

Note: This Work has been made available by the authority of the copyright owner solely for the purpose of private study and research and may not be copied or reproduced except as permitted by the copyright laws of Canada without the written authority from the copyright owner.

Kessler, John. "Prophecy at the Turning of the Ages: Imminent Crisis and Future Hope in Hag. 2:6-9; 20-23 and Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13]." *Transeuphratène* 40 (2011): 97-133.

TRANSEUPHRATENE 40, 2011

RECHERCHES PLURIDISCIPLINAIRES
SUR UNE PROVINCE
DE L'EMPIRE ACHEMENIDE

Actes du VIII^e Colloque international
La Transeuphratène à l'époque perse :

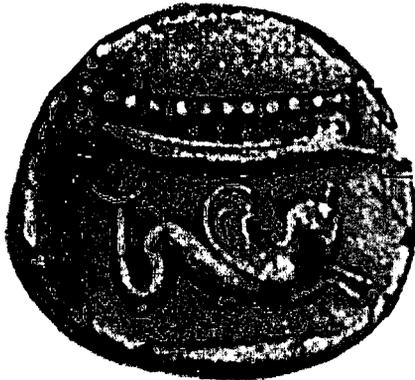
Crises et autres difficultés
Institut Catholique de Paris

8-10 avril 2010

(Organisateurs : J. Elayi, T. Römer, J. Asurmendi, J. Sapin)

Deuxième partie

Éditeurs : J. Elayi, J. Sapin



GABALDA

TRANSEUPHRATENE

Multidisciplinary researches
on a province
of the Achaemenid Empire

Editors : J. ELAYI, J. SAPIN

Editorial secretary : A. SÉRANDOUR

Advisory Committee : J. ASURMENDI, J. BRIEND, A.-M. COLLOMBIER,
J. ELAYI, B. GOSSE, É. GUBEL, A. LEMAIRE,
T. RÖMER, J. SAPIN, A. SÉRANDOUR

Series published with the support of the ASPEP (Association for research on Syria-Palestine in the Persian period), the Catholic Institute and the Protestant Institute of Theology of Paris.

This series publishes the works of the ASPEP. It also welcomes all contributions pertaining to Transeuphratene (Phoenicia, Syria-Palestina and Cyprus) in all disciplines: history, archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics, biblical studies, historical geography, etc. Lastly, it welcomes in its *News Bulletin* any kind of information likely to be of interest for research in this field. Articles may be written in English, French, German, Spanish or Italian.

Manuscripts, books for review and correspondence should be addressed to Mrs Josette ELAYI, 92, rue de Lourmel, F - 75015 PARIS.

Orders and subscriptions should be sent to Editions GABALDA, 69, rue du Petit Pendé, F - 80230 PENDÉ, Phone: 33 3 22 26 25 37;
Fax: 33 3 22 26 29 55; e-mail: editions@gabalda.com

© 2011, by *Librairie Gabalda, Pendé*
ISBN: 2-85021-206-2
ISSN: 0996-5904

Prophecy at the Turning of the Ages: Imminent Crisis and Future Hope in Hag. 2:6-9; 20-23 and Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13]

J. KESSLER

Résumé : Les oracles de *Za* 2:10-17 et *Ag* 2, 6-9, 21b-23 datent des premières années de la domination perse en Judée, et donnent un aperçu concernant l'utilisation des traditions religieuses et les attitudes socio-politiques de l'époque. Ces oracles comprennent la situation contemporaine en tant que début de la faveur renouvelée de Yahweh envers Jérusalem, mais s'attendent à une future intervention qui répondra aux plus grands besoins ressentis par la communauté : l'état pitoyable du temple, le statut subalterne du gouverneur et la population toujours clairsemée de la province. Ces oracles manifestent des similarités et d'importantes différences. La vision d'Aggée s'enracine dans les grandes traditions concernant Yahweh et les nations à Sion. Zacharie, puisant ses thèmes dans la tradition qui s'attendait au jugement de Babylone, envisage, même après 521, un jugement futur sur cette ville, et à la lumière de cet événement, relance un appel à la diaspora pour l'inviter à s'enfuir et à s'installer à Jérusalem. Les prophètes s'attendent à ce que cette intervention divine arrive sous peu et envisagent une grande continuité entre le présent et le futur.

1. Hag. 2:6-9; 20-23 and Zech. 2:10-17[ET 6-13] as windows into Yehudite thought of the mid- to late 6th century B.C.E.

The Biblical literature of the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E. is frequently referred to as 'literature of crisis.'¹ Indeed, the transitions expe-

1. T. Römer, "L'Ancien Testament: une littérature de crise", *RTP*, 1995, pp. 321-38; T. Römer *Trans* 40, 2011

rienced by the Kingdom of Judah and its inhabitants as they moved from existence as an independent kingdom, to vassal state, to province under Babylonian and Persian rule gave rise to several dramatic changes which may justly be called 'crises'.² Radical transformations of this sort required ongoing adaptation on at least two foundational levels. First, such transitions demanded traditio-historical adaptations, that is, the reformulation of earlier religious traditions (especially earlier hopes regarding the future) in light of the realities of a later and much changed age. Second, such dramatic changes called for socio-political adaptations, that is, the re-assessment of the community's identity and relationship to external powers—both to the imperial overlords to whom they were subject, as well as to the neighbouring peoples with whom they shared a long history. The study of the various prophetic texts within the biblical literature provides an excellent window into these traditio-historical and socio-political changes. It goes without saying that the more easily datable texts may provide us with certain historical 'fixed points' as we seek to trace developments of changes in these two areas. Hag. 2:6-9 and 20-23 and Zech. 2:10-17[ET 6-13] are two excellent sets of oracles in this regard. The former are generally dated to the early Persian period and the latter to the Babylonian or early Persian periods.³

This study will examine these oracles and seek to ascertain, first how broader theological traditions are employed and re-contextualized in light of the community's current needs, and second, what they reveal concerning the prophetic response to the socio-political context in which the Yehudite community found itself. My study will therefore proceed as follows. First, I will present a brief analysis of these prophetic oracles as it relates to their understanding of the present situation, the nature and form of the imminent divine intervention and of the contours of the new, post-intervention reality. Critical in this regard are the degree of continuity between present and future expressed in these oracles, as well as the degree

et al., *Introduction à l'Ancien Testament*, Geneva 2004, p. 247; B. Becking and M.C.A. Korpel eds, *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times*, Leiden-Boston-Köln 1999; H. Reventlow and Y. Hoffman, *Religious Responses to Political Crisis*, New York 2008; U. Struppe, "Exil-Krise als chance", *BiKi* 55, 2000, pp. 109-119; R. Albertz, "Die sozial- und religionsgeschichtlichen Folgen der Exilzeit", *BiKi* 55, 2000, pp. 127-31.

2. There are numerous resources for this period. For a comprehensive overview cf. R. Albertz, *Israel in Exile: the History and Literature of the Sixth Century B.C.E.*, Leiden-Boston 2004; see also L.L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian: The Persian and Greek Periods*, Minneapolis 1992; *id.*, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, London 2006; O. Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah under Babylonian Rule*, Winona Lake 2005; O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp eds, *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, Winona Lake 2003; J. Middlemas, *The Troubles of Templeless Judah*, Oxford Theological Monograph Series, Oxford 2005; O. Lipschits and M. Oeming, *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, Winona Lake 2006; E. Ben Zvi, *Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures II*, Piscataway, N.J., 2007.

3. I will discuss matters of dating in further detail *infra*.

of finality of the state following the anticipated in them divine intervention.⁴ In the subsequent section, I will outline the points of commonality between Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 as well as the divergences between the two texts as regards their traditio-historical and socio-political content. Finally, I will offer a series of concluding observations concerning the insights these texts might offer us into the traditio-historical and socio-political realities of their day.

2. Preliminary considerations

2.1 *Hope for the future in prophetic traditions*

Israelite religious traditions, especially those associated with the prophets, frequently featured hopes and aspirations for the future of the nation, its temple and its ruling dynasty.⁵ As the profoundly destabilizing events of the 6th century unfolded, various prophetic voices responded to the challenges these events posed to earlier traditional hopes and expecta-

4. It is precisely at this point that many scholars differentiate between what is frequently called "prophetic-historical" hope for the future and a more fully blown "eschatology" cf. on this *infra*.

5. The bibliography on hope in the Old Testament is rich and varied, yet not as extensive as one might expect. Only a few sources can be mentioned here. These include J. van der Ploeg, "L'espérance dans l'Ancien Testament", *RB* 61, 1954, pp. 481-507; W. Zimmerli, *Man and his Hope in the Old Testament*, London 1971; F. van Menxel, *Elpis, espoir, espérance: études sémantiques et théologiques du vocabulaire de l'espérance*, Frankfurt am Main 1983; D.A. Hubbard, "Hope in the Old Testament", *TynB* 34, 1983, pp. 33-59; J.B. Payne, "Covenant and Hope: A Study in the Theology of the Prophets", *JETS* 17, 1974, pp. 126-127; C. Conroy, "Hope in the Prophetic Literature of Israel", in *Hope For a Suffering People*, Quezon City 2003, pp. 19-38; C.J. Dempsey, "Hope Amidst Crisis: A Prophetic Vision of Cosmic Redemption", in C.J. Dempsey and R.A. Butkus eds, *All Creation Is Groaning*, Collegeville 1999, pp. 269-284; *id.*, *Hope Amid the Ruins: the Ethics of Israel's Prophets*, St. Louis 2000; H.G.M. Williamson, "Hope under Judgment: The Prophets of the eighth century B.C.E.", *EvQ* 72, 2000, pp. 291-306; *id.*, "Judgment and Hope in Isaiah 1.21-26", in C. Exum and H.G.M. Williamson eds, *Reading from Right to Left*, London-New York 2003, pp. 423-434; M.J. Boda, "Messengers of Hope in Haggai-Malachi", *JSOT* 32, 2007, pp. 113-131; R.E. Clements, "Jeremiah, Prophet of Hope", *RExp* 78, 1981, pp. 345-363; *id.*, "Jeremiah's Message of Hope: Public Faith and Private Anguish", in M. Kessler ed., *Reading the Book of Jeremiah*, Winona Lake 2004, pp. 135-147; W. Gross, "Israel's Hope for the Renewal of the State", *JNWSL* 14, 1988, pp. 101-133; P.A. Keim, "Watch your Back: Ruminations on the Biblical Poetics of Hope", *CrossCur* 53, 2004, pp. 548-554; P.J. King, "Hosea's Message of Hope", *BibTh* 12, 1982, pp. 91-95; J. Krasovec, "The Source of Hope in the book of Lamentations", *VT* 42, 1992, pp. 223-233; P. L. Redditt, "Israel's Shepherds: Hope and Pessimism in Zechariah 9-14", *CBQ* 51, 1989, pp. 631-642; T.R. Valentino, "Couriered Hope: The Textual Integrity of Jeremiah's Prophetic Letter to the Exiles in Babylon (Jer. 29:1-23)", *Evangelical Journal* 19, 2001, pp. 68-73; W.J. Wessels, "Jeremiah 24:1-10 as a Pronouncement of Hope?", *OTE* 4, 1991, pp. 397-407; D. Hartman, "Sinai and Exodus: Two Grounds for Hope in the Jewish Tradition", *RelSt* 14, 1978, pp. 373-387.

tions. Indeed several significant studies have been devoted to the analysis of the effect of such crises on Israel's faith and the role played by earlier religious traditions in the community's attempts to adapt to radically new situations.⁶ Especially important here were the ongoing developments and transformations in the prophetic vision of the nation's future. Many of these transformations are discussed in the literature on the much-debated subject of 'Old Testament eschatology'.⁷ Similarly, much discussion has been directed toward the distinction frequently made between the concepts of a 'prophetic-historical future' versus 'eschatology'⁸ as well as the

6. See, in this regard the programmatic essays of P.R. Ackroyd, "Continuity and Discontinuity: Rehabilitation and Authentication", in D.A. Knight ed., *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament*, London 1977, pp. 215-234 and O.H. Steck, "Theological Streams of Tradition", in pp. 183-214 in the same volume. Cf. also, regarding this phenomenon in *Haggai*, J. Kessler, "Tradition, Continuity and Covenant in the Book of Haggai: an Alternative Voice from Early Persian Yehud", in M.H. Floyd and M.J. Boda eds, *Traditions in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah 1-8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology*, Library of Hebrew Bible-Old Testament Studies 475, New York-London 2008, pp. 1-39; and, more broadly, *id.*, "Images of Exile: Representations of the 'Exile' and 'Empty Land' in Sixth-Fourth Century B.C.E. Yehudite Literature", in E. Ben Zvi and C. Levin eds, *Concept of Exile in Ancient Israel & its Historical Contexts*, BZAW 404, Berlin-New York 2010, pp. 309-351.

7. For some general treatments of the topic of Old Testament Eschatology cf. B. Arnold, "Old Testament Eschatology and the Rise of Apocalypticism", in J. Walls ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of Eschatology*, Oxford 2008, pp. 23-38; J.M. van Cangh, "Temps et eschatologie dans l'Ancien Testament", in *Temps et eschatologie: données bibliques et problématiques contemporaines sous la direction de Jean-Louis Leuba*, Paris 1994; R.H. Hiers, "Eschatology", in P.J. Achtemeier ed., *The Harper-Collins Bible Dictionary*, New York 1996, p. 302; D. L. Petersen, "Eschatology", in D.N. Freedman ed., *AncBD* II, New York 1992, p. 575; R.P. Carroll, "Eschatology", in D.N. Freedman ed., *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, p. 420; D.E. Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, Philadelphia 1986. On the history of the use of the term, and its appropriateness *vis-à-vis* the Hebrew Bible cf. H.G. Reventlow, "The Eschatology of the Prophetic Books: A Comparative Study", in H.G. Reventlow ed., *Eschatology in the Bible and in Jewish and Christian Tradition*, JSOT.S 243, Sheffield 1997, pp. 169-188, esp. 169-73, with bibliography, and S. Talmon, *Eschatology and History in Biblical Judaism*, Jerusalem 1986, pp. 1-9; cf. also here H.G.M. Williamson, "Eschatology in Chronicles", *TynB* 28, 1977, pp. 115-154.

8. The distinction reaches back to at least J. Wellhausen, who saw eschatology as present only in later "Judaism" and absent in true biblical religion, J. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, Atlanta 1994, pp. 502-508; reprint of *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, trans. J.S. Black and A. Enzies, Edinburgh 1885; trans. of original *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, Berlin 1958, pp. 109-147, 151-161, 206, noted by B. Arnold *op. cit.* (n. 7), p. 26. A similar approach was taken by S. Mowinckel, *He that Cometh: The Messiah Concept in the Old Testament and Later Judaism*, New York-Nashville 1954, trans. of *Han som Kommer*, Copenhagen 1951, pp. 125-154, esp. 126-133. An opposing view, which affirmed the presence of eschatological thought in the prophets may be found in W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* I, OTL, Philadelphia 1961, p. 385; M. Saebo, "Messianism in Chronicles: Old Testament Background of the New Testament Christology", *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 2, 1980 pp. 85-109; Gowan, *op. cit.* (n.7), pp. 1-2 and G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* II, Edinburgh 1962, pp. 99-112; A. Kapelrud, "Eschatology in Micah and Zephaniah", in J.

related matters of 'millenarism'⁹ and 'apocalypticism'.¹⁰ However these matters are decided, for the purposes of our present discussion two points are, I believe, undisputed. First, it is generally agreed that the Israelite prophetic (or eschatological) vision of the future tends to follow a basic schema wherein the present age is seen as imperfect, and sorely in need of redress and as such, only a decisive, dramatic intervention of Yahweh is sufficient to remedy the situation.¹¹ Second, whether or not one sees the presence of 'eschatology' in the latter prophets,¹² generally prophetic texts

Doré, P. Grelot et M. Carrez eds, *De la Torah au messie*, Paris 1981, pp. 255-262; W.J. Dumbrell, "Some Observations on the Political Origins of Israel's Eschatology", *RTR* 36, 1971, pp. 33-41; M.J. Boda provides an extremely helpful summary of the issue and a cogent argument for seeing eschatology in prophetic texts, in M.J. Boda, "Figuring the Future: the Prophets and Messiah", in S.E. Porter ed., *Messiah in the Old and New Testaments*, McMaster New Testament Studies, Grand Rapids 2007, pp. 39-43, with bibliography. I am indebted to M.J. Boda for several of the preceding bibliographical elements. H.G. Reventlow (*loc. cit.* [n. 7], pp. 174-188) presents a mediating position. He sees the emergence of a 'proto-eschatological' perspective in *Haggai* and *Zech.* 1-8 (p. 174), which is developed in the redactional additions to *Amos*, *Hosea*, *Zephaniah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel* and *Isaiah*, and to a certain extent, *Micah*. He concludes, "It follows from this overview that the eschatological additions in the prophetic books are no isolated phenomenon, but can be found in very different books. Their character is always similar: They take up the statements contained in the earlier layers and give an interpretation fitting to the actual problems of their time. A typical trait of this interpretation is an eschatologizing in the sense that a decisive turn to a new period of salvation is expected which will now be final. In this period the Diaspora will return from all parts of the world, the land will be turned into a paradise, because the promises of blessing in the blessing-form will be fulfilled in fruitfulness and security of land and inhabitants, the announcements of curse in the curse-form will be reversed to blessing. Disobedience and apostasy of the people which were a hindrance until now will disappear, and this not by the people's return and repentance, but by the transforming action of God who even can replace the old heart with a new one ... If one asks for the period in which such an expectation could arise, one would have to think in the context of *Isaiah* 60-62 of the fifth century. The temple is rebuilt, but elsewhere much has to be reconstructed. The situation is oppressive, so that the hope upon a deep going change becomes more and more ardent" (pp. 187-188).

9. Cf. Y. Talmon, "Millenarism", *IESS* 10, New York 1968, pp. 349-362.

10. Cf. P. D. Hanson, "Apocalypses and Apocalypticism", in D.N. Freedman ed., *AncBD* I, New York 1992, pp. 279-282; J. Murphy, "Apocalypses and Apocalypticism: The State of the Question", *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 2, 1994, pp. 147-179; L. Di Tommaso, "Apocalypses and Apocalypticism in Antiquity (Parts I-II)", *Currents in Biblical Research* 5, 2007, pp. 235-286; 367-432; S. L. Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism: The Postexilic Social Setting*, Minneapolis 1995, pp. 85-121. On this cf. also R. Kasher, "Haggai and Ezekiel: The Complicated Relations between the Two Prophets", *VT* 59, 2009, pp. 556-82.

11. Thus D.E. Gowan, *op. cit.* (n. 7), p. 2, states that the prophetic vision of the future wrestles with "the radical wrongness of the present world and the conviction that radical changes, to make things right will indeed occur 'in that day', that is at some time known only to God."

12. That is, of course *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel* and *Hos-Mal*. On the question of whether the "Twelve" should be read a single volume, or 12 "books" cf. recently E. Ben Zvi, *Two Sides of a Coin*, Piscataway N.J. 2009. My sympathies are more with the approach of E. Ben Zvi, and traditional re-

regarding the future are compared and contrasted in terms of three key variables. These include: (1) the degree of historical continuity between the present and future—that is whether the same persons and nations are participants in the pre- and post-intervention world; (2) the degree to which the post-intervention world replicates the pre-intervention one—that is whether the structures and realities of the post-intervention world are essentially the same, or radically and essentially different and (3) the degree of permanence or unalterability of the world situation subsequent to divine intervention.¹³ My examination of Hag. 2:6-9 and 20-23, and Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] will devote special attention to the data provided by these texts with reference to such matters.

2.2 Sixth- to fourth century B.C.E. reactions to foreign rule

As noted above, various external crises forced the community to rethink its foundational convictions in the political arena. The relationships between the Northern and Southern kingdoms and the nations immediately surrounding them, as well as those greater empires which ultimately absorbed them one after the other,¹⁴ raised a series of profound and complex questions to which differing responses were given within the community of Israel's prophets, as well as in its broader traditions.¹⁵ One critical variable element in such re-assessments was the community's stance regard-

dational critical methodologies. However I would not exclude the possibility that some texts are deliberately linked to others. For example, it could be cogently argued that Zech. 1-8 was attached to an already-existing Haggai, and that subsequently, further material was added to it, cf. J. Kessler, *The Book of Haggai: Prophecy and Society in Early Persian Yehud*, VT.S 91, Leiden 2002, pp. 56-57; M.J. Boda, "Zechariah: Master Mason or Penitential Prophet?", in B. Becking and R. Albertz eds, *Yahwism After the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era*, Studies in Theology and Religion 5, Assen 2003, pp. 49-69.

13. For H.G. Reventlow (*loc. cit.* [n. 7], p. 171) the concept of finality is the *sine qua non* of eschatological texts. Cf. similarly, R. Kasher, *op. cit.* (n. 10), p. 576 cites Y. Talmon (*op. cit.* [n. 9], p. 349) who states that millenarist groups expect "imminent, total, ultimate, this-worldly, collective salvation".

14. For the historical data see the sources listed in n. 2, *supra*.

15. Studies engaging the question of Israel's relationship to foreign powers are too numerous to mention here. For a more general presentation cf. J.L. Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow: A Social and Historical Approach*, Minneapolis 1995; C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers, "The Persian Period and the Judean Restoration: From Zerubbabel to Nehemiah", in F.M. Cross ed., *Ancient Israelite Religion*, Philadelphia 1987, pp. 509-521 with bibliography. For a discussion of the situation in Jerusalem and the role of the *golah* in the 6th-4th centuries see, J. Kessler, "Reconstructing Haggai's Jerusalem: Demographic and Sociological Considerations and the Search for an Adequate Methodological Point of Departure", in L.L. Grabbe and R.D. Haak eds, *Every City Shall Be Forsaken: Urbanism and Prophecy in Ancient Israel and the Near East*, JSOT.S 330, Sheffield 2001, pp. 137-158 and *id.*, "Persia's Loyal Yahwists: Power, Identity and Ethnicity in Achaemenid Yehud", in O. Lipschits and M. Oeming eds, *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, Winona Lake 2006, pp. 91-121.

ding the dominant foreign power of the day: to resist or to submit. This is clearly an issue within *Jeremiah* (most especially in Jer. 27:9, 11-14, 17; 40:9; 42:1-17)¹⁶ *Kings* (2 Kgs. 25:24) and *Isaiah* (Isa. 44:28; 45:1,13). It has been suggested that the redactional development of the book of *Haggai* manifests a movement from intense eschatological expectation to accommodation to the realities of life in the Empire.¹⁷ Similarly the complaint of Neh. 9:36-37 reveals something of the broader attitude to Persian rule in *Ezra-Nehemiah*.¹⁸ Containing as they do, various allusions to the future of both Israel and the nations, Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 are highly significant sources regarding Yehudite socio-political attitudes.

2.3 Foundational historical assumptions

The general political contours of the late Babylonian and early Achaemenid periods in the Levant have been extensively studied in recent years and need not be reiterated here.¹⁹ The following assertions are, however, most relevant for the present study: (1) while the fall of Babylon to Cyrus in 539 B.C.E. did result in the end of Babylonian rule over the Levant, it did not entail the massive destruction of Babylon described in several prophetic texts,²⁰ nor did it result in any large-scale 'return to Zion' by the Ju-

16. The contrasting themes within *Jeremiah* of submission to Babylon versus resistance constitute a major *topos* of critical discussion of that book, cf., R.P. Carroll, *Jeremiah: a Commentary*, OTL, Philadelphia 1986, pp. 815-817.

17. R.A. Mason, "The Purpose of the 'Editorial Framework' of the Book of Haggai", *VT* 27, 1977, pp. 413-421. While I feel Mason's bifurcation between the perspective of the oracles versus the framework may be too sharply drawn, it is true that the raw and stark expectation of divine intervention in 2:6-9; 21-23 is attenuated by its placement in a redactional frame which 'routinizes' the life of the community in the Persian empire without nullifying that future hope. On this cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 259-260.

18. It is generally viewed as a clear complaint, in contrast to the more pro-Persian stance of *Ezra-Nehemiah* in general as manifested in Ezra 9:9 (thus, J. Blenkinsopp [*Ezra-Nehemiah*, OTL, Philadelphia 1988, pp. 307-308]) who states, "in spite of the pro-Persian sentiments in Isa. 40-48 and favorable allusions to the Persians' providential role in *Ezra-Nehemiah*, there is no reason to believe that their rule was significantly more benign than that of their Semitic predecessors ... For these reasons, then, the situation is one of great distress. The prayer is therefore, by implication, an aspiration toward political emancipation as a necessary precondition for the fulfillment of the promises". For a radically opposing view, cf. M. Oeming, "See, We Are Serving Today (Nehemiah 9:36): Nehemiah 9 as a Theological Interpretation of the Persian Period", in Lipschits-Oeming eds, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 571-588.

19. Some of the relevant bibliographic materials are listed in n. 2 *supra*.

20. On this see R. Albertz, "Darius in Place of Cyrus: The First Edition of Deutero-Isaiah 40.1-52.12 in 521 B.C.E.", *JSOT* 27, 2003, pp. 371-383; *id.*, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 113-116; P. Briant, *Histoire de l'empire perse de Cyrus à Alexandre*, Achaemenid History 10, Leiden 1996, pp. 50-53; D. S. Vanderhooft, *The Neo-Babylonian Empire and Babylon in the Latter Prophets*, HSM 59, Atlanta 1999, pp. 193-202; M.J. Boda, "Terrifying the Horns: Persia and Babylon in Zechariah 1:7-6:15", *CBQ* 67,

dean Diaspora; (2) the effect of Persian rule in the Levant was only gradually felt by the local population;²¹ (3) with Cambyses' conquest of Egypt in 525 B.C.E. and ongoing Persian interest in the West, Yehud became more closely related to the political dynamics of the empire (although this must not be over estimated);²² (4) the political turmoil resulting from the death of Cambyses and Darius' quelling of the 'orgy of revolt' following his accession, would not have gone unnoticed in Yehud; and (5) by 520, the 'second year of Darius,' the political situation in the empire had returned to one of general stability, and this reality would have been known and experienced in Yehud.²³

3. Hag. 2:6-9; 21-23: present situation and future expectations

3.1 Introductory considerations

3.1.1 The concept of time in Haggai

The theme of 'time' proves to be a complex and elusive one in *Haggai* in at least two regards. First, the oracle in 1:2-11 has evoked extensive scholarly discussion. Are the people's words regarding the question of the appropriateness of the time for temple reconstruction in v. 2 to be understood as an expression of sincere doubt as to whether the divinely appointed time for temple reconstruction had indeed arrived,²⁴ or, as I have ar-

2005, pp. 22-41.

21. Briant, *ibid.*, p. 59; F. Bianchi, *I superstiti della deportazione sono là nella provincia (Nemia 1.3). Ricerche storico-bibliche sulla Giudea in età neobabilonese e achemenide (586 a. C. - 442 a. C.)*, AION.S 82, Napoli 1995, p. 45.

22. Cf. P. Briant ("Histoire impériale et histoire régionale. A propos de l'histoire de Juda dans l'Empire achéménide", in A. Lemaire and M. Saebø eds, *Congress Volume Oslo 1998*, Leiden-New York-Köln 2000, pp. 235-245) who states, "I am highly reticent (to say the least) when faced with lines of argumentation which attribute a decisive strategic position to Judah in the Achaemenid configuration, simply because I cannot see why or in what way Judah and Jerusalem ought to be considered to be strategic positions vis-à-vis Egypt. As far as I know Judah is not situated on the Egyptian frontier, and Jerusalem is located at a significant distance from the main routes leading to the Nile valley" (p. 238, translation mine).

23. On the chronology here cf. J. Kessler, "The Second Year of Darius and the Prophet Haggai", *Trans 5*, 1991, pp. 63-84; *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 80-85, with bibliography. For a recent dissenting view, placing the end of the rebellions and the return of peace following Darius' accession to 519 cf. A.M. Wolters, "The Whole Earth Remains at Peace" (Zechariah 1:11): the Problem and an Intertextual Clue", in M.H. Floyd and M.J. Boda eds, *Traditions in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah 1-8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology*, Library of Hebrew Bible-Old Testament Studies 475, New York-London 2008, pp. 128-143.

24. Thus P. R. Bedford, "Discerning the Time: Haggai, Zechariah and the 'Delay' in the Rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple", in S.W. Holloway and L.K. Handy eds, *The Pitcher is Broken, Memo-*

gued elsewhere, were they an excuse to put off a difficult and costly task, in light of economic constraints? Whatever the historical realities may have been, the logic behind the prophetic response in 1:3-11 presupposes that the literary presentation of the people's attitude was the latter.²⁵ Haggai's words furthermore assume, first, that rebuilding was possible; second, that the population knew this to be so; third, that the rebuilding of the temple was understood to be part of Yahweh's purpose; and fourth, that the people would have understood this to be the case (the use of covenant malediction language as the divine response to the people's neglect of the task underscores these last two points). This state of affairs is rather surprising as the text of *Haggai* (oracles or framework) gives no indication as to any definite call to rebuild or divine authorization for rebuilding (a *sine qua non* in the ANE).²⁶

A second matter concerns the question of whether the economic misfortunes described in 1:3-11 and reversed in the promises of economic weal in 2:16-19, are to be understood as the expression of an exceptional and eschatological fecundity (such as is the case in Amos 9:13 or Ezek. 47:12), or as a return to abundant harvests as a sign of divine blessing in response to covenant faithfulness (as in Deut. 28:8-12). Despite the frequency with which the former approach is advocated²⁷ such an inference is unwarranted. It is true that such abundance in *Haggai* is associated with the presence and cleansing of the temple (which has clear analogies to ANE temple building ideologies, where fertility is associated with the divine presence).²⁸ However in *Haggai* the renewed prosperity envisioned is that which would transpire within the normal agricultural cycle. It has

rial Essays for G. W. Ahlström, Sheffield 1995; *id.*, *Temple Restoration in Early Achaemenid Judah*, JSJS 63, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2001; P. de Robert, "Pour ou contre le second temple", in M. Augustin and K.D. Schunck eds, *Dort ziehen Schiffe dahin: Collected Communications to the XIVth Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament, Paris 1992*, BEATAJ 28, Frankfurt am Main 1996; H. Tadmor, "The Appointed Time Has Not Yet Arrived: The Historical Background of Haggai 1:2", in R. Chazan, W.W. Hallo and L.H. Schiffman eds, *Ki Baruch Hu: Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Baruch A. Levine*, Winona Lake 1999.

25. Thus J. Kessler, "‘?et (le temps) en Ag. i 2: conflit théologique ou ‘sagesse mondaine’?" *VT* 48, 1998, pp. 555-559; *id.*, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 123-127; *id.*, "Building the Second Temple: Questions of Time, Text and History in Haggai 1:1-15", *JSOT* 27, 2002, pp. 243-256.

26. On the absence of such a call and the reasons for it cf. J. Kessler "Temple Building in Haggai: Variations of a Theme", in M.J. Boda and J. Novotny eds, *From the Foundations to the Crenellations: Essays on Temple Building in the Ancient Near East and the Hebrew Bible*, AOAT, Münster 2010, pp. 357-379.

27. Thus, for example, P.D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, Philadelphia 1975, pp. 174-178, speaks of Haggai promising that the reconstruction of the temple would "unlock the heavens and bring in the eschaton" (p. 174), that is the ideal future described in Ezek 40-48.

28. On the relationship between Haggai and ANE temple building cf. C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, AnB, Garden City 1987, pp. 65-67, with bibliography; Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 2010; Kasher, *loc. cit.* (n. 10), with bibliography.

been attained by the people's willingness to undertake the work of rebuilding the temple²⁹ and through the ritual ceremony removing earlier impurity.³⁰ In point of fact, the temporal schema in *Haggai* features four different periods: (1) the past, characterized by the obstinacy of the people, and Yahweh's imposition of covenant maledictions upon them; (2) the present, in which the work of rebuilding has begun and ritual consecration of the new structure has taken place; (3) a 'futur proche' during which time economic abundance and fertility in the land will be restored; and (4) a time soon at hand, when Yahweh's coming intervention will radically transform even the more positive conditions of 'period 3' above and bring forth an unprecedented, blessed state.

Thus *Haggai* features an interplay between the immediate future (characterized by Yahweh's removal of the covenant maledictions listed in 1:3-11, and their reversal in 2:15-19) and the more distant future (characterized by 'eschatological' blessing). This frequently overlooked distinction has been well noted by A. Caquot.³¹ Thus two distinct future periods stand in relationship to each other, yet are nevertheless separate. The oracles in 2:1-9 and 20-23 speak to the relationship between the present state where the relationship with Yahweh has turned (period 2, above) and move directly to period 4—the future post-divine-intervention state.³² The descriptions of fecundity in 2:15-19, by contrast are those of the normal agricultural cycle (period 3, above).

3.1.2 The dating of Hag. 2:6-9 and 20-23

Unlike the wide range of suggestions regarding Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] the oracles in Hag. 2:6-9 and 20-23 are generally dated to the early years of Darius' reign, as indicated by the date formulae attached to them. Leaving aside those approaches which view the dates as much later insertions or creations³³ of dubious historical utility, or those which view the

29. H.W. Wolff, *Haggai: A Commentary*, Minneapolis 1988, pp. 66-67.

30. This is well-stated by Kasher, *loc. cit.* (n. 10), pp. 560-561. For the view that Hag. 2:10-19 reflects a kind of Israelite echo of the Mesopotamian *kalu* ceremony, cf. Meyers-Meyers, *op. cit.* (n. 28), pp. 63-64; D.L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, OTL, London 1985, pp. 88-90.

31. A. Caquot states, "Haggai and Zechariah call attention to the immediate benefits [of the Temple's reconstruction]: it will bring the blessing of Yahweh and the end of drought to the land ... but the prophets see further ahead and discern that the divine blessing will not stop at that. The temple must be rebuilt so that the ultimate reign of God will come to pass in history and so that the nations of the world might bring their tribute to Jerusalem". A. Caquot, "Le judaïsme depuis la captivité de Babylone jusqu'à la révolte de Bar-Kokheba", *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade. Histoire des Religions*, Paris 1972, pp. 129-130 (translation mine).

32. The specific means of linking the two epochs will be examined *infra*.

33. So, for example, the earlier position of P. R. Ackroyd, "Two Historical Problems of the Early Persian Period". *JNES* 17, 1958, pp. 13-27, esp. 22, and more recently D.V. Edelman, *The Origins of the "Second" Temple: Persian Imperial Policy and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem*, London-Oakville, CT 2005. For a detailed

Darius in question as Darius II,³⁴ the dates attached to these oracles, that is the 21/7 and 24/9 of the second year of Darius, are generally viewed as authentic.³⁵ While a minority of scholars suggest that the 'second year of Darius' (Hag. 1:1 etc) refers to 521 B.C.E. when the empire was in a state of political turmoil following the accession of Darius I,³⁶ the basis of such dating is dubious.³⁷ The most probable conclusion therefore remains that which identifies Haggai's words with October and December 520,³⁸ some 19 years after the fall of Babylon and subsequent to the rebellions following the accession of Darius I, a time when the Persian empire enjoyed a large measure of peace,³⁹ a fact which would have certainly been known in Yehud.⁴⁰

3.2 Hag. 2:6-9. Prophetic assessment of the present situation, coming crisis, and resultant state

3.2.1 The present situation

The pericope in Hag. 2:1-9 presupposes a situation that is better than it once was, yet still remains unsatisfactory. The people's obstinacy has been overcome (the brief narrative interlude of 1:1-15 supplies the explanation for this change) and the work of rebuilding has begun. The period prior to the people's response to Haggai's words was a time during which the community lived under divine displeasure (although the text seems not to presuppose the kind of radical covenantal breach or disruption in evidence elsewhere, cf. Jer. 31:31ff; Zech. 1:1-6).⁴¹ Now, with the task of re-

critique of Edelman cf. M.J. Boda, *JHS* 7, 2007, www.arts.ualberta.ca/JHS/reviews/review268.htm.

34. L. Dequecker, "Darius the Persian and the Reconstruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem [Ezra 4, 24]", in J. Quaegebeur ed., *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East*, OLA 55, Leuven 1993, pp. 67-92.

35. P.R. Ackroyd, who in his earlier writings suggested that the date formulae were added to the oracles at least a century later than their proclamation subsequently attenuated his position, states "If [the dates] were obviously schematic, it would be natural to suppose them invented to provide a specific emphasis. But there are no clear indications of such deliberation; the dates themselves are sufficiently haphazard for a majority of scholars to accept them without question" ("Problems in the Handling of Biblical and Related Sources in the Achaemenid Period", in A. Kuhrt and H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg eds, *Achaemenid History III: Method and Theory*, Leiden 1988, p. 42). For a fuller discussion of the authenticity of the dates cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 41-57.

36. Thus, for example, E.J. Bickerman "En marge de l'écriture", *RB* 88, 1981, pp. 19-23.

37. Cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 80-85; *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 23), pp. 63-84; Wolff, *op. cit.* (n. 29), pp. 74-76.

38. Meyers-Meyers, *op. cit.* (n. 28), p. xlvi.

39. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), p. 96.

40. Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 33), pp. 13-27, esp. 17-18.

41. Cf. here the more detailed discussion in Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 2008, pp. 16-19.

building begun, a move has been made in the right direction. Nevertheless the early results are discouraging. The appearance of the temple is nothing in comparison to its past glory (2:1-3).⁴² Haggai's response to the situation is twofold. First, he encourages the community to persevere in the present (thus the *Ermutigungsformel* in v. 2:4) in light of the divine presence among them (thus the *Beistandformel* in 2:5). Second, he announces a future intervention of Yahweh, not yet present, but imminent, introduced by *ky* (2:6) providing additional ground for perseverance and hope. Thus the present and glorious future are closely linked. For Haggai, the present moment was a critical moment of transition. The community stood on the threshold of an imminent future act of Yahweh which would set the inadequacies of the present to rights.

3.2.2 The imminent transitional crisis and future hope

Hag. 2:6-7 thus moves immediately to the transitional crisis set in motion by Yahweh which will remedy the inadequacies of the present and provide hope for the community in its present labours. This intervention is described as the 'shaking of the heavens and earth, sea and dry land' and the 'shaking of the nations'. The motif of shaking⁴³ is a common prophetic trope often associated with the presence of Yahweh, the Divine Warrior, who appears and intervenes on behalf of his people (cf. Exod. 19:18; 1 Kgs. 19:11; Judg. 5:5; Nah. 1:5; Joel 4:16 [ET 3:110]; Isa. 13:13; 14:16; Jer. 10:10; 50:46; Ezek. 26:10, 15, 16; 27:28; 38:19-20). In 2:6a Yahweh's coming intervention is introduced with the temporal phrase *ʿwd ʔht mʿ hyʔ* indicating the extremely brief interval which would exist between the prophetic word and Yahweh's coming actions on Israel's behalf, which would repeat, in an amplified way, earlier interventions for them.⁴⁴ This stress on extreme imminence is continued by the use of a *futurum instans* construction indicating that Yahweh is about to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and dry land (*wʔny mr ʕš ʔt-hšmym wʔt-hʔrʔš wʔt-hym wʔt-hhrbh*). This shaking likely refers to the convulsions of the visible world (heavens, earth, sea, dry land) in response to the theophanic appearance of Yahweh. This motif, derived from older historical and cultic traditions (cf. Judg 5:4; Ps. 18:8-16 [ET 7-15]; 77:17-20 [ET 16-19]; 46:7

42. On the various interpretive issues involved in this section cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 159-173.

43. Some of the principal verbal roots used descriptions of shaking are *rʕš*, *rgz*, *phd*, *mwg*, *hyl*, *zll*. Cf. B. S. Childs, "The Enemy from the North and the Chaos Tradition", *JBL* 78, 1959, pp. 187-198; H. Schmoldt, "rʕš", in *TDOT* XI, G.J. Botterweck *et al.* eds, Grand Rapids 2003, pp. 589-593; J.A. Tollington, *Tradition and Innovation in Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, JSOT.S 150, Sheffield 1993, pp. 223-224; J. Kessler, "The Shaking of the Nations: An Eschatological View", *JETS* 30, 1987, pp.159-166; *id.*, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 175-179.

44. On this understanding of this much disputed phrase, including the text-critical issues see Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 160, 173-175.

[ET 6], was later associated with the Day of Yahweh (Isa. 13:13; Jer. 4:24; J1 2:10; 4:16 [ET 3:16]; Ezek. 38:19-20).⁴⁵ This shaking of the elements of the created order is followed by the ‘shaking of the nations’⁴⁶ (*whr^sty ʔt-kl-hgwym*), a reference to Yahweh’s causing the nations to tremble in fear.⁴⁷ The nations’ trembling with fear then results in the gathering of their treasures into the temple (*wh³w hmdt kl-hgwym*), although the manner and purpose of the coming of these treasures are not specified,⁴⁸ and in the temple’s resultant glorification (*wml²ty ʔt-hbyt hzh kbwd*). Lexical and syntactical considerations make it likely that the language and general conceptual pattern in Hag. 2:6-9 are derived from the motif (traditional in many divine-theophany texts in Zion theology) of a dramatic intervention of Yahweh which causes the elements of nature to convulse (perhaps through celestial portents, earthquakes and the like), and spreads panic on earth, bringing Israel’s enemies to their knees.⁴⁹ The references to shaking thus refer to a chain of events set in motion by the intervention of Yahweh.⁵⁰ Haggai’s language here draws on numerous earlier epic and prophetic traditions,⁵¹ yet reconfigures them in service of his primary aim – the declaration that Yahweh’s intervention will ineluctably remedy the pressing need of the present *viz.* the transformation of the temple’s mean appearance into an incomparably glorious state.⁵²

45. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 173-183; Schmoltdt, *loc. cit.* (n. 43), pp. 589-590.

46. Haggai’s reference to the nations here is of profound significance vis-à-vis his understanding of the community’s relationship to foreign, Gentile power. However, since this motif reappears in 2: 21-22, I will defer my discussion of it to the preliminary conclusions at the end of my discussion of Haggai’s oracles.

47. For the translation “tremble with fear’ as the nations” response to the shaking of the heavens and earth cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 173-183, and *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 43), *passim*. B.S. Childs, *op. cit.* (n. 43), p. 188, caught the ‘psychological’ sense of the Hiphil of *r^sʕ* as referring to “trembling with fear” but did not carry this observation to its logical consequence in Haggai.

48. On the generalized language here cf. Petersen, *op. cit.* (n. 30), pp. 101-102. On the reasons for the lack of specificity here and its function, cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 190-191.

49. Cf. L.C. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah*, NICOT, Grand Rapids 1976, p. 101.

50. The chain of events would thus be: Imminent cosmic perturbations (“shaking of the heavens and earth”)>trembling of the terrified nations (shaking of the nations)>nations’ wealth comes to Yahweh’s house (no explanation regarding how)>glorification of the Temple. For a detailed defense of this text as describing a series of consecutive events here cf. Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 43), pp. 162-63; *id.*, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 176-181.

51. For a fuller list cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 183-195. B. Peckham notes the “crisis of allusions” in Hag. 2:5; B. Peckham, *History and Prophecy: The Development of Late Judean Literary Traditions*, AncBRL, New York 1993, p. 745.

52. These are too numerous to mention here. For a fuller listing of these cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 183-195.

3.3 Hag. 2:20-23: *Prophetic assessment of the present situation, coming crisis, and resultant state*

3.3.1 Present situation

This section, comprising a more general oracle regarding a coming divine intervention (vv. 21b-22), followed by a more specific one addressed to Zerubbabel (v. 23),⁵³ follows a similar pattern to 2:6-9, yet has a distinct emphasis. Like 2:6-9 it begins with clear links to the present situation, through the repetition in 2:20 of the date already given in 2:10, 18 (and alluded to in v. 19), and the notice that this word of Yahweh was the second such event on that same day. Again, like 2:1-9, the oracle presupposes a changed, yet still unsatisfactory present, which awaits a remedial, transformative act of Yahweh. However, unlike 2:1-9, where the dissatisfaction nature of the present is expressed via the prophet's rhetorical questions which reveal the inner sentiments of the population (2:2-3), here there is no explicit allusion to the need for the coming intervention described in vv. 21b-23. Nevertheless, given that the coming intervention is described in similar terms to that of 2:6-9 it is to be inferred that, just as the shaking of the nations in 6-9 responds to and remedies the problem of an inglorious temple, so vv. 21-23 speak to the problematic matter of Yehud's status as a tiny and remote province in the empire, and of the humble status of its Davidic ruler.⁵⁴

3.3.2 The imminent transitional crisis and future hope.

The description of the future begins in v. 21b with a *futurum instans* construction (*w ʔny mr ʔš ʔ-hšmym w ʔ-h ʔs* cf. Hag. 2:6; Zech. 2: 13-14 [ET 9-10]), stressing the imminence of Yahweh's coming intervention. Once again, Yahweh's action begins with the motif of 'shaking the heavens and earth'. (cf. 2:6). However, instead of following this initial me-

53. Here I follow D.L. Petersen (*loc. cit.* [n. 30], p. 102) who notes that although vv. 21-23 consist of two oracles separated by *bywm hhw*² it is nevertheless preferable to read these verses as comprising a single flow of thought, with the oracle to Zerubbabel as its culmination. A similar observation is made by S. de Vries, "Futurism in the Pre-exilic Minor Prophets Compared with that of the Postexilic Minor Prophets", in P.L. Reditt and A. Scharf eds, *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve*, New York 2003, pp. 262-263.

54. For the view that Yehud is a province within the empire, and Zerubbabel a governor (as opposed to a variety of opposing positions), cf. A. Lemaire, "Le rôle de Zorobabel et la dynastie davidique en Judée du VI^e siècle au II^e siècle av. J.-C.", *Trans* 7, 1994, pp. 153-165; cf. also Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 72-80; *id.*, "Haggai, Zerubbabel and the Political Status of Yehud: The Signet Ring in Hag. 2:23", in M.H. Floyd and R. Haak eds, *Prophets, Prophecy and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism*, Library of Hebrew Bible-Old Testament Studies 427, New York-London 2006, pp. 102-119, for a further statement of this position, and a survey of opposing ones, with bibliography.

rism with various elements of the cosmos (as in 2:6-7), the oracle moves directly to the motif (not directly alluded to in 2:6-7) of the overthrowing (*hpk*)⁵⁵ of the throne (*ks*)⁵⁶ of the kingdoms (*mmlkwł*) and the destruction (*šmd*) of the strength (*hřq*) of the kingdoms of the nations (*mmlkwł hgwym*) – a reference not to the complete annihilation the nations *per se*, but of their inability to resist Yahweh and his will.⁵⁷ Verse 22b moves on to a more concrete image, that of a decisive military conflagration. Chariots, horses and riders will be overtaken in a panic, resulting in their self-annihilation. This motif is commonly used for Yahweh's routing of the enemies of his people in both historical (e. g. Judg. 7:22; 1 Sam. 14:20; 2 Chr. 20:20-25 and 32:20-23) and prophetic traditions (e.g. Isa. 19:2; Ezek. 38:19-21 and Zech. 14:13). This then sets the stage for the final goal of Yahweh's intervention, described in v. 23 and introduced by the temporal phrase *bywm hhw*⁵⁸ and a divine-oracle formula.⁵⁸ After the reduction of the nations' power, Yahweh will take Zerubbabel, and establish him as a signet ring (cf. Jer. 22:24-30). While the nature of Zerubbabel's role and exalted status is stated in the most imprecise terms, the oracle clearly asserts the re-election of the Davidic line and a future, exalted role for Zerubbabel himself⁵⁹ in the new order that Yahweh will establish.⁶⁰ Jehoiachin had been unfaithful to Yahweh and was rejected (Jer. 22:24-30). By contrast, Zerubbabel, like David before him, had been zealous for Yahweh's house. The oracle in v. 23 is filled with multiple allusions to a variety of Israelite traditions, including the deliverance at the Sea of Reeds,

55. This verb is found frequently in traditions concerning the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, e.g. Gen. 19: 21, 25, 29; Deut. 29:22 [Eng. 23]; Jer. 49:18; 50:40. However as D.L. Petersen notes, it eventually serves as a descriptor for the overthrowing of any power hostile to Yahweh, e.g. Jer. 20:16, Petersen, *loc. cit.* (n. 30), p. 99.

56. Singular, but plural in sense cf. GKC § 124r. The plural *mmlkwł* (kingdoms) indicates that *ks* (throne) is collective, rendering the sense of the phrase, "every throne of every nation". Cf. for a fuller discussion, P.A. Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, NICOT, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1987, p. 142; K.M. Beyse, *Serubbabel und die Königserwartungen der Propheten Haggai und Secharaj: eine historische und traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Stuttgart 1972, pp. 55-56.

57. As H.W. Wolff notes (*loc. cit.* [n. 29], pp.102-104), there is a long tradition of interpretation which views the expression "the throne (sg) of the nations (pl)" as a veiled reference to the Persian empire on Haggai's part. However, as H.W. Wolff accurately notes, the reference is to the final bringing of *all* powers into submission to the rule of Yahweh. For a fuller development of the exegetical issues in vv. 21-23, including the traditions utilized in this oracle, cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 223-225.

58. On this transition cf. de Vries, *loc. cit.* (n. 53), pp. 262-264.

59. On this cf. Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 54), pp. 102-119.

60. The order in this pericope is thus: Imminent cosmic perturbations ("shaking of the heavens and earth")>destruction of the nations' ability to resist or oppose the reign of Yahweh>exaltation (undefined and non-specific) of davidide Zerubbabel.

the overthrowing of the Cities of the Plain, holy war, oracles against the nations, and the royal Psalms, to name a few.⁶¹

3.4 Hag. 2:6-9; 20-23: Summary of key elements

Several key observations emerge from the preceding analysis. First, Haggai's oracles describe the community of his hearers as having moved from a position of neglect of Yahweh's purposes for his house to one of responsiveness to them. Yet, no profound change has resulted from the fruit of their labours: the temple's appearance is disappointing, the davidide Zerubbabel remains a subaltern governor in a backwater of the empire. As such, the text manifests a crisis of expectations.⁶² However, the prophet indicates that very soon their situation will radically change for the better. Using a variety of traditional motifs set in highly generalized language Hag. 2:6-9 and 20-23 foresee an imminent intervention of Yahweh. Second, this intervention, though vast in its extent – the heavens, earth and all nations are affected – serves a focused and limited goal: the nations will tremble with fear and their treasures will fill and glorify the temple, surpassing its past splendour. In the absence of any opposing power on the part of the (unnamed) nations, Zerubbabel (and by implication Yehud/Israel) will emerge as pre-eminent and exalted. Third, these changes are seen as imminent. They will directly impact the experience of the specific community (the temple builders) and individual (Zerubbabel) addressed. The ensuing ameliorated state is not one that is profoundly distinct from the then-present historical experience. Rather it is a re-alignment and re-ordering of existing realities. S. de Vries summarizes these preceding points well, "Thus Haggai's expectation was sharply focused upon events of the immediate future. [His hope for Zerubbabel] is far from messianic in the traditional sense. Furthermore, it is not predicted for a remote and ideal future, but for the situation of the very moment".⁶³ There is no explicit reference to the resultant state as being definitive and unalterable.

Finally, the present is thus a critical turning point between past and future – in a certain sense a moment of waiting between the beginning of Yahweh's activity and its fulfillment. In the interim, the community is called both to labour (2:4-5) and to accept its present state of subjection to Persian rule, awaiting their future exaltation (2:21-23).⁶⁴

61. For a more complete listing, with specific references cf. Petersen, *loc. cit.* (n. 30), pp. 99-106; Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 225-242; T. Chary, *Aggée-Zacharie, Malachie*, SBI, Paris 1969, p. 34.

62. On this general theme cf. K. Schmidt and O. H. Steck, "Restoration Expectations in the Prophetic Tradition of the Old Testament", in J.M. Scott ed., *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Perspectives*, JSJ.S 72, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2001, pp. 41-82.

63. De Vries, *loc. cit.* (n. 53), pp. 263-264.

64. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 259-261.

4. Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13]: present situation and future expectations

4.1 Introductory matters, date of original proclamation, redactional history and function

Unlike Hag. 2:6-9; 20-23, the series of oracles⁶⁵ in Zech 2:10-17 [ET 61-3] contains no specific date. It is however, part of a visionary-oracular complex⁶⁶ which is redactionally connected to 24/11 of the second year of Darius (i.e. Feb. 15, 519 B.C.E.) in Zech. 1:7. The original date and historical context of the oracles in 2:10-17 [ET 6-13], as well as their present function in Zech 1-8 are hotly debated matters that are highly relevant to our present discussion. Although redactionally linked to 24/11 of the second year of Darius (i.e. Feb. 15, 519 B.C.E., Zech. 1:7), the oracles view the fall of Babylon as lying in the future, and urge the Judean exiles to flee in light of that city's coming destruction (2:11[ET 7]). It is well known that while Babylon fell to Cyrus in 539 B.C.E., it remained largely intact, but was later defeated militarily (although not totally devastated) during Darius' suppression of the Babylonian revolts of 522-21.⁶⁷ Two closely related questions emerge: first, into what situation were these oracles originally proclaimed (pre 539? pre 522? post 520?), and second, what is their function in the context in which they now stand? Various proposals have been advanced.⁶⁸ One group of scholars views these as earlier oracles pronounced by Zechariah in Babylon shortly after his call (prior to 539) and inserted here, likely as a retrospective.⁶⁹ A second group situates it in the years just prior to 521-22, as an expression of the anti-Babylonian sentiment still present in Yehud. As noted, Cyrus' conquest of Babylon left that city intact (in stark contrast to the hopes expressed in Isa. 13:19-22) thus a further devastation was longed for. Indeed, the early victories of Darius I in 522 B.C.E. might have stimulated these pro-

65. Note the comment of C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers who state, "the material within this block is not simply a single long oracular pronouncement. In reality it is a series of oracles that recapitulate, reverse order, the themes and content of the first three visions" (*op. cit.* [n. 28], p. 172).

66. That is a series of seven "night visions" plus a "prophetic vision", into which various oracles have been interspersed. On the structure of the visions cf. Meyers-Meyers, *ibid.*, pp. lii-lxiii. On the oracles see the extensive and detailed, A. Petitjean, *Les oracles du Proto-Zacharie: un programme de restauration pour la communauté juive après l'exil*, EtB, Paris-Louvain 1969.

67. Cf. n. 20 *supra*.

68. See the extremely helpful summary in Boda, *op. cit.* (n. 20), pp. 22-41, esp. 32-33. I am indebted to M.J. Boda for several of the references which follow.

69. R.A. Mason, *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*, Cambridge 1977, pp. 37-39, 43; P.L. Redditt, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, NCB, Grand Rapids 1995, pp. 54-55; A. Van Hoonaeker and W. Nowack (cited by S. Amsler), in S. Amsler, A. Lacoque, and R. Vuilleumeier, *Aggée-Zacharie 1-8, Zacharie 9-14, Malachi*, CAT XI-C, Genève 1988, p. 74.

phetic hopes.⁷⁰ A third group sees these oracles as post-520 reflections on Darius' suppression of the Babylonian revolts, placed in their present context to herald the fact that no further impediment stood in the way of the realization of Yahweh's promised return to Zion and the restoration of that city.⁷¹ A fourth group sees these as a collection of earlier oracles first directed against Babylon, but now re-read in the light of the *pax persica* following 520⁷² and re-applied to the coming judgment of Persian power, or gentile power in general.⁷³ Boda notes a few other, infrequently followed suggestions.⁷⁴

In my opinion, the oracles in 2:10-17 are best understood as oracles originating during the early victories of Darius in 522 (with position 2,

70. Notably S. Amsler who states, "This troubled phase of Persian history forms a perfect backdrop for Zechariah's impassioned cry. The prophet discerns in the upheavals of the day [i.e. 522] the signs of the coming eschatological crisis and urges the exiles still in Babylon to demonstrate their hope by hastily setting themselves on route toward Jerusalem, in order to escape the judgment that will fall upon the nations", *op. cit.* (n. 69), p. 74, translation mine. Cf. also K. Galling, "Politische Wandlungen in der Zeit zwischen Nabonid und Darius", in *Studien zur Geschichte Israels im persischen Zeitalter*, Tübingen 1964, pp. 1-60, esp. 59.

71. Thus M.J. Boda, *loc. cit.* (n. 20), p. 40 who states, "Zechariah 1:7-6:15 finds in the recent upheaval of the Persian empire significant progress toward the Persian fulfillment of prophetic expectations. This means not just the breaking of Babylonian hegemony over Yehud, but punishment of Babylonian excesses, structural transformation of the former empire, and reversal of the devastating actions of the Babylonians through releasing significant numbers of people and rebuilding the temple structure. Although Cyrus had begun the process in 539 B.C, in the Zecharian tradition it was Darius who displayed greater progress in the fulfillment of the prophetic hope". Cf. also, similarly, M.H. Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature 22, Grand Rapids 2000, p. 358, and Albertz, *op. cit.* (n. 20), pp. 371-383. From a different angle, A. Wolters, *op. cit.* (n. 23), pp. 128-143, relates the report of the horsemen in Zech 1:11 to the period *after* 520. However, *pace* the majority of exegetes, he views the sense of the statement "all the earth is at peace" as a positive one, alluding to Isa 14:7. Thus he states "For the last two decades they had lived in a world characterized by the prophetic pronouncement: 'The whole earth is at rest and quiet'. There might be individual wars and revolts within the Persian Empire, but in terms of God's overall redemptive plan, which had been so dramatically vindicated in the recent past by the fall of Babylon to the Persians and the return of the Jews, the situation of the world was one of freedom from Babylonian oppression" (p. 140).

72. Groups one, three and four agree on this point.

73. Thus Meyers-Meyers, *loc. cit.* (n. 28), p. 40; B. Gosse, "La menace qui vient du nord, les retournements d'oracles contre Babylone et Jérémie 30-31", *EstB* 56, 1998, pp. 289-314; Tollington, *op. cit.* (n. 43), pp. 219-220 and Petersen, who states, "For Zechariah, Babylon is no longer the issue at all. Despite the destruction of the neo-Babylonian empire, and despite the installation of a beneficent Cyrus and later Darius on the Persian throne, the temple in Jerusalem had not yet been rebuilt. For Zechariah therefore, anger at specific foreign nations is no longer appropriate in quite the same way that it was for Deutero-Isaiah. The scene had changed radically with the 'punishment of the Babylonians' There is no easy target, i.e., a particular foreign nation, against which Yahweh can be angry" (*loc. cit.* [n. 30], pp. 154-155).

74. Boda, *loc. cit.* (n. 20), p. 33.

and *pace* position 1 above) but still directed against Babylon (*pace* position 4 above) but whose fulfillment is redactionally still anticipated even after Darius' clear victory and pacification of the rebellions of 522-21 (*pace* position 3, above). My reasons for adopting this approach are as follows. In contrast to the fourth approach, it appears to me unlikely that the sustained focus on Babylon in Zech. 1-8 is merely symbol for the coming judgment on all Gentile powers.⁷⁵ Although the text knows of a wider dispersion (Zech. 2: 10b), Babylon is the principal locus of the Judean exiles and the place from which they are to flee (2:10a, 11). Babylon has been the cause of their dispersion, and their principal enemy (cf. Zech. 2:2; 5:11). In accordance with earlier tradition, notably Isa. 13:20-22 and Jer. 50:39-40; 51:37, Babylon itself must be utterly destroyed. It is culpable in ways other nations simply are not.

In contrast to position 3 above, I feel it is inadequate to view the reiteration of Zechariah's call to flee Babylon in light of its coming destruction, as a prophecy which was fulfilled in an earlier period and recorded to demonstrate that the 'new age' of redemption had begun.⁷⁶ Several related considerations stand against such a 'historicizing' view of the call to flee in 2:10-17.⁷⁷ As I have argued elsewhere,⁷⁸ one of the great preoccupations of Zech. 1-8 is the notion of return: the return of Yahweh to his temple and the return of the Diaspora to Zion. This is true both of the visionary-oracular complex (1:7-6:15) and of the sermonic frame (7:1-8:23).⁷⁹ The visionary-oracular complex is anchored to Feb. 15, 519 B.C.E. (1:7). The theme of the repopulation of Jerusalem appears in the third night vision (2:5-9 [ET 1-5]). As S. Amsler, D.L. Petersen, and C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers note,⁸⁰ the oracles of 2:10-17, serve to develop the preceding night visions, in that they explain how it will be possible for Jerusalem to

75. On the focus on Babylon in Zech. 1-8, see the persuasive arguments in Boda, *ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

76. Thus Boda, *ibid.*, p. 40.

77. For a further critique of historicist interpretation of Zechariah's night visions cf. J.-M. Vincent, "L'apport de la recherche historique et ses limites pour la compréhension des visions nocturnes de Zacharie", *Bib* 87, 2006, pp. 22-41.

78. J. Kessler, "The Diaspora in Zech 1-8 and Ezra-Nehemiah: The Role of History, Social Location, and Tradition in the Formulation of Identity", in G. Knoppers and K. Ristau eds, *Community Identity in Judean Historiography: Biblical and Comparative Perspectives*, Winona Lake 2009, pp. 119-45, esp. 121-27.

79. On this vision of the material in Zechariah cf. J. Kessler, "Diaspora and Homeland in the Early Achaemenid Period: Community, Geography and Demography in Zechariah 1-8", in J.L. Berquist ed., *Approaching Yehud: New Approaches to the Persian Period*, Semeia Series, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta 2007, pp. 137-66, esp. 137-139, with bibliography.

80. Amsler, *loc. cit.* (n. 69), p. 73; Petersen, *loc. cit.* (n. 30), p. 172; C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, "Jerusalem and Zion after the Exile: the Evidence of First Zechariah", in M. Fishbane and E. Tov eds, *Sha'arei Yalmon: Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East presented to Shmaryahu Talmon*, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake 1992, pp. 121-135.

overflow with people (2:6-9, cf. 8:4-6).⁸¹ The sermonic frame, anchored to the date of Dec. 7, 518 B.C.E. in 7:1 takes up the matter of repopulation in 8:1-8. It would therefore appear that for the redactors of Zech. 1-8, working after 518 B.C.E. the repopulation of Yehud is considered still to lie in the future. This literary image is corroborated by archaeological evidence that indicate a sparsely populated Yehud, especially at the beginning of the Persian period.⁸² At that moment, given the lack of fulfillment of the key elements of the call to flee Babylon in light of its coming destruction (i.e. Babylon was still standing and a large Diaspora still existed) it seems to me unlikely that these oracles are repeated to indicate that the fall of Babylon had already taken place in the events of 522-21. Rather, it seems more probable that the call to flee Babylon after 520 is reprised in 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] because some further destruction is still anticipated, in light of which the remaining members of the Diaspora are called to flee.⁸³ Furthermore, it is clear that the language in 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] is drawn from a broader *onus Babylonis* tradition manifested most specifically in Isa. 13⁸⁴

81. Meyers-Meyers, *ibid.*, pp. 121-135.

82. O. Lipschits, "Judah, Jerusalem and the Temple", *Trans* 22, 2001, pp.129-143; *id.*, "Demographic Changes in Judah between the Seventh and Fifth Centuries B.C.E.", in Lipschits-Blenkinsopp eds, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 323-376; *id.*, *op. cit.* (n. 2).

83. This of course raises the matter of the purpose the oracles in 2:10-17. A. Petitjean (*op. cit.* [n. 66], p. 127) sees it as support for the movement to return while S. Amsler (*op. cit.* [n. 69], p. 76) views it both as an appeal to the Diaspora members to return, which could have been transmitted by word of mouth to those in Babylon, and as an encouragement to those who had already made the move back to the homeland. C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers (*op. cit.* [n. 28], pp. 172-173) make a similar point. Rejecting the notion that Zechariah's prophetic activity had begun in exile (P. R. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the sixth century B.C.*, London 1968, pp. 148-149) they maintain that we hear "in the imperatives of this oracle pulling its distant audience to Zion the voice of one who has already made the return and who is involved in the temple restoration project". It is destined to "be heard by fellow returned Yehudites needing assurance that they have chosen wisely or by exiles still pondering the choice". How the words of the oracles might have reached the Diaspora members is difficult to determine, as such a suggestion presupposes significant movement between the homeland and Babylonian Diaspora in our period - by no means a certainty. At this point the vexing question of the ease and frequency of movement between Jerusalem and the East comes to the fore, a question which cannot be discussed here, cf. P. Garelli, "Les déplacements de personnes dans l'empire assyrien", in K. von Lerberghe and A. Schoors eds, *Immigration and Emigration in the Ancient Near East, Festschrift. E. Lipiński*, OLA 65, Leuven 1995, pp. 79-82 and various other essays in the same volume.

84. It is generally conceded that this oracle of judgment against Babylon is to be dated prior to the fall of Babylon to Cyrus in 539 B.C.E., due to its reference to the rousing of the Medes in 13:17. Thus Childs, *loc. cit.* (n. 43); *id.*, *Isaiah*, OTL, Louisville 2001, p. 123; Vanderhooft, *op. cit.* (n. 20), pp. 124-127; H. Wildberger, *Isaiah 13-27*, Minneapolis 1997, pp. 16-18; C.R. Seitz, *Isaiah*, Interpretation, Louisville 1993, pp. 128-130; O. Kaiser, *Isaiah 13-39*, OTL, Philadelphia 1974, pp. 9-12. Notable exceptions are S. Erlandsson (*The Burden of Babylon: A Study of Isaiah 13:2-14:23*, ConBOT 4, Lund 1970) who places its origin in the 8th century and B. Gosse (*Isaïe 13, 1-14, 23: Dans la tradi-*

and Jer. 50-51,⁸⁵ as well as similar calls to flight in Isa. 48:20; Jer. 50:8, 28 and 51:6. The dangers of flight when Babylon's fall finally occurs are expressed in Isa. 13:14-15. The critical decision to be made here is whether Zechariah (or his editors) jettison the elements of this tradition which call for the utter devastation of Babylon – a devastation so great that it will be too late to flee once the destruction begins – and view the events of 522-21 to be the fulfillment of this long-standing tradition. If such is the case, it is inappropriate to speak of an 'eschatological' expectations in Zech 2. However it seems to me that the notion of a violent and total devastation of Babylon so engrained in the tradition would not so easily be relinquished, nor would the call to flee be so quickly disconnected from its traditional matrix. Rather, would not any mention of a call to flee Babylon carry with it overtones of that city's coming doom, as anticipated in the tradition, unless such expectations were explicitly refocused in other directions? As such, the quashing of the rebellions of 522-21 could be seen as the first fruits of a greater judgment to come (cf. Hag 2) but not the end of Yahweh's hand against Babylon. This expectation of Babylon's destruction which likely found its origins in the early to mid-sixth century and was rather subject to an ongoing 'rolling forward' as history progressed. The repetition of hopes for Babylon's ruin in various texts including Zech 2 suggests that at each moment, when contrary to expectation, Babylon's demise, devastation and abandonment did not occur (such as 539 and 522-21),⁸⁶ these expectations were not cast aside but rather thrust forward to a later time. Such a 'rolling forward' of 'unfulfilled' prophecy is certainly in evidence in *Haggai* where the prediction of Zerubbabel's

tion littéraire du livre d'Isaïe et dans la tradition des oracles contre les nations - Étude de la transformation du genre littéraire, OBO 78, Freiburg 1988), who sees it as a composition during the reign of Darius I. Isa. 13 bears several thematic similarities to motifs found in Hag. 2:6-9; 20-23 and Zech. 2:10-17. Isa.13: 2-3 speaks of a banner raised up to which the armies which Yahweh is gathering will rally themselves. The signal for their attack is the "waving of the hand" (*nwḇ yḏ* cf. the same expression in Zech. 2:13 [ET 9]). The imagery of the nations trembling in fear is found in v. 6, 8 cf. Hag. 2:6-7; 22. The raised hand, or its close parallel the "stretched out hand" (*nḥ yḏ*) frequently elicits a response of trembling (cf. Isa. 5:25; 23:11). The destabilizing of the heavens in v. 13 and of the earth in vv. 9, 10, 13, are echoed in Hag. 2:6-8, 21-22. The coming judgment of Babylon in the context of a broader generalized judgment in vv. 3, 9, 19, especially its complete devastation and depopulation (esp. v. 19), are implicit in Zech. 2:10, 11, 13 [ET 6, 7, 9]. The impossibility of success in flight once the siege begins in v. 15-16 is to be contrasted with the exhortation to flee in advance in Zech. 2:10-11 [ET 6-7].

85. Usually dated to 6th century. cf. W. McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah II*, ICC, Edinburgh 1996, pp. 1249-1250 which provides an excellent summary with bibliography. Cf. also J. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 37-52*, AncB, New York 2004, p. 367 who suggests an early 6th century date and R.P. Carroll, *op. cit.* (n. 16), p. 819 who proposes a later one. We may note in passing Isa. 48: 20 where a similar call to flee Babylon in the light of its coming judgment is made.

86. Cf. Gosse, *op. cit.* (n. 73), pp. 289-314. It would appear that evidence for a total abandonment of Babylon is only found in the Seleucid period, cf. Kaiser, *op. cit.* (n. 84), pp. 11-12.

exaltation is transmitted without attenuation.⁸⁷ Such phenomena bear out von Rad's observation that in Israelite prophetic traditions, seemingly unfulfilled prophecies, were "absorbed in the great complex of tradition ... [and] applied to a future act of God".⁸⁸ Thus, whatever the precise original date of the oracles in Zech. 2, their placement in a series of visions redactionally linked to the second year of Darius (Zech. 1:7) indicates that the fulfillment was still seen as belonging to the future. Furthermore, even if these oracles of 2:10-17 were originally related to Darius' suppression of the Babylonian revolts of 522-21 (which seem probable), they now serve (in their literary context at least) as a commentary on the situation after the second year of Darius, a time, as we have seen, when Persian rule in both East and the Levant was well entrenched.⁸⁹ S. Amsler sees Zechariah himself as the one who decided to retain these oracles and roll them forward. He states, "The oracle of vv. 10-13 is likely older than the literary report of the seven visions into which it has been inserted. It thus bears witness to the prophet's first period of activity, in relationship to the crisis of 522, which Zechariah now interprets in an eschatological perspective ... It is likely that, in the aftermath of the crisis, in writing his vision report, Zechariah felt constrained to take up this vision once more, to affirm its ongoing applicability, based upon the second vision".⁹⁰ Thus from the redactional perspective of years 1-4 of Darius I (if not even later), Zechariah's earlier oracle still awaited fulfillment. An imminent and decisive act of Yahweh still lay ahead. Babylon was to be judged and the demographic disequilibrium created by Yahweh's scattering of his people in judgment would be remedied.⁹¹

For the prophet then, the present moment is the beginning of Yahweh's restorative activity which still awaits full completion. The prophet's words presuppose a community of returnees already present in Jerusalem

87. On this cf. Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 54), pp. 102-119. For an opposing view cf. W.H. Rose, "Messianic Expectations in the Early Postexilic Period", *TynB* 49, 1998, pp. 373-376; *id.*, *Zemah and Zerubbabel: Messianic Expectations in the Early Postexilic Period*, JSOT.S 304, Sheffield 2000.

88. Von Rad, *op. cit.* (n. 8), p. 285.

89. Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 23). As noted *supra* the view that Persian rule was well entrenched and stable in 520 has recently been challenged by A. Wolters (*loc. cit.* [n. 23]) on the ground that the Elamite and Scythian revolts of 519 testify to the ongoing turmoil in the empire. To this it may be responded, first, that there was indeed a perceived period of calm between the suppression of the earlier revolts and the latter two and, more importantly, Zech. 1-8 portrays a strongly Yehudite focus of interest. Given the fact that Persian rule was only progressively felt in the West (cf. n. 13, *supra*) and that events in the central and eastern parts of the empire would likely have been viewed as rather remote, it does not seem highly improbable that the perception of the empire would have been one of great stability.

90. Amsler, *loc. cit.* (n. 69), p. 76, translation and emphasis mine. Cf. also Meyers-Meyers, *loc. cit.* (n. 28), pp. 176-177.

91. On the imagery of "scattering and gathering" as a description of exile and restoration cf. Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) forthcoming.

(2:14; cf. 6:10-12; 7:1-14; 8:6, 11), who have repented and returned to Yahweh and now experience a restored relationship, dwelling with him (1:1-6).⁹² Furthermore the existence of a widespread Diaspora testifies to the incompleteness of Yahweh's redemptive activity.⁹³ In Zech. 1-8 the return of the Diaspora is viewed as a critically important, yet lacking element (1:16; 2:5-9; 10-17; 8:1-9). Similarly, the anger of Yahweh against the nations who scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem (2:2), has not been fully dissipated so long as the nations are 'at peace' (1:11) and Jerusalem and Judah are still largely devastated.⁹⁴ Thus the present, while hopeful, is still riddled with problematic realities.⁹⁵

4.2 Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13]: Prophetic assessment of the present situation, coming crisis and resultant state

4.2.1 The transitional crisis

The transitional crisis which would alleviate the inadequacies of the then-present situation is alluded to in 2:10-13 [ET 6-9]. The oracle begins with an urgent call to attention⁹⁶ and exhortation to flee 'from the land of the north'. This is followed by a more specific call⁹⁷ to flee addressed to 'Zion⁹⁸ who dwells in Babylon' to escape, stressing the imminence of Yahweh's coming judgment.⁹⁹ The reason for such flight is given in v. 13 [9]. There, using a *futurum instans* construction introduced by *ky* (*ky hnny mnyṗ ʔt-ydy ʕyhm* cf. Hag. 2:6), Yahweh declares that in short order he will 'wave/shake his hand over them'.¹⁰⁰ The verbal phrase 'to raise' (*nwṗ*)

92. Cf. *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 79). The question of matters related to the timing of Yahweh's return to Zion (1:16-17; 2:9, 14[ET5, 10]) cannot be engaged in detail the context of the present study. A brief analysis will be found *infra*.

93. Cf. *id.*, *ibid.*, pp. 137-166; *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 78), pp. 119-145; and Amsler, *op. cit.* (n. 69), p. 49.

94. On this cf. Meyers-Meyers, *loc. cit.* (n. 80) *pace* Wolters, *loc. cit.* (n. 23).

95. Cf. Amsler, *loc. cit.* (n. 69), p. 74 who states, "Thus this second group of oracles reveals the cosmic import of the movement which has begun by the return of the exiles to Jerusalem ... *Despite all of their then-present difficulties*, how could one not rejoice?" (translation and emphasis mine).

96. See M.J. Boda, "Hoy, Hoy: The Prophetic Origins of the Babylonian Tradition in Zechariah 2:10-17", in *Tradition in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah 1-8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology*, M.J. Boda and M. Floyd eds, Library of Hebrew Bible-Old Testament Studies 475, New York-London 2008, pp. 171-190.

97. On the question of the purpose of such a call to flight and how it might have reached those still in Babylon, cf. n. 83, *supra*.

98. Reading Zion here as a vocative, not a directive, cf. Petitjean, *loc. cit.* (n. 66), p. 106.

99. S. Amsler, *loc. cit.* (n. 69), p. 74 notes the similarities of the urgent call to flee in Zech. 2 to the one found in the Sodom and Gomorrah narrative, Gen. 19:17.

100. The antecedent of the 3 plural pronominal suffix in Zech. 2:13 (I will raise my hand against

or 'to stretch out' (*nth*) the hand is frequently used in prophetic 'oracles against the nations' for Yahweh's judgment of specific nations (thus Assyria, Isa. 14:2; Zeph. 2:13; Egypt, Isa. 19:16; 31:3; Babylon, Isa. 13:1-3; Jer. 21:5; Ammon, Edom and Philistia, Ezek. 25:7, 13, 16) as well as against his own people (Isa. 5:25; 9:17; 10:4, 32; Jer. 6:12; 15:6; 21:5; Ezek. 6:14; 16:27; 20:33-34). This metaphor is likely rooted in the activity of a king raising his sword over the enemy before destroying it (Ezek. 30:25) and it likely implies judgment through military defeat. In Isa. 19:16 the response of those over whom Yahweh's hand is raised is severe trembling. Yahweh's activity in Za 2:13 [ET 9] is likely an oracular explication of the second vision, that of the 'horns', and the 'craftsmen' who cause them to tremble with fear (*lhhryd ʔm* Zech. 2:4),¹⁰¹ a motif not far removed from the 'shaking' of the nations in Hag. 2:6-7. Thus, for Zechariah, the imminent crisis consists of Yahweh's judgment on Babylon (likely implying a form of military defeat, 2:13 [ET 9]). This punitive action is also evoked in 2:17 [ET 13] where silence is called for and Yahweh is seen as having been aroused¹⁰² from his holy dwelling for judgment.¹⁰³ It is significant to note that in Zech. 2 the portrait of Babylon is far less vivid than in the tradition upon which these oracles draw. Gone is the emphasis on Babylon's pride and tyranny (cf. Isa. 13:11, 19; 14:1-5, 10-20; Jer. 50:11-12, 24, 29, 31, 32). No case is made here for the necessity of judgment upon it. Rather Babylon is now viewed as a region which will very soon experience the judgment of Yahweh and in which the Diaspora members no longer have any legitimate place. In the early years of Darius' rule Babylon was still home to a significant Diaspora population and only a tiny repatriate community had returned to Judah. As we have seen, in the broader theological perspective of Zech. 1-8, the Diaspora is essentially a manifestation of the brokenness of the relationship between Yahweh and his people, caused by their rebelliousness (cf. Zech. 1:1-6) and as such, according to the Zecharian perspective, in the era of Yahweh's renewed redemptive activity, it no longer had any *raison d'être*.¹⁰⁴ The ineluc-

them) is of critical importance. Is it a more generalized judgment of the nations (Zech. 2:12, cf. Hag. 2:6-9; 21-22) or a more specific one against Babylon (cf. 2:1-4)? With M.J. Boda (*loc. cit.* [n. 20], pp. 29-30), I would maintain that while Zechariah knows of a more general dispersion (and hence the returnees will come from east and west, cf. Zech. 8:7) the enemy here is Babylon, or perhaps Assyria-Babylon viewed as a composite entity.

101. On the imagery and translational issues involved in this vision cf. Boda, *loc. cit.* (n. 20), pp. 23-26. Thus while there is no explicit mention of shaking in Zech. 2 there is a clear association between Yahweh's raising his hand and shaking or trembling in numerous related traditions.

102. *nʕwr* cf. the same root for Yahweh's activity in stirring up the spirits of the people and leaders in Hag. 1:14, and Yahweh's arousal for battle in Judg. 5:12 and Isa. 51:9).

103. With M.J. Boda (*op. cit.* [n. 96], p. 179), C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers (*loc. cit.* [n. 28], pp. 171-172) are reticent to see a note of judgment here.

104. Cf. Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 79), p. 127.

table coming judgment on Babylon thus serves as a *terminus* requiring an urgent response: return or perish!

4.2.2 The intended result and subsequent state

The purpose of Yahweh's intervention is expressed both in the oracles of Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] and in the broader context of Zech. 1-8. First, Zech. 2:12-13 [ET 8-9] stresses the redress of the injustice done to Judah (cf. Zech 1:15). Thus, those who despoiled the people of Yahweh will themselves be despoiled.¹⁰⁵ Second, as noted, the coming destruction of Babylon provides a powerful impetus for those Diaspora members living there to return to Zion, thus resolving the (theologically) aberrant reality of the Diaspora, that is, of "Zion dwelling in Babylon" (2:11 [ET 7]).¹⁰⁶ In this regard it is noteworthy that the coming judgment of Babylon does not in itself resolve the problem of the existence of the Diaspora. Those Judeans living in exile must choose to heed the prophetic call and return, lest they be swept up in Babylon's judgment. Put another way, Yahweh's intervention both permits and invites the return of the Babylonian Diaspora to Yehud. However, Yahweh's desired outcome rests profoundly on human choice—the exiles must choose to return before it is too late! Third, the oracle in vv.14-17 [ET10-13] stresses Yahweh's intention to return and dwell in Zion, 2:14, 15b (in 2:14, once again, a *futurum instans*, introduced by *ky* (cf. Zech. 2:13 and Hag. 2:6)).¹⁰⁷ The presence of Yahweh in Jerusalem will be so attractive that 'many nations will come and join themselves to Yahweh and his people' (cf. 8:20-23; cf. Isa. 2:1-5; Mic. 4:1-5; Isa .19:18-25).¹⁰⁸ Judah and Jerusalem will once again become Yahweh's 'portion and inheritance' (2:16) likely signifying his return to the temple, the restoration of his people to their land, and the resumption of the nation's earlier life and institutions, but this time on a greater scale.¹⁰⁹

105. This echoes the plundering of the Egyptians motif in Exod. 3:22; 12:35-36.

106. A. Petitjean, *loc. cit.* (n. 66), p. 106, astutely comments, "The use of Zion to designate the deportees in Babylon serves to place the dramatic situation created by the exile in stark relief. Israel has been snatched away from its land and from the religious center that Yahweh has assigned to his people-Jerusalem and the hill of Zion. Put another way, Zion is no more in Zion".

107. If, as I have argued, 2:10-17 [ET6-13] reflects a "thrusting forward" of an earlier oracle, the question of the timing becomes acute. After the second year of Darius, has Yahweh returned or will he return in the future? It is clear that in some sense the presence of Yahweh returns to the temple after its ritual consecration, alluded to in Hag. 2 and Zech. 4. It may be, however, that the redactor of these verses sees both a present and future return of Yahweh to his temple, just as there is a present and future return of the Diaspora members.

108. The reference here is clearly to non-Jews rather than Diaspora members. The use of many nations (*gwyn rbyrn*) as in Isa. 2:4 and Mic. 4:3) and the verb *hwh* (to join, cf. Isa. 14:1; 56:3,6) bear this out.

109. The flow of thought in Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] is thus: urgent call to attention: flee Baby-

4.3 Zech. 2:10-17[ET 6-13]. Summary of key elements

First, we note that Zechariah focuses intensely on the question of return – the return to the land of both Yahweh’s people and of Yahweh himself. The presence of a community of Yahwists who have now responded appropriately to the prophetic word and the presence of Yahweh with them (cf. Zech 1:1-6) signals the beginning of Yahweh’s new redemptive activity. Nevertheless a large Diaspora remains and Yahweh has not yet fully judged the nations for their excessive violence against Jerusalem. As such, the prophet looked for a further dramatic intervention of judgment against Babylon and the nations. In the light of this coming manifestation, those in exile are urged to flee to Zion. Second, Zechariah anticipates an imminent judgment of Yahweh against Babylon, but alludes to it quite briefly when compared to the far more dramatic and general descriptions of Babylon’s fall in earlier tradition, and of the ‘shaking of the nations’ in Hag 2:6-9; 21b-22. Third, Zechariah stresses the necessity of choice. Yahweh has chosen to return to Zion (Zech. 1:16-17; 2:14 [ET 10]). Yahweh’s people must choose to flee Babylon (2:10-11[ET 6-7]). Finally, the future envisaged here is an extension and rearrangement of present realities. There is no explicit statement to the effect that the state of affairs is permanent, although, as in *Haggai*, such an inference would not be inappropriate.

5. Synthesis and Conclusions

5.1 The Reconfiguration of tradition in Hag. 2:6-9; 20-23 and Zech. 2:10-17[ET 6-13]

The relevance of Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 for the development of Israelite traditions can best be seen through an assessment of the points of commonality and divergence between these texts.¹¹⁰

5.1.1 Common points in Hag. 2: 6-9; 21-23 and Zech 2:10-17 [ET 6-13]

The series of oracles in Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 share a number of points in common. First, in terms of basic structure these oracles move from connection to the present to expectation of an imminent divine intervention.

lon since its destruction is imminent; Yahweh is about to (*futurum instans*) judge it>human choice to flee is necessary>judgment on Babylon> injustices done to Judah are redressed; Diaspora returns to Yahweh and Israel.>Yahweh and his people dwell together in the land>many nations join themselves to Yahweh and Israel.>Judah and Jerusalem become Yahweh’s portion and inheritance.

110. In this study I will not attempt to position these texts in diachronic relationship to others, based on traditio-historical considerations. For an approach to the question, cf. Reventlow, *loc. cit.* (n. 7).

Yahweh's coming is described with a vocabulary of shaking or shaking related imagery. This intervention establishes a context for the transformations needed by the nascent restoration community. Second, in both of these oracular configurations the motifs of Yahweh's wrath and judgment on the nations for their arrogance, tyranny and crimes, more commonly part of the 'oracles against the nations', are assumed but not explicitly expressed.¹¹¹ Rather, in the oracles in Hag. 2 and Zech. 2, Yahweh's intervention in history perturbs the nations for the achievement of specific goals within the restoration community: the glorification of the temple and pre-eminence of Zerubbabel (in *Haggai*), the return of the exiles and the integration of Gentiles into the people of Yahweh (in *Zechariah*). Third, neither Hag. 2 nor Zech. 2 contains future visions that are explicitly irreversible, final or definitive. The temple's former glory will be eclipsed by its future splendour (Hag. 2:6-9), Zerubbabel will be exalted (Hag. 2:23), Yahweh and the exiles may return (Zech. 2:10-17 [ET6-13]). All these texts lean in the direction of finality and irreversibility but ultimately stop short of any explicit affirmation of it. Fourth and highly significantly, in these texts the desired goal is not achieved though the direct and radical re-ordering of the entire situation by Yahweh alone. Rather Yahweh's intervention creates a context in which human agents respond in such a way as to accomplish those goals that are particularly needful for the restoration community. As such, the perturbation of the heavens and earth causes the nations to tremble with fear, resulting in the bringing of their treasures (either as spoils of war, offering of tribute, or gifts of worship—Haggai does not specify which, nor is it possible to infer from his language) to the temple to glorify it (Hag. 2:6-9). In 2:21b-22 it is the nations who annihilate one another, as they are thrown into panic by the cosmic upheavals associated with the coming of Yahweh (again no reason is given as to why they are arrayed in battle, although such imagery is usually connected with the nations' assault on Jerusalem). The self-inflicted crushing of the armies of the nations, permits Yahweh's exaltation of Zerubbabel and the re-affirmation of Yahweh's promises to the Davidic line, as the renewed temple emerges and fills the power vacuum left in the wake of the nations' humiliation (Hag. 2:20-23). In a somewhat different, yet still similar way, Yahweh's hand raised over Babylon in impending judgment, provides the context and impetus for the Babylonian Diaspora to flee to Zion before it is too late (cf. Isa. 13:14-16) and for the nations to turn and join the people of Yahweh (cf. Isa 14:1). Fifth, both use terminology loosely related to the day of Yahweh (*bywm hhw'* Hag. 2:23; Zech 2:15[11]).¹¹²

111. Cf. R. Albertz, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 179-203 who discusses some of the various transitions which occur within the "oracles against the nations" materials.

112. The bibliography on the day of Yahweh is immense, cf. C. Van Leeuwen, "The Prophecy of the *Yom Yahweh* in Amos V 18-20", *OTS*, A.S. van der Woude ed., Leiden 1974, pp. 113-34; Y. Hoffmann, "The Day of the Lord as a Concept and a Term in the Prophetic Literature", *ZAW* 93, 1981, pp. 37-50.

5.1.2 Divergences between Hag. 2:6-9; 21-23 and Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13]

Despite these common points the oracles of Haggai and Zechariah exhibit several distinctions from each other. The most significant area of contrast relates to the difference in the purpose of Yahweh's intervention: Haggai's oracles reflect a strong interest in the visible representations of Yahweh's prestige and honour, both in the eyes of his people and of the nations. As such, Yahweh will intervene in the cosmos to permit the enriching of the temple and the exaltation of his anointed ruler—concepts steeped in Zion-Royal theology. By contrast Zech. 2:10-17[ET 6-13] (and all of Zech. 1-8) reflect a profound interest in 'undoing' the effects of the people's earlier disobedience to the prophetic word (cf. Zech. 1:1-6) and in the 'renewal' and 'restoration' of the nation and its institutions. In Zech. 2:10-17[ET 6-13], chief among these are the return of all of the exiled population and their descendants to the land (a theme absent in *Haggai*), the judgment of those who have injured Yahweh by wounding his people and, supremely, the return of Yahweh to dwell with them.

A second area of contrast between Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 concerns each text's perspective with respect to the theme of 'Yahweh and the nations'. A careful reading of these two sets of oracles reveals that Haggai's references to the shaking and defeat of the nations, followed by the ingathering of their wealth and the exaltation of Zerubbabel, stem from a separate traditio-historical matrix than Zechariah's call to flight from Babylon in light of its coming demise. It cannot be doubted that both Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 draw deeply on Zion traditions. In each prophet's vision, the future of the city of Jerusalem and its temple occupies centre stage. Yet our prophets do so in different ways. At the risk of over-simplifying a vast and complex mass of material, it is possible to distinguish, on the one hand, the core traditions of Zion Theology (the divine choice of Zion, the installation of Yahweh's anointed representative, the hostile attack of the nations and their ultimate defeat, and the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion)¹¹³ from the 'oracles against the nations' traditions which are more

113. On Zion Theology as a theological "stream" or "tradition" cf. J. D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible*, Minneapolis 1985; *id.*, "Zion Traditions", in D.N. Freedman ed., *AncBD* VI, New York 1992, pp. 1098-1102; M. Weinfeld, "Zion and Jerusalem as Religious and Political Capital: Ideology and Utopia", in R.E. Friedman ed., *The Poet and The Historian*, HSS, Chico 1983, pp. 75-113; R. S. Hess and G.J. Wenham eds, *Zion, City of our God*, Grand Rapids 1999; B. W. Anderson, *Contours of Old Testament Theology*, Minneapolis 1999; B.F. Batto and K.L. Roberts eds, *David and Zion: Biblical Studies in honor of J.J.M. Roberts*, Winona Lake 2004; J.J.M. Roberts, *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, Winona Lake 2002; B. C. Ollenburger, *Zion, the City of the Great King*, JSOT.S 41, Sheffield 1987; J.H. Hayes, "The Traditions of Zion's Inviolability", *JBL* 82, 1963, pp. 419-426; C.R. Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah*, Minneapolis 1991.

loosely related to a focus on Zion¹¹⁴ and have distinct characteristics. Haggai's words draw more deeply on the former, while Zechariah's reflect the latter. It is important to note that such diversity in the use of a single root tradition should not be viewed as surprising. As R. Clements and D.H. Ryou note, there should be no expectation of uniformity in the prophetic use of various core traditional matrices.¹¹⁵

The origin, form and thematic development of the 'oracles against foreign nations' so widely distributed in the prophetic corpus of the Hebrew Bible have been the object of significant discussion.¹¹⁶ R. Albertz traces the development of such oracles from early war oracles, to visions of a more generalized judgment upon both Israel/Judah and the neighbouring nations, to the more exilic vision of an intervention of Yahweh which serves to provide the occasion for salvation for Yehud. Simply put, the 'oracles against the nations' material indicts specific nations for specific offenses in the past and foresees Yahweh's coming judgment upon them.¹¹⁷ Examples include Amos 1-2; Isa. 13-23; Jer. 46-51; Ezek. 25-32. In certain contexts a nation's restoration is announced. The nation's 'fortunes are restored' indicating a restoration following judgment and the creation of a new status quo, albeit with the same protagonists, but now in different roles.¹¹⁸ It is significant that in these oracles a motif emerges whereby the

114. On the relationship between these oracles and Zion traditions cf. R. Clements *Prophecy and Tradition*, Atlanta 1975, pp. 58-72 and Albertz, *loc. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 179-196.

115. D.H. Ryou, *Zephaniah's Oracles against the Nations*, Biblical Interpretation 13, Leiden 1995, p. 229, speaks of the importance of distinguishing Zion theology and Zion tradition. Ryou draws upon the excellent discussion of Clements, *op. cit.* (n. 114), pp. 87-92 which stresses the extreme fluidity and diversity with which the motifs of Zion or covenant were used by the prophets. R. Clements states, "[T]radition' in itself in ancient Israel cannot be regarded as in any sense a uniform entity ... This undoubtedly means that we cannot treat each identifiable religious tradition in Israel, whether it was mediated through a particular cultic centre or circle of people, as itself representing a particular stream of theology. This would be to treat each tradition as though it were a theological doctrine, which is not historically acceptable, even though distinctive traditions were evidently characterized by particular theological emphases" (p. 87, emphasis mine). Clements' observations are profoundly significant, and correspond to Steck's concept of a "theological stream" (cf. Steck, *op. cit.* [n. 6]).

116. Cf. the careful and detailed discussion in Albertz, *loc. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 179-196 with extensive bibliography. Cf. also J.H. Hayes, "Usage of oracles against foreign nations in ancient Israel", *JBL* 87, 1968, pp. 81-92; J. Barton, *Amos' Oracles Against the Nations*, MSSOTS 6, Cambridge-New York 1980; N. Lohfink and E. Zenger eds, E.R. Kalin trans., *The God of Israel and the Nations: Studies in Isaiah and the Psalms*, Collegeville 2000; Tollington, *loc. cit.* (n. 43), ch. 5.

117. Albertz, *loc. cit.* (n. 2), p. 183.

118. On this cf. J.M. Bracke, "sub sebut: A Reappraisal", *ZAW* 97, 1985, pp. 233-244. Cf. also here R. Albertz, *loc. cit.* (n. 2), p. 187, who notes that, "in the eyes of the exilic prophetic circle, the judgment of Yahweh proclaimed in the oracles against the nations would restore just equality between Israel and its neighbors. Therefore, these oracles end on a surprising conciliatory note". He also notes (p. 183) in such oracles Israel and its neighbours are frequently threatened with destruction by a third

judgment upon the nations actually facilitates the emergence of a restored Israel.¹¹⁹ As already noted, within this broader tradition a strong 'onus Babylonis' tradition arose which anticipated the judgment and total destruction of Babylon (Isa. 13:20-22; Jer. 50:39-40; 51:37). More specifically, in some of the later expressions of this tradition, the coming judgment upon Babylon provides the occasion for the rectification of the demographic disruptions occasioned by the Babylonian (and Assyrian deportations) via the flight of the Judeans from the city (Isa. 48:20; Jer. 50:8, 28 and 51:6). Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] clearly stands within this tradition. As we have seen, significant debate surrounds the dating and redactional history of Isa. 13, 48 and Jer. 50-51. However, it is generally concluded that these passages contain material originating in the mid-to late years of Babylonian rule, perhaps with evidence of ongoing redaction in the years surrounding the accession of Darius.¹²⁰ As such, these traditions are largely antecedent to Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13]. Zechariah's oracle thus draws upon a 'rolling tradition' of prophetic anticipation of the defeat of Babylon - a tradition which likely was 'pressed forward' each time the kind of obliteration of the city expected in Isa.13:17-22;¹²¹ and Jer. 50:39-40 51:37 failed to materialize. Earlier expectations of the judgment of Babylon are taken up and reiterated.¹²² Zechariah's oracle therefore focuses very specifically on the coming judgment of Babylon and sees in it both an opportunity and a threat: the *golah* members who remain in Babylon must leave immediately or be caught up and die during its fall (cf. Isa. 13:14-16).

Haggai's use of motifs of the nations in Zion theology is quite different from Zechariah's in several respects. First, despite the use of much vocabulary found elsewhere in specific 'oracles against the nations' (shaking, cf. Jer. 51:29; falling by the hand of ones brother, cf. Isa. 19:2, Ezek. 38:19-21, overthrowing cf. Jon 3:4), Haggai views the nations as a collective whole rather than individually. Furthermore, whereas Zechariah's words in 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] tend to draw heavily upon late monarchic and exilic prophetic traditions, especially those associated with the oracles against the nations,¹²³ Haggai's language evokes a wider diversity of traditions drawn from a great number of origins. Most particularly Haggai draws upon the stock traditions in Zion theology regarding the disposition of the nations *en bloc* to Yahweh's choice of Zion as his dwelling place and his installation of his anointed ruler. In the broader context of Zion theo-

party as a result of their misdoings.

119. Albertz, *ibid.*, p. 186.

120. Thus *ibid.*, p. 186; Gosse, *loc. cit.* (n. 73).

121. R. Albertz, (*ibid.*, p. 192) identifies this portion as the earliest portion of the oracle, with later additions in the early years of Darius' reign.

122. Gosse, *loc. cit.* (n. 73), pp. 289-314.

123. See especially here the meticulous inventory in Boda, *loc. cit.* (n. 96), pp. 173-79. Note especially p. 175.

logy¹²⁴ the nations play at least two significant roles.¹²⁵ In the first instance, they resist the rule of Yahweh and his anointed from Zion (Ps. 2, 110) and seek to mount an assault on Zion to overthrow it (Ps. 46, 48; Zech. 14). In the second, following Yahweh's vindication of his city and king through the destruction of their forces, the remnants of these nations come in pilgrimage to Zion, worshipping Yahweh and receiving his *torah*, bearing gifts and seeking the glory of his house (Mic. 4; Isa. 2, 60).¹²⁶ These motifs are derived from texts of diverse origin and tradition history, but are reflected in Haggai's words. I have argued at length that Hag. 2:6-9 draws on language identified with the nations' role as both opponents of Yahweh's rule (the nations as those 'shaken' by Yahweh, cf. the numerous texts which feature the nations trembling with fear at Yahweh's intervention) as well as those who manifest fealty and submission (as evidenced by the bringing of wealth cf. Isa. 60; Zech. 14) such that it is impossible to determine which broader motif the prophet has in mind, if not both.¹²⁷ Hag. 2:20-23, by contrast, has a clearly bellicose flavour.¹²⁸ That Haggai should use one aspect of Zion theology, (Temple and Royal traditions) and Zechariah another, (oracles against the nations traditions) fits perfectly with the overall objectives of each. Haggai focuses on the exaltation of the temple and the prestige of Yehud's royal-Davidic ruler in the eyes of the nations. Zechariah yearns for the restoration of the people and their God to their former life of dwelling together in the land.

Following from this, a third area of contrast regards the role of Gentile nations. While Haggai's perspective on the nations has been mistakenly viewed as negative and exploitive,¹²⁹ it may justifiably be said that as a *dramatis persona* the role of the nations is muted and vague. Their wealth provides the means through which the temple will be made splendid, and the reduction of their power permits the exaltation of Zerubbabel, Yah-

124. On Zion theology in general cf. n. 113, *supra*.

125. G. Von Rad (*loc. cit.* [n. 8], pp. 283-291) suggested that two cycles lay at the core of eschatological vision in Zion theology: a battle cycle, highlighting the thwarting of a hostile attack on Zion by the nations, and a pilgrimage cycle, featuring the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion to offer their tribute. Cf. also, Weinfeld, *op. cit.* (n. 113), pp. 75-113.

126. Cf. esp. the references in the previous note and M.A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-4 and the Post-exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition*, Berlin-New York 1988, pp. 166-170; G. McConville, "Pilgrimage and Place: An Old Testament Perspective", in Craig G. Bartholomew and Fred Hughes eds, *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage*, Burlington 2004, pp. 17-28, esp. 25. G. McConville sees Isa. 2:2-4 as a conscious reversal of Ps. 2. He states, "Whereas in Ps. 2 Yahweh and his anointed are at war with the nations which attack Zion, now the nations come willingly to it" cf. also Lohfink-Zenger, *op. cit.* (n. 116); cf. also Albertz, *loc. cit.* (n. 2), p. 433.

127. On this "generalizing" tendency in Haggai cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 180-190.

128. Pace Tollington, *loc. cit.* (n. 43), pp. 223, who sees both 2:6-9 and 21b-22 as indicating judgment.

129. Thus F. James, "Thoughts on Haggai and Zechariah", *JBL* 3, 1934, pp. 229-234 among many others.

weh's chosen signet ring and servant. Zechariah, by contrast, sees a more glorious future for them as those who may ultimately join themselves to the people of Yahweh (Zech. 2:15 [ET 11], cf. Isa. 14:1-2). Fourth, the sphere of Yahweh's coming intervention differs between the two prophets. Zechariah's description of the coming judgment on Babylon excludes many of the more theophanic, cosmic and dramatic elements included in Isa. 13:9-12, phenomena echoed, albeit subtly, in Hag. 2:6-9; 21b-22. The description of the fall of Babylon in Zech. 2:13[9] is rather restrained and could simply be that of a revolt by its lowest social elements. Haggai's vision is more extensive, involving the heavens and earth as well as all nations. It also entails far more extensive use of the imagery associated with the 'day of Yahweh' than does Zechariah's. Fifth, two different types of activity are called for in the present in light of Yahweh's coming intervention. In Haggai's vision, the people of Yahweh must labour for the completion of the temple in the sure hope that Yahweh will himself reward their efforts by gathering in the nations' wealth. Zerubbabel must continue in his role as governor (even though only as a subordinate governor) knowing that he is indeed Yahweh's 'servant' and would one day be exalted. The community is called to accept him as such. The stress in *Haggai* is on faithful labour, waiting and acceptance. No active role for Israel is described for them in the midst of Yahweh's future acts.¹³⁰ Zech. 2:10-11[ET6-7], shares this vision of faithful activity in the present in light of Yahweh's future intervention. Zechariah however calls the Babylonian Yahwistic community (as opposed to the Yehudite one) to heed the prophetic cry and to return to Zion.¹³¹

In sum then, the oracles in Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 reveal a diverse and dynamic use of earlier tradition. The prophetic books which grew up around the words of these two distinctive, yet related, early Persian period prophetic voices went on to retain something of the distinctiveness of each. Despite the fact that both books situate their message in the early years of Darius' reign, they differ from each other in matters of form, structure, and perspective on a variety of highly significant matters (covenant, Diaspora, return of Yahweh, the nature, form and purpose of Yahweh's coming intervention, to mention but a few).

130. R. Kasher, *loc. cit.* (n. 10), p. 582 correctly notes the active role for the human community in Haggai, in contrast to Ezekiel. However it is important to note that that activity is situated in the *present*, prior to Yahweh's future renewal, not in the midst of it.

131. On the means though which this call might have reached the Babylonian Diaspora, cf. n. 83 *supra*.

5.2 *Socio-political attitudes in Hag. 2:6-9; 21-23 and Zech. 2:10-17[ET 6-13]*

For the purposes of the present study, I will limit the question of the socio-political vision of Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 to one specific area:¹³² how, in these oracles, is the community directed to understand its present and future relationship to the foreign political powers that surround it? Put another way, what sort of a response would these oracles have called forth from their original audiences and from the readers/hearers of the literary contexts in which they ultimately became embedded? What kinds of attitudes would they have engendered toward Persian rule and gentile nations as a whole?

5.2.1 Divergent perspectives

5.2.1.1 Haggai 2:6-9; 21-23

Leaving aside the earlier hypothesis of a political insurrection and independence movement in Yehud promoted by Haggai, resulting in the ultimate removal of Zerubbabel¹³³ (a position now seldom found),¹³⁴ Hag. 2: 6-9; 20-23 present the following perspectives regarding the Gentile nations and Yehud's response to them. First, despite the fact that *Haggai* contains no explicit role for the nations in relationship to Yahweh and his people (as opposed to Zech. 2:15[ET11])¹³⁵ and the prophet does foresee a coming 'shaking' of all gentile power (2:6-7;21a-22), it must be emphasized that this is not a 'nationalistic' or 'anti-Gentile' type of perspective.¹³⁶ There is no call to active rebellion against the Persian crown, nor is there any expectation of the total annihilation of the Gentile nations.¹³⁷ Rather,

132. It is beyond the parameters of the present study to engage theories regarding the affinities of these two prophets to reconstructed socio-political groupings of the period. Such as those, for example of Hanson, *op. cit.* (n. 27) and others. Nor can I undertake a discussion of the import of Hag. 2: 20-23 relative to the question the emergence of diarchic communal leadership, cf. Tollington, *loc. cit.* (n. 43), pp. 125-181; Meyers-Meyers, *loc. cit.* (n. 28), pp. xlii-xliv.

133. For a critique of this approach cf. P.R. Bedford, *Temple Restoration in Early Achaemenid Judah*, JSJ.S 63, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2001, pp. 230-237; Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 23); *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 12), p. 85; Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 33), pp. 13-27.

134. Although cf. Kasher, *loc. cit.* (n. 10), p. 582.

135. Hag. 2:8-9 may, however represent a veiled allusion to the pilgrimage motif, according to which the nations present their treasures in Jerusalem.

136. This kind of approach to Haggai has a long and sorry history. For examples of such readings of Haggai cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 2-11.

137. See the older but insightful discussion in A. Bentzen, "Quelques remarques sur le mouvement messianique parmi les Juifs aux environs de l'an 520 avant Jésus-Christ", *RHPPhR* 10, 1930, pp.

the use of the terms 'throne' and 'strength of the kingdoms of the nations' (2:22) Haggai stresses the abolition the power of the nations to resist the purposes of Yahweh for his people and land. To suppose that these words are a deliberate but veiled call to resistance against the Persian throne would be to infer far too much. But they do foresee an end to Persia's dominion over the people of Yahweh and the land. This likely resonates with the deuteronomistic conception of Israel's exaltation in the eyes of the nations when the community manifests covenantal obedience (Deut 28:1, 7, 10, 13, cf. Haggai's use of deuteronomistic language in 1:3-11) as well as the broader motif of the exaltation of Jerusalem in Zion theology (cf. Isa. 2; Mic. 4).

Yet over against this hope for the ultimate re-ordering of the world around Zion and its divinely appointed ruler we see a clear invitation to view Persian rule as part of Yahweh's purposes. This can be seen in the narrative framework by the integration of Darius and Zerubbabel into a common structure,¹³⁸ as well as in the oracle to Zerubbabel in 2:23 which invites the community to an acceptance of Zerubbabel as Yahweh' servant (*'bdy*) in role as governor (*pht yhw dh*),¹³⁹ thus inviting a real (albeit provisional) acceptance of Persian rule. Thus Haggai regards Persian rule as a stage in the progress toward Yahweh's ultimate purposes. Finally, it is worth noting in passing, that unlike the oracles in Zechariah, there is no mention of the return of the Diaspora.

5.2.1.2 Zechariah 2:10-17 [ET 6-13]

Zechariah's oracles have several distinctive features. First, as opposed to a more spectacular, cosmic 'shaking of the nations', Zechariah envisages a very specific judgment on a particular population—Babylon (2:10-11 [ET 6-7]). While glimpses of a more general judgment may be inferred in the second vision (Zech. 2:5-9 [ET 1-5]), the focus on Babylon implicitly portrays Persian rule in a more positive light. In this sense, Zechariah's words carry a pro-Persian undercurrent: in both 539 and 522-21 Persian rule brought a partial fulfillment of a long tradition of hoped for judgment upon Babylon. Zechariah's language leaves open the possibility that its future destruction would be at Persian hands as well. What is more, in 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] there is no explicit reference to a reduction in or an end to Persian rule. Even in the broader context of Zech 1-8 Zion's glorious future is not contingent upon the destruction of Persian rule, as it would seem to be in *Haggai*. Thus, although each prophet has a

493-503. Cf. also Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 23).

138. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 115-116, 259-260.

139. Though many would see Zerubbabel's title here as a redactional gloss, this need not be the case. Cf. S. de Vries, *loc. cit.* (n. 53), pp. 262-63, who views this oracle as authentic in its entirety.

distinct conception of Yahweh's future judgment, both contain an implicit invitation to acceptance of Persian rule.¹⁴⁰

5.2.2 Common perspectives

Several perspectives are common to both Hag. 2:6-9; 21-23 and Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] (and to a certain extent the broader contexts in which they stand). First, these oracles share the strong conviction that the presence of a community of faithful Yahwists in Jerusalem and the reconstruction of the temple signaled the beginning of Yahweh's promised work of redemption and restoration following the devastating events of the early 6th century. Yet it was clear to them that the *status quo* did not reflect Yahweh's final intentions and purposes. The inglorious appearance of the temple under construction, Yehud's status as a Persian province, Zerubbabel's position as a subaltern governor, and the existence of a large Diaspora were inherently incompatible with their vision of the future. As such these prophets understood themselves as standing between the successive waves of Yahweh's salvific activity. They furthermore anticipated the culmination of Yahweh's activity to occur in the very near future. This is underlined by the use of various lexical and syntactical indicators (Hag 2:6a; 21b; Zech 2:13-16 [9-12]). Thus, although they viewed the life and activity in the present moment as indeed acceptable to Yahweh, acceptance of present realities could be only provisional at best. We witness in these texts the clear expectation of the Yehudite prophetic community in the early Persian period that Yahweh's intervention was imminent. They felt themselves to be on the cusp of a profound and definitive change which would radically alter their circumstances, and resolve the problem that so sorely preoccupied them.

Second, both prophets viewed the coming activity of Yahweh as occurring on the historical, rather than the meta-historical, plane. It would consist of the re-ordering of the world which they knew and in which they lived. This is most vividly seen through: (1) the precise naming of Zerubbabel (Hag 2:21, 23; Zech 4:6-10a),¹⁴¹ who would presumably still be alive and become the renewed Davidic ruler of the nation and (2) the call to flee Babylon so as not to be overtaken in its coming destruction, as well as in the various other lexical and grammatical expressions of the immanence noted *supra*. The hopes expressed in these oracles are firmly rooted in the realities and institutions of Israel's historical experience: the return of the exiles; the glorification of the temple; national and political pre-eminence in the world. Thus, these visions reflect a very 'this worldly' pers-

140. As is commonly noted, tangible manifestations of Persian rule would not have been frequent in Yehud in the earlier part of the Persian period.

141. Clearly the use of the term "branch" in Zech 3 and 6 raises numerous issues in this regard. On the various interpretive options cf. S. Amsler, *loc. cit.* (n. 69), p. 84, who sees the term as a royal designation for Zerubbabel, uttered before the governor's arrival in Yehud.

pective. The glorious age to come, although expressed in 'idealistic' terms is still profoundly historical in that it largely reinvigorates earlier traditional hopes for nation, land, temple, priesthood and ruler, in the context of the geopolitical world of the ANE.

Third, both these texts reflect a transformation and re-contextualization of certain aspects of the earlier oracles of judgments against foreign nations, making them more relevant to the Yehudite community in their concrete socio-political context. Most specifically we witness in *Zechariah* both a re-affirmation of the belief in the coming judgment of Babylon (Zech. 2:10-11[ET 6-7]) for its acts of violence in the dispersion of the people of Yahweh – acts which exceeded the demands of Yahweh's judgment (Zech. 1:15). However, (as elsewhere in Zech. 1-8) emphasis is placed on this judgment as impetus for the return of the exiles in 2:10-12 [ET 6-8]. Zech. 2:10-17 [ET 6-13] in particular demonstrates the flexibility and fluidity of prophetic traditions – especially well-rooted ones. Thus, the *onus Babylonis* tradition was not discarded when the anticipated devastation of Babylon failed to occur in 539, or even 522. Rather, the lack of fulfillment was seen as an indication that the purposes of Yahweh would be worked out in some form of a fulfillment that was integrally linked to the original promise, even if delayed or different in form. The retention of the promise to Zerubbabel long after the governor failed to experience the kind of exaltation described in Hag. 2:23 reflects a similar perspective. In a similar way, Haggai's oracles have taken motifs drawn from specific oracles of judgment against specific nations, removed much of their particularity, and re-directed them toward Gentile power in general.

Fourth, the hopes expressed in Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 reflect an amalgam of diverse, sometimes conflicting motifs. Thus the coming intervention of Yahweh is both cosmic and global (the shaking of the heavens and earth and nations) yet intensely circumscribed and local (Zion focused; interested in demographics; the enrichment of the temple; the exaltation of the governor). Similarly these visions use an *Urzeit/Endzeit* model which yearns to restore a world which once existed (restoration of the Davidic line; return of the exiles) yet envisages a world which never existed (the nations join themselves to Yahweh and become his people). This *pastiche* testifies to the tolerance for diversity and tension in visions of the future nurtured in early Persian Yehud.

Fifth, as noted, there is an 'indirectness' in the way in which Yahweh's purposes are achieved in the world. The activity of Yahweh does not directly and inexorably achieve the desired outcomes. The Babylonian *golah* must choose to flee before Yahweh's judgment falls upon Babylon. Yahweh shakes the heavens (likely causing terrifying portents and signs in them), this terrifies the nations, whose power is broken, permitting the ingathering of their treasures and the exaltation of Zerubbabel. The nations choose to join themselves to Yahweh. Thus in each case there is a

defined¹⁴² yet active role for the community to play. This attests to a sense of the importance of human choice and decision, versus a more deterministic perspective on foreign affairs, evidenced in the apocalyptic writings.

Sixth, these oracles reflect the very real struggle, experienced in Yehud during the late Babylonian and early Persian periods, as the community attempted to come to grips with the larger political realities of which Judah/Yehud was now a part. Zech. 2:10-17[ET6-13] taken independently reflects the belief that, Persian rule notwithstanding, Babylon, the nation that had done so much injury to the people of Yahweh (cf. Ps. 137) and which was characterized by such arrogance and evil must not be left unpunished. Yet Hag. 2 either ignores such sentiments or incorporates them into a broader expectation of a coming intervention of Yahweh which will overtake the world. The fact that these two parallel visions coexisted at this particular moment speaks to an ongoing process of reformulation of Israel's self-understanding vis-à-vis the nations which was taking place in Yehud. On one hand, in *Zechariah* we see a clinging to earlier hopes for vindication for the particular crimes of Babylon and the restoration of the demographic situation that obtained before 587. On the other hand in *Haggai* we witness the emergence of a hope for a renewed world, expressed in more general terms, order without any reference to the end of the exile, or to exile at all.

6. Conclusion

In sum, then, the present study has examined that which the oracles in Hag. 2 and Zech. 2 contribute to our understanding of the traditio-historical and socio-political context in the early years of Persian rule in Yehud. How this material contributes to broader diachronic developments must be left for further study.

Israelite wisdom understood the distress caused by endlessly deferred hopes in the well-known proverb: "Hope deferred makes the heart sick" (Prov. 13:12). As much may be said of Samuel Beckett who alludes to these words in the beginning of *Waiting for Godot*. Equally distressing, if not more so, is the situation in which the realities of fulfillment appear pale and insipid in comparison to the grandiose expectations of an earlier time, when fulfillment was unthinkable or impossible. In such circumstances a process of negotiation must occur whereby earlier hopes are reconciled to present realities. In many ways the Persian period literature of the Old Testament bears witness to this process. The oracles of Haggai and Zechariah which we have considered here reflect the earlier moments of this process when lively expectations of an imminent divine intervention and glorious future inspired the dispirited restoration community.¹⁴³

142. However nowhere is there an invitation to political activism.

143. I am deeply grateful to Professor M. Boda for his comments and suggestions on this article.