

One Menorah, Seven Lamps, and Two Olive Trees in Zechariah 4: The Central Role of Zerubbabel for the Completion of the Second Temple

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1. Introduction

The majority of publications on chapter 4 of Zechariah have focused on the seemingly incongruent nature of the text. Much discussion has revolved around how verses 6b-10a awkwardly stand apart from the preceding (vv. 1-6a) and following verses (vv. 10b-14). Certainly, the question posed about seven lamps and the two olive trees in the first part is answered in the latter but there is an oracle delivered from YHWH to Zerubbabel (vv. 6b-10a) situated in between that allegedly stands alone. As such, this chapter has spawned much debate about the nature of the text, the proper placement of the oracle, and the function of the oracle in its proposed places. These debates will be examined in this paper but in broad strokes, some have argued that the oracle should be placed elsewhere while others have attempted to remedy this somewhat bothersome interruption through a more synchronic reading of the text.

This paper addresses this issue and examines those debates and ultimately presents a reading that focuses on the final form. By doing so, it will be argued that the oracle, in its current position, is crucial to the unity of the vision, and the chapter

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as a whole conveys a theological message that the temple will be restored through Zerubbabel.

This will be approached in the following sequence. First, I will summarize the views of scholars, then I will offer a structure that takes the final form seriously. Based on the proposed structure I will offer a reading of chapter 4. Finally, I will suggest the theological message that is purveyed through this vision.

2. Overview of Approaches to Zechariah 4

There have been various scholars who have read and interpreted Zechariah 4. To understand their views, I have divided them into two categories: diachronic and synchronic analyses. While there is a risk of oversimplification or superficiality in this kind of endeavor, we hope that it proves to be a useful way to comprehend the issue at hand and what is at stake.

2.1. Diachronic Analyses

Since Wellhausen, the literary coherence of chapter 4 has been predominately questioned by scholars, resulting in a heightened interest in the reconstruction of the text.²⁾ As such, many have attempted to explain the interpolation through a diachronic approach. Mitchell perhaps represents the most extreme view. He argues that the oracle (4:6b-10a) is not, in fact, in its proper place. He then proceeds to omit the oracles

2) A. S. van der Woude, "Zion as Primeval Stone in Zechariah 3 and 4," in *Text and Context: Old Testament and Semitic Studies for F.C. Fensham*, W. T. Claassen, (ed.) JSOTSup 48 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 238.

from its present location and places it between 6:14 and 6:15.³⁾

Petersen, while not as extreme as Mitchell, assumes a hypothetical collection of Zechariah's prophetic statements regarding Zerubbabel and assumes that 4:6b-10a was a part of that collection. He argues that the oracle is consisted of two statements vv. 6ab-7 and vv. 8-10a due to a difference in content and form and therefore have originated independently. For him, vv. 6b-7 present a challenge to Zerubbabel and vv. 8-10a. Thus, he elects to treat the text separately.⁴⁾

Tollington also assumes an editor who inserted the oracles into an existing text. She calls it "abrupt" and "deliberate." She does not think that the interpolation can be interpreted in continuation from the verses that precede and follow, but she acknowledges that the oracle was placed from someone with a "particular theological standpoint" rather than a compiler.⁵⁾ Like Petersen, she thinks that the oracle is in favor of Zerubbabel to oppose the vision relating to Joshua.⁶⁾

3) H. G. T. Mitchell, J. M. P. Smith, and J. A. Bewer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah*, ICC (T&T Clark, 1912), 190-194.

4) D. L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, Old Testament Library (Westminster Press, 1995), 237-244. Petersen does, however, acknowledge that there is a reason why the interpolation is in its present state. Since Joshua received special attention in the fourth vision, the editor found that in this particular vision, he needed to argue a superior status for Zerubbabel. In other words, since the fourth vision in chapter 3 is in favor of Joshua, it is only appropriate that the text is inserted in this particular place to favor Zerubbabel. Petitjean, on the other hand, argues that the order of the two oracular materials needed to be reversed. A. Petitjean, *Les Oracles Du Proto-Zacharie: Un Programme de Restauration Pour La Communauté Juive Après l'exil* (Librairie Lecoffre, J. Gabalda, 1969), 263-267.

5) J. E. Tollington, *Tradition and Innovation in Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, JSOTSup 150 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 43.

6) Ibid., 44. Meyers and Meyers, on the other hand, are opposed to this idea as they suggest that the postexilic situation had a priestly officer and a Davidic governor together. The Meyers say that it is not surprising that scholars would want to rearrange the material into "Zerubbabel materials" and "Joshua materials."

Redditt also thinks that the text was not in unity. He suggests the possibility of the redactor as Zechariah himself. But he does not think that it should be placed elsewhere. He says, “it would seem better to assume that they were composed for their present position.”⁷⁾ However, he too treats the oracle separately. Boda and Butterworth also treat the oracle separately.⁸⁾

Halpern attempts to understand this vision through parallels in ancient Near Eastern texts. Following the works of Petitjean⁹⁾ and Lipinski,¹⁰⁾ he argues that one may find parallels to this vision in materials such as the Mesopotamian temple ritual, “*kalû*-ritual,” one from Warka in the Selucid era and the other K 48+ from Babylon. He thinks that the first oracle to Zerubbabel (4:6b-7) is the removal of the first stone from the old temple and the second (4:8-10a) is the installation of the first stone in the new temple.¹¹⁾ He also argues that the reference to

The point that they emphasize however, is that in postexilic situation, a “priestly office and a Davidic governor were together entrusted with the administration of Yehud by the Persian Government.” C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, AB (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 266-267.

- 7) P. L. Redditt, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*, NCBC (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1995), 67. Also see P. L. Redditt, “Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the Night Visions of Zechariah,” *CBQ* 54(2) (April 1992), 249-259.
- 8) M. J. Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah*, NAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 270-289. Butterworth writes, “I therefore agree with virtually all scholars that 4:6a-10a is secondary.” See M. Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, JSOTSup 130 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 68.
- 9) Petitjean, *Les Oracles Du Proto-Zacharie*, 179-185.
- 10) E. Lipiński, “Recherches Sur Le Livre de Zacharie,” *VT* 20(1) (1970), 25-55.
- 11) B. Halpern, “Ritual Background of Zechariah’s Temple Song,” *CBQ* 40(2) (1978), 173. Halpern is also opposed to those who assert that the oracular 4:1-6a and 10b-14 should not be a part of the night vision. He strongly suggests a case that it is, in fact, part of the night vision in the context of the temple. For a more updated view on this see A. Laato, “Zachariah 4,6b-10a and the Akkadian Royal Building Inscriptions,” *ZAW* 106(1) (1994), 53-69. Bruehler also traces two separate oracles in vv. 6-7 and 8-10. But he argues that the first was the

Zerubbabel in 4:6b-10a was originally situated between 3:8 and 3:9. By doing so, Halpern identifies “the shoot” to Zerubbabel. His proposal explains the discontinuity in chapter 4 and forms a relatively smooth unity in chapter 3. Given that the *menorah* already gives the readers a sense of the temple, the oracle that Zerubbabel must rebuild the temple is well fitting. However, one cannot help but to wonder whether this is too complicated in understanding the text. To accept Halpern’s view, one must assume a significant text critical issue while maintaining a connection to ancient Near Eastern materials.¹²⁾ Another debatable assumption that leads to the conclusion that 4:6-10 was part of chapter 3:8-9 is that the “shoot” is Zerubbabel.

2.2. Synchronic Analyses

Others have taken more interest in a synchronic reading of the text. Meyers and Meyers, while taking some interest in the diachronic nature of the text, veers towards a more synchronic

original vision relating to the “re-founding of the temple in 520 BCE” and the second oracle—that includes v. 10b—came later which had to do with the “completion of the temple by Zerubbabel.” See B. B. Bruehler, “Seeing through the YNYM of Zechariah: Understanding Zechariah 4,” *CBQ* 63(3) (2001), 431.

- 12) Van der Woude is opposed to this view. He refutes Petitjean’s proposal to interpret “the topstone” (הָאֶבֶן הָרִאשׁוֹנָה) as the foundation stone of the temple from Mesopotamia festivities due to the time gap of two decades. Also, he points out that the ancient Near Eastern literature does not provide us with solid evidence other than the aforementioned text. van der Woude, “Zion,” 241. Van der Woude therefore suggests *hārōšā* as a locative or an adverbial accusative. He concludes that this word is the equivalent of *rišā* “beginning” (Ezek 36:11) and of *rēšit* “beginning” and “should be considered an apposition of *‘eben*.” Also see Petitjean, *Les Oracles Du Proto-Zacharie*. Wolters also provides an extensive conversation on why the “top stone” read from the background of the ancient Near Eastern ritual is hard to accept. See A. M. Wolters, *Zechariah* (Peeters, 2014), 126–130.

reading. They agree with Petersen that the oracular material is consisted of two separate units¹³⁾ and they also concur with Halpern's assertion that this material originally may have been related to 3:8-10 or 6:9-15. They, however, assume that if the interpolation had existed separately, it would have been during a very short time and thus the *Sitz im Leben* would relatively remain the same.¹⁴⁾ Their interest in how the text is currently presented is appreciated. They find meaning for the "Oracular Insertion" in its literary context. They correctly suggest that chapter 4 from a literary viewpoint is formed as an *inclusio* and therefore should be seen as a literary whole.¹⁵⁾ I will further elaborate this point in the next section.

Wolters also thinks that it is also redactional but assumes an original author responsible for the redaction.¹⁶⁾ He calls it an "interruption" but concludes that this interruption was deliberate. Somewhat skeptical of the idea of the text having an ancient Near Eastern background,¹⁷⁾ he argues that the interpolation has been rightfully posited in its place to explain the vision Zechariah sees. This was to "highlight the fact that

13) Smith also notes that the interruption is consisted of two oracles. R. L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, WBC (Waco: Word Books, 1984), 203.

14) "We have proposed that Zechariah himself, perhaps with the assistance of one or more of his disciples, was involved with the editing and probably also those of his sometime colleague Haggai. We have also suggested that this task would have been concluded, at the latest, prior to the temple rededication in 515 BCE., perhaps a few months before the dedication if the editing was completed in anticipation of that event." Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 268.

15) *Ibid.*, 267-268.

16) Since he views the interpolation to be written before the completion of the temple in 516 BCE and the night visions to be received in 519 BCE, it is likely that it was added to the cycle of night visions later by Zechariah himself. Wolters, *Zechariah*, 117.

17) He writes, "most of the parallels which many interpreters have recently posited between features of Episode II and Mesopotamian building inscriptions turn out to be illusory." *Ibid.*, 111.

the fifth vision and its explanation must be understood as a message from God addressed to Zerubbabel.”¹⁸⁾ As such, he labels chapter 4 as “Vision 5: The Menorah (Incorporating Episode III).”¹⁹⁾ He does not think that this should be categorized as “Zerubbabel material” and asserts that its function within this vision is to answer the first part of the question. He writes, “the first part of the answer turns out to be Episode III, full of encouraging words addressed to Zerubbabel (vv. 6b-10a).”²⁰⁾

Van der Woude is also opposed to a fractured reading of the text. If the unity of the text is in question to the extent that vv. 6b-10a was originally part of another text, it still leaves us with many unanswered questions. He asserts “nobody has ever given a satisfying answer to the problem where vv. 6b-10a stood originally if this section does not belong to the vision.”²¹⁾ He also correctly points out that typical features of the night visions, such as “proclamation of weal and foretelling of future salvation” are also lacking without vv. 6b-10a.²²⁾

Conrad is not interested in the redactional approach to this chapter or the book of Zechariah.²³⁾ His interest primarily lies in the final form of the text. Thus, he rarely discusses the matter of the interpolation.²⁴⁾ By taking a literary approach, he analyzes

18) Ibid., 117.

19) Ibid., 110-155.

20) Ibid., 111.

21) van der Woude, “Zion,” 238.

22) van der Woude discusses additional problems that occur if one eliminates vv. 6b-10a. Ibid., 238-239.

23) According to Conrad, the first six verses of ch. 1 serve as the prologue of the book which then follows nine scenes from 1:7 to 8:23. The last two parts he views them as two oracles: the first from ch. 9 to 11 and the second from ch. 12 to 14. The chapter of our interest is scene 5, entitled “Stirring Up Zechariah.” Conrad argues that this scene takes place in the temple along with ch. 3 and the following two chapters (5:1-6:15). See E. W. Conrad, *Zechariah, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 100.

chapter 4 according to the characters, scene, and its literary context in the book of Zechariah as a whole. He says, “this is occasioned as part of the tutoring as Zechariah learns his messenger role.”²⁵⁾ He also correctly says that the oracle to Zerubbabel is an “indirect answer” to the question, a clue that will help Zechariah understand the *menorah*.

Stead also suggests a reading based on the unity of the text. He points out that if one excises the material (6b-10a) from its literary context the answer (10b-14) does not fully answer the question (1-6a). Thus, working under the assumption that the text was intended to be read as a whole, he is able to point out some interesting intertexts that are involved.²⁶⁾ He also believes that vv. 6-10 is “related to the interpretation of the lampstand with the seven spouts.”²⁷⁾

Merrill also is opposed to the view that the oracle is an insertion. He finds no evidence for such redactional stage and argues the chapter reflects both structural and thematic patterns.²⁸⁾ His point is well taken and I will explore this more in detail later.

Anthony Petterson takes a literary point of view and argues that there is a “coherent thread” that is weaved into the text. For him when chapter 4 is read as a dialogue then repetition, disruption are all natural aspects.²⁹⁾

24) Conrad does point out that the sayings of YHWH conclude in the scenes in the first, second, third, fourth, sixth, seventh, and eighth scenes. However, in this particular scene the word of YHWH comes in the middle, and not at the end of the scene. *Ibid.*, 105.

25) *Ibid.*

26) M. R. Stead, *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1-8*, LHBOTS 506 (T & T Clark, 2009), 172-187.

27) *Ibid.*, 173.

28) E. H. Merrill, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 149-152.

29) A. R. Petterson, *Behold Your King: The Hope for the House of David in the Book of Zechariah*, LHBOTS 513 (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 67.

As we have seen many scholars have taken interest in Zechariah 4. For the most part, this debate is an intriguing topic of discussion. The nature of the interpolation, the historical setting of the text, the connections made with ancient Near Eastern parallels, the replacing of the material may help us understand the text. However, one wonders what kind of conclusion might surface when one takes the current presentation of the text seriously. As we have seen scholars that have done so elicit an important observation: without the oracle in its present place, the vision, as a whole, is left with an unanswered question. This is what is at stake. If we excise the oracle from chapter 4 and take vv. 1-6a and 10b-14 as a literary unit, we are left with an unexplained revelation. While the meaning of the seven spouts and two olive trees are explained by the messenger, the body of the *menorah* is not. In other words, the chapter, as currently constructed, seems to present the oracle as part of the answer to the question of “what are these?”

3. Reading Zechariah 4 as a Whole

3.1. The Structure of Zechariah 4

The precise nature of the structure of the fifth vision has not been discussed much by scholars. Other than noting that the oracle to Zerubbabel has been inserted, not much has been said. While the insertion gives us some indication on the structure, some elements of the vision are missed due to the lack of attention to the literary structure.³⁰⁾

30) Unger offers a simple structure: I. The Prophetic Symbolism of the Vision (Zech 4:1-5), II. The Exposition of the Purpose of the Vision (Zech 4:6-10), and III. The Particular Explanation of the Vision (Zech 4:11-14). M. F. Unger,

Of those who offer a structure, Butterworth’s structure proves instructive. Based on the repetition of words, questions, and replied answers, he provides important insights towards establishing a structure. The following is the structure he provides.³¹⁾

<Butterworth’s Structure of vv. 1-6a and 10b-14>³²⁾

Description of the Vision	
(‘angel who spoke with me’ prominent)	
Seven lamps...	D1
Two olive trees	D2
Questioning (ambiguous; assuming to be about ‘7’)	Q1
Delay	
Counter-question	CQ
Long interruption	[...]
Answer	
Answer to Q1 (with respect to the ‘7’)	A1
Question (about the ‘2’; elaborated)	Q2
(Wording of v. 11b very close to v. 3)	
Delay	
Counter question	CQ
Answer to Q2 (with respect to the ‘2’)	A2

Butterworth, unfortunately deals with the oracular material separately but based on his structure, I propose a more detailed structure that *includes* the oracular material. In the above structure, Butterworth omits the oracle and notes it as a “long

Zechariah, Prophet of Messiah’s Glory (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), 69.
Petterson offers a structure largely viewing the material as a dialogue. His view is similar to Butterworth’s. See Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 67.
31) Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, 121-123.
32) D: Description; Q: Question; A: Answer; CQ: Counter Question

interruption.” His structure also implies that the question asked by Zechariah in 4:4 includes only the seven spouts and the two olive trees. However, in my view, which takes into account the text in the final form,³³⁾ the oracle functions not as an “interruption” but as an answer to the question. In other words, the question posed in 4:2b-3 (“What are these?”) involves not only the seven lamps and two olive trees but also includes the *menorah* itself. Thus, when Zechariah asks the messenger what these are, they include the *menorah*, the seven lamps, and the two olive trees. The following is a tentative structure I propose in terms of the description (D), questions (Q), counter questions (CQ) and answers (A) and the numbers that guide this structure.

<Structure of Zechariah 4>³⁴⁾

I. Beginning of Vision

4:1 Waking from Sleep

II. Descriptions, Question, and Counter Question

4:2-3 Description

Golden menorah	(‘(1)’) ³⁵⁾	D1
Seven lamps	(‘7’x3) ³⁶⁾	D2x2
Two olive trees	(‘2’)	D3

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- 33) Taking interest in the final form also necessitates questions regarding the book of Revelation’s relation to Zechariah 4 (Rev 1:12-20; 5:6). Further study is needed on this issue but is outside of the purview of this project. See G. V. Allen, “Textual Pluriformity and Allusion in the Book of Revelation: The Text of Zechariah 4 in the Apocalypse,” *ZNW* 106(1) (2015), 136-145; K. A. Strand, “The Two Olive Trees of Zechariah 4 and Revelation 11,” *AUSS* 20(3) (1982), 257-261; C. Tanner, “Climbing the Lampstand-Witness-Trees: Revelation’s Use of Zechariah 4 in Light of Speech Act Theory,” *JPT* 20(1) (2011), 81-92.
- 34) I have followed the abbreviation noted by Butterworth and have added more numbers to elicit a clear logic in the chapter.
- 35) The number 1 in brackets are implied. The number does not appear in the Hebrew text but is implied in the feminine singular form of מְנוּרָה.
- 36) The number 7 appears three times in the MT as opposed to the LXX which has it twice.

4:4 Question: What are these? Q1 + Q2 + Q3
 4:5 Counter-question: Do you not know? CQ

III. Answers, Questions, and Counter Question

4:6-10a Answer to Q1 ('(1)'): the Oracle A1
 4:10b Answer to Q2 ('7'): the eyes of YHWH A2
 4:11-12 Question ('2' x2): What are these? Q3x2
 4:13 Counter question: Do you not know? CQ
 4:14 Answer to Q3 ('2'): the two anointed ones A3

If we take a closer look at the structure, we may notice that there are three elements in the vision that need to be addressed: the *menorah*, the seven lamps, and the two olive trees. The question that is asked in v. 4 includes all three elements and the structure may be understood accordingly. When we consider the answers to the question, A2 and A3 are straightforward. A1—the oracular material—is less obvious. However, if we omit the oracle and stitch together the first and last part of the vision together, notice that there is a part of the question that is not answered. While the meaning of the seven lamps and two olive trees are conveyed, the meaning of the *menorah* is not. One connection that can be made between the outer visions and the inner oracle is the golden *menorah* with a bowl on top in verse 2 (עֶלְ-רִאשָׁה) and the top stone in verse 7 (הָרִאשָׁה).

Some other details reinforce this structure. First, “the messenger who talked with me” appears three times in vv. 1, 4, and 5. The first time indicates the beginning of the vision. Butterworth correctly says that the second and third time in vv. 4 and 5 functions as a literary device that “delays the answer and heightens the tension.”³⁷⁾

Secondly, as Meyers and Meyers have noted, there is an *inclusio* in chapter 4. When chapter 4 is taken as a whole, the

37) Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, 119.

opening and closing units show unity as we see in the repetition of the counter question in vv. 4 and 13.³⁸⁾ Also the description (D1-D3) and the questions (Q2, Q3) are answered in the closing unit (A2, A3).

Thirdly, the interrogatives that drive the conversation of this vision should be taken under consideration. “What” (מַה) appears in vv. 2, 4, 5, 11, 12, and 13, three times in the first part and three times in the latter. The first “what” in v. 2 is used to begin a literary unit that triggers the description of the vision, the second enables the inquiry of the description, and the third is used for the counter question. In the latter part of the vision, the “what” is used twice in vv. 11-12 where there is the double question of Zechariah and the last one by the messenger in v. 13.

Fourthly, the “the whole earth” (כָּל-הָאָרֶץ) appears in vv. 10 and 14. This marks another *inclusio* for a second literary unit of the vision.

Lastly, the numerals also play a significant role in this vision. Especially when making the connections to explain the meaning of each element in the vision. In the “Description (vv. 2b-3)” we see that it begins with a singular *menorah*, that is one *menorah*, then we see the seven lamps with the seven spouts and the two olive trees, and two branches. In the answers (A1, A2, A3) we see the completion of the temple, the seven eyes of YHWH, and the two anointed ones. In essence, we see that the oracular material is a crucial part in this vision and its literary form.

38) “The opening and closing units correspond with each other, as for example in the repetition in verse 13 of the questioning by the Interpreting Angel in response to the prior questioning of the prophet that had already appeared in verse 5; together they frame another unit which is in the middle...The material in Zechariah 4 appears in this way because of the purposeful arrangement and not through later careless or thoughtless handling of prophetic materials. Chapter 4 as a whole should be seen as a single literary construct.” Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 267-268.

3.2. A Literary Reading of Zechariah 4

We have discussed above how scholars have excised the oracular material from the fifth vision. Replacing the material elsewhere in places such as chapter 3 or at the end of chapter 6 or even at the end of chapter 4 allegedly gives vv. 1-6a and 10b-14 more fluidity since the question that is asked is answered right away in vv. 10b-14. However, examining the structure that includes the oracular material demonstrated that there are important connections that are made when we see the chapter as a whole. The value of the oracular material in between in its current position, shows not only the coherence of the text but also it also sheds light on our understanding of the vision. It therefore contains an important theological message.³⁹⁾

39) The church fathers provide some insight into this matter that keeps the text intact. From the school of Antioch, Theodoret of Cyrus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, although they do not take note of the “interpolation” nevertheless read the book historically. When discussing the *menorah*, Theodoret says that the seven lamps represent a divine care, divine providence, and that the spouts, which pour the olive oil, represent the “boundless generosity of divine lovingkindness.” Theodoret of Cyrus and R. C. Hill, *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets, Commentaries on the Prophets* (Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006), 242–243. As for the mountain that stands before Zerubbabel, they represent the nations that obstruct the construction of the temple. For them, the two olive trees represent Joshua and Zerubbabel. For Theodore of Mopsuestia the lampstand represents “divine grace” that shines on all the people the earth and the two olive trees indicate the monarchy and the priesthood. Theodore of Mopsuestia and R. C. Hill, *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*, FC 108 (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 346. On the other hand, Didymus the Blind, from the Alexandrian school offers an allegorical reading. The *menorah* is the “luminous doctrine of the Trinity” for him, and he connects this to the wise virgins who lit their lamps and waited upon the “divine bridegroom.” He also quotes the “no one lights a lamp and conceals it under a vessel or a bed instead of putting it on a lampstand for everyone in the house to see the light.” See Didymus the Blind and R. C. Hill, *Commentary on Zechariah*,

3.2.1. Beginning of Vision – Waking from Sleep (4:1)

This vision begins with a messenger waking Zechariah (4:1). Petersen suggests that Zechariah was perhaps in deep thought or a trance possession rather than asleep.⁴⁰⁾ Boda on the other hand notes that he was awakened from sleep like a normal awakening. His point is that Zechariah does not wake up to the real world, but into a “visionary one.”⁴¹⁾ Tiemeyer suggests that Zechariah had a visionary experience followed by an interpretation.⁴²⁾ Whatever the case may be, it signals an important message to be conveyed.

3.2.2. Descriptions, Question, and Counter Question (4:2-5)

3.2.2.1. Description (4:2-3)

In 4:2, the messenger asks Zechariah what he sees which signals a change in the pattern of the questions. Previous visions up to this point had Zechariah asking the question whereas in this vision it is the messenger initiating the dialogue. It seems that the messenger is expecting that Zechariah knows certain things by now. However, we see, and will continue to see that

FC 111 (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 84–87. What is helpful for our study is that their reading of this chapter is facilitated by a reading that includes the oracle.

40) Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, 216.

41) Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah*, 271.

42) She writes, “We are not dealing with a prophet who clothes his message in the form of the vision report but a prophet who found a message in his visionary experience.” She offers a fascinating report of Zechariah’s visions, visions in the Old Testament, and visions outside of the Old Testament. See L-S. Tiemeyer, “Through a Glass Darkly: Zechariah’s Unprocessed Visionary Experience,” *VT* 58(4–5) (2008), 573–594.

Zechariah still needs aid in the interpretation of the vision.

Zechariah replies by describing a single golden *menorah* (מְנוֹרָה) that has a bowl on top of it. This bowl has seven lamps with seven lips on top of them. These three elements of the vision provide a map of what is to come for its interpretation, namely the meaning of each element.

The *menorah* presents some difficulties in understanding what it is. Wolters thinks that the term *menorah* is the “central shaft and base of the lampstand,” distinguishing from the upper part of the *menorah*.⁴³⁾ Klein says that this is not the typical shape of the *menorah* that appears in Jewish iconography.⁴⁴⁾ Also there is some ambiguity in its expression. The *menorah* is perhaps a lampstand and is used to refer those in domestic households (2Kgs 4:10), but here it likely alludes to the tabernacle or the temple.⁴⁵⁾ In other words, it holds a symbolic value that goes beyond the lampstand itself. By doing so the writer seems to be establishing the continuation from the tabernacle to the first temple to the one Zerubbabel was to reconstruct.

Zechariah continues to describe what he has seen in 4:2-3. On the *menorah* there are seven lips lamps with seven spouts⁴⁶⁾

43) Wolters, *Zechariah*, 117.

44) G. L. Klein, *Zechariah*, NAC 21B (Nashville, TN: B & H, 2008), 155. Also see O. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms* (Seabury Press, 1978), 165-166.

45) E.g. 1Kgs 7:49, Exod 25:31-40. Petersen asserts that the term *menorah* was used for a lampstand (2 Kgs 4:10) and that it was a derivation from Phoenician tradition. He asserts that the plural *menorah* is pre-exilic or early exilic period whereas the singular *menorah* was probably postexilic. Petersen also has a lengthy discussion on what the “spouts” were. See Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, 221-224.

46) Some note the possibility of fourteen lamps. See Klein, *Zechariah*, 155; Merrill, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 147. Meyers and Meyers have a detailed discussion on the possible translation of this word. See Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 236-238. Petterson prefers “streams” because he thinks that for him it is “pouring” in the literal sense. See Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 68 f. 82.

on them. The number seven appears three times in verse 2 followed by the indication of the two olive trees.

3.2.2.2. Question: What are these? (4:4)

Zechariah then follows the description with a question: “what are these, my lord?” When Zechariah asks this question, note that it follows that description of the single *menorah*, seven lamps, and the two olive trees. Therefore, we can assume that the antecedent for “these” are the three elements that are mentioned in the description. This is an important observation as it necessitates the oracle later. Zechariah here address this messenger as “my Lord,” a feature that is used frequently in this chapter (vv. 5, 13).

3.2.2.3. Counter-question: Do you not know? (4:5)

The messenger, seemingly delaying his answer, counters Zechariah’s question with another. “Do you not know what these are?” he asks, as if Zechariah should know what these are. The second question perhaps functions as a “dimension of surprise” as Conrad asserts,⁴⁷⁾ or as a delay of the answer to heighten the tension as Butterworth points out.⁴⁸⁾ If this is indeed a delay that heightens the tension it is noteworthy that the delay comes in the form of a counter question. Later we see in v. 13, this same literary feature appears again.

Zechariah acknowledges his ignorance, and replies that he does not know. Conrad suggests that Zechariah’s ignorance is

47) Conrad, *Zechariah*, 102.

48) Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, 119. Petterson also thinks that this heightens the tension which results in highlight the explanation in the oracular material. Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 69.

an indication of the unfamiliarity with elements of the temple in the Persian community.⁴⁹⁾ Zechariah's ignorance however, from a literary perspective gives the readers a chance to hear what this means. In other words, this conversation between Zechariah and the messenger, necessitates the giving of the oracle.

3.2.3. Answers, Questions, and Counter Question

3.2.3.1. Answer to Q1 ('(1)'): the Oracle (4:6-10a)

As first part of the answer, we have the oracular material in vv. 6-10a (A1). The oracle begins in verse 6. As has been discussed above, scholars have thought this to be an interruption. But as we have already established, this oracle can be taken to be the answer the question posed in verse 4. The question of the identity of the seven lamps and seven spouts are later revealed to be the seven eyes of YHWH, and the two olive trees to the two anointed ones. Only the *menorah's* identity is not revealed.⁵⁰⁾ Thus we may assume that the oracle is part of the answer and may well be the answer to what the *menorah* is.⁵¹⁾ Meyers and Meyers are opposed to this idea. "[the oracular material] cannot be understood as a response to the inquiry addressed to the prophet by the interpreting Angel in verse 5." However, it is my contention that without the oracle the question that is posed in verse 4 is not adequately answered.

Focusing on the oracle, we see that it explicitly mentions Zerubbabel, the governor. YHWH says that it is not by might (כֹּחַ) nor by power (גִּבּוֹר) but by his spirit (רוּחַ).⁵²⁾ "Might"

49) Conrad, *Zechariah*, 102.

50) Even Petersen notes this as he comments on v. 14. He says that "lampstand is pointedly ignored." Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah* 1-8, 237.

51) Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah* 1-8, 267.

indicates human strength or ability and can, at times, have connotations of an army.⁵³⁾ “Power” also can mean human strength. These two terms together connote “military might” or “powerful armies.”⁵⁴⁾ These two things are contrasted against “spirit.” As Petersen notes since it is indicated that the spirit is YHWH’s and the might and power is not, rather they are likely human force.⁵⁵⁾ What will happen is in divine control. In the context of the oracle this seems reasonable as the following verse indicates “a great mountain” (הַר־הַגָּדוֹל) that seems to stand in the way of Zerubbabel.⁵⁶⁾

There have been various proposals as to what this great mountain refers to. Some suggest the rubble of remains after the destruction of the first temple⁵⁷⁾ while others the possibility of the priest Joshua, or the Samaritan governor Tattenai⁵⁸⁾ but Van der Woude, interestingly indicates the ambiguity in his

52) Story offers a good application of this verse that considers the historical cultural aspects of Zechariah. J. L. Story, “Zechariah’s Two Sons of Oil: Zechariah 4,” *JBPR* 2 (2010), 31–56.

53) *HALOT*. Boda states that the term is not used to depict God’s might, but that does not mean that this type of force is “ungodly.” M. J. Boda, *The Book of Zechariah* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2016), 288.

54) Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 244.

55) Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, 239.

56) The first half of this verse lacks a verb in the Hebrew. Most translations understand these as an interrogative followed by some kind of answer. For example, the *NRSV* has “what are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain.” Rogland, however, suggests a different translation making it into one question: “What do you signify for uprightness before Zerubbabel, O mountain of the great one?” The effect of doing this puts Zerubbabel to an “uprightness” that is characteristic of the David king and ultimately the reign of YHWH. See M. F. Rogland, “The ‘Mountain’ of Zechariah 4,7: Translation and Interpretation,” *BN* 162 (2014), 75–82.

57) Petitjean, *Les Oracles Du Proto-Zacharie*, 257–258; Laato, “Zachariah 4,6b-10a and the Akkadian Royal Building Inscriptions.”

58) Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, 240.

translation: “Whatever you are, great mountain” and argues for a mythological mountain that would rival Mount Zion.⁵⁹⁾ Nevertheless, the mountain is described as an obstacle for Zerubbabel. No matter how big the obstacle seems to be, it will become a plain.

Zerubbabel will also bring forth the “top stone” (הָאֶבֶן הָרִאשֹׁנָה). The meaning of רִאשֹׁנָה is disputed amongst scholars. Some have translated it to “head” or “top” stone.⁶⁰⁾ Baldwin and Redditt, on the other hand prefers “completion stone.”⁶¹⁾ The vision describes a bowl on top of the *menorah*, which enables us to make a connection between the vision and the oracle. In any case, Zerubbabel is expected to play a crucial role in the reconstruction of the temple. Related to verse 6 where it states that it will be YHWH’s spirit that makes this possible, there will be an affirmation to this act in “grace, grace to it!”

Verse 8-9 begins with indication of another oracle with the prophetic formula. Some have viewed this as a second oracle. Whether this is a separate oracle or not, the significance is that they are brought together with verses 6-7. Verses 8-9 offers clarity to the vision. The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house. Zerubbabel’s job, now that the foundation is laid, is for his hands to complete it. Then we may assume that the building of the temple has begun but not yet finished. The second half of verse 9 deals with validation that is likely addressed to Zechariah.⁶²⁾

Verse 10 continues its words of the oracle with a message to those who despised the reconstructing of the temple. These people were perhaps those who were either pessimistic about the project in comparison to the former temple’s glory. These

59) van der Woude, “Zion.”

60) The ancient Near Eastern parallels were discussed above.

61) Redditt, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*, 69.

62) Others have suggested the messenger as the antecedent. See Unger, *Zechariah*, 77.

people will also see the **הָאֶבֶן הַבְּרִילִי**, typically translated as “plummet” or “plumb line.” Boda, however, prefers “tin stone.”⁶³⁾ A stone can be used in the context of construction as measurement (cf. Isa 34:11) but the word is a *hapax legomenon* and is difficult to understand.⁶⁴⁾ David Petersen notes Ellis’s work who notes the palace of Sargon II at Khorsabad, “the following inscription was found written upon tablets of gold, silver, and magnetite: ‘I wrote my name on tablets of gold, silver, copper, tin, lapis lazuli, and alabaster, and I deposited (them) in (several places) in the foundations.’”⁶⁵⁾ Following Ellis’s work he thinks that the ancient Near Eastern parallel helps us to understand that this tin stone would have functioned as a valuable token that would elevate the quality of the temple and please God. To this end Anthony Petterson argues that this is better understood as referring to the same completion stone stated in verse 7 rather than a plummet. He thinks that it would not make sense that people would feel validated during the project. Rather as a completion stone, people’s despair would turn to joy.⁶⁶⁾ Although the completion of this reconstruction is unclear, this interpretation is congruent with the view that this oracle looks forward to the completion of the project.

3.2.3.2. Answer to Q2 (‘7’): the eyes of YHWH (4:10b)

The second answer to the question posed in verse 4 is found in verse 10b. The meaning of the seven lamps⁶⁷⁾ are presented:

63) Boda, *Zechariah*, 303.

64) Boda writes, “While the tin stone may be a measuring instrument representative of the building activity which Zerubbabel will supervise after the foundation-laying ceremony, it may also allude to Zerubbabel’s role in establishing justice.” Ibid., 304.

65) Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, 243.

66) Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 72.

67) While the antecedent for “these seven” is unclear (it is either the seven lamps

that they are the seven eyes of YHWH that roam around the whole earth.⁶⁸⁾ Petersen provides a helpful allusion to 2 Chr 16:9 which describes the eyes of YHWH.⁶⁹⁾ In the context of 2 Chr 16:9, the phrase means the “divine presence acting beneficently toward those who obey his precepts.”⁷⁰⁾ Thus referring to YHWH’s omniscience and omnipotence. As such, the vision that Zechariah sees involves YHWH’s blessing to his people through the temple that is to be restored through Zerubbabel.

3.2.3.3. Question (‘2’ x2): What are these? (4:11-12)

In verses 11-12 we see two questions from Zechariah regarding the two olive trees. What is seemingly clear to Zechariah regarding the meaning of the seven lamps is perhaps less so for the two olive trees. The first time, he simply asks what the two olive trees are. The second time he asks the question in verse 12, Zechariah specifies his question by noting the “two branches” (שְׁתֵּי זְבֵלִי) of the olive trees which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out.⁷¹⁾ There is some difficulty in translating what שְׁתֵּי זְבֵלִי is. Petersen explains the difficulties of understanding what exactly this is by noting the

or seven channels), it is possible that it is the seven lamps which includes the seven channels as it denotes the light that shines through the lamp.

68) Yogev who interprets the seven eyes through the *kalû* and *Sibittu* iconography offers a wide range of interpretations given in the past. See J. Yogev, “The Seven Eyes of God,” *VT* 69(2) (2019), 307-319.

69) Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah* 1-8, 225-229. He is opposed to Oppenheim who asserts that the eyes of YHWH should be understood as the political royal eyes of a king. For more see A. L. Oppenheim, “The Eyes of the Lord,” in *Essays in Memory of E. A. Speiser* (American Oriental Society, 1968), 173-180.

70) Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah* 1-8, 227.

71) Petersen says that this is an addition to the original vision and its interpretation and that this view is almost universal because not only this is the only instance that happens, and it also “adds detail of the tableau.” *Ibid.*, 234.

ambiguity of the word “branch.” This could either mean “ear of grain” or “olive oil,” both of which are difficult to understand within its context in Zechariah.⁷²⁾ He also notes other commentators for this issue. Mitchell asserts that the writer of verse 12 wanted to connect the lights with the olive trees. Ackroyd similarly suggests that this is a “picture of some kind of connection between the leaders, represented by olive trees, or here as olive shoots, and the lamp which they supply with oil.”⁷³⁾ Meyers and Meyers correctly suggest that it is “in essence a rephrasing and amplification of the first question about them in verse 11.”⁷⁴⁾ They also note “the two of these branches serves to connect them with the two trees of verse 3, with the two conduits of the next clause, and with the two “sons of oil” of verse 14.”⁷⁵⁾ Thus the function of the double question along with the additional information seems to serve as a literary technique. Whatever the case may be the main point is that it maintains a close relationship between the lampstand and the olive trees: the oil burned in the lamps comes from the olive trees.

Petersen also notes that only the two olive trees are interpreted as the two sons of oil and the interpretation of the two branches are left out. He ultimately concludes by noting it was to “obfuscate the clear and potentially ‘blasphemous’ picture created by the interpreted vision.”⁷⁶⁾ However, he misses that in the first part of the vision the seven lamps along with the seven spouts are mentioned but only offers one interpretation that they are the eyes of YHWH.⁷⁷⁾ Likewise, the two olive trees and the two

72) Wolters also notes that the Hebrew word *šibbole* in verse 12 is a word play: “spike” (or ear of grain), “branch-end” (of an olive tree), and “stream.” See Wolters, *Zechariah*, 112.

73) Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, 236. Also see Pettersen, *Behold Your King*, 77.

74) Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 274.

75) *Ibid.*, 256.

76) Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, 236.

77) To clarify, the issue at hand is whether the absence of reference to specific elements

branches are mentioned but offers a single interpretation as the sons of oil.

3.2.3.4. Counter question: Do you not know? (4:13)

Zechariah's question is met with a counter-question from the messenger, which again may indicate that Zechariah should know what these are. "Do you not know what these are?" asks the messenger. Like the counter question posed in verse 5, this too is to be understood as a literary technique that heightens the tension. It also emphasizes that reliance that humans have to obtain heavenly insight.⁷⁸⁾ Like the first counter question, this necessitates an interpretation from the messenger.

3.2.3.5. Answer to Q3: the two anointed ones (4:14)

After Zechariah again confesses his ignorance, the messenger tells him that these two are the "anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth." There has been some debate on who these two sons of oil are. The most popular view is that they were Joshua and Zerubbabel.⁷⁹⁾ Some have identified them as Haggai and Zechariah.⁸⁰⁾ Rose thinks that they are also heavenly beings.⁸¹⁾ Wolters lists the possibilities but to name a few are "sons of Izhar", two heavenly beings, Moses and Elijah, a future political ruler and the high priest and some more.⁸²⁾

in the vision should be seen as a lack or as an all-encompassing interpretation.

78) Boda, *Zechariah*, 312.

79) Conrad, *Zechariah*, 111; Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 205; Mitchell, Smith, and Bewer, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah*, 165.

80) Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah*, 275. Also see Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 82.

81) W. H. Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel: Messianic Expectations in the Early Postexilic Period*, JSOTSup 304 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 177-207.

82) Wolters, *Zechariah*, 154.

He concludes by saying that whoever these were, they were “community leaders who could be said, literally or metaphorically, to fuel the light of the temple, and that they were therefore enabled by the agency of the “oil-pressers” to enhance and support the worship of God in the temple.”⁸³⁾ Boda handles this carefully providing insights into different opinions regarding this issue.⁸⁴⁾

In sum, through a reading of Zechariah 4 based on the final form of the text, we have seen that the chapter offers much more congruity than many have assumed. As we have seen, the oracle functions as a part of the answer and plays a crucial part in the vision. The vision of the *menorah* functions as a metaphor for the 2nd Temple, which is to be finished by Zerubbabel. Thus, its current place seems more fitting than any other.

Then we might ask what is the intention of this vision? How does this vision as a whole help us understand the theological message of this chapter? Three things are proposed. First, we see that through this vision that the text functions to inform the readers that restoration of the temple is near and that it is to be done through Zerubbabel. The image of the golden *menorah* is linked with the oracle to Zerubbabel. This inspires the readers to wait and hope for the day to come.

Second, the continuity of the authority of the temple is asserted through this vision. As it has been discussed above, there are two other places that mention a golden *menorah*, the *menorah* in the tabernacle (Exod 25:31–39; 37:17–24; 39:37; Lev 24:4; Num 8:4), and the *menorah* in the first temple (1 Kgs 7:49).⁸⁵⁾ As Moses is linked with the tabernacle and Solomon with the first temple, Zerubbabel is linked with the re-established temple.

83) Ibid., 155.

84) See Boda, *Zechariah*, 314–319.

85) Stead, *Zechariah* 1–8, 173.

Also, the statement in the oracle that this can only be done by YHWH's spirit (4:6) adds to the authority of the temple. It seems that the intent of this vision was to portray a temple that is in continuity of authority to the tabernacle and the first temple.

Third, the aesthetic quality of the *menorah* in the vision presents itself as a metaphor for the temple. The description of the *menorah* including the seven lamps and two olive trees that is provided by Zechariah in vv. 2-3 and 12 is of aesthetic value. Zechariah is in awe of the vision with the golden *menorah* that has seven lamps and seven spouts that pour out oil, and the two olives trees. If we consider the first temple that is filled with garden imagery (1 Kgs 6:18; 29-35), the vision of the *menorah* aligns with the imagery in the temple. Then we may conclude that the *menorah* is a microcosm of the temple of itself thus, enabling us to see the vision of the *menorah* as a metaphor of the temple. As such the vision urges readers to view the 2nd temple that is to be built through Zerubbabel and is regarded authoritative as the tabernacle and the first temple.

4. Conclusion

As we have seen, the oracular material plays an important part within the vision. Whether it was added by Zechariah or perhaps by one of his disciples we can only speculate. However, through a reading that takes the final form seriously, we have seen that the oracular material answers an important part of the question. The vision itself without the oracle leaves us with a somewhat partial text that does not fully answer the question. Thus, we conclude that the oracular material itself functions as a “top stone” that fulfills the whole text.

Within the first half of Zechariah, chapters 3-4 play an integral part through the vision reports due to the emphasis

of the role of a priestly figure in Joshua and royal figure in Zerubbabel.⁸⁶⁾ In that sense, chapter 4's role is significant. The vision that contains the oracular material highlights the central theme as the rebuilding of the temple. Although the rebuilding of the temple might seem impossible, Zerubbabel will achieve it through the power of the Spirit (Zech 4:6-7). Therefore, in its final form, the oracle that explicitly features Zerubbabel is situated in its most appropriate place. The central role of Zerubbabel is then suggested by not only implicitly in the description and interpretation of the seven lamps and two olive trees (vv. 1-5, 11-14) but explicitly through the temple building oracle (vv. 6-10). The golden *menorah* then serves as the metaphor of the temple as *pros par toto*.

<Keywords>

Zechariah, Menorah, Zerubbabel, Oracle, Second Temple

<주요어>

스가랴, 메노라, 스룹바벨, 신탁, 제 2 성전

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86) Boda, Zechariah, 224.

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<Abstract>

**One Menorah, Seven Lamps,
and Two Olive Trees in Zechariah 4:
The Central Role of Zerubbabel
for the Completion of the Second Temple**

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This paper explores the debates surrounding chapter 4 of Zechariah, which have largely centered around the placement and function of the oracle delivered from YHWH to Zerubbabel (4:6b-10a). Some scholars have argued that the oracle should be placed elsewhere, while others have attempted to reconcile its placement through a synchronic reading. This paper, however, argues that the oracle is in its proper place and offers a reading of the text that takes its final form seriously. Through this endeavor, the paper argues that the oracle functions as part of the answer to the question posed in verse 4 and as such posits that the oracle that specifically includes Zerubbabel is appropriately located. In doing so, it aims to present the oracle's crucial role in conveying a theological message regarding the restoration of the temple through Zerubbabel. When the text is viewed as such, Zerubbabel's significance can be viewed as being explicitly portrayed through the temple construction prophecy (verses 6-10).

The paper first provides a summary of the various scholarly views on the nature, position, and function of the oracle ranging from those who argue for an emendation of the text to those who purport unity within the text. Subsequently, it proposes a structure looking at the literary features of the text that elicits

the oracle as part of the answer to the question posed in Zech 4:4. Finally, the paper offers a literary reading of the text based on the provided structure. Based on preceding discussions and arguments, it identifies and explains the theological message conveyed by the chapter as a whole. By doing so, the paper aims to contribute to the discussion regarding the book of Zechariah and its message about the restoration of the temple presented in chapter 4.

<초록>

순금 등잔대, 일곱 등잔, 두 감람나무:

성전 재건을 위한 스룹바벨의 중심적 역할

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이 논문은 스가랴 4장에 나타난 스룹바벨에게 전달된 신탁(4:6b-10a)의 위치와 기능을 중심으로 둘러싼 논쟁을 탐구하고자 한다. 일부 학자들은 4장에 나타난 다섯 번째 환상 중간에 위치한 신탁이 다른 곳에 배치 되어야 한다고 주장한 반면 또 어떤 학자들은 공식적 읽기를 통해 본문을 이해해보고자 한다. 필자는 이 신탁이 적절한 위치에 있다고 주장하고, 속 4:4절의 질문에 대한 부분적 답으로서 신탁이 주어졌다는 것을 논증하고자 한다. 이를 통해 환상 중간에 위치한 이 신탁의 역할이 스룹바벨을 통한 성전 회복에 관한 신학적 메시지를 전달하는데 있다는 점을 제시하고자 한다.

먼저 스가랴 4장에 대한 다양한 학술적 견해들을 살펴보고, 이어서 속 4:4에 제기된 질문에 대한 답의 일부로 신탁을 이해하는 구조를 문학적 장치들에 집중하여 제안해 보고자 한다. 이 구조를 바탕으로 결론에서는 스가랴 4장에서 전달하고자 하는 신학적 메시지를 제시하고자 한다. 그렇게 함으로써 본 논문은 스가랴 4장에 제시된 스가랴와 성전 회복에 관한 메시지에 대한 논의에 기여하는 것을 목표로 한다.

