Introduction: Zech. 6:9-15 is the central hinge linking the two halves of the prophet's diptych composition, the axis between the night visions (1:7-6:8) with their introduction (1:1-6) and the burdens (9:1-14:21) with their introduction (7:1-8:23). Each half is itself a diptych having a hinge section, Zech. 3:1-10 for the visions and 11:1-17 for the burdens. Common to the three hinge passages is a focus on the figure of the coming Messiah and in particular on his priest-king office.

Messianic symbolism and interpretation alternate in CH as follows: Symbolism of the preparation of a crown with the participation of returnees from far off exile and the placing of the crown on the head of Joshua, the high priest (vv. 10, 11). Interpretation of the coronation of Joshua (vv. 12, 13). Symbolism of the depositing of the crown in the temple as a memorial of the contribution of the returned captives (v. 14) and interpretation thereof (v. 15). Our comments will follow this sequence except that the opening verses (vv. 10, 11)² will be treated in connection with vv. 14, 15, which resumes the subject of the returned exiles, so producing an envelope pattern.³

CH recapitulates major messianic themes found throughout the seven night visions: Messiah's dual priest-king office; his regathering of the distant exiles and building of the temple; and his intratrinitarian associations. The most conspicuous connections of CH are with the third, fourth, and fifth visions, the closest relationship being with the fourth. In addition to the formal features distinctive of the three hinge sections of the book,⁴ other features shared by CH and vision four include: the figure of Joshua as a type of Christ; the crowning of Joshua and his investiture in glory array; his identification as the Branch; the union of the priestly and royal offices; the exalted privilege of presence in God's heaven; and the principle of faithful service as prerequisite to eschatological blessings.⁵ One difference between these two closely related passages is that in Zechariah 3 the investiture of Joshua with the priestly regalia transpires within a vision, whereas the crowning of Joshua in Zech. 6:9-15 was a real life occurrence. However, this actual historical event, like the visionary episode, had symbolical significance; it too was a typological prefiguration of Messiah's ministry and exaltation.

I. Crown Rights (Zech. 6:12, 13b)

A. Royal Scion. Interpreting the figure of Joshua the high priest with the crown set on his head, the word of the Lord declares: "Behold a man—his name is Branch (semaḥ). From his place he shall branch forth (yismah) and he shall build the temple of Yahweh" (Zech. 6:12b-d). The significance of the name "Branch" is explained by earlier prophecies concerning Messiah as one who springs up from David's royal stock (cf. Isa. 4:2; 11:1, Jer. 23:5, 6; 33:14-17).⁶ In Zechariah 3 the messianic reference of the Branch title is confirmed by the further identification of the Branch with the Isaianic Servant of the Lord (v. 8).

It is Joshua not in himself but as a symbol of Christ who is in view in both Zechariah 3 and Zech. 6:9-15. Many modern commentators, however, reluctant because of their naturalistic bias to admit the prophetic-typological character of the CH episode, try to construe it in political terms as the making of a public statement about the roles of the cultic and civil authorities in the governance of the postexilic community. And since in those terms it would seem that Zerubbabel, the governor and a Davideid, was the one who should receive the royal crown, he gets arbitrarily substituted in the text for Joshua the high priest. Or he gets added as a second figure alongside Joshua (with citation of ancient diarchic practices). On the latter approach two crowns would be involved, and in support of that appeal is made to the apparently plural form 'atarot in v. 11. But this form, if it is a plural and not an old Phoenician singular, may be understood as the superlative plural of excellence or as a reflection of the composite structure of the crown as consisting of separate gold and silver circlets (cf. v. 11 and Rev. 19:12). Certainly the Massoretes understood only one crown to be involved for in v. 14 they vocalize trt, the subject of the singular verb tīyeh, as 'atarot. Indeed that singular verb demands the conclusion that only one crown is in view in the entire passage. An attempt has been made to maintain the two-crown view while acknowledging that a single crown is referred to in each instance. But this involves an obviously contrived argument to distinguish the crown of v. 14 from that in v. 11. It becomes evident that no satisfactory explanation of the data is possible apart from the adoption of the typological-messianic interpretation.

B. Messianic Temple Builder. Conjoined with the Branch's identity as one who comes forth as the royal scion of David's dynasty is his role as temple builder (Zech. 6:12c, d). This role belongs to the portrayal of Messiah as king, for temple building was a royal function.⁷ Agreeably it was the Davideid governor, Zerubbabel, who was the primary leader in restoring the temple in Zechariah's day and who appears in Zechariah's fifth vision as the prototype of Christ as builder of the eschatological temple (Zech. 4:6-10).⁸ In CH Joshua is selected as the messianic type, even though the temple-building theme is present, because the basic symbolism in CH is the crowning of the Branch and that is resumed from vision four, where Joshua was the typological figure. The choice of the priest rather than the governor there was dictated by the cultic setting and rituals of that vision. In CH itself there is also a climactic focus on the priestly prerogative of heavenly association with Yahweh (6:13d, e), which makes Joshua a more suitable symbol here. Another possible factor, remembering that the CH episode was not visionary but actually occurred, is that a public coronation of Zerubbabel, a prince of the royal house, might result in suspicion and punitive reaction on the part of the Persian authorities.

Repeating the twofold identification of the Branch given in Zech. 6:12c and d, v. 13a and b declares: "And he (wehu) shall build the temple of Yahweh and he (wehu) shall bear the glory." As the grammatical parallelism indicates, these two clauses constitute a pair, with the repetition of the independent personal pronoun pointing back to the Branch as the one who receives the twofold attestation of his identity as Yahweh's anointed king: endorsement as builder of the temple (v. 13a) and reception of the royal regalia (v. 13b).
Taken together the four clauses in v. 12c, d and v. 13a, b form an A. B. B'. A' chiastic quatrain, with the middle members (B and B') being a virtually identical pair of statements concerning the building of the temple. The A and A' members of the chiasm both deal with the Branch's succession to the throne. The A clause (v. 12c) declares him the legitimate royal heir and the A' clause (v. 13b) celebrates his investiture with the majesty of kingship. Rather than the more abstract rendering, "he shall bear the glory," v. 13b may be translated, "he shall wear the royal robes."9 Such investiture in royal robes would be a natural accompaniment of the bestowing of the crown. In fact, in the symbolism of Joshua's crowning in vision four, the setting of the royal diadem on his head is integral to his being clothed in the priestly glory garments (Zech. 3:5), the diadem being part of the royal mitre.

C. God's Covenant Promise (2 Samuel 7). The two royal distinctions attributed to the Branch in CH, his right to the throne and his prerogative of constructing the temple, remind us at once of God's covenant with David (2 Sam. 7:5-16).10 The same two royal honors are the featured blessings promised in that dynastic grant. At the typological level these royal promises were fulfilled in David's son Solomon and his successors, but Zechariah's prophecy looks beyond that to their ultimate fulfillment in the messianic Branch, that Son of David to whom it would be given to build an enduring house for God's name and the throne of whose kingdom God would establish forever (2 Sam. 7:13).

The covenantal origins of the royal grant to Christ go back before the making of the covenant with David to the intratrinitarian counsels before the world was, back to a primal divine pact.11 Though the covenants made between God and man in the course of human history were determined upon in eternity in the all-embracing divine decrees, the actual covenanting between the parties does not occur until the creature party is on the scene. However, since all parties of the intratrinitarian covenant are present at the determination of the eternal decrees, that decretive predestinating is at the same time an actual eternal covenanting of the persons of the Godhead with each other with respect to their relationships in all that they decree concerning creation and redemption.

It was in that eternal covenant that the cosmic kingdom of glory was granted to the Son as the reward for his faithful execution of the work the Father gave him to do (cf. Luke 22:29; John 17:4, 5). This covenantal commitment to the Son was renewed in the course of the historical administration of the Covenant of Grace.12 It came to earthly expression in the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants: Christ was the promised seed of Abraham to whom pertained the promise of kingship (Gal. 3:16) and Christ was the son of David to whom the dynastic promises of the Davidic covenant were directed. What Zech. 6:9-15 prophesies is the Father's fulfillment of the eternal covenant by bestowing the promised kingdom grant on the Son who came to earth as Jesus, the Christ of God, the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matt. 1:1), and obediently carried out the stipulated task.

II. Heavenly Throne (Zech. 6:13c-e)

A. Enthronement of the Priest-King. Following the quatrain on kingship and the temple of Yahweh is a bicolon (Zech. 6:13c and d), in which the parallelism of the two cola is established by the shared phrase, "by his throne" ('al kise 'o).13 This pair is capped by a climactic third colon (v. 13e), which is the apex of the entire prophetic celebration of the glory of the messianic Branch.

Throughout the interpretation of the symbolism of the crowned high priest in terms of the Branch (vv. 12, 13a, b), he, the messianic priest-king, is the subject of all the verbs. Certainly he continues to be the subject in v. 13c: "and he shall sit and rule," which echoes the declarations of his reception of the royal office in vv. 12c and 13b. And there is no good reason to read v. 13d: "there will be a priest by his throne," as though there were some other priestly figure standing by the side of the enthroned king. The messianic Branch is himself this priest, the antitype of Joshua the high priest, and the intrusion of another priest alongside Christ, the priest-king, would be superfluous at best. It also requires that the phrase 'al kise 'o be taken in a different sense in v. 13d than in v. 13c. The only warranted translation of wehayah kohen in v. 13d is: "and he will be a priest."

Having rejected the notion that different individuals are referred to in v. 13c and d, we face the question of the meaning of the phrase "between the two of them" in v. 13e. The traditional view, rightly holding that the Branch is both king and priest, would explain the problematic "two of them" by personifying the two offices of Christ as two individuals. But this view proves unsatisfactory. If, as it assumes, "his throne" in v. 13c and d is the Branch's throne,14 then, if the royal figure of v. 13c and the priestly figure of v. 13d are treated as two persons, we are left with the odd imagery of two figures sitting on one throne. Jer. 33:14-18, which prophesies of the Davidic kingship and Levitical priesthood continuing together forever in Christ, the priest-king, uses the more appropriate imagery of the actual typological situation, with the king sitting on his throne and the priests ministering before the Lord in his temple. Moreover, the traditional view is mistaken in its appeal to vision five as another instance of the representation of Christ's twofold office of priest-king by two separate figures, the "two sons of oil" symbolized by the two trees (Zech. 4:11-14). For the two trees there symbolize the prophetic office.15

For a more satisfactory solution of the problem raised by "the two of them" (v. 13e), we must return to the phrase 'al kise 'o in v. 13c and d and reconsider the question of the antecedent of "his"—usually taken to be the king. In the structure of vv. 12 and 13 there are three pairs of clauses, each marked by the repetition of a key term. The repetition focuses attention on "the temple of Yahweh" in the first pair (vv. 12d and 13a) and on "his throne" in the third pair (v. 13c and d), while the middle pair (v. 13a and b), marked by the repeated personal pronoun "he" (hu'), overlaps the first and links it to the third by emphasizing that the Branch is the common subject: he (hu') builds the temple and he (hu') is the one invested with the right to the throne. The connection thus made between the throne and the temple of Yahweh argues for the conclusion that the throne, like the temple, is to be identified as Yahweh's. Other evidence of the bond of the throne and temple supports this conclusion. Architecturally, temple and throne belong together. The temple is a sacred palace; it houses God's throne. The Lord identifies the eschatological temple as "the place of my throne" (Ezek. 43:7). Indeed, the throne and temple coalesce in the heavenly city, the identity of both of them being absorbed by the New Jerusalem, the city which as a whole is the temple so that there is no separate temple there (Rev. 21:22), the city which is called "The Throne of the Lord" (Jer. 3:17). That "his throne," the coronation site of Messiah in Zech. 6:13c and d, refers to Yahweh's throne is confirmed by the fact that the throne that
Messiah's heavenly reign is such a peaceful condition of prosperity interpreted, the idea is that the object into which he was being taken up. It was also a token preview of the Glory of vision. Jesus' followers the endoxate Son subserves the original creational purpose, redemptively enhancing intimate family fellowship of God with his people for his wisdom and power. When, after dwelling with God himself (Rev. 21:22), that is, according to Scriptural (cf. Psalm 82)—behold and reflect back God's a temple, a place creation. It was for the manifestation of that transcendent Glory that the had with the Father before the world was (John 17:5). That eternal divine Glory is knowable by us only as it is manifested within the creation. It was for the manifestation of that transcendent Glory that the world was created. Heaven and earth thus have the character of a temple, a place where God's Glory-Presence is revealed, a place where priests angels and men made in Elohim likeness (cf. Psalm 82)—behold and reflect back God's Glory, where they worship and adore him.

What an astounding advance is marked by Christ's priesthood. It was the greatest privilege afforded by the old covenant cult that the high priest might enter the earthly holy of holies, he alone, once a year (Heb. 9:7), to stand and minister before the throne of God. But to Christ, the royal priest, it is given to enter the true temple above, to be continually in the heavenly holy of holies, and—the utterly astonishing thing—to ascend the throne and share in the Glory of God between the cherubim (cf. Heb. 10:11, 12). In contemplation of this priest-king, fairer than the children of men, arrayed in divine glory and majesty, the psalmist exults: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Ps. 45:7 [Eng.6]).

B. Christ and the Glory-Spirit Temple. In his ascension and heavenly enthronement Christ received from the Father the Glory he rightfully claimed in anticipation of his obedience unto the death of the Cross, the Glory identifiable as the Father's own self, the Glory the Son had with the Father before the world was (John 17:5). That eternal divine Glory is knowable by us only as it is manifested within the creation. It was for the manifestation of that transcendent Glory that the world was created. Heaven and earth thus have the character of a temple, a place where God's Glory-Presence is revealed, a place where priests angels and men made in Elohim likeness (cf. Psalm 82)—behold and reflect back God's Glory, where they worship and adore him.

According to Scriptural representations, the cosmic temple is not simply a place where God manifests his Glory; it is actually identified with God himself (Rev. 21:22), that is, with the self-manifestation of God within creation. (Needless to say, the intention is not that God is identical with creation in a pantheistic sense.) More precisely, this Glory-temple is identified with the realm of heaven, the Glory-dimensioned realm presently invisible to mortals but to be opened to the redeemed at the Consummation. Created in the beginning and continuing forever, the cosmic Glory-temple, as God's own self-manifestation, constitutes a perpetual epiphany, a permanent entombing of the divine Presence.

In pre-Consummation earth history the heavenly Glory-Presence has appeared occasionally in localized symbolic fashion in the form of the theophanic Glory-cloud. This earthly projection is identified in the Bible as the Spirit, and accordingly the heavenly reality, while a trinitarian manifestation, is more particularly identified with the Spirit.

There is then an eternally continuing Glory-embodiment of God's Spirit-Presence in creation, shaping creation and constituting it a temple. The primal creation event that brought this Glory-Spirit epiphany into existence (Gen. 1:1) may be called the endoxation of the Son. Incarnate Son and endoxate Spirit are both living embodiments of the God of Glory.

Each of these manifestations of the divine Presence is also the temple of God, and since the temple is God's dwelling place, each is a divine tabernacle among us. Each is an Immanuel (God-with-us) Presence. Not for the first time does the immanuel principle come to expression in redemptive history. In the original act of creation God manifested this divine eagerness to welcome his creatures into his dwelling place, to gather them as children to his bosom. Creation was as much an exhibition of God's tender, condescending love as of his wisdom and power. When, after the Fall, God yet so loved the world that he sent his Son, incarnate Immanuel, it was to restore the intimate family fellowship of God with his people for which the endoxation of the Spirit was originally designed. The incarnation of the Son subserves the original creational purpose, redemptively enhancing the manifestation of the divine love present from the beginning in the endoxate Spirit.

Exaltation to the heavenly temple, filled and formed by the Glory of the endoxate Spirit, was the reward of the incarnate Son. That Glory-Spirit temple was the Glory of the Father's own self, to which the Son returned. It was in the midst of the temple throne that the priest-king Branch took his place as God's "fellow" (Zech. 13:7) at the right hand of the Father.

Jesus' followers witnessed his exaltation to the Glory-Spirit realm in his ascension (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:2, 9, 10). They beheld him transported above on the ascension cloud—the theophanic cloud which was the projection of the Glory-Spirit into the field of mortal vision. The mode of the Lord's departure into heaven thus afforded an anticipatory glimpse of the Glory of the invisible Spirit-temple into which he was being taken up. It was also a token preview of the Glory of the Father in which he will reappear at his parousia (Acts 1:11).

C. God's Covenant Oath (Psalm 110). "The counsel (esah) of peace will be between the two of them" (Zech. 6:13c). As usually interpreted, the idea is that the object of the consultation is to promote a state of peace for God's people. Certainly the effect of Messiah's heavenly reign is such a peaceful condition of prosperity and righteousness in his kingdom (cf., e.g., Ps. 72:3, 7; Ezek. 34:25;
might then have been similar to that of his great
temple(s) connected with the temple, over which he was in charge.

Josiah was then a temple official, a steward of precious commodities.

The preposition "for," which is prefixed to requisitioned objects—the "memorial" in Zech. 6:14.

"where they have come from Babylon." (7) The receipt for supplying the requisitioned objects—the "memorial" in Zech. 6:14.

A. Typological Requisitioning. The role of the individuals named in Zech. 6:10 and (with some modifications) in v. 14 has been construed in different ways. It is plain enough, however, that they (at least, the first three) have come from the Babylonian captivity with a donation of precious metals. As the prophetic significance of their action indicates (cf. v. 15), their contribution was intended to support the restoration of the temple cultus in Jerusalem. Crucial for our understanding of the essential character of the episode described in CH is the role of the fourth member of the group, Josiah ben Zephaniah. That is clarified by two kinds of evidence: the genre of Zech. 6:9-11 and the designation of Josiah in v. 14.

Exhibited in Zech. 6:9-11 are the distinctive elements and technical terms that characterize requisition doockets. We may illustrate from a group of ostraca (shards inscribed in ink) found at Arad in the northern Negeb, dating from the end of the Israelite monarchy. At that time Arad was a royal citadel and administrative center. In the archives of Eliashib ben Eshyahu, an official there in charge of supplies, taxes, and tithes, were requisition documents authorizing the bearers to obtain specified provisions stored at the fortress. These ostraca-slips were then kept by Eliashib as evidence of the transaction. One such text addressed to a certain Nahum reads: "To Nahum, and now: Come to the house of Eliashib ben Eshyahu and take from him 1 (jar of) oil and send (it) to me quickly and seal it with your seal." On the back of the ostraco Eliashib recorded the date of delivery as a kind of receipt: "On the 24th of the month gave Nahum oil by the hand of the Kitti, 1 (jar)."

Zech. 6:9-11 matches the pattern of this requisition form in these particulars: (1) The address to the bearer of the requisition, Zechariah (v. 9). (2) The command sequence: "come... take from." (3) The reference to the "house" of the steward and his name with his patronymic, ben Zephaniah. (4) The objects to be taken: silver and gold. (5) The disposition of the requisitioned articles: to be made into a crown. (6) Temporal reference: "that day," i.e., the day of the exiles' arrival at the "house"—the last clause of v. 10 may be translated "where they have come from Babylon" but also "when they have come (there) from Babylon." (7) The receipt for supplying the requisitioned objects—the "memorial" in Zech. 6:14.

The genre of Zech. 6:9-11 is clearly that of a requisition docket and Josiah ben Zephaniah emerges in this context as a treasury steward. Confirming this identification of his role is the designation for him in v. 14. In place of the name Josiah is lehen. The I- is usually taken as the preposition "for," which is prefixed to each of the other three names. It should, however, be taken together with the hn and this Ihn has been shown to be an Akkadian loanword, the Neo-Assyrian lathinu (also attested in the Aramaic lehen), used as a title for a court or temple official, a steward of precious commodities.

Josiah was then a temple official. Such an office was occupied in the days of Hezekiah by Kore ben Imnah, who was set over the storage and distribution of the offerings (2 Chr. 31:14). Josiah's "house" does not refer to his residence but to the storage or treasury room(s) connected with the temple, over which he was in charge. It was naturally to this "house" of Josiah that the returning exiles brought their treasures for the temple. And it would have been at that (treasury) house that Zechariah received through Josiah's offices the exiles' donation as requisitioned by the Lord.

It has been shown to be possible that Josiah ben Zephaniah was the great grandson of Zephaniah, a priest at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, the "second priest" next to Seraiah, the chief priest (2 Kgs. 25:18ff.). Josiah's relationship to Joshua the high priest might then have been similar to that of his great grandfather to Seraiah. Such a priestly identity of Josiah and the location of his treasury
The divine prerogative of requisition, operative throughout the history of God's relationship to Israel, was the expression of the Lord's claims as covenant suzerain. Through authorized agents, like Moses or the high priest (cf. Exod. 25:2ff.; Num. 7:5; 31:51-54; 2 Kgs. 12:5ff. [Eng. 4ff.]), he required of his vassal people due tribute in the form of both regular and special offerings. Thus, at the inaugurating of the old covenant, the Lord through the covenant mediator requisitioned from the people an offering of precious materials to be used for constructing the tabernacle, site of his earthly throne and replica of his heavenly palace (Exod. 25:2-9; 35:4-36:7). Beyond their possessions, the Lord claimed the covenant people themselves for the ministry of his holy palace. An application of this was the obligation that all the first-born males, representing the nation, be consecrated to the service of Yahweh in his sanctuary. In this connection, requisition took the form of a redemption tax exacted for the number of the first-born of Israel in excess of the number of the Levites, who were substituted for the first-born to perform the cultic ministry (Num. 3:11ff.). Requisitioning the people themselves was actually another instance of requisitioning the materials for the building of God's royal sanctuary, for God makes his sanctified people to be a holy, living temple for his Presence in the Spirit.

Such is the requisition pattern that we find again in the CH episode. Through his representative, the prophet Zechariah, Yahweh takes tribute of gold and silver from the covenant people. As we have seen, the priestly "house" of Josiah is simply the administrative agency for storage and distribution. Though Zechariah obtains the silver and gold directly from Josiah, he is also said to take it from the three from Babylon, who represent the far off people of the Lord (vv. 10, 11). The praiseworthy participation of all four of them is underscored by the statement in v. 14 that the crown made from their donation was to be kept in the temple as a memorial (zikkaroh) to them, each of the four being named. This memorial function of the tributary crown corresponds, as observed above, to the receipt-notice appended to the requisition docket kept in the storage "house." Further, in keeping with the use to which Israel's requisitioned offerings were regularly put, the tribute in Zech. 6:9-15 was devoted to the cultic program, specifically, to the special ceremonial crowning of Joshua, the high priest.

The antitypical, messianic dimension of this requisition event must not be missed. Joshua, recipient of the tribute-crown, was a type of the Branch, the coming messianic priest-king. In effect, therefore, these returning exiles were by faith bringing tribute to Christ. Their mission from afar was akin to that of the wise men who came to Jerusalem from the east with their treasures to worship the one born king of the Jews (Matt. 2:1-11). They were participating in advance in the eschatological crowning of the Lamb upon the throne with many crowns.

That such an antitypical perspective is present in this episode is corroborated by Zech. 6:15a. There, the tributary pilgrimage of the exiles from Babylon as memorialized in the crown in the temple is said to be prophetic of an eschatological coming of those far off to help build the temple of the Lord. It is to the fulfillment of that prophecy that we shall now turn, focusing on the sovereignty requisitioning activity of Christ as an aspect of his exaltation.

B. Christ, the Temple Requisitioner. The requisitioner in the Zech. 6:9-15 episode is the Angel of the Lord, for (as is indicated, for one thing, by the validation formula in v. 15b) he is the divine speaker who commissions Zechariah to take the tribute from the house of Josiah. In this typological event the pre-incarnate Christ is claiming from the men returned from Babylon the tributary honor due to him, the royal crown to which he is entitled. And in connection with this he prophesies of the later antitypical requisitioning would engage in as the incarnate Christ on a world-wide scale (v. 15a).

The Gospels picture Jesus as a sovereign requisitioner even during the days of his earthly ministry. A particularly interesting instance is his commandeering of the covenant-ratifying donkey for his royal procession into Jerusalem. Simply say: "The Lord has need of it" (Mark 11:3). And a fundamental form of the Lord's requisitioning was his calling the disciples one by one to leave all and give their lives to him.

Jesus is also portrayed as a requisitioner on the larger canvas of covenant history, in relation to old covenant Israel and to the new Israel, the church of the new covenant.

In the vineyard parable of Matt. 21:33-41, God's requisitioning of the covenant nation through the prophets generation after generation is depicted under the image of the lord of the vineyard requiring of the stewards the fruit in its season. He presents his claims through a succession of servants and finally through his son. The son presents the requisition demand both as representative of the father and as the heir. Such was the mission of Jesus to Israel in his first advent: he came calling upon the covenant nation to submit to him, their Lord. Israel's rebellious response is prophesied in the parable. It also announces God's subsequent taking of the vineyard-kingdom from Israel, an execution of the curse by which the old covenant had been sanctioned.

In Zechariah 11, the hinge passage in the second part of the book, the prophet foretold this future tragic confrontation of Jesus and Israel. As in CH, here again in Zechariah 11 the prophet is told to enact the role of Messiah the Requisitioner. After performing his services as shepherd-ruler of the flock he demands his wages and is given as his kingly tribute a scornful thirty pieces of silver (v. 12). Again, as in the vineyard parable, the sequel to the rejection of the divine requisitioner is covenant judgment. What Israel refuses to give is taken away from them as an act of judicial dispossession (vv. 13ff.).

But there is another chapter in the history of covenant requisitioning. The kingdom taken from the old Israel is given by the Lord and heir of the vineyard to another people (Matt. 21:43) in a new covenant, a covenant of grace replacing the old covenant of works which was broken (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:7-13; 10:9). When promulgating the new covenant (Matt. 28:18-20), Jesus declared that absolute authority was given him in heaven and earth (v. 18). Thereby he claimed to be Lord of the covenant with the divine right of sovereign requisition. Then he gave his disciples the commission of global requisitioning in his name (v. 19a). Zechariah had prophesied that Jerusalem's king, who would come riding on the requisitioned donkey and whose dominion would be to the ends of the earth (cf. Ps.
In the light of his possession in the sense that a chosen company from battle spoils as it were, who accept promised to those his king over them will be enforced in a shattering eruption of the Lord and his Annointed (vv. 1-3). God derisively earth for your possession” Son, this complex of concepts that we have found formula (2:15b [Eng. 11b]). prophecy that those from far off will enter into covenant (2:17 [Eng. 13]), and immediately divine portion (segullah), redeemed from Egypt "to be unto him a people of inheritance" (nahalah). his "portion" (heleg). This identification of the covenant community as God's chosen inheritance is prominent in the visions of Zechariah that CH is recapitulating. The first vision contains the assurance that Yahweh will again choose Jerusalem as his own, the site of his temple (1:17). In the fourth vision God's election of Jerusalem is appealed to by the Angel of the Lord in his rebuke of Satan (3:2). And in the third vision (2:5-17 [Eng. 1-13]) the divine choosing of Jerusalem is explained in inheritance terms: "Yahweh will inherit (nahal) Judah as his portion (heleg); for his sanctuary ground he will choose Jerusalem" (2:16 [Eng. 12]). This is the more significant for our recognition of the divine inheritance concept in CH because of other correspondences of vision three to CH. As in CH, Messiah speaks as universal Lord (2:17 [Eng. 13]), and immediately associated with the inheritance theme in 2:16 [Eng. 12] are the two elements of 6:15a, b, namely: a prophecy that those from far off will enter into covenant with the Lord and his people (2:15a [Eng. 11a]) and, second, the attestation formula (2:15b [Eng. 11b]).

For the idea of the people of God as the inheritance of the Messiah in particular, we turn to Psalm 2, where we discover much the same complex of concepts that we have found in CH and in vision three, which CH echoes. In Psalm 2, right after God's assertion that he has set his Anointed (cf. v. 2) as king on Zion (v.6), Messiah cites the decree of Yahweh on the occasion of the coronation: "You are my Son, this day have I begotten you. Ask of me and I will give you the nations for your possession (nahalah) and the utmost parts of the earth for your possession" (vv. 7-8). This decree was proclaimed in confrontation with the nations conspiring against the suzerainty of the Lord and his Anointed (vv. 1-3). God derisively rebukes the folly of their rebellious council (vv. 4-6) and asserts that the dominion of his king over them will be enforced in a shattering eruption of His wrath (v. 9; cf. v. 12b). But along with this threat, a directive is given to earth's kings to exchange the follow of revolt for the wisdom of allegiance to the Son (vv. 10, 11, 12a), and blessing instead of curse is promised to those who commit themselves under his protectorate (v. 12c). The prospect emerges here of a remnant from the nations, battle spoils as it were, who accept Messiah's overtures of mercy as he speaks peace to the nations. Messiah thus receives the nations as his possession in the sense that a chosen company from the ends of the earth become his own covenant people, his precious inheritance (v. 8).

In the light of the passages closely related to CH, those who are described in Zech. 6:15a as coming from afar to take part in the temple building are seen to be Messiah's chosen portion, the inheritance which he, as exalted Lord, appropriates through world-wide gospel requisitioning.

C. God's Covenant Decree (Psalm 2). In dealing with each aspect of Christ's exaltation, we have traced it to a covenant transaction—his
the specific probationary task whose accomplishment waging of the Lord's battle of the Lord (Zech. 6:9) of the Lord's covenant with the Father to become a second Adam meant Adam (Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 15:45-47).

Priestly it is Christ, the Servant-Branch, as typically portrayed by the individual in Zechariah's fourth vision the Messiah's role as the individual representative probationer is revealed therefor says that God's kingdom of glory is the reward for the probationary obedience of the elect corporately. In the light of the total Scriptural revelation we understand, however, that this act of probationary obedience is performed not by them but by Christ their federal representative—by the one for the many. It is a righteousness of God imputed to the elect by grace through faith. In Zechariah's fourth vision the Messiah's role as the individual representative probationer is revealed more explicitly. There again the attainment of heaven is made the reward for the obedient discharge of a specific duty, the guarding of God's sanctuary (Zech. 3:7), and it is Christ, the Servant-Branch, as typically portrayed by the individual figure of Joshua the high priest, who must fulfill this probationary priestly mission. What we have then in Zech. 6:15c is the pre-incarnate Christ directing his people in faith to himself as their vicarious probationer, who secures for them God's approbation and so puts them beyond probation.

The function of probationer that Christ assumed as the true Israel-Servant was more basically his in terms of his identity as second Adam (Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 15:45-47). The covenant with the first Adam was a works-probation arrangement. Hence, for the Son to covenant with the Father to become a second Adam meant he must win the promised messianic exaltation (which he shares with his own) as the reward for a victory of obedience in a probationary mission. This is implicit in CH in the Branch's role of building the temple of the Lord (Zech. 6:12c, 13a), for, as we have seen, the prelude to and qualification for temple construction was regular the faithful waging of the Lord's battle against his enemies. Messiah's temple building presupposes his victorious warfare against Satan. That was the specific probationary task whose accomplishment established his right to requisition the materials and build God's temple, and...
As advertised by his birth under the Torah covenant of works (Gal. 4:4), Christ came to earth as one under the intratrinitarian covenant of works. It was by fulfilling the probation of that supernal works covenant that he became the mediator of the Covenant of Grace, the covenant in which his people become by faith joint-heirs with their Lord of the eternal kingdom of glory (Heb. 9:14; Rom. 8:17). Law is thus foundational to gospel; gospel-grace honours the demands of divine justice as definitively expressed in law covenant. In Rom. 3:31 Paul makes this point forcefully: “Do we then make the law of none effect through faith? God forbid; nay we establish the law.” The apostle is not concerned here with the normative nature of the Mosaic laws but with the law as a covenant governed by the principle of works in contrast to the gospel with its principle of grace. And even though he is arguing that we are justified not by works but by grace through faith, he insists emphatically on the continuing validity of the works principle as foundational to the gospel order. It is by the obedience of the one that the many are made righteous (Rom. 5:19).

Messiah's exaltation would follow humiliation. The way to the Sabbath throne on Har Magedon led through the abyss of Gehenna. As stipulated in his covenant with the Father, the Son must become incarnate in human likeness and be obedient unto the death of the Cross (Phil. 2:5-11). It would be because of his obedience as the suffering Servant of the Lord that he was lifted up very high (Isa. 52:13-53:12). In CH, Messiah's descent prior to his ascent is intimated by the designating of him as the Branch who comes forth from the human line of David (Zech. 6:12a, b; cf. Isa. 53:2), the Branch who is the suffering Servant (Zech. 3:8).

Sharpening the point that Christ earns his exaltation as a due reward is the identification of his inheritance possession as something he has purchased. “Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people for his own possession” (Titus 2:13, 14; cf. Eph. 1:14). Giving the redeemed to him as his allotted portion is an act of justice, pure and simple. They belong to him by virtue of his paying the purchase price as stipulated in the supernal covenant of grant.

And the purchase price itself tells us again of the humiliation and suffering that was the appointed way to Christ's ultimate exaltation. "You were redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish or spot" (1 Pet. 1:18, 19; cf. Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12). It was "with his own blood" that the Lord acquired the church, his bride (Acts 20:28; cf. Rev. 7:14, 19:7, 8, 21:2, 9). This note sounds forever in the music of heaven acclaiming the exalted Redeemer: “You are worthy to take the book and to open its seal; for you were slain and have purchased to God by your blood (a throng) from every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev. 5:9). "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing" (Rev. 5:12).

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End Notes

* This study of Zech. 6:9-15 concludes the series on Zechariah's night visions begun in Kerux 5:2 (September 1990).

1 CH (central hinge) will be used below as an alternative designation for Zech. 6:9-15.

2 On the introductory formula in v. 9, cf. Zech. 1:1, 7; 4:8; 7:4; 8:1, 18. From Zech. 6:15b it appears that the word of the Lord that comes to Zechariah in CH is a speaking of the pre-incarnate Word. The same phenomenon is found in Zech. 4:8, 9. Cf. Kerux 7:2 (September 1992) 16-18; 7:3 (December 1992) 50, 51, and 9:2 (September 1994) 3. It will be seen below that v. 9 also functions as an element in a particular genre we shall identify.

3 In this respect CH is similar to vision five. Cf. Kerux 9:1 (May 1994) 3.


5 Because of the resumptive nature of much of the content of CH, our treatment of some matters will be cursory, with frequent references to our previous studies of the visions for more detailed discussion.


9 For hod as glorious raiment, cf. Job 40:10 and Ps. 104:1. Note also the use of the verb for wearing the ephod (1 Sam. 2:28; 14:3; 22:18).

10 The specific terminology of covenant and oath is applied to this arrangement in Pss. 89:4, 29, 35 [Eng. 3, 28, 34]; 132:11, 12. At the coronation of Joash, bestowal of the crown was accompanied by presentation of a covenant witness document, which would identify the kingship as authorized and regulated by the Lord (2 Kgs. 11:12). Note also the parallelism of crown and God's covenant with the king in Ps. 89:40 [Eng. 39].

11 Variousely designated by covenant theologians, we may refer to it as the eternal or supernal covenant in distinction from temporal, earthly covenants made with men. Cf. Kerux 8:1 (May 1993) 33; 9:2 (September 1994) 16; 9:3 (December 1994) 32.

12 The Covenant of Grace is to be distinguished from the eternal intratrinitarian covenant of works, for it differs from it in fundamental respects, including: the parties to the covenant, the role of the Son, and the principle of inheritance.
13 On the translation of the preposition 'al, see below.

14 The preposition 'al must then mean "on" in v.13c, and so too in v. 13d, for 'al kise 'o is to be rendered the same way in these paired clauses.


16 Cf. e.g., Ps. 110:1; Acts 2:33, 34; 7:55, 56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 12:2; Rev. 3:21; 12:5 (which speaks of the Messiah being caught up "to God and to his throne").

17 This interpretation is anciently attested in the church.


20 Note in Acts 1:10 the customary association of angelic beings with the Glory-cloud.

21 This episode in CH provides a transition to the introduction to the second half of the book (Zechariah 7 and 8). There again we read of the visit of a delegation of Israelites to the Jerusalem temple which becomes the occasion to foretell how peoples of all nations would one day make their way to Jerusalem to seek Yahweh (8:18-23). Like CH these introductory chapters open and close with sections that refer directly to the delegation and their activity.


26 On contributions of those in exile to the postexilic restoration of the temple, cf. 2 Chr. 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1-6; 2:68, 69.

27 The poll-tax atonement money taken from the Israelites and used for the service of the tabernacle, God's royal court, is also said to serve as a memorial, reminding the Lord that the ransom had been paid for them (Exod. 30:16; cf. Col. 2:14). Numbers 31 records an episode with similar requisition features. Moses and Eleazar are commanded to take for the Lord a specified portion of the victory spoils from the battle against the Midianites (cf. Gen. 14:16-20). A special tribute of gold presented by the military leaders was deposited in the tent of meeting as a memorial of the Israelites before the Lord (v. 54).

28 The themes of CH and the third vision (2:5-17 [Eng. 1-13]) correspond closely. Christ is presented in both passages as the sovereign summoning his people from all the earth, in the third vision under the model of the kerux, and in CH, of the requisitioner. Cf. Kerux 7:3 (December 1992) 39-61.

29 For this use of bayit, cf., e.g., 1 Chr. 28:11; Neh. 10:39 [Eng. 38]; Mal. 3:10.


33 Similarly in Zechariah's third vision the hostile nations are threatened with judgment (2:13 [Eng. 9]), in the midst of which there will, however, be a conversion of Gentiles, a redemptive spoiling of the nations. By this despoiling which is a discipling many are brought into covenant with the Lord as his people, his chosen inheritance (2:15, 16 [Eng. 11,12]). Cf. Kerux 7:3 (December 1992) 47.

34 In Hebrews 1, where Ps. 2:7 is quoted (v. 5) in an exposition of the exaltation of the Son, he is described as "the heir of all things"(v. 2).

35 For our previous discussion of this subject see Kerux 8:1 (May 1993) 33; 8:2 (September 1993) 20-22; 9:2 (September 1994) 15, 16; 9:3 (December 1994) 27ff.
A state of indefectible holiness is the necessary precondition of entering into the eternally secure felicity of the Sabbath-Glory (cf. I Pet. 1:4). Thus, under the original covenant in Eden divine approbation upon successful probation would have been accompanied by transformation to the prerequisite state of confirmed righteousness.

As Paul's appeal to Lev. 18:5 shows (Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:12), a legal principle of meritorious works was operating in the Torah covenant opposite to the gospel principle of grace.

Thus under the original covenant in Eden divine approbation upon successful probation would have been accompanied by transformation to the prerequisite state of confirmed righteousness.

It is God's covenantal word that defines divine justice. Analysis of God's covenant with Adam has been plagued with a tendency to judge the terms stipulated in this covenant by some extraneous standard and to pronounce the value of the award offered disproportionate to the value of the service. Thereby any "merit" still attributed to the performance of the stipulated duty in this arrangement (confusingly dubbed "gracious") is radically qualified, the law-gospel contrast is changed into a continuum, the absoluteness of God's justice is relativized, and the foundation of the gospel is destroyed.

The imagery of the seven-sealed book evokes the legal sphere of testament and inheritance.

Scripture facts on Christ, The Exaltation Of. Bible encyclopedia for study of the Bible. The Second Advent. The exaltation of Christ is to be completed by His coming again at the close of the dispensation, to complete His redemptive work and judge the world, and so to establish the final Kingdom of God. This belief has found a place in all the ecumenical symbols. Theology has ever included it in its eschatology. It is clear that the apostles and the early church expected the second coming of the Lord as an immediate event, the significance of which, and especially the effect of the nonfulfillment of which expectation, does not fall within the province of this article to consider.