

# The Counsel of Peace

## *The Hinge of Zechariah*

- <sup>9</sup> And the word of the LORD came to me [saying]<sup>1</sup>:
- <sup>10</sup> "Take from the exiles Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon, and go the same day to the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah.
- <sup>11</sup> Take from them silver and gold, and make a crown, and set it on the head of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.
- <sup>12</sup> And say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD.
- <sup>13</sup> It is he who shall build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.'"
- <sup>14</sup> And the crown shall be in the temple of the LORD as a reminder to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the son of Zephaniah.
- <sup>15</sup> "And 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. And this shall come to pass, if you will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God."

### **Zechariah 6:9-15**

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<sup>1</sup> "Saying" is in the Hebrew (*amar*) and Greek (*legon*), but the ESV and a handful of English translations leave it out. See the discussion in the sermon.

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## The Center

**THE CENTER.** In **basketball**, if you have a super tall, gifted center, you will dominate. **Wilt Chamberlin**, the only person to ever score 100 points in an NBA game, was a center. **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar**, the highest all time scorer in NBA history, was a center. If you add to these **Shaquille O'Neal**, **Bill Russell**, and **Tim Duncan**, you have 28 NBA Championships between them. In **target shooting**, be it archery, darts, or guns, the goal is to hit the center. If you can do that consistently, you have mastered your craft. In **Astronomy**, it used to be thought that the earth was the center—meaning that it was the most important focal point of the universe. Today, the Sun is the center of the solar system and its importance is obvious to life on earth. In **aviation**, the Area Control Center is the facility that controls the flights of all the planes in the sky. The same goes for things like Grand Central Station. In **politics**, Washington DC is the central location from which all Federal decisions are made in the United States. The point is, the center is a big deal.

In the Bible, the **center** is the Lord Jesus Christ. Thinking that law was the center, Jesus told the Pharisees, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me” (John 5:39). You find sermons and tracts that trace him through Scripture. One says, “In Genesis He is the Seed of the Women. In Exodus He is the Passover Lamb. In Leviticus He is the High Priest. In Numbers He is the Pillar of Cloud by day and the Pillar of Fire by night. In Deuteronomy He is the Prophet like unto Moses. In Joshua He is the Captain of our Salvation.” And so on.<sup>2</sup> Like the early church and the Reformation, this sermon “gets it.”

The book of Zechariah has a **center**. And the more I learn about this book’s focus and its structure, the more intriguing it becomes. You can outline the book in ways that move from the very simple to the vastly complex. Simply speaking, you have a series of seven “visions” followed by two “burdens.” Between them is the center.

Visions                  Center                  Burdens

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.forthethepeaceofjerusalem.com/he-is.html>

(1-6)

(7-14)

Adding a little more detail, the series of visions have a short introduction, and the burdens have a much longer introduction. Still, in the middle, is the center.

Introduction  
(1:1-6)

Visions  
(1:7-6:8)

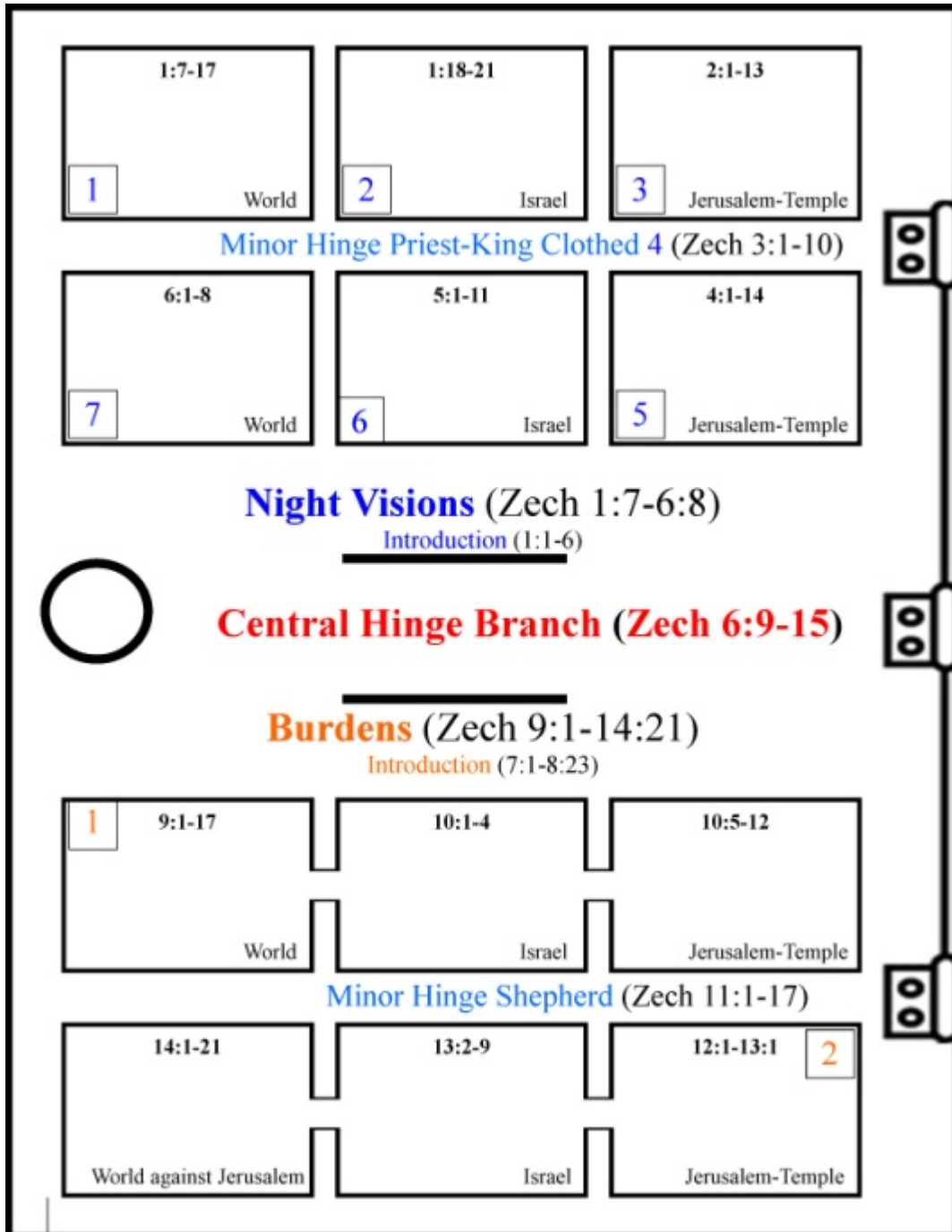
Center

Introduction  
(7:1-8:23)

Burdens  
(9:1-14:21)

The truly fascinating thing is to look at the vast complexity of the way the material in the book is organized. It is like a door with three hinges. The door has twelve “panels” (getting the idea of “hinges” and “panels” from Meredith Kline). They are organized into two sets of “six.” The first set of six are visions 1-7, with the “hinge” being the middle (forth) vision. The second set of six are the two burdens, each divided into three natural parts. Between these two burdens is the third hinge. Amazingly, these panels line up, not only so that the visions parallel one another, but so that the different panels of the visions parallel the corresponding panels of the burdens. In other words, the book is a neatly organized door with repeating parallel

themes. But like the easier ways of outlining the book, the center is still the same.



This center of Zechariah's book is our passage today. Curiously, its theme is the same as the other two hinges that hold the visions and burdens together. That theme concerns the same central person, and that person is the same person who is at the center of the rest of the Bible. It is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Before even getting into what this passage is about specifically, I believe this whole idea of the center should strike you like a bolt of lightning. How glorious it is that not only does Jesus teach that all of the Scripture is about him, the OT itself is structured in book after book—before he ever came to earth as a man—in such a way that it proves his teaching true. For Zechariah to do this repeatedly throughout his own book, before Jesus comes in human flesh, is one of the most outstanding proofs of the inspiration of the Bible I can think of, for how can a book be about a real person who has yet to even be born? How can the central, most important parts of the book be about Jesus Christ in very specific prophetic terms and not blow everyone's mind? How is that even possible? Let's turn our

attention to these now so that our faith might be strengthened by looking at the Word of God.

## The Word Came Saying

It begins with a phrase that began the book (Zech 1:1) and the first vision (1:7): “The word<sup>3</sup> of the LORD came to me” (6:9).<sup>4</sup> The exact same Hebrew phrase appears in 4:8. Curiously, the ESV translates the two verses *differently*. It leaves one entire word out of its translation here that it retained in the earlier identical verse. Other translations (NAS, KJV, YLT, etc) do not leave the word off. The word is “*amar*,” and it means “saying.”

Is that a big deal? Listen to two translations side by side and see if you think it effects the way you hear the verse. “This message from ADONAI came to me:” (CJB). Now this, “And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying:” (JPS). (These are similar to the differences between the ESV and something like the KJV). The former simply sounds like a message is being delivered, maybe in the mail or

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<sup>3</sup> This is *logos* in the LXX. No English translation I consulted capitalizes the “word.”

<sup>4</sup> “The word of the LORD” also appears in 4:6 and 4:8 (the fifth vision), but neither time is a new vision introduced.

something. The latter sounds like “The Word” is talking! The difference could be seen as the Word is a Person vs. disembodied, impersonal sounds in the prophet’s head.<sup>5</sup> This strikes me as fairly important, given what we know about the Word from the NT, given that we have seen that the Word is the Angel of the LORD already in Zechariah, and given that we are talking about the center of the prophet’s book, which is about Christ! How easy it is even for Christians to not see Christ in places where we have every reason to believe he is to be found. Don’t miss Christ, for it is through him that we have our life. And it is through him that words about him come to pass. What do I mean?

Let’s continue thinking about this. Though back in Chapter 1 we discussed why the Word of the LORD refers to a person, there is another reason here to see this as something more than just words of prophecy. The Word of the LORD is having a [conversation](#) with the prophet. Messages don’t converse. They dictate. Notice the

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<sup>5</sup> The Targum is very impersonal in its interpretation here: “And there was a word of prophecy from the Lord with me, saying...”



language of the speaking Word: “Take from the exiles (10) ... take from them silver and gold (11) ... say to [Joshua the high priest], ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts’ (12) ... [then several verses of prophecy] (13-15) ... And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you ... if you will diligently obey the voice [“Memra” in the Targum] of the LORD your God (15). This does not sound like a set of laws, such as Moses was given. Nor is it purely the prophet jotting down verbatim prophecy that he hears, like you sometimes find in the OT. No, this is a conversation, with the Word saying things, and Zechariah being instructed on what to do.

Amazingly, it concludes with the pronoun “me.” Follow these instructions, the Word says, and you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent “me.” On strictly grammatical terms, I don’t see any way of avoiding this conclusion: The Word is alive and speaking. Christ is having a conversation with Zechariah.

The content of this conversation is truly wondrous and continues our idea of the center being about Christ. First the Word **commands** some things. Then he **prophecies**

some things. Finally, he **cautions** something. The first of these three things itself involves three things. **First**, the prophet is to take something from three newly returned exiles (**10-11a**). **Second**, he is to take what he collects and make something out of it (**11b**). **Third**, he is to find the high priest living in his day—a man we have seen before in this book, and do something with that object he has just made (**11c**).

All of this is profoundly **symbolic**. It is symbolic of the future. It is symbolic of the mysterious work of God in redemption. It is symbolic of the work God had planned from the foundation of the world. It is symbolic of a coming person. It is proof that Zechariah really was visited by God himself. It is to be performed so that you might believe in the only God who is capable of bringing such things to pass.

## The Taking and the Making

So first the Word tells Zechariah to **approach three men**. They are **Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah** (**10**). Though all three names are found in other places of the OT, these three names do not appear together anywhere but here. So

who are they? They were exiles to Babylon who were recently allowed to return to the Promised Land (10).

These three men had returned to Jerusalem on a mission. They had something in their possession. They had “silver and gold” (11). Zechariah was commanded to take it. It is not that they were themselves rich men, much less that Zechariah was suppose to become the first **Robin Hood**, stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. Rather, the silver and gold that they had in their possession was **tribute** that they were themselves bringing back from Babylon. We don't know if it was a gift from the king of Persia or a freewill offering the exiles still in Babylon had been taken up, as they had heard of the rebuilding of the temple in their home land. Ezra reports that both things were happening (**Ezra 6:8; 7:15-16**). King Artaxerxes was freely giving state funds to rebuild a new province in his kingdom, while the Jewish people were freely giving to the rebuilding of the new temple. Whatever the case, there it was, and Zechariah was commanded to **take it** from the three.

At this point, he is told to go to the house of a man named **Josiah** (10). This is not Josiah, the king of Israel, who died hundreds of years earlier. In **vs. 14** he is called “Hen.” Why the two names? Well, often men had two names in the Bible. Perhaps the meaning of the names sheds some light. **Josiah** means, “The LORD Supports” or “The Spared of God.” **Hen** mean “Gracious Gift” or “Goodwill.” If he had these two names, they might draw attention to God’s grace in the returning exiles in using their goodwill offerings to further his kingdom to anyone who knew what the names meant.

So who is this Josiah? One commentator writes, “Perhaps Josiah was a goldsmith who could make the crown that was required. Alternatively, it was at his house that the party from Babylon were staying before they completed their task by handing the material they had brought over to the authorities in Jerusalem.”<sup>6</sup> The point is, they were to take the silver and gold and at this time in the house of Josiah, they were to **make a crown** (11).

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<sup>6</sup> John L. Mackay, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: God’s Restored People*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2003), 135–136.

This crown was then to be **put on the head** of a man named **Joshua**. Joshua is the man we have seen before. He is the standing “high priest” of Israel, and in the middle vision of the seven, he was clothed with beautiful garments by the Angel of the LORD. The focus of that vision was the same as our passage today. It was Christ. The clothing Christ gave him was a sign of the righteousness that we have by faith. It is a sign of being justified, declared not guilty, being made new, and robed in the righteousness of Christ. In a word, it is the Gospel in the OT, something many people would think is a contradiction in terms.

However, he and all of **his friends** (who are unnamed in that chapter) **are considered signs**. This is very important for properly interpreting our passage. “**Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign**” (**Zech 3:8**). In the fourth vision, somehow, they are signs of someone who will be called “**the Branch**.” This same theme is now picked up in the center section of the book which we are looking

at this morning.<sup>7</sup> This is because the whole idea of the symbolism of these men has not ceased.

But before we think about that, think about how Joshua is called “**the high priest**” (6:11). Why is that important? It is because this priest is being given a crown. But crowns (*atarah*) do not go on priest’s heads. They get special turbans (*mitsnepheth*; Ex 28:4). Crowns go on the heads of kings (2 Sam 12:30; 1 Chron 20:2). Priests are obviously not kings.

The implications of this for Israel’s future are stunning. Suddenly, for the first time since Melchizedek, a priest and king are combined together into one person. Subsequently, from time to time a priest or king might have acted in an unofficial capacity in both roles. But the fact of the matter is, to act in an official capacity in both roles was forbidden in the law of Moses in the centuries after Melchizedek. For example, “**When King Uzziah tried to burn incense on the altar of incense, he was punished for his usurpation of the**

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<sup>7</sup> “Branch” is a popular idea in the prophets. Zechariah only talks about it twice, in the first and second “hinges,” thus helping us see that the two passages help to interpret one another.

priests' role (2Ch 26:16–21).”<sup>8</sup> You simply couldn't do this. The offices had to remain separate, because the offices were given separate covenants (Levitical and Davidic) in the days after Abraham.

Since he is already a priest, it is understood that he could act in a priestly capacity, offering sacrifices for sins once the temple was built. The *kingly* work of this high-priest is seen in the prophecy that follows. Zechariah is commanded to say to Joshua, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD’” (Zech 6:12). David was the king who wanted to build the first temple, and David was the king. God gave his son Solomon permission to actually build it, because Solomon was also the king. No peasant, no priest, no prophet could do this work, because temple building is kingly work.

There is a wordplay going on here that is worth mentioning. “He shall branch out from this place” is a

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<sup>8</sup> John L. Mackay, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: God's Restored People*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2003), 137.

word play on his Royal name: The Branch. Again, the imagery of the **tree** is a royal image. From the stump of Jesse the king would come (**Isa 11:1**). The king of Assyria is called a cedar (**Ezek 31:3**). Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon saw himself as a world-tree and all the nations came to him (**Dan 4:10ff**). Branching out from his place is a reference to the scope of his kingdom, extending beyond Jerusalem to the ends of the world.

But first, the temple must be built. The Branch will be its builder. But here's the thing. The temple was already being built!<sup>9</sup> So Joshua is not the Branch. This is a prophecy about the future. A future priest-king with worldwide kingdom is coming. Can anything be more glorious than a prophecy like this? More glorious or more important in a world that is crumbling and rotting away?

We can see this in even more detail by understanding that Joshua is a Levite, hence a priest. He is not from the tribe of Judah. But it is through Judah that Messiah would

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<sup>9</sup> John L. Mackay writes, “**Since the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem was already under way, that cannot be what is referred to.**” In *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: God's Restored People*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2003), 138.



come, not Aaron. Remembering that the men are themselves signs of something else, we now know that Joshua is a sign of the Branch. The Branch will be both priest and king. Joshua's crowning is symbolic of someone else coming in the future. The fact is, Joshua never stood as king of Israel. There was no king in Zechariah's day, except the king Persia.

This is made yet more clear in the next verse. “**Say to him [Joshua]... it is he [the Branch] who shall build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne” (Zech 6:13)**. Zechariah was to tell Joshua that someone named the Branch, someone who is not him, will one day build and rule. For these reasons, in the time between the Zechariah and Jesus, the Jews understood this passage as prophesying about the coming Messiah.

Some speculated that somehow Messiah would be both a Levite and from the tribe of Judah. How else could he be a priest and a king? But this is biologically impossible based on the way Jews understand lineage. You are from one tribe or the other. Even if your mother was a Levite and

your father from Judah, you would not be eligible to be serve as a priest. For these reasons, some actually said that this priest-king would actually be Melchizedek, either because this man would return or because he was himself a supernatural being.

## Covenantal Change

Now, Melchizedek came before the covenants with Israel. But the Branch would be born under those older covenants. So if no man could serve two offices, and if no man could be considered from two tribes at the same time, then something else had to change in the future. There had to be a **change of covenant**. The old must give way to the new, thereby bringing the two offices together.

Perhaps not coincidentally, **Zechariah 6:13** was the fountainhead for the covenant that is more typically known as the **Covenant of Redemption**. The Covenant of Redemption is the pre-temporal covenant made in eternity past between the members of the Godhead. They called it by a Latin term: *Pactum Salutis*. It means “Counsel of Peace.”

**John Owen** is a good representative. He writes:

First, The *rise* and spring of it is to be considered. It came forth from the eternal mutual consent and counsel of the Father and the Son: Zech. 6:13, “The counsel of peace shall be between them both.” It is of Christ, the Branch, of whom he speaks. “He shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both;”—that is, between God the Father, who sends him, and himself. There lay the counsel of peace-making between God and man, in due time accomplished by him who is “our peace,” Eph. 2:14: so he speaks, Prov. 8:30, 31, “Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.” They are the words of the Wisdom,—that is, of the Son of God. When was this done? “Then I was by him.” Why, “before the mountains were settled, while as

yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields;” that is, before the creation of the world, or from eternity, verses 25, 26.<sup>10</sup>

Plenty of Puritans and later Reformers saw our verse as “the rise and spring” of this covenant.<sup>11</sup> “Rise” is a curious word, given that the LXX for some reason translates “Branch” as “East” or “Rise.” It is the word *Anatole*. It refers to the rising in the east of any heavenly body above the horizon. Basil the Great was among the Church Father’s who commented on this:

“Behold a man,” it is said, “the Orient [East] is his name.” For those upon whom the spiritual light will rise, when the darkness that comes from ignorance and wickedness is destroyed, early morning will be at hand. Since, then, light has come into the world in

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<sup>10</sup> John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold, vol. 6 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, n.d.), 487. I found this via Paul Smalley, “A Sweet Mystery: John Owen on the Trinity,” ed. Joel R. Beeke 3, no. 1 (2011): 99.

<sup>11</sup> See J. Mark Beach, “The Doctrine of the Pactum Salutis in the Covenant Theology of Herman Witsius,” *MJT* 13 (2002): 124-25 [101-142].

order that he who walks about in it may not stumble, his help is able to cause the early morning. Or perhaps, since the resurrection was in the dim morning twilight, God will help the city in the morning early, who on the third day, early on the morning of the resurrection gained the victory through death.

*(Homilies on the Psalms 45.18.5)*<sup>12</sup>

At any rate, later Reformed thinkers such as Berkhof believed it was a mistake to see the Covenant of Redemption here. Many today don't see a Covenant of Redemption anywhere in the Bible at all.

I still do. At the last supper, Jesus told his disciples, “Just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you” (Luke 22:29 NAS). “Grants” *are* covenants. The word here (*diatithemi*) is the verbal form of the word “covenant” (*diatheke*). This was the starting point for the earliest

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<sup>12</sup> Alberto Ferreiro, “Introduction to the Twelve Prophets,” in *The Twelve Prophets*, ed. Alberto Ferreiro, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 249.

Reformed thinking on this covenant.<sup>13</sup> Any time Jesus says that he was “sent” by the Father or is doing the Father’s “will” (pun intended), he is referring to this covenant. When the Scripture says that the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world, it refers to this covenant.

Whether or not Owen is right and the parties in **Zechariah 6:13** are the **Father and Branch**, or whether others are right and the peace is between **Joshua and Jesus** (an interesting thought, given the names are the same), or the offices of **priest and king**, it seems right to me to see this verse as talking about a great covenant.

What does the NT say about this counsel of peace? It tells us that we are the people who benefit from it. Jesus did this for us, so that God might be glorified for his kindness. “Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior” (**Tit 1:4**). “Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son” (**2Jo 1:3**). “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (**Rom 5:1**). These verses show that not only did

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<sup>13</sup> See Beach, 122.

Christ give us peace, but that the peace we have is with both He and the Father. This seems to be exactly what the Zechariah is teaching.

**Why should you care about this?** First, it is because thinking about such a covenant demonstrates that the Fall did not catch God off guard. Too many people think that sin is outside of His control or that he isn't good enough to stop it. But this covenant goes farther. It demonstrates that God had it in mind before Adam ever sinned, to bring peace to those who would become by their own doing, his enemies. Many people don't understand that they are not born God's friends. They are his enemies. It is why non-Christians are so offended by the real God. They hate him until he changes their hearts through the Gospel. That may be offensive to people, but unless they come to see its truthfulness, how can they ever be saved and find peace? In Christ, the counsel of peace is now here, because Jesus has provided a way wherein even his worst enemy might be reconciled to God through the death of the Son. When this happens, you are at peace with God.

Still further, many Christians **suffer from feelings** that they are not at peace with God, because they continue to sin. How could God possibly not hate me after what I did? But Jesus' death forgives all sins, not just a few. It is the only sacrifice that covers everything—past, present, and future. If a person is trusting Christ to reconcile them to God, they will not be disappointed. They are at peace. That is the promise. Feelings don't matter. Truth does. Jesus does not fail in his mission. Behold, the man whose name is the Branch. His kingdom is worldwide, its branches extending everywhere. This is all part of the new covenant made in Christ's blood with his people. It is the fulfillment of the Covenant of Redemption.

## **Kingly Work of the Priest**

It says that the Branch, this Messiah, King Jesus will **build God's temple**. Many people go to OT prophecies about a new temple and think they must be referring to a third temple in Jerusalem. But what is the point of that, when they are standing there right now building the second temple? What possible hope would a new third



physical temple be when you are at that moment so excited about the second temple?

It is better, I think, to simply see how the NT interprets future temple prophecies. Jesus said, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it ... the temple he was speaking of was his body” (John 2:19, 21). Christ the Head has a body. His body is a temple, and I’m not referring to his own physical body any longer. “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” (1 Cor 3:16), asks Paul. Peter says the same thing, “As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house [temple], to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1Pe 2:4-5). The church is the temple.

Finally, at the end of Revelation, there is no rebuilt temple, because it is all Temple (Rev 21:22). “This is the provision made by the Messiah for his church, ‘built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone’ (Eph 2:20). It was only by

the work of Jesus, the ‘one greater than the temple’ (Matt 12:6), that the building could be founded, and it is by his power it grows to completion.”<sup>14</sup> Zechariah is seeing the days in which you now live. Give glory to God.

The Branch will also bear royal honor. So at his birth, the men from the east (curious) asked, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?” (Matt 2:2). At his death, Pilate put an inscription over Jesus that read, “This is the King of the Jews” (Luke 23:38). They demanded he change it to “He said he was king of the Jews.” Pilate refused. Throughout his ministry, Jesus bore royal honor, even to entering the Royal city on a donkey, in the manner of king David before him (2 Sam 16:1-2). Zechariah will predict this very thing later in his book.

The Branch will “sit and rule on his throne.” “There shall be a priest on his throne” (Zech 6:13). This is remarkable, because priests don’t sit. Priests must always stand before the LORD, because they are sinful, and because their work in the temple is never finished. Priests also don’t sit on thrones. But the priest-king Branch sits

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<sup>14</sup> Mackay, 138–139.

and rules. “Christ is seated at the right hand of God” (Col 3:1; cf. Luke 22:69; Eph 1:20; etc.). Hebrews puts it more bluntly for our modern ears. He “is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb 12:2). Perhaps having our very verse in mind, it also says, “We have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven” (Heb 8:1). The priest is seated, because his work is finished. He is a priest in the order of Melchizedek (Ps 110:4; cf. Hebrews 5-7). Every time the NT speaks like this, it isn’t just to convey information. It is to prove that prophecy has been fulfilled.

Finally, in Zechariah’s day the Word said, “And the crown shall be in the temple of the LORD as a reminder to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the Son of Zephaniah. And 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. And this shall come to pass, if you will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God” (Zech 6:14-15). The meaning is clear. It isn’t talking about moral perfection. If they took to building the second temple, they would find success. The language of **diligently**

obeying is that which we find throughout Exodus when Moses built everything in the tabernacle “as the LORD commanded him.” God gave his blessing. If they obeyed, he would return in their second Temple for their good. The fact that the second temple was rebuilt and stood for nearly 500 years until the Roman armies completely razed it to the ground is proof that God kept his word to them.

In our day, however, the meaning goes beyond the physical temple. It was a sign, even as the men in the prophecy are signs. Jesus Christ is the priest-king who has brought peace. He was crowned with a crown of thorns and shame and given a mock robe of a king as they put him to death for your sin. But God has crowned him with glory and honor and seated him at the right hand of the majesty in heaven.

Amazingly, the Word of God predicted his own coming. The Memra (Zech 6:15 in the Targum) spoke it out. Zechariah’s prediction via the Word of God has come true in perfect complete detail. God’s covenant has not been thwarted. Rather, it has brought in time a better covenant, made with better blood, by a better priest than

Aaron. It has the authority of a better king than David. Because this Priest-King, as it even implies in a passage that is related to Zechariah, is more than a man. May your hearts be encouraged by the fulfillment of such a remarkable prophecy, and the diligent obedience of the Branch who is building the great temple that has branched out all the way to Boulder, Colorado from its roots and origins in Israel. May you find yourself always looking for and trusting in the Center.