timber and stones."

### **Seventh Vision: The Woman in a Basket**

<sup>5</sup> Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is coming out." <sup>6</sup>I said, "What is it?" He said, "This is a basket coming out." And he said, "This is their iniquity in all the land." <sup>7</sup>Then a leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket! <sup>8</sup>And he said, "This is Wickedness." So he thrust her back into the basket, and pressed the leaden weight down on its mouth. <sup>9</sup>Then I looked up and saw two women coming forward. The wind was in their wings; they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and sky. <sup>10</sup>Then I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they taking the basket?" <sup>11</sup>He said to me, "To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it; and when this is prepared, they will set the basket down there on its base."

### **Eighth Vision: Four Chariots**

<sup>6</sup> And again I looked up and saw four chariots coming out from between two mountains--mountains of bronze. <sup>2</sup>The first chariot had red horses, the second chariot black horses, <sup>3</sup>the third chariot white horses, and the fourth chariot dappled gray horses. <sup>4</sup>Then I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" <sup>5</sup>The angel answered me, "These are the four winds of heaven going out, after presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth. <sup>6</sup>The chariot with the black horses goes toward the north country, the white ones go toward the west country, and the dappled ones go toward the south country." <sup>7</sup>When the steeds came out, they were impatient to get off and patrol the earth. And he said, "Go, patrol the earth." So they patrolled the earth. <sup>8</sup>Then he cried out to me, "Lo, those who go toward the north country have set my spirit at rest in the north country."

### **The Coronation of the Branch**

9 The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>10</sup>Collect silver and gold from the exiles--from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah--who have arrived from Babylon; and go the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah. <sup>11</sup>Take the silver and gold and make a crown, and set it on the head of the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak; <sup>12</sup>say to him: Thus says the LORD of hosts: Here is a man whose name is Branch: for he shall branch out in his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD. <sup>13</sup>It is he that shall build the temple of the LORD; he shall bear royal honor, and shall sit upon his throne and rule. There shall be a priest by his throne, with peaceful understanding between the two of them. <sup>14</sup>And the crown shall be in the care of Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Josiah son of Zephaniah, as a memorial in the temple of the LORD.

15 Those who are far off shall come and help to build the temple of the LORD; and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

### **Hypocritical Fasting Condemned**

7 In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Chislew. <sup>2</sup>Now the people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-melech and their men, to entreat the favor of the LORD, <sup>3</sup>and to ask the priests of the house of the LORD of hosts and the prophets, "Should I mourn and practice abstinence in the fifth month, as I have done for so many years?" <sup>4</sup>Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me: <sup>5</sup>Say to all the people of the land and the priests: When you fasted and lamented in the fifth month and in the seventh, for these seventy years, was it for me that you fasted? <sup>6</sup>And when you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink only for yourselves? <sup>7</sup>Were not these the words that the LORD proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, along with the towns around it, and when the Negeb and the Shephelah were inhabited?

### **Punishment for Rejecting God's Demands**

8 The word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying: <sup>9</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; <sup>10</sup>do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another. <sup>11</sup>But they refused to listen, and turned a stubborn shoulder, and stopped their ears in order not to hear. <sup>12</sup>They made their hearts adamant in order not to hear the law and the words that the LORD of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. <sup>13</sup>Just as, when I called, they would not hear, so, when they called, I would not hear, says the LORD of hosts, <sup>14</sup>and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and a pleasant land was made desolate.

### **God's Promises to Zion**

8 The word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying: <sup>2</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. <sup>3</sup>Thus says the LORD: I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts shall be called the holy mountain. <sup>4</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their great age. <sup>5</sup>And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets. <sup>6</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: Even though it seems impossible to the remnant of this people in these days, should it

also seem impossible to me, says the LORD of hosts? <sup>7</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: I will save my people from the east country and from the west country; <sup>8</sup>and I will bring them to live in Jerusalem. They shall be my people and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness.

<sup>9</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: Let your hands be strong--you that have recently been hearing these words from the mouths of the prophets who were present when the foundation was laid for the rebuilding of the temple, the house of the LORD of hosts. <sup>10</sup>For before those days there were no wages for people or for animals, nor was there any safety from the foe for those who went out or came in, and I set them all against one another. <sup>11</sup>But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>12</sup>For there shall be a sowing of peace; the vine shall yield its fruit, the ground shall give its produce, and the skies shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. <sup>13</sup>Just as you have been a cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you and you shall be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong.

<sup>14</sup> For thus says the LORD of hosts: Just as I purposed to bring disaster upon you, when your ancestors provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says the LORD of hosts, <sup>15</sup>so again I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; do not be afraid. <sup>16</sup>These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace, <sup>17</sup>do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, says the LORD.

### **Joyful Fasting**

<sup>18</sup> The word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying: <sup>19</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be seasons of joy and gladness, and cheerful festivals for the house of Judah: therefore love truth and peace.

### **Many Peoples Drawn to Jerusalem**

<sup>20</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, the inhabitants of many cities; <sup>21</sup>the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, "Come, let us go to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I myself am going." <sup>22</sup>Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of the LORD. <sup>23</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from nations of every language shall take hold of a Jew, grasping his garment and saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
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## זכריה

<sup>1</sup> **1** בַּחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁמִינִי בַשָּׁנָה שְׁתַּיִם לְדַרְיוֹשׁ הָיָה דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-זְכַרְיָה בֶן-בְּרַכְיָה <sup>3</sup>

בֶּן-עֲזֹרָה הַנְּבִיא לֵאמֹר:

<sup>2</sup> **2** קִצְרָה יְהוָה עַל-אַבְוֹתֵיכֶם קִצְרָה: <sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> **3** וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

<sup>5</sup> **5** וְאָשׁוּבוּ <sup>6</sup> אֵלַי נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

<sup>7</sup> וְאָשׁוּבוּ <sup>7</sup> אֵלַיכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:

<sup>4</sup> **4** אֶל-תְּהִינּוּ <sup>8</sup> כְּאֲבֹתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר קָרְאוּ-אֵלֵיהֶם הַנְּבִיאִים הָרִאשׁוֹנִים לֵאמֹר

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

וְאָשׁוּבוּ <sup>9</sup> נְאֻם מִדֶּרְכֵיכֶם הָרְעִים

וּמַעַלְלֵיכֶם הָרְעִים

וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ

וְלֹא-הִקְשִׁיבוּ אֵלַי

נְאֻם-יְהוָה:

<sup>3</sup> Repetition of the same theophoric element יה (היה) preceded by יה (repetition preceded by היה).

<sup>4</sup> Another cognate accusative with קִצְרָה appears below in verse 15.

<sup>5</sup> "This word...has geographic as well as religious and ethical implications for Zechariah's hearers." (David Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), pp. 110-111.

<sup>6</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 imperatives.

<sup>7</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 imperatives.

<sup>8</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 imperatives.

<sup>9</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 imperatives.

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5

10 אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם אִיהֵמָּה

11: הַלְעוֹלָם יַחֲיוּ:

6 אַדּוּ דְבַרְי וְחֲלֵי אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי אֶת-עַבְדֵי הַנְּבִיאִים הַלּוֹא הַשִּׁיגוּ אֲבֹתֵיכֶם וַיִּשׁוּבוּ  
וַיֹּאמְרוּ כֹּאֲשֶׁר זָמַם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לַעֲשׂוֹת לָנוּ כְּדַרְכֵינוּ וְכַמְעַלְלֵינוּ כֵּן עָשָׂה אִתָּנוּ:

ס

7 בְּיוֹם עֲשָׂרִים וָאֶרְבַּעָה לַעֲשֵׂתִי-עָשָׂר חֲדָשׁ הוּא-חֲדָשׁ שְׂכָט בְּשַׁנַּת שְׁתַּיִם לְדַרְיוֹשׁ

הָיָה דְבַר<sup>12</sup> יְהוָה אֶל-זַכְרְיָה בֶן-בְּרַכְיָהוּ בֶן-עֲדוּא הַנְּבִיא לֵאמֹר:

14 רְאִיתִיו<sup>13</sup> הַלְיָלָה

8

וְהִנֵּה-אִישׁ רֹכֵב עַל-סוּס אָדָם

וְהוּא עֹמֵד בֵּין הַתְּדָסִים אֲשֶׁר בַּמְּצֻלָה

וְאַחֲרָיו סוּסִים אֲדָמִים שְׂרָקִים<sup>15</sup> וְלִבְנִים:

<sup>10</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 rhetorical questions.

<sup>11</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 rhetorical questions.

<sup>12</sup> Although letters of these words do not correspond visually, they may have functioned as an aural anagram.

<sup>13</sup> *Antanaclasis*- in this verse, רָאָה “see” has the sense of “vision” (see different use in verse 9).

<sup>14</sup> Shift from 3<sup>rd</sup> person (in 1<sup>st</sup> oracle) to 1<sup>st</sup> person

<sup>15</sup> Francis Brown, *et al*, eds., *The New Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 1979), p. 977, s.v. שָׂרַק. This word provides a link between אֲדָמִים and לִבְנִים. BDB says שָׂרַק has the connotation of “having ruddy tinge over white.” This creates a gradual progression of colors as the vision continues.

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וַאֲמַר מֶה־אֵלֶּה אֲדַגִּי

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי

הַמְּלֶאךָ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי

אֲנִי אֶרְאֶךָ<sup>16</sup> מֶה־יִהְיֶה<sup>17</sup> אֵלֶּה:

וַיַּעַן הָאִישׁ הָעֹמֵד בֵּין־הַדְּסִים וַיֹּאמֶר 10

אֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח<sup>18</sup> יְהוָה

לְהַתְּהַלֵּךְ בְּאַרְצֵךְ:

וַיַּעֲנוּ אֶת־מְלֶאךָ יְהוָה הָעֹמֵד בֵּין הַדְּסִים וַיֹּאמְרוּ 11

הַתְּהַלְּכֵנוּ בְּאַרְצֵךְ

וְהַיְהִי כָל־הָאָרֶץ<sup>19</sup> יִשְׁכַּח וְשָׁקֶטָה:

וַיַּעַן מְלֶאךָ־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר 12

יְהִינָה צְבָאוֹת עַד־מָתִי אֶתֶּה לְא־תְּרַחֵם<sup>20</sup>

אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֵת עָרֵי יְהוּדָה<sup>21</sup>

אֲשֶׁר זָעַמְתָּה זֶה שְׁבָעִים שָׁנָה<sup>22</sup>:

<sup>16</sup> *Antanaclosis*- in this verse, ראה is used to cause Zechariah to “see” (or understand) something.

<sup>17</sup> This exact phrase occurs also in Zech 4:6.

<sup>18</sup> *Epanastrophe*- while the roots שלח and הלך are unrelated, the final syllable of each of these two words ties them together. Yahweh sent (שלח) the ones who walk about (התהלך).

<sup>19</sup> The letters ל, כ, and ן are used in reverse order in these parallel lines, creating a split *anagram*.

<sup>20</sup> This root is repeated in verse 16 in fulfillment of this statement.

<sup>21</sup> These words appear in reverse order in Zech 2:2.

<sup>22</sup> Wai Sing Mak identifies this as a rhetorical question in *Rhetorical Questions in the Post-Exilic Minor Prophets* (Penang, Malaysia: Institute for Biblical Interpretation, 2004), p. 33.



<span style="color: red;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="color: olive;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="color: gray;">■</span> Body part
<span style="color: teal;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Misc. literary device	—	Chiastic element

וַיַּעַן יְהוָה אֶת־הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בְּי 13

דְּבָרִים טוֹבִים<sup>23</sup>

דְּבָרִים נְחֻמִּים<sup>24</sup>:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בְּי 14

קָרָא לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

לִירוּשָׁלַם קִנְיָתִי

וּלְצִיּוֹן וּלְצִיּוֹן קִנְיָה<sup>25</sup> גְּדוּלָה<sup>26</sup>:

וּקְצֹחַ גְּדוּלֵי אֲנִי קִצְרֵךְ<sup>27</sup> עַל־הַגּוֹיִם הַשְּׂאֲנִנִים 15

אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי קוֹצֵפְתִי מִעֵט

וְהָמָה עֲזָרוּ לְרַעָה:

<sup>23</sup> This root is likewise repeated in verse 17.

<sup>24</sup> This root is repeated in verse 17.

<sup>25</sup> BDB, p. 888, s.v. קִנָּה “*become intensely red*,” evoking the red and reddish colors of two of the horses in verse 8.

<sup>26</sup> This phraseology is similar to Zech 8:2. For an analysis of this chiasm, see Excursus.

<sup>27</sup> A cognate accusative with קִצְרֵךְ also appears in verse 2.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

לָכֵן כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה

שְׁבִתִי לִירוּשָׁלַם<sup>28</sup> בְּרַחֲמִים<sup>29</sup>

פִּיתִי יִבְנֶה לְיָהּ

נֵאֵם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

וְקוּה יִנְטֶה עַל־ירוּשָׁלַם:

עוֹדוֹ קָרָא לְאֹמֵר 17

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

עוֹד תִּפּוּצְיֶנָה<sup>30</sup> עָרֵי מְטוֹב<sup>31</sup>

וְנַחֲמֵם<sup>32</sup> יְהוָה עוֹד אֶת־צִיּוֹן

וּבְחָר עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלַם: ם

וְאֶשָׂא אֶת־עֵינַי וְאֶרְאָה וְהִנֵּה אַרְבַּע קְרָנוֹת: 12

<sup>28</sup> A chiasitic structuring of Jerusalem and Zion in verses 14-17 follows, recognized by , recognized by Chaney Bergdall, "Zechariah's Program of Restoration: a Rhetorical Critical Study of Zechariah 1-8" (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1986), p. 135.

<sup>29</sup> See above note on verse 12.

<sup>30</sup> With the meaning "overflow" here, but evokes the primary root פוּץ "be dispersed, scattered" (BDB, p. 806, s.v. פוּץ), especially in light of the following vision. In this subsequent vision, the imagery of scattering (זרה) follows quickly (in Zech 2:2; separated by only one brief verse).

<sup>31</sup> See above note on verse 13.

<sup>32</sup> See above note on verse 13.

<span style="color: red;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="color: olive;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="color: gray;">■</span> Body part
<span style="color: teal;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

2

וַאֲמַר אֶל־הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי מִה־אֵלֶּה

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי

אֵלֶּה הַקְּרָנוֹת אֲשֶׁר זָרְוּ אֶת־יְהוּדָה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל<sup>33</sup> וִירוּשָׁלַם: ם

וַיִּרְאֵנִי יְהוָה אַרְבַּעַה תְּרָשִׁים: 3

וַאֲמַר מָה אֵלֶּה בָּאִים לַעֲשׂוֹת 4

וַיֹּאמֶר לֵאמֹר

אֵלֶּה הַקְּרָנוֹת אֲשֶׁר־זָרְוּ אֶת־יְהוּדָה

כְּפִי־אִישׁ לֹא־נָשָׂא רֹאשׁוֹ

וַיָּבֵאוּ אֵלֶּה לְהַתְּרִיד אֹתָם

לִי־דֹת אֶת־קְרָנוֹת הַגּוֹיִם הַנִּשְׂאִים קֶרֶן אֶל־אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה לְזָרוּתָהּ:

וַאֲשֶׁא עֵינַי וְאָרָא וְהִנֵּה־אִישׁ וּבִידּוֹ תָּחַל<sup>34</sup> מִדָּה: 5

וַאֲמַר אָנָּה אַתָּה הַלֵּךְ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי 6

לְמַד אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם

לְרֵאוֹת כַּמָּה־רַחֲבָה וְכַמָּה אַרְבָּה: 35

<sup>33</sup> These words appear in reverse order in Zech 1:12.

<sup>34</sup> חבל here means “line” (*HALOT*, p. 286, s.v. II חבל), but could also evoke the meaning “ruin” (*HALOT*, p. 285, s.v. III חבל), especially in light of the scattering חרשים in verse 3. In Isa 54:16, the חרש is associated with חבל and its destructive sense.

<sup>35</sup> These words appear in reverse order in Zech 5:2.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

7

וְהִנֵּה הַמְּלָאָה הַדֹּבֵר בִּי יֵצֵא

וַיִּמְלָאָה אַחֲרַי יֵצֵא לְקִרְאתוֹ:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו רִצֵּן דְּבַר<sup>36</sup> אֶל־הַנְּעָר הַלֵּז לְאָמֹר

8

פְּרוֹזוֹת תַּנְשֵׁב יְרוּשָׁלַם מֵרַב אָדָם וּבְהִמָּה<sup>37</sup>

בְּתוֹכָהּ:

וַאֲנִי<sup>38</sup> אֶהְיֶה<sup>39</sup> לָהּ נְאֻם־יְהוָה

9

חֹמַת אֲשֶׁר סָבִיב

וּלְכַבֹּד

אֶהְיֶה

בְּתוֹכָהּ: פ

הוֹי הוֹי<sup>40</sup> וַיִּגְסוּ<sup>41</sup> מֵאֶרֶץ צָפוֹן נְאֻם־יְהוָה

10

כִּי כָאֲרַבֵּעַ רוּחֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם

פָּרְשֵׁתִי אֶתְכֶם נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

<sup>36</sup> Double imperative.

<sup>37</sup> *Merism* for all living things.

<sup>38</sup> Emphatic introduction of a chiasm, recognized by Mike Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), p. 101.

<sup>39</sup> This emphatic first person phrase is repeated in Zech 8:8.

<sup>40</sup> The emphatic repetition of the same word also occurs in Zech 4:7.

<sup>41</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> of 4 command: Masculine imperative.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

11

הוֹי צִיּוֹן הַמְּלִטִי<sup>42</sup> יוֹשֶׁבֶת בַּת-בְּבִלַּיִם: ס

כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֱתֵר כְּבוֹד<sup>43</sup> שְׁלַחְנִי אֶל-הַגּוֹיִם הַשְּׁלֵלִים אֶתְכֶם כִּי הַנִּגְעַע

בְּכֶם נִגְעַע בְּבִבְתִּי<sup>44</sup> עֵינָיו:

כִּי הִנְנִי מִגִּירָה אֶת-יָדִי עָלֵיהֶם וְהָיוּ שְׁלֵלִים<sup>45</sup> לְ<sup>46</sup> עַבְדֵיהֶם

וַיִּדְעֻקֶם כִּי-יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנִי: ס<sup>47</sup>

רַגְלֵי וְשִׁמְחֵי<sup>48</sup> בַת-צִיּוֹן

כִּי הִנְנִי-בָא וְשִׁכַנְתִּי בְתוֹכָךְ נְאֻם-יְהוָה:

וְנִלְווּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים אֶל-יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וְהָיוּ לִי לְעָם

וְשִׁכַנְתִּי בְתוֹכָךְ

וַיִּדְעַת כִּי-יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלַיְךְ:

וְנַחַל יְהוָה אֶת-יְהוּדָה חֶלְקוֹ עַל אֲדָמַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבָחַר עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

הֵס<sup>49</sup> כָּל-בָּשָׂר מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה כִּי נִעְזָר מִמֶּנּוּ עוֹן קֹדֶשׁוֹ: ס

<sup>42</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> of 4 commands: Feminine imperative.

<sup>43</sup> *Periphrasis* for “כבוד יהוה.” In this verse, כבוד is the subject of שלחני. In the next verse, the subject of שלחני is צבאות יהוה. If the two formulae can be equated, then the subject of שלחני in verse 12 would also be a divine name.

<sup>44</sup> In this instance, a geminate root is preceded by a preposition that repeats the already repeated letters, in effect tripling the letter.

<sup>45</sup> “The presence of the root שלל in both the motive and the pronouncement of judgment reinforces the principle of *lex talionis* which is in operation here” (Bergdall, “Zechariah’s Program of Restoration,” p. 142).

<sup>46</sup> As in the previous verse, a letter is tripled. In this case, the geminate root is immediately followed by a preposition that repeats the preceding two letters.

<sup>47</sup> Chiasm recognized by Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, pp. 103-104.

<sup>48</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> of 4 commands: Feminine imperative.

<sup>49</sup> *Onomatopoeic*, and 4<sup>th</sup> of 4 commands: Masculine imperative. The result of the four commands: a gendered chiasm:  
Masc. --- Fem. --- Fem. --- Masc.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

3

1 וַיִּרְאֵנִי אֶת־יְהוֹשִׁיעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל עֹמֵד לְפָנַי מִלְּאֵף יְהוָה

וְהִשְׁטָן עֹמֵד עַל־יְמִינִי לְשִׁטְנוֹ:

2 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־הַשְּׁטָן

יִגְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַשְּׁטָן

וַיִּגְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַבַּחֵר בִּירוּשָׁלַם הֲלוֹא זֶנָּה אִוֵּד מִצָּל מֵאִשׁ:<sup>50</sup>

3 וַיְהוֹשִׁיעַ הָיָה לְבָשׁ בְּגָדִים צוּאִים וְעֹמֵד לְפָנַי הַמִּלְּאָף:

4 וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֹמְדִים לְפָנָיו לֵאמֹר

הִסִּירוּ הַבְּגָדִים הַצּוּאִים מֵעָלָיו

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו רְאֵה הָעֵבֶרְתִּי מֵעָלָיו עֹנֶה וְהִלְבִּישׁ אֹתָהּ מִחִלְצוֹת:

5 וְאָמַר יִשְׁעִימוּ צַנְיָה טְהוֹר עַל־רֵאשׁוֹ

וַיִּשְׁעִימוּ הַצַּנְיָה הַטְּהוֹר עַל־רֵאשׁוֹ

וַיִּלְבַּשְׁהוּ בְּגָדִים וּמִלְּאָף יְהוָה עֹמֵד:

6 וַיַּעַד מִלְּאָף יְהוָה בִּיהוֹשִׁיעַ לֵאמֹר:

<sup>50</sup> Rhetorical question.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

7

כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

אִם־בְּדַרְכֵי תַלְוּ<sup>51</sup>

וְאִם אֶת־מִשְׁמַרְתִּי תִשְׁמֹר

וְגַם־אֶת־הַתְּדִין אֶת־בֵּיתִי

וְגַם תִּשְׁמֹר אֶת־חֻצְרוֹי

וְנִתְּתִי לְהַמְלֵכִים בֵּין הָעַמִּים הָאֵלֶּה:

שָׁמַע־נָא יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל אֶת־הַיְרֵעִי הַיִּשְׁבִּיִּים לְפָנָיִךְ

8

כִּי־אֲנֹשִׁי מוֹפֶת הִמָּה

כִּי־הִנְנִי מְבִיא אֶת־עַבְדֵי צָמַח:

כִּי הִנֵּה הָאָבֶן אֲשֶׁר נִתְּתִי לְפָנָי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ

9

עַל־אָבֶן אַחַת שְׁבַעֵה עֵינַיִם

הִנְנִי מְפַתַּח פְּתִיחָה נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

וּמִשְׁתִּי אֶת־עֲוֹן הָאָרֶץ־הַזֹּאת בְּיוֹם אֶחָד:

בְּיוֹם הַזֶּה נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

10

תִּקְרְאוּ אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ

אֶל־תַּחַת גִּפְּוֹן וְאֶל־תַּחַת תְּאֲנֶה:

<sup>51</sup> Chiasm recognized by Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, pp. 115-116. For an analysis of this chiasm, see Excursus.

<span style="color: red;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="color: olive;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="color: gray;">■</span> Body part
<span style="color: teal;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

4

1 וַיֵּשֶׁב הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בֵּי וַיַּעֲיֹרְנִי כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲזֹר מִשְׁנָתוֹ:

2 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מָה אַתָּה רֹאֶה וַיֹּאמֶר רְאִיתִיו וְהִנֵּה מְנוֹרַת זָהָב כְּלָה

וְגִלְגָּה עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ<sup>52</sup>

וְשִׁבְעָה נֹרְתִיהָ עָלֶיהָ

שִׁבְעָה<sup>53</sup>

וְשִׁבְעָה מוֹצְקוֹת לַנֵּרוֹת

אֲשֶׁר עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ:

3 וּשְׁנַיִם זֵיתִים עָלֶיהָ

אֶחָד מִיְמִין הַגִּלְגָּה

וְאֶחָד עַל-שְׂמֹאלָהּ:

4 וַאֲעֹן וַאֲמַר אֶל-הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בֵּי לֵאמֹר מָה-אַלֶּה אֲדַגֵּי:

5 וַיַּעֲן הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בֵּי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי

הֲלוֹא גִדַּעְתָּ מִתְּהִמָּה<sup>54</sup> אֶלֶּה<sup>55</sup>

וַאֲמַר לֹא אֲדַגֵּי:

<sup>52</sup> For an analysis of this chiasm, see Excursus.

<sup>53</sup> This grammatical oddity is dealt with in the Excursus.

<sup>54</sup> This same phrase appears above in Zech 1:9.

<sup>55</sup> Rhetorical question.



<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

6

וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי לֵאמֹר

זֶה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־זַרְבָּבֶל לֵאמֹר

לֹא בָחִיל וְלֹא בָכַח כִּי אִם־בְּרוּחֵי אֱמֶר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:

מִי־אַתָּה הָר־הַגָּדוֹל<sup>56</sup> לִפְנֵי זַרְבָּבֶל לְמִישׁוֹר

7

וְהוֹצִיא אֶת־הָאֶבֶן הָרֹאשׁה תַּשְׂאוֹת תָּנוּ חֵן<sup>57</sup> לָהּ: פ

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:

8

יָדֵי זַרְבָּבֶל יִסְדּוּ הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה

9

וַיְדִיו תִּבְצַעְנָה

וַיִּזְעַף כִּי־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנֵי אֵלֵיכֶם:

כִּי מִי בּוֹ לִינוֹם קָטְנוֹת<sup>58</sup> וְשָׁמְחוּ וּרְאוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן הַבְּתִיל בְּיַד זַרְבָּבֶל שִׁבְעָה־אַלְפֵה

10

עֵינַי יְהוָה יִתְמָה מְשׁוֹטְטִים בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ:

וַאֲעֹן וַאֲמַר אֵלָיו

11

מִה־נִּשְׁגִּי הַיְזִיתִים הָאֵלֶּה עַל־יָמִין הַמְּבֹנֶה וְעַל־שְׂמֹאלָהּ:

<sup>56</sup> Rhetorical question.

<sup>57</sup> The emphatic repetition of words occurs also in Zech. 2:10.

<sup>58</sup> Mak identifies this as a rhetorical question (*Rhetorical Questions in the Post-Exilic Minor Prophets*, p. 35).

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

12

וַאֲעֹן שְׁנִית וְאָמַר אֱלֹהֵי מִה־שָׁתִּי שְׁבִלֵי הַזֵּיתִים

אֲשֶׁר בְּיָד שְׁנֵי צְנִמְרוֹת<sup>59</sup> הַזֵּיתִב

הַמְרִיקִים מֵעֲלֵיהֶם הַזֵּיתִב:<sup>60</sup>

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי לְאֹמֶר 13

הֲלֹא יָדַעְתָּ מִה־אֵלֶּה<sup>61</sup>

וְאָמַר לֹא אֲדַנִּי:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶּה שְׁנֵי בְנֵי־הַיְצְהָר 14

הַעֲמֻדִים עַל־אֲדוֹן כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:<sup>62</sup>

<sup>15</sup> וְאֵשׁוּב

וְאֵשׁא עֵינַי

וְאֵרְאֶה<sup>63</sup> וְהִנֵּה מְגִלָּה עֹפָה:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מָה אַתָּה רֹאֶה 2

וְאָמַר אֲנִי רֹאֶה מְגִלָּה עֹפָה<sup>64</sup> אֲרֹכָה עֲשָׂרִים בָּאֲמָה וְרַחְבָּהּ<sup>65</sup> עֶשְׂרֵת בָּאֲמָה:

<sup>59</sup> A *hapax legomenon*.

<sup>60</sup> *Antonomasia*- actual gold is not dripping (מְרִיקִים) from the pipes, but gold-colored oil.

<sup>61</sup> Rhetorical question.

<sup>62</sup> *Metaphor*- the olive trees are individuals.

<sup>63</sup> Literary progression: Zechariah turns, lifts up his eyes, then sees.

<sup>64</sup> This may play on אֵיפָה in verse 6.

<sup>65</sup> These words appear in reverse order in Zech. 2:5.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
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3

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִי זֶה הָאֵלֹהִים הַיּוֹצֵאת עַל-פְּנֵי כָל-הָאָרֶץ

כִּי כָל-הַגִּזְבִּים מִזֶּה כְּמוֹהַ נִקְּה

וְכָל-הַנְּשֻׁבְעִים<sup>66</sup> מִזֶּה כְּמוֹהַ נִקְּה:

הַיּוֹצֵאתֶיהָ 4

נֵאֵם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

וּבָאֵה אֶל-בֵּית הַגִּזְבִּים

וְאֶל-בֵּית הַנְּשֻׁבְעִים בְּשִׁמִּי לְשִׁקֹּר

וְלָנֶה בְּתוֹךְ בֵּיתוֹ<sup>67</sup> וְכָלְתוּ

וְאֶת-עֵצָיו

וְאֶת-אֲבָנָיו:<sup>68</sup>

וַיֵּצֵא הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי 5

שָׂא נָא עֵינֶיךָ<sup>69</sup> וּרְאֵה מָה הַיּוֹצֵאת הַזֹּאת:

וַאֲמַר מֶה-הִיא 6

וַיֹּאמֶר זֶה הָאֵיפָה הַיּוֹצֵאת

וַיֹּאמֶר זֶה עֵינָם בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ:

<sup>66</sup> *Merism* for all sinners.

<sup>67</sup> The emphasis on the house (בית) of the sinners contrasts the house (בית) of Yahweh in Zech 3:7.

<sup>68</sup> *Merism* for an entire house.

<sup>69</sup> *Assonance* with qamets.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

7

וְהִנֵּה כַּפֶּר עֹפֶרֶת נִשְׂאֵת וְזֹאת אִשָּׁה אֶחָת יוֹשֶׁבֶת בְּתוֹךְ הָאִיפָה:

וַיֹּאמֶר זֹאת הָרִשְׁעָה<sup>70</sup> 8

וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶתְהָ אֶל-תּוֹךְ הָאִיפָה

וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת-אָבֹן הָעֹפֶרֶת אֶל-פִּיהָ: 8

וְאִשָּׁא עֵינָי 9

וְאָרָא

וְהִנֵּה שְׁתֵּים נָשִׁים יוֹצְאוֹת וְרוּחַ בְּכַנְפֵיהֶם וְלִהְיֶה כְנָפִים כַּנְפֵי הַחֲסִידָה וְתִשְׂאֵנָה

אֶת-הָאִיפָה בֵּין הָאָרֶץ וּבֵין הַשָּׁמַיִם:

וַאֲמַר אֶל-הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בֵּי אֵנָה הַמָּה מוֹלְכוֹת אֶת-הָאִיפָה: 10

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי 11

לְבָנוֹת-לֵהָ בֵּית בְּאֶרֶץ שְׁנַעַר<sup>71</sup>

וְהַיְכֹן וְהַגִּיחָה שֵׁם עַל-מְכַנְתָּהּ: 8

וְאִשָּׁב וְאִשָּׁא עֵינַי וְאָרָאָה וְהִנֵּה אַרְבַּע מַרְכָּבוֹת יוֹצְאוֹת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַהָרִים וְהַהָרִים<sup>1</sup> 6

הָרִי נְחֻשֶׁת:

<sup>70</sup> This foreshadows the use of שְׁנַעַר in verse 11 (see note below).

<sup>71</sup> שְׁנַעַר only appears here in Zechariah. Elsewhere, this locale is referred to as בבל in Zech 2:11 and 6:10. According to I. H. Eybers in "The Use of Proper Names as a Stylistic Device," *Semitics 2* (1971-2), p. 91, this choice of words is "a deliberate case of paronomasia with reference to הַרשָׁעָה," the sound of שְׁנַעַר "clearly recalls" רִשְׁעָה. Eybers seems to be suggesting that שְׁנַעַר is an anagram for הַרשָׁעָה. While this is not a perfect anagram, the words are similar. Thus, הַרשָׁעָה is brought to שְׁנַעַר.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiastic element	

2

בַּמֶּרְכָבָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה<sup>72</sup> סוּסִים אֲדָמִים

וּבַמֶּרְכָבָה הַשֵּׁנִית סוּסִים שְׁחֹרִים:

וּבַמֶּרְכָבָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית סוּסִים לְבָנָיִם

3

וּבַמֶּרְכָבָה הָרְבִיעִית סוּסִים בְּרָדִים אֲמָצִים:

וְאֵעִן וְאָמַר אֶל-הַמֶּלֶאךָ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי מָה-אֵלֶּה אֲדֹנָי:

4

וַיַּעַן הַמֶּלֶאךָ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי

5

אֵלֶּה אַרְבַּע רִחּוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם יוֹצְאוֹת מִהַיָּצֵב עַל-אֲדוֹן כָּל-הָאָרֶץ:

אֲשֶׁר-כָּהֱסוּסִים

6

הַשְּׁחֹרִים יֵצְאוּ אֶל-אֶרֶץ צָפוֹן

וְהַלְבָּנִים יֵצְאוּ אֶל-אַחֲרֵיהֶם<sup>73</sup>

וְהַבְּרָדִים יֵצְאוּ אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַתִּימָן:

<sup>72</sup> *Anabasis*- numerical progression of ordinal numbers.

<sup>73</sup> Scholars are divided on how to interpret this phrase. Some suggest amending the text to read *el-ahar hayyam*, rendering the phrase “to the west” (see Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, p. 264). This emendation assumes a thematic correspondence between this verse and verse 5, where the chariots “go forth to the four winds of heaven.” This line of reasoning assumes that if the “four winds of heaven” are mentioned, then the chariots should be sent to the four cardinal directions. Subsequently, such scholars often argue that in addition to this emendation, an eastern direction is missing from the verse, and should be restored. See Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, p. 264, and Rex Mason, *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 81-82.

This severe amending of the text is not necessary. As the MT stands, the movement of the chariots in verse 6 is along a north-south axis (מִזְרָח “east” only appears in Zech 8:7). Michael Floyd argues that these directions can stand independent of the other cardinal directions if viewed symbolically. See Michael Floyd, *Minor Prophets, Part 2* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), p. 400-401. From this perspective, צָפוֹן would evoke the mountain sacred to Baal, whereas תִּימָן would refer to either Mt. Paran or Mt. Sinai, from whence “Yahweh marches forth as a victorious warrior and charioteer to defend his people” (Floyd, *Minor Prophets, Part 2*, p. 400; Floyd cites Deut. 33:2, Hab. 3:3, and Ps. 68:8-9 to support this position).

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7

וְהָאֲמָצִים יָצְאוּ וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ לְלָכְתָּ לְהִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּאֶרֶץ

וַיֹּאמֶר לָכֹן הִתְהַלְכוּ בְּאֶרֶץ

וּתְהַלְכֶנָּה בְּאֶרֶץ:

וַיִּזְעַק אֹתִי וַיְדַבֵּר אֵלַי לֵאמֹר רְאֵה הִיוּצְאִים אֶל-אֶרֶץ צָפֹן הִגִּיחוּ אֶת-רוּחִי בְּאֶרֶץ 8

צָפֹן: 8

9 וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:

10 לְקוֹחַ מֵאֵת הַגּוֹלָה מִחִלָּדָי וּמֵאֵת טוֹבִיָּה וּמֵאֵת יַדְעִיָּה וּבָאתָ אִתָּהּ בַּיּוֹם

הַזֶּה וּבָאתָ בַּיּוֹם יֵאֱשִׁיָּה בֶן-צָפֹן<sup>74</sup> אֲשֶׁר-בָּאוּ מִבְּבֵל:

11 וּלְקַחְתָּ כֶּסֶף-וְזָהָב וְעָשִׂיתָ עֲטָרוֹת וְשִׁמְתָּ בְּרֹאשׁ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-יְהוֹצָדָק הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל:

12 וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לֵאמֹר

הִנֵּה-אִישׁ צָמַח שָׁמוֹ וּמִתְחַתֵּיו יִצְמַח

וּבָנָה אֶת-הַיְכָל יְהוָה:

<sup>74</sup> If verse 6 does evoke the northern territories of Baal and the southern territory of Yahweh, then this name may echo the ultimate sovereignty of Yahweh over Baal's sacred Mt. Zaphon.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

13

<sup>75</sup> וְהוּא יִבְנֶה אֶת־הַיְכָל יְהוָה

וְהוּא־יִשָּׂא הָוֶד

וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיִּמְשַׁל עַל־כְּסֵאוֹ

וְהָיָה כְהֵן עַל־כְּסֵאוֹ

וַעֲצַת שְׁלוֹם תִּהְיֶה בֵּין שְׂנֵיהֶם:

וְהָעֲטֹרֹת תִּהְיֶה לְחֵלֶם וְלִטּוֹבִיָּה וְלִידְעֻיָּה וְלִחַן בּוֹר־צַפְנִיָּה 14

לְזַכְרוֹן בְּהֵיכַל יְהוָה:

וּרְחוּקִים יִבָּאוּ וּבְנוֹ בְּהֵיכַל יְהוָה וַיִּדְעֻקֶּם כִּי־יִהְיֶה צְבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנֵי אֱלֵיכֶם וְהָיָה 15

אִם־שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמָעוּן בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: ם

<sup>1</sup> 7 וַיְהִי בַשָּׁנָה אַרְבַּע לְדַרְיֹוֹשׁ הַמֶּלֶךְ הָיָה דְבַר־יְהוָה <sup>76</sup> אֶל־זְכַרְיָה בְּאֶרְבָּעָה לַחֹדֶשׁ

הַתְּשַׁעִי בְכֶסֶל:

וַיִּשְׁלַח בֵּית־אֵל שַׁר־אַצָּר וַרְגָם מֶלֶךְ וַאֲנָשָׁיו לְחִלּוֹת <sup>77</sup> אֶת־כְּנִי יְהוָה: 2

לֵאמֹר אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים אֲשֶׁר לְבֵית־יְהוָה <sup>78</sup> צְבָאוֹת וְאֶל־הַנְּבִיאִים לֵאמֹר 3

הֲאֵבֶכֶה בַחֹדֶשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי הַנֶּזֶר כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי זֶה כַּמָּה שָׁנִים: פ

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֵלַי לֵאמֹר: 4

<sup>75</sup> *Anadiplosis*- the concluding line of verse 12 is the same as the beginning line of verse 13.

<sup>76</sup> A similar formula is used in Zech 1:7.

<sup>77</sup> This root appears again in Zech 8:21.

<sup>78</sup> Despite frequent references to this building, the full phrase “house of Yahweh” only appears here and in Zech 8:9.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

5

אָמַר אֶל-כָּל-עַם הָאָרֶץ וְאֶל-הַכֹּהֲנִים לֵאמֹר כִּי-צַמְתֶּם וְסָפוּד בַּחֲמִישֵׁי וּבְשִׁבְעֵי

וְזֶה שְׁבַעִים שָׁנָה הַצֹּם צַמְתָּנִי אָנֹכִי:<sup>79</sup>

וְכִי תֹאכְלוּ וְכִי תִשְׁתּוּ הֲלוֹא אִתְּכֶם הָאֲכָלִים וְאִתְּכֶם הַשְׁתִּים:<sup>80</sup>

הֲלוֹא אֶת-הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר קָרָא יְהוָה בְּיַד הַנְּבִיאִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים בְּהִיזֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם

יִשָּׁבֵת וּשְׁלֹוּה וְעָרִיָה סְבִיבֹתֶיהָ וְהַנְּגֹב וְהַשְּׁפֵלָה יֵשֵׁב:<sup>81</sup>

וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-זְכַרְיָה לֵאמֹר:

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לֵאמֹר מִשְׁפַּט אָמַת לְשֹׁפֵט וְחֹסֵד נְרַחֲמִים עָשׂוּ אִישׁ

אֶת-אָחִיו:

וְאֶלְמַנָּה וַיְתוּם גֵּר וְעַנִּי אֶל-תַּעֲשִׂקוּ

וְרַעַת אִישׁ אָחִיו אֶל-תִּחַשְׁבוּ בְּלִבְבְּכֶם:

וַיִּמְאַנּוּ לְהַקְנִיב וַיִּתְּנוּ כֶּתֶף סָרָת<sup>82</sup> וְאַזְנֵיהֶם הִכְבִּידוּ מִשְׁמוֹעַ:

וְלִפְנֵי שְׁמוֹ שְׁמִיר מִשְׁמוֹעַ<sup>83</sup> אֶת-הַתְּנֹרָה וְאֶת-הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

בְּרוּחֹו בְּיַד הַנְּבִיאִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים וַיְהִי קֶצֶף גָּדוֹל מֵאֵת יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:

<sup>79</sup> Verses 5-7 contain a series of three rhetorical questions. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> of 3 rhetorical questions.

<sup>80</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> of 3 rhetorical questions.

<sup>81</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> of 3 rhetorical questions.

<sup>82</sup> *Lex talionis* through *paranomasia* - A stubborn shoulder in verse 11 (סָרָת) is rewarded with being blown (עָרָה) away in verse 14.

<sup>83</sup> *Alliteration* with ש and מ (echoes of this *alliteration* are heard in verse 13, followed by even more alliteration using these consonants in verse 14).



<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
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13

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר-קָרָא<sup>84</sup> וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ

כֵּן יִקְרָאוּ וְלֹא אָשְׁמָע אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:

וַאֲסֻעֲוֹם עַל כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יְדַעוּם וְהָאֲרֶזַל נִשְׁמָה אַחֲרֵיהֶם מִעֵבֶר וּמִשֵּׁב 14

וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֲרֶז-חֲמֻדָּה לְשִׁמָּה: פ<sup>85</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 8 וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לֵאמֹר:

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת קִנְיָתִי לְצִיּוֹן קִנְיָה<sup>86</sup> 2

גְּדוּלָּה

וְחִמָּה

גְּדוּלָּה

קִנְיָתִי לָהּ: פ<sup>87</sup>

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה שְׁבִתִי אֶל-צִיּוֹן 3

וּשְׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם

וּנְקִרְאָה יְרוּשָׁלַם עִיר-הָאֱמֶת

וְהָרִ-יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הָרַקְדָּשׁ: ס

<sup>84</sup> *Lex talionis*- using the phrase כַּאֲשֶׁר-קָרָא... כֵּן יִקְרָאוּ (Bergdall, "Zechariah's Program of Restoration," p. 183).

<sup>85</sup> *Lex talionis* through *paranomasia*- The making of their hearts flint in verse 12 (שָׁמוּ שְׁמִיר) is rewarded with the land being made waste in verse 14 (שִׁמְו... לשמה) (recognized by Bergdall, "Zechariah's Program of Restoration," p. 184).

<sup>86</sup> For an analysis of this (and the following) chiasm, see Excursus.

<sup>87</sup> The phraseology used here is similar to that used in Zech 1:14.

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4

כָּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

עַד יָשׁוּבוּ זְקֵנִים וְזָקֵנֹת בְּרַחְבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם

וְאִישׁ מִשְׁעֲנָתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ יִמְרַב יָמִים:

וְרַחְבוֹת הָעִיר יִמְלְאוּ יְלָדִים וְיִלְדוֹת<sup>88</sup> 5

מִשְׁחָקִים בְּרַחְבֵּיהֶּ: ם

כָּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת 6

כִּי יִפְלֵא בְּעֵינָי שְׂאֵרֵיט הָעַם הַזֶּה בְּיָמִים הַהֵם גַּם־בְּעֵינָי יִפְלֵא

נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: פ<sup>89</sup>

כָּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת 7

הַנְּנִי מוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת־עַמִּי מֵאֶרֶץ מִזְרַח<sup>90</sup>

וּמֵאֶרֶץ מְבֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ: ן<sup>91</sup>

וְהִבֵּאתִי אֹתָם וְשָׁכְנוּ בְּתוֹךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם 8

וְהָיוּ־לִי לְעָם וְאֲנִי אֶהְיֶה<sup>92</sup> לָהֶם לְאֱלֹהִים בְּאֶמֶת וּבְצַדִּיקָה: ם

<sup>88</sup> *Merism* for all ages.

<sup>89</sup> Mak identifies this as a rhetorical question (*Rhetorical Questions in the Post-Exilic Minor Prophets*, p. 36).

<sup>90</sup> This pairing of east and west is in juxtaposition to the explicit reference to the other two cardinal directions in Zech 6:6.

The phrases מזרח and מבוא השמש are not used together in the same verse elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. Only in Isa 43:5-6 are the east-west and north-south axes mentioned in succession:

אֶל־תִּירָא כִּי אֶת־אֲנִי מִמִּזְרַח אָבִיא וְרָעָה וּמִמְעַרְב אֶקְבָּצֶךָ:

אָמַר לְצַפּוֹן תִּנְּנִי וּלְתִימָן אֶל־תִּקְלָאֵי הִבִּיאֵי בְנֵי מִרְחֹק וּבְגוֹתֵי מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ:

As with Zech 8:7, the central theme in this passage from Isaiah is restoration.

<sup>91</sup> Literally- “from the going in of the sun,” but with the sense of “from the west country.”

<sup>92</sup> This emphatic first person phrase is repeated in Zech 2:9.

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כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

תִּתְזַקְקֶנָּה יְדֵיכֶם<sup>93</sup> הַשְּׁמָעִים בְּיָמִים הָאֵלֶּה אֵת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה מִפִּי הַנְּבִיאִים

אֲשֶׁר בְּיוֹם יְסֹד בֵּית־יְהוָה<sup>94</sup> צְבָאוֹת

הַחֵיכָל לְהַבְנוֹת:

כִּי לִפְנֵי הַיָּמִים הֵהֱם שְׂכַר הָ<sup>95</sup> אָדָם לֹא נִהְיָה

וּשְׂכַר הַבְּהֵמָה אֵינֶנָּה

וְלִיּוֹצֵא וְלִבָּא<sup>96</sup> אֵין־שְׁלוֹם מִן־הַצָּר

וְאֲשַׁלַּח אֶת־כָּל־הָאָדָם אִישׁ בְּרֵעֵהוּ:

וְעַתָּה לֹא כִיָּמִים הָרַאשֻׁנִים<sup>97</sup> אֲנִי לְשֹׁאֲרֵית הָעָם הַזֶּה נֹאֵם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:

כִּי־זָרַע הַשְּׁלוֹם הִגְפֹן תִּתְּנוּ פְרִיָּהּ

וְהָאֲרֶזְךָ תִּתְּנוּ אֶת־יִבּוּלָהּ

וְהַשְּׁמִימִים<sup>98</sup> יִתְּנוּ טַלְמִים

וְהַנְּחַל<sup>99</sup> תִּי אֶת־שֹׁאֲרֵית הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶת־כָּל־אֶלֶּה:

<sup>93</sup> *Inclusio*- this phrase begins and ends this oracle (in verse 13).

<sup>94</sup> This full phrase only occurs here and in Zech 7:2.

<sup>95</sup> A play on זָכַרְיָה? This verb only occurs in one other verse in Zechariah (שָׁכַר in 11:12), and occurs twice.

<sup>96</sup> *Merism* for the actions of all people.

<sup>97</sup> *Chronographia*- this refers to Israel's sinful past.

<sup>98</sup> *Anabasis*- the blessing of abundance is described first as pertaining to הַגִּפֶּן, expanding to הָאֲרֶזְךָ, and then culminating with הַשְּׁמִימִים.

<sup>99</sup> The water imagery evoked by the preceding clause could cause the audience to think of the water-related use of the root נָחַל "stream" (*HALOT*, p. 687, s.v. I נָחַל) or "torrent" (*BDB*, p. 636, s.v. II נָחַל) before understanding the root's use in this verse as "posses" or "inherit" (*HALOT*, p. 686, s.v. נָחַל).

<span style="color: red;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="color: olive;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="color: gray;">■</span> Body part
<span style="color: teal;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

13

וְהָיָה כְּאִשֶּׁר<sup>100</sup> הָיִיתֶם קִלְלָהּ בְּגוֹיִם

בֵּית יְהוּדָה וּבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל

כֵּן אוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְכֶם

וְהָיִיתֶם בְּרֻכָּה

אֶל־תִּירָאוּ תַחֲזִיקֶנָה יְדֵיכֶם:<sup>101</sup> ס

כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת 14

כְּאִשֶּׁר<sup>102</sup> זַמַּמְתִּי לְהַרְעֵ לְכֶם בְּהַקְצִיף אֲבֹתֵיכֶם אֹתִי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְלֹא

נִחַמְתִּי:

כֵּן שָׁבַתִּי זַמַּמְתִּי בַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה לְהִיטִיב אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם 15

וְאֶת־בֵּית יְהוּדָה אֶל־תִּירָאוּ:

אֲלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּ 16

דַּבְּרוּ אֱמֶת אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ אֱמֶת<sup>103</sup> וּמִשִּׁפְטֵי שְׁלוֹם שְׁכַטוּ בְּשִׁעְרֵיכֶם:<sup>104</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Another *talionic* formula is used here (כֵּן...כְּאִשֶּׁר), but used positively (in contrast to Zech 7:13) (recognized by Bergdall, "Zechariah's Program of Restoration," p. 188).

<sup>101</sup> *Inclusio*- The phrase with which the oracle began (in verse 9) is repeated at the end of this oracle.

<sup>102</sup> The same *talionic* used in verse 13 is used here.

<sup>103</sup> Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, in *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1987), p. 426 note that "the repetition of *emet* ('truth') in this phrase...has caused many of the ancient versions (Greek, Latin, Syriac) to omit the second 'truth'...Most translators have [also] chosen to delete the second 'truth.' However, the repetition of 'truth' in the MT could be understood as a reinforcement of the first occurrence." For a similar grammatical oddity, see the discussion of Zech 4:2 in Excursus.

<sup>104</sup> *Alliteration* with ש.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

17

וְאִישׁ | אֶת־רַעַת רָעָהּ | אֶל־תְּחַשְׁבוּ בְּלִבְכֶם

וּשְׂבַעַת שֶׁקֶר אֶל־תִּתְּאָהָבוּ

כִּי אֶת־כָּל־אֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר שָׁנֵאתִי נְאֻם־יְהוָה: ם

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת | אֵלַי לֵאמֹר: 18

כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת 19

צוֹם הָרְבִיעִי וְצוֹם הַחֲמִישִׁי וְצוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וְצוֹם הָעֶשְׂרִי

יְהִי לְבֵית־יְהוּדָה לְשָׁשׂוֹן

וְלִשְׂמֹחָה וְלִמְעֵדִים טוֹבִים

וְהָאֵמֶת וְהַשְּׁלוֹם <sup>105</sup> אָהָבוּ: פ

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת 20

עַד אֲשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ עַמִּים וַיִּשְׁבִּי עָרִים רַבּוֹת:

<sup>105</sup> These words are recognized as a word pair using syndetic parataxis by Yitzak Avishur, "Pairs of Synonymous Words in the Construct State (and in Appositional Hendiadys) in Biblical Hebrew," *Semitics* 2 (1971-2), p. 21.

<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">■</span> Repetition	<span style="background-color: olive; color: black;">■</span> Cognate Accusative	<span style="background-color: magenta; color: black;">■</span> Geminate	<span style="background-color: cyan; color: black;">■</span> Evocative word	<span style="background-color: gray; color: black;">■</span> Body part
<span style="background-color: teal; color: black;">■</span> Anagram	<span style="background-color: green; color: black;">■</span> Repetition between verses	<span style="background-color: yellow; color: black;">■</span> Misc. literary device	— Chiasitic element	

וְהִלְכוּ<sup>106</sup> יִשְׁבִּי אֶת־אֶתֶת אֶל־אֶתֶת לְאמֹר

בְּלִבָּה הַלֹּהֶ

לְחִלּוֹת<sup>107</sup> אֶת־פְּנֵי יְהוָה

וּלְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

אֲלֵכֶה גַם־אֲנִי:

וּבָאוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְגוֹיִם עֲצוּמִים 22

לְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת בִּירוּשָׁלַם

וּלְחִלּוֹת אֶת־פְּנֵי יְהוָה: ם

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת 23

בְּיָמִים הַהֵמָּה אֲשֶׁר יִחְזִיקוּ עֲשָׂרָה אַנְשֵׁים מִכָּל לְשׁוֹת הַגּוֹיִם וְהִזְזִיקוּ בְּכַנְף<sup>ו</sup>

אִישׁ יְהוּדִי לְאמֹר

בְּלִבָּה עַמְּכֶם כִּי שָׁמַעְנוּ אֱלֹהִים עַמְּכֶם: ם

<sup>106</sup> Chiasm recognized by Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, pp. 159-160.

<sup>107</sup> This same root used in Zech 7:2.

## EXCURSUS

### Wholly Holy: A Holistic Reading of Zechariah 1-8

A certain humility is required in both commentator and reader before [the writings of Zechariah]. There is much in them which remains tantalizingly obscure and at times it is better to acknowledge that we do not know than to elevate clever guess-work to the plane of confident and dogmatic assertion.<sup>108</sup>

The disparate nature of Zechariah's visions has spawned a number of approaches to understanding the text as a whole. In examining the complexities of these visions, one can become bogged down in details, missing the forest for the trees, as it were. I will demonstrate how focusing on the presence of chiasmus at the beginning, middle, and end of Zechariah's visions reveal a unified text with conceptual and literary concentric circles of holiness.

The book of Zechariah generally is divided into two sections: chapters 1-8 and 9-14. The rationale behind such a division is the presence of a number of visions in chapters 1-8, while such visions are lacking in chapters 9-14. Due to the radical difference between the visions in chapters 1-8, however, scholars have tried to understand their interrelation in a number of ways.

One study cataloguing such attempts to arrive at a meaningful description of Zechariah's structure "makes one wonder whether the scholars that produced them were all reading the same text."<sup>109</sup> Some argue that these visions have undergone a number of redactions and therefore should be viewed individually. For example, B.S. Childs sees a conglomeration of individual texts with no literary dependence on one another.<sup>110</sup> Such studies become bogged down in trying to determine a *Sitz im Leben* for each vision (or even for each constituent part of an individual vision).

Other scholars have taken a more holistic approach. While recognizing the differences among the visions, these scholars look for an underlying structure among them. Some see loose connections between visions, while others argue for a complex arrangement produced by a single author.<sup>111</sup> In order

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<sup>108</sup> Rex Mason, *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 81.

<sup>109</sup> Michael Floyd, *Minor Prophets, Part 2* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), p. 305.

<sup>110</sup> Brevard Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), p. 481.

<sup>111</sup> See Meredith Kline, "The Structure of the Book of Zechariah," *JETS* 34 (1991), pp. 192-193.

to make sense of this patchwork of visions, some have deemed it necessary to change the order of the visions to fit a sensible framework.<sup>112</sup> Others have been able to find underlying themes and structure while leaving the text intact.<sup>113</sup>

However, even among such scholars who prefer to leave the text as it is, there is a disagreement as to how this series of visions should be divided. Some argue for the presence of eight separate visions,<sup>114</sup> while others claim the existence of only seven visions.<sup>115</sup> Despite these differing views, scholars from both parties have observed that the visions seem to be arranged chiastically.<sup>116</sup> A closely related (and by no means mutually exclusive) approach accepts the literary unity of these visions, but instead stresses the element of progression observed in the text. Ultimately, both approaches stress the importance of the beginning, middle, and end of this collection of visions. In examining these areas of the text, a series of chiasms serves to tie the whole text together.

### The Beginning of the End

Zechariah's first vision contains the following chiasm (1:14):

Thus saith Yahweh of Hosts:	כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
I am jealous	קִנְיָתִי
for Jerusalem	לִירוּשָׁלַם
and for Zion	וּלְצִיּוֹן
with a great jealousy	קִנְיָתָה גְדוֹלָה

This simple chiasm underscores the jealousy of the Lord towards the “holy land” (אדמת הקדש) which is referred to as both “Jerusalem” and “Zion.” These similar ideas are collapsed into one conceptual “holy

<sup>112</sup> This approach is used by Mason in *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi*, pp. 45-48.

<sup>113</sup> An exhaustive work using this approach is Mike Butterworth's *Structure and the Book of Zechariah* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992).

<sup>114</sup> For example, see Hinckley Mitchell, J. M. Powis Smith, and Julius August Brewer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Johah*. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. 84; Mason, *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi*, p. 29; and Floyd, *Minor Prophets, Part 2*, p. 326-327; Seth Sykes, “Time and Space in Haggai-Zechariah 1-8: A Bakhtinian Analysis of a Prophetic Chronicle,” *JSOT* 76 (1997), p. 120.

<sup>115</sup> For example, see Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1987), p. lix; David Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), p. 113-114.

<sup>116</sup> For instance, see Sykes, “Time and Space in Haggai-Zechariah 1-8,” 120 and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, p. lv.



land” in the next chapter (Zech 2:17).<sup>117</sup> These two words appear again joined together after Zechariah’s final vision (8:2-3):

Thus saith Yahweh of Hosts:

I am jealous for Zion with a great jealousy

[ ]

and [with] a great fury

[ ]

I am jealous for her

Thus saith Yahweh of Hosts:

I return to Zion

and I dwell in the midst of Jerusalem;

and Jerusalem will be called the faithful city

and the mount of Yahweh of Hosts the holy mount

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

קִנְיַתִּי לְצִיּוֹן קִנְיָה

גְּדוּלָה

וְחַמָּה

גְּדוּלָה

קִנְיַתִּי לָהּ

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה

נֹשְׁבְתִי אֶל־צִיּוֹן

וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם

וְנִקְרְאָהּ יְרוּשַׁלַם עִיר־הַאֱמֻת

וְהָר־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הָר־הַקֹּדֶשׁ

The jealousy of Yahweh is expressed at the opening of this literary unit, just as it was in the chiasm at the beginning of Zechariah’s visions. Also, the words “Jerusalem” and “Zion” figure prominently. While these elements at both the beginning and the end of the visions form an *inclusio*, the author does not simply repeat this formula. Instead, the themes stated at the beginning are elaborated on: both conceptually and linguistically.

In this conceptual intensification of the original statement, Yahweh reveals his jealousy for the holy land and adds greater severity by declaring his fury. Further, Yahweh underscores his ultimate intention as he declares that he will dwell among his people in that land. Linguistically, the structure of the statement also intensifies; it becomes more complex, doubling the number of chiasms involved.

The elements repeated in this passage in one way perfectly balances the original divine statement, mentioning Jerusalem twice. In this way, Zech 8:2-3 completes a ring structure that began in Zech 1:14, thereby supporting those who argue for the appropriateness of approaching the visions chiastically. On the other hand, the obvious intensification of this repetition also validates those who argue for the

<sup>117</sup> This is a central theme in Zechariah’s visions. In addition, the only occurrence of the phrase “holy land” in the entire Hebrew Bible occurs here.

progressive nature of those same visions. Thus, the two structures are functioning simultaneously, adding another level of literary complexity to this work.

### Mid-Text Crisis

Having dealt with the beginning and end of these chapters, my next task is to examine the center of this series of visions. In studying Akkadian tablets, Anne Kilmer found that authors “placed significant events at symmetrically spaced points in the texts.”<sup>118</sup> Kilmer notes that in such texts, key words are used “repeatedly and symmetrically...[and] function to highlight the condition of a character.”<sup>119</sup> While this article focuses on Akkadian texts, her points are equally relevant to Hebrew texts.<sup>120</sup> The visions in chapters 3 and 4 stand at the center of Zechariah’s assembly of visions, and deserve to be examined for significance at such an axis of symmetry.

Paul Hanson notes that the “structural form of [Zechariah’s] symbolic universe [moves toward] the critical center of the visions.”<sup>121</sup> Commenting on this conceptualization, Seth Sykes states, “The structural arrangement of the visions focuses on the temple as the center of a symbolic universe. Thus, the visions are arranged as a chiasmus in which the two visions of Zechariah 3-4 form the center.”<sup>122</sup> This approach is espoused by most scholars today.

As mentioned above, Petersen stresses the progressive nature of these visions. However, he notes that chapters 3 and 4 are markedly different. Petersen argues that three elements are present in each vision: 1) a notion of “inbetweenness,” or liminality, 2) motion, and 3) the notion of the deity’s action in “all the earth.”<sup>123</sup> Yet, he admits that not all of the visions are filled with motion. Petersen explains that

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<sup>118</sup> Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, “Visualizing Text: Schematic Patterns in Akkadian Poetry,” in Ann K. Guinan, *et al*, eds., *If a Man Builds a Joyful House: Assyriological Studies in Honor of Erle Verdun Leichty* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), p. 209.

<sup>119</sup> Kilmer, “Visualizing Text: Schematic Patterns in Akkadian Poetry,” p. 210.

<sup>120</sup> And perhaps even more relevant, given that Zechariah was presumably exposed to Babylonian influences the majority of his life.

<sup>121</sup> Paul D. Hanson, “In Defiance of Death: Zechariah’s Symbolic Universe,” in J. H. Marks and R. Good, eds., *Love and Death in the Ancient Near East* (Guilford: Four Quarters Publishing Company, 1987), pp. 177.

<sup>122</sup> Sykes, “Time and Space in Haggai-Zechariah 1-8,” p. 120.

<sup>123</sup> Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, p. 114.

“even the so-called static visions function to make movement possible in the visions that follow.”<sup>124</sup> The two “static” visions are that of the cleansing of the high priest and the vision of the menorah (chapters 3 and 4 respectively). Thus, in both the chiasmic approach and the progressive approach to the visions, an emphasis is placed on the central two visions. I will examine these two chapters for the same literary feature that ties this series of visions together: chiasmus.

Zechariah 3 opens with a scene from the heavenly court. Joshua the high priest is being accused by Satan, while the angel of Yahweh defends him. The angel then commands the re-clothing and purification of Joshua.<sup>125</sup> This act of cleansing is followed by the direct words of Yahweh (3:7):

Thus saith Yahweh of Hosts:	כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
If you will walk in my ways	אִם־בְּדַרְכֵי תִלְוֶהָ
and if you will keep my requirements,	וְאִם־אֶת־מִשְׁמְרֹתַי תִּשְׁמֹר
then you will judge my house	וְגַם־אֶתֶּה תִּדְוִן אֶת־בֵּיתִי
and will keep my courts	וְגַם תִּשְׁמֹר אֶת־חֲצֵרַי
and I will give you access among these standing	וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ מִהַלְכִים בֵּין הָעֹמְדִים הָאֵלֶּה

This passage describes not only the requirements of the high priest, but also his rewards. In this sense, this chiasm is progressive. It also stresses the centrality of Yahweh’s house, or temple, by placing this item in the structural center of the passage. If Joshua will keep and enforce the commandments of Yahweh in his earthly abode, he will then have access to the heavenly realms.

Following this vision of Joshua and the heavenly court, the author describes a dramatically new scene. Zechariah sees a golden menorah with a number of spouts, flanked by two olive trees. The description of this item has caused a number of problems for scholars over the years. The verse appears as follows (4:2):

<sup>124</sup> Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, p. 114.

<sup>125</sup> This action addresses for the “critical issue...of how ritual purity may be engendered in a situation of radical defilement.” Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, p. 112.

And he said to me, “What to you see?”  
 And I said, “I see and behold a menorah  
 completely of gold  
 and a bowl upon its top  
 and seven lamps upon it  
 -seven-  
 and seven spouts for the lamps  
 which are on top of it

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מָה אַתָּה רֹאֶה  
 וַיֹּאמֶר רְאִיתִיו וְהִנֵּה מְנוֹרַת  
 זָהָב כְּלָהּ  
 וְגִלְגָּל עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ  
 וְשִׁבְעָה נֵרֹתֶיהָ עָלֶיהָ  
 שִׁבְעָה  
 וְשִׁבְעָה מוֹצְקוֹת לְנֵרוֹת  
 אֲשֶׁר עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ

A deceptively simple chiasm appears at the beginning of this vision, but is accompanied by grammatical problems. Most notably, “the threefold repetition of ‘seven’ ... causes some difficulty. The first ‘seven’ clearly indicates the number of lamps...[and] the third ‘seven’ poses no problems, for it denotes the number of spouts.”<sup>126</sup> The second “seven,” however, is not attached to a substantive. This word was so problematic that the LXX (and subsequently the Vulgate) eliminated it in translation.<sup>127</sup>

W. H. Lowe, however, outlines two options for interpreting the use of this dangling “seven.” One option is that this word was “repeated on account of its importance as corresponding to ‘the seven eyes of the LORD,’ ...render[ing]: ‘seven (was) the number of its lamps above the same- seven – and seven the number of its pipes.’”<sup>128</sup> Lowe disagrees with this option,<sup>129</sup> and instead proposes that it is functioning distributively, rendering the translation “seven pipes apiece to the seven lamps.”<sup>130</sup>

When reading this vision in light of the subsequent angelic explanations, the first translational option makes more sense, and the placement of the problematic “seven” may be understood. In Zech 4:3, the audience is told that two olive trees stand by the lamp; one on its right side, and the other on its left.

<sup>126</sup> Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, pp. 234-235. In the Hebrew Bible, שבעה rarely appears more than twice in the same verse. It appears three times in Num 23:1, 29 and Zech. 4:2. There is only one instance where שבעה appears more than three times: 2 Chron. 29:21. Each of these verses (except in Zechariah) uses שבעה in an explicitly sacrificial setting.

<sup>127</sup> On the other hand, the phraseology of Targum Jonathan is almost identical to the MT regarding the use of שבעה:

וַיֹּאמֶר לִי מָה אֵת חָזִי וְאִמְרֵי חֲזִיתִי וְהָא מְנִרְתָּא דְדֵהבָא כּוּלָּהּ וְגוּלְתָּהּ עַל רִישָׁהּ וְשִׁבְעָה בּוֹצִינְהָא דְעֵלָה שִׁבְעָה וְשִׁבְעָה דְמַרְיָקִין מְנַהוֹן מִשְׁחָא לְבוֹצִינְיָא דְדֵהבָא דְעַל רִישָׁהּ

Targumic Toseftot to the Prophets also keeps this odd phraseology when directly quoting this verse:

וַיֹּאמֶר לִי מָה אֵת חָזִי וְאִמְרֵי חֲזִיתִי וְהָא מְנִרְתָּא דְדֵהבָא כּוּלָּהּ וְגוּלְתָּהּ עַל רִישָׁהּ וְשִׁבְעָה בּוֹצִינְהָא דְעֵלָה שִׁבְעָה וְשִׁבְעָה דְמַרְיָקִין מְנַהוֹן מִשְׁחָא לְבוֹצִינְיָא דִּי עַל רִישָׁהּ

<sup>128</sup> W. H. Lowe, *The Hebrew Student's Commentary on Zechariah* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1882), p. 42.

<sup>129</sup> “Had this been the meaning of the prophet, it is hardly likely that he would have written שבעה in such an equivocal collocation, but would rather have written שבעה מספר ‘seven in number.’” Lowe, *The Hebrew Student's Commentary on Zechariah*, p. 42.

<sup>130</sup> Citing 1 Chron 20:6 “ואצבעתי שש-ידי” (“who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot”).

Zechariah asks his guide what these trees signify. Instead of receiving an immediate answer, the angel launches into a description of the work that Zerubbabel will accomplish. Only then does he declare that the olive trees represent “the two anointed ones who stand by the lord of all the earth” (v. 14).

When viewed in the context of the heavenly court in the preceding vision, we see that “the scene in 3:1-10 is the court of Yahweh’s heavenly dwelling place, and the scene in 4:1-14 is the corresponding court of Yahweh’s earthly dwelling place (i.e., the temple).”<sup>131</sup> There is an intersection of the earthly and the heavenly: Zerubbabel is to manage the earthly affairs of the returning exiles, while Joshua is to preside over their spiritual affairs. Returning to the meaning of the two olive trees beside the menorah, “Joshua and Zerubbabel are here cast in an earthly role corresponding to the role of Yahweh’s heavenly attendants.”<sup>132</sup> Symbolically, this menorah “occupies the central position on the earthly plane, which is analogous to the central position of Yahweh seated on his heavenly throne.”<sup>133</sup>

Now the issue of that troublesome “seven” in Zech 4:2 can be addressed. The grammatical difficulties of this passage may have signaled its significance to the audience. As mentioned earlier, a chiasm appears in this verse:

And seven lamps upon it	וּשְׁבַעַה נְרֹתֶיהָ עָלֶיהָ
-seven-	שְׁבַעַה
and seven spouts for the lamps	וּשְׁבַעַה מוּצָקוֹת לַנְּרוֹת

This arrangement of “sevens” within the chiasm may also reflect the content of the vision which follows.

Just as the holy menorah is prominent, standing between two olive trees in Zech 4:3, so the central “seven” is positioned between two other “sevens” and stands independent grammatically.<sup>134</sup> If the menorah represents the omnipotent and omni-central Yahweh, then perhaps the corresponding central

<sup>131</sup> Floyd, *Minor Prophets, Part 2*, p. 383.

<sup>132</sup> Floyd, *Minor Prophets, Part 2*, p. 384.

<sup>133</sup> Floyd, *Minor Prophets, Part 2*, p. 384.

<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, if one isolates the chiasmic portion of this verse, the independent *שְׁבַעַה* stands directly in the center; It is the seventh word from the beginning *and* the seventh word from the end:

וּגְגֵלָה	עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ	וּשְׁבַעַה	נְרֹתֶיהָ	עָלֶיהָ	שְׁבַעַה	וּשְׁבַעַה	מוּצָקוֹת	לַנְּרוֹת	אֲשֶׁר	עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

“seven” in this passage would also reflect this superiority by not conforming to the restrictive grammatical expectations of its audience.<sup>135</sup>

### Conclusion

In conclusion, I end as I began; by quoting Rex Mason:

We must attempt to base conclusions on a study of the *nature* of the material. We must also listen for the message which spoke through these chapters and led to their being preserved, passed on and presented in their extant form. Their difficulties must not blind us to the fact that they proved an inspiration to the people of God through many successive times of crisis and change.<sup>136</sup>

Zechariah chapters 1-8 are a well-structured presentation of the prophet's visions. In viewing both the text as a whole and the function of chiasmus placed at its beginning, middle, and end, the “nature” of this material becomes apparent. The first and last chiasms directly address the holy land of Jerusalem. At the center of this text lie two chiasms which address matters of the temple, an even holier place. And at the center of the culminating chiasm is a reference to the omnipotent Yahweh, literarily standing in the holy of holies in the midst of the holiest of lands.

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<sup>135</sup> Conceptually, the root “שבע” can evoke abundance or perfection: “Perhaps a translation involving the idea of ‘completeness’ as meaning ‘perfection’ is not to be excluded, inasmuch as a family which has been reduced by the death of one of its members becomes complete again with the birth of a new child” (*HALOT*, p. 1400, s.v. III שבע). If the author was playing on this meaning, then the addition of שבעה to an already grammatically complete passage could have symbolized the omnipotent Yahweh's ability to provide *even more* than what was originally thought possible.

<sup>136</sup> Mason, *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi*, pp. 81-82.

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