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Author(s): N. L. A. Tidwell

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WĀ'ŌMAR (ZECH 3:5) AND THE GENRE OF ZECHARIAH'S FOURTH VISION

N. L. A. TIDWELL

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

THE fifth verse of the third chapter of Zechariah¹ presents three minor textual questions: (1) The first person, *wā'ōmar* ("and I said"), at the beginning of the verse, without which the "narrative of the vision is self-contained."² (2) The obvious need to insert, but without support from the versions, *ṭ'ḥōrīm* ("clean") after *b'gādīm* ("garments") (cf. BH³). (3) The awkwardness of the last three words of the verse in their present form and position, *ūmal'ak Yahweh 'ōmēd*, "and the angel of the Lord was standing by."

Clearly, the issue in (2) is of little consequence, and (3) is not by any means impossible, as it stands,³ but (1) is a disruptive element in an otherwise straightforward narrative and invites further investigation. It is not without parallels elsewhere in the OT, e.g., Isa 6:8 and 40:6 (LXX and 1QIsa^a), but these are not normally thought to shed any light on Zech 3:5. A fresh investigation of this question indicates that such an opinion requires radical revision.

Text-critically, the unexpected use of the first person at the beginning of Zech 3:5 does not present a complex problem. The LXX omits *wā'ōmar*, continuing the narrative and the sequence of plural imperatives with *w'šmā*, and the deletion of this word is recommended by BH³ and adopted by D. W. Thomas,⁴ while the Vg and Peš, with a third-person reading, represent most likely "an accommodation to the expected sense."⁵ The MT is favored by the majority of commentators, and the sudden change of person is explained as an impulsive intervention of the prophet at the point of climax in the vision, when he could

¹ RSV: "And I said, 'Let them put a clean turban on his head.' So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments; and the angel of the Lord was standing by."

² P. R. Ackroyd, "Zechariah," *PCB*, 566b.

³ The case for retaining the MT is ably presented by H. G. Mitchell, *Haggai and Zechariah* (ICC; Edinburgh: Clark, 1912) 153.

⁴ "Zechariah," *Interpreter's Bible* (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 6. 1069. R. H. Kennett ("Zechariah," *A Commentary on the Bible* [ed. A. S. Peake; London: Jack, 1923]) also follows LXX from vs. 4.

⁵ J. G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi* (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries; London: Tyndale, 1972) 114. K. Elliger (*Das Buch der zwölf kleinen Propheten* [ATD; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1950] 2. 112) adopts the third-person reading.

no longer contain himself in silence,⁶ or, with perhaps more to commend it, as a "device to lay emphasis upon the turban."⁷ The putting on of the turban was the last act in the ceremonial clothing of the high priest. At his investiture it took place immediately before the anointing (Exod 29:6, although it is less immediately associated with the anointing in Lev 8:9, and has no anointing to follow it in Num 20:26-28); for the celebration of the Day of Atonement, the turban is the last item of the holy vestments to be put on before the atonement ceremonies begin (Lev 16:4). It is especially singled out for mention as a part of the vestments which signify the high priest's representative character as the one who takes upon himself the guilt of the whole community (Exod 28:36-38). It, therefore, makes extremely good sense to suppose that the jolt provided by the sudden introduction of the first person at Zech 3:5 is intended to draw attention to the all-important turban. But why was this particular "device" adopted for this purpose? W. A. M. Beuken notes that "Personenwechsel als Stilmittel begegneten wir auch 6,8. . . . und wir werden ihn noch 3,8a finden,"⁸ but these further instances are hardly comparable to the abrupt change at 3:5. A form-critical examination of Zechariah's fourth vision, as a whole, suggests that its intrusive first person at vs. 5 is a distinctive feature of its *Gattung*, not merely a literary device of the prophet.

On the basis of quite different principles of analysis, different scholars have seen the fourth vision variously as: (1) forming a "pair" with the fifth vision (Baldwin, Beuken); (2) of the same type as the first and eighth visions (Horst); (3) as an alien in the midst of an otherwise symmetrical sequence of visions (Jepsen).

Baldwin,⁹ building on P. Lamarche's analysis of Deutero-Zechariah,¹⁰ traces a chiasmic pattern in the structure of the cycle of visions, an *abbcbbba* pattern in which the fourth and fifth visions form a "pair" and together mark the theological climax or peak of the whole sequence. Beuken similarly brings the fourth and fifth visions together as a "pair,"¹¹ while F. Horst placed the first, fourth and eighth visions in the same category of *Anwesenheitsvisionen*.¹² A. Jepsen, for his part, found no place for the peculiar fourth vision in the original cycle formed by 1, 2-3, 5, 6-7, 8, a cycle in which 1 and 8 also constituted a "pair" like 2-3 and 6-7, while 5 was the original, single centre of the pattern.¹³

With Horst's name is also associated the break-down of Zechariah's visions

⁶ So J. G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 114; T. W. Crafter, *The Books of Haggai and Zechariah* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1920) 48; T. T. Perowne, *The Books of Haggai and Zechariah* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1908) 81.

⁷ P. R. Ackroyd, "Zechariah," 566b.

⁸ *Haggai-Sacharja* 1-8 (Studia semitica neerlandica, 10; Assen: van Gorcum, 1967) 284 n. 1.

⁹ *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 80, 93.

¹⁰ *Zacharie IX-XIV* (EBib; Paris: Gabalda, 1961).

¹¹ *Haggai-Sacharja* 1-8, 282-83.

¹² "Die Visionsschilderung der alttestamentlichen Propheten," *EvT* 20 (1960) 193-205.

¹³ "Kleine Beiträge zum Zwölfprophetenbuch III," *ZAW* 61 (1945-48) 95-114.

into the simple *Formschema: Einführung, Visionsschilderung, Frage des Propheten, and Antwort des Engels*.¹⁴ But this basic schema, even in a modified form, is not evident in the fourth vision. In fact, in three major respects, Zech 3:1-7 is unique among the night visions.¹⁵

(1) The introduction (*Einführung*) does not have the form that is found in the rest of the visions. Here the hiphil of *rʾy*, "to cause to see, to show," is employed, without a following *binnēh*, "behold," whereas elsewhere the introductory forms used are *rāʾiti* (*hallaylāh*) *wʾbinnēh*, "I saw (in the night) and behold" (1:8; cf. 4:2); or, most frequently, *wāʾēššāʾ* (*ʾet*) *ʿēynay wāʾēreḥ*, "and I lifted up my eyes and saw and behold" (2:1; 2:5; 5:1; 6:1; cf. 5:5, *šāʾ nāʾ ʿēynaykā ūrʾēh*). Closest to 3:1 stands 4:1 (the fifth vision) with another unique opening, *wayʾirēni*, "and he waked me," displaying once again a hiphil form not far removed in sound from *wayyarʾēni*, "and he showed me" (3:1). These special introductory forms for the fourth and fifth visions are hardly "no more than the writer's attempt to avoid constant repetition,"¹⁶ for quite the opposite tendency is apparent in the predominant use of the *nʾʾ yn* formula, and in the monotonous repetition of the question-and-answer form in all the visions except the fourth. C. J. Lindblom suspects that the introductory formulas at 3:1 and 4:1 — especially "he roused me again" in 4:1 — betray the presence of truly "ecstatic" visions.¹⁷ This may be taken to imply that the scenes in these two visions were not conjured up in the prophet's imagination, as it were *ex nihilo*, but reflect actual objects (a lampstand) or ceremonies (the vesting of the high priest), which Zechariah could and had seen as a matter of ordinary visual experience. The hiphil forms may, then, be meant to suggest that on these occasions the prophet "woke up to," or felt that he had been "shown," the deeper meaning of familiar things. This is possible, since these two visions alone, from among the whole cycle, are experienced in the Temple, the place where heavenly and earthly meet, and where a prophet might be expected to see through the earthly scene to its heavenly counterpart (cf. Isaiah 6 and Rev 1:10).

(2) The fourth vision is "dramatic," not "static" in type; but, unlike other "dramatic" visions in the series, no mysterious objects or figures appear to pro-

¹⁴ T. H. Robinson and F. Horst, *Die zwölf kleinen Propheten* (HAT 14; Tübingen: Mohr, 1964) 210; cf. J. G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 93. For a more elaborate and detailed analysis of the form of each vision, see W. A. M. Beuken, *Haggai-Sacharia* 1-8, V.

¹⁵ The reason for including vss. 6-7 in the total structure of the vision will be advanced at the end of this article.

¹⁶ J. G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 113.

¹⁷ *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962) 145. If Yahweh is the subject of the verb in 3:1 (so, e.g., D. W. Thomas, "Zechariah," 1068), then there is an obvious parallel in Amos's visions with their introductory *kōb birʾanī ʾādōnāy Yahweh* (7:1, 4; 8:1) and *kōb birʾanī* (7:7, but cf. BH³). If Yahweh is the source of the revelation to Zechariah on this occasion, this further distinguishes the fourth vision from the rest of the cycle and brings it much closer to the forms of classical prophecy.

voke the prophet's usual request for an explanation. The question-and-answer pattern is entirely absent from this vision, and, in this important respect, the fourth vision is fundamentally different in form and character even from the fifth, with which it may — on other grounds — be thought to form a "pair." The central figure of the fourth vision, Joshua, is an actual and recognizable contemporary figure, who has essentially representative and not symbolic significance.¹⁸ The dramatic action in the vision is also self-explanatory.¹⁹ The picture contains no obvious mythological features or semi-apocalyptic figures but describes a scene which, but for the heavenly beings who take part in it, might have taken place on earth in the Temple itself. The situation is, in this regard again, reminiscent of Isa 6:1-8.

(3) The *mal'āk haddōbēr bī*, "the angel who talked with me," plays no part at all in the fourth vision. He is not even specified as the one who "caused" the prophet to see. Throughout this vision the major, active role is played by the *mal'āk Yahweh*, "the angel of the Lord," and the prophet does not, on this occasion, stand on the side-lines as a fascinated onlooker viewing a distant scene; he actually takes part in the action. He is present in the midst of it all and intervenes at a dramatic moment — *wā'ōmar* (vs. 5).

In view of these facts it is not surprising that many — e.g., Elliger, Jepsen, Chary, Horst²⁰ — have doubted whether the fourth vision belonged to the original series at all.

It is not our purpose either to question the authenticity of the fourth vision or to discuss its place in the cycle of night visions, but simply to draw out, for closer attention, two conclusions which follow quite obviously from what has been said above. First, it is clear that, in certain notable respects, the fourth vision is unique among the *Nachtgesichte* of Zechariah. But, second, it is equally clear that the fourth vision is in some sense a "pair" with the fifth — in its setting in the Temple²¹ and in that its central figure is Joshua, one of the two leaders of the community who appear to be referred to as the *b'ne-hayyishār* in the next vision — and that it also has certain features in common with the first and eighth visions. A satisfactory definition of the genre of the fourth

¹⁸ M. Bič's "eschatological" interpretation of this vision, in particular, is most unconvincing (*Die Nachtgesichte des Sacharja* [BibSt 42; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1964] 37). Possibly Joshua appears also in his personal as well as his representative capacity. Cf. P. R. Ackroyd, "Zechariah," 566b; D. W. Thomas, "Zechariah," 1067; J. E. McFadyen, "Zechariah," *The Abingdon Bible Commentary* (New York: Abingdon, 1929) 822.

¹⁹ The interpretive words of the angel of the Lord (vs. 4) are not the answer to a request for an explanation. They are declaratory and may well echo an actual ritual pronouncement. On this point, see J. B. Frye, *Legal Language in the Book of Job* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis; London: University of London, 1973) 88-89 n. 54.

²⁰ K. Elliger, *Das Buch der zwölf kleinen Propheten*, 103, 112, 118-22; A. Jepsen, "Kleine Beiträge," 96-87; T. Chary, *Aggée-Zacharie, Malachie* (SB; Paris: Gabalda, 1969) 73; F. Horst, *Die zwölf kleinen Propheten*, 210.

²¹ So J. G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 113.

vision must explain, therefore, the respects in which this vision is unique and the special relationship it has with the first, fifth, and eighth visions, as well as indicating, if possible, the formal elements that make the first and the eighth visions a "pair." Such a definition may begin with the simple observation that all four visions—1, 4, 5 and 8—have to do in some way or other with the heavenly council or court of Yahweh.²²

That the fourth vision itself describes a scene in the heavenly council, when it is gathered in its character as a legal assembly to judge and decide on the affairs of men, needs no demonstration.²³ In the case of the other three visions the council setting may not be so obvious, until it is noted how at 4:4, for example, *hā'ōm' dīm 'al-²⁴dōn kol-hā'āreš*, "who stand before the Lord of all the earth," recalls the pervasive use of *'md* in 3:1-7²⁴ (particularly in the phrase *mahl'kīm bēyn hā'ōm' dīm hā'ēlēh* at 3:7) and also directly parallels the use of the same phrase to describe the place where the four *rūhōt haššamayim* present themselves in 6:5 (eighth vision). Similarly, that the seven eyes of Yahweh *m'šōf' tīm b'kol-hā'āreš*, "range through the whole earth," corresponds exactly to the function of the *šātān* in Job 1:7 and 2:2 (*šūt bā'āreš*, "ranging through the earth").²⁵ Also, that same *šātān*, together with the *b'nē hā'ōlōhīm*, present themselves (*hityaššēb*) before Yahweh precisely as the chariot/spirits do in Zechariah's eighth vision (5:5), while, in the first vision, the four horsemen are sent *l'hitballēk bā'āreš*, "to patrol the earth," in the same way as the *šātān* of Job (1:7; 2:2). Zechariah's first, fourth, fifth, and eighth visions and the prologue of Job have the same conceptual background of the heavenly council, whose members ("sons of [the] God[s]" or "spirits" [Zech 6:5; 1 Kgs 22:21]) patrol the earth, govern the nations (Deut 32:8, LXX and 4QDeut^m), and function as defence and prosecution in the heavenly court (Zechariah 3; Job 1 and 2). The fourth vision stands in a particularly close conceptual relationship to the prologue of Job, and the two together present a very full and detailed picture of the council operating as a law court.

The common conceptual background of the first, fourth, fifth, and eighth visions may suitably explain the links of various kinds, which scholars, who have approached the question of their relationship from quite different angles, have seen to exist between these four. The fourth vision is unique only within

²² On the heavenly council in the OT, see T. H. Robinson, "The Council of Yahweh," *JTS* 45 (1945) 151-57; G. E. Wright, *The Old Testament against Its Environment* (SBT 2; London: SCM, 1950) 30-41; F. M. Cross, "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," *JNES* 12 (1953) 274-77; G. Cooke, "The Sons of (the) God(s)," *ZAW* 76 (1964) 22-47; E. C. Kingsbury, "The Prophets and the Council of Yahweh," *JBL* 83 (1964) 279-87; R. N. Whybray, *The Heavenly Counsellor in Is. xl, 13-14* (SOTSMS 1; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1971).

²³ On this aspect of the council, see F. M. Cross, "The Council of Yahweh," 274-75 n. 3.

²⁴ On the special association of this verb with the assembly of the divine council, see F. M. Cross, "The Council of Yahweh," 274 n. 3.

²⁵ P. R. Ackroyd ("Zechariah," 566h) suggests that the seven eyes may be the planets. In the light of Job 38:7 that may mean they are synonymous with the *b'nē hā'ōlōhīm*.

the cycle of Zechariah's night visions. It has clear parallels outside Zechariah in two of the most well known prophets-in-the-council-of-Yahweh texts (Isaiah 6 and 40), with which it has in common, among other features, the startling use of the first person of the prophet himself at 3:5. These parallels provide the vital clue to the uniqueness of the fourth vision. Zechariah stands midway between prophecy, as it was known before the exile, and apocalyptic, as it will later become; and this peculiar position which he holds in the development of OT forms of revelation is reflected, on the one hand, in the important place held by the interpreting angel in seven of his revelations, and, on the other, by the unique absence of the interpreting angel from the fourth vision. In view of the now widely recognized importance of the heavenly council in the classical prophets of the OT (cf. Amos 3:7; Jer 23:18, 22), it is understandable that there is no intermediary in Zechariah's fourth vision. While Zechariah may have felt that the earlier prophets spoke with an authority which he lacked — if that is the implication of a text like 1:4-6²⁶ — and, while in the normal course of things he may have felt, or have expressed, his relationship to Yahweh in a less direct and immediate way than his predecessors — thus the normal mediation of the *mal'āk haddōbēr bī* — yet, at the same time, in his ministry, as well as in that of Haggai, certain elements of a much older prophetic tradition seem to have been significantly revived. For instance, the predilection for the title *Yahweh š'ḇā'ōt* and the frequent use of the old messenger formula, *kōḥ ʿāmar Yahweh*. But, insofar as Zechariah saw himself as a prophet in the old tradition (cf. 1:1, 7 and 2:13, 15), he would know that a prophet was one who had *himself* been admitted to the council of Yahweh on some crucial occasion. He must be one who had himself, with his own eyes and ears, witnessed the council at work, especially at work as a legal body conducting God's *rib* against Israel.²⁷ The prophet was the one who had himself heard the verdict of Yahweh's court and was commissioned as "messenger of the court" to proclaim it. In Zech 3:1-7 one of the unique features is precisely that in this vision the prophet himself, without any intermediary, not only sees and hears what goes on, but joins in the proceedings, *wā'ōmar* (3:5). From this angle at least, but from others also as we shall see, among all the council-texts of the OT, Zechariah's fourth vision invites comparison with Isa 6:1-13 and 40:1-8.²⁸

²⁶ It is likely that this oracle has been considerably worked over by disciples or editors of Zechariah's work; see P. R. Ackroyd "Zechariah," 564g; W. A. M. Beuken, *Haggai, Sacharia 1-8*, 88-90. It shows marked dependence on Jeremiah (cf. A. Petitjean, *Les oracles du Proto-Zacharie* [EBib; Paris: Gabalda, 1969] 39-41) and may not reflect Zechariah's own views in all respects. Some commentators deduce from this oracle that the earlier prophets were already "canonical"; e.g., J. G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 90; K. Elliger, *Das Buch der zwölf kleinen Propheten*, 101.

²⁷ On this point, see F. M. Cross, "The Council of Yahweh," 275 n. 3.

²⁸ The character of Isa 40:1-8 as a "parade example" of "divine directives to angelic heralds" is affirmed by F. M. Cross (*ibid.*) and is the basis of J. Muilenburg's exegesis of this pericope ("Isaiah 40-66," *Interpreter's Bible* [New York: Abingdon, 1956], 5. 422-23).

In the case of both Isaiah 6 and 40 we have to do with the genre of a prophetic call in a divine council-setting,²⁹ for which, according to N. Habel, the prototype is 1 Kgs 22:19-21.³⁰ Habel treats this genre simply as a modification—mainly occasioned by the setting—of the prophetic *Call-Gattung*.³¹ At one point in the “underlying sequence” (divine confrontation, introductory word, commission, objection, reassurance, and sign), normally after the *commission*, and in order to raise the *objection*, the “prophetic ‘I’ intrudes in all ... call forms.”³² Habel does not refer in his article to the intrusive “I” of the prophet in Zech 3:5, probably because he, along with most others, identifies Zechariah’s call and commission with the exchange between angel and prophet at 1:14.³³ Clearly the fourth vision does not constitute a prophetic “call,” and it is, consequently, excluded from Habel’s discussion of the *Call-Gattung*. However, Habel’s recognition that the council-setting of a call introduces some modification into the call-pattern naturally invites the question, “What form does the modification take?” Is it really only a “modification” or does it perhaps amount to a transformation into a different genre? There are, in fact, two types of narrative, in both of which there is a distinctive place for an intrusive first person of the prophet himself. For this reason the two genres may be easily confused and have been confused in Habel’s search for the *Call-Gattung* in Isaiah 6.

In Isa 6:8, at the moment when the heavenly *qôl* requests a volunteer messenger, the prophet intervenes to offer himself for the task. This is clearly the obvious point at which he might be expected to intervene,³⁴ and it corresponds to the response of *hārîḥ* to a similar request made to the council in the “prototype” in 1 Kgs 22:21. In Isaiah 6, however, the prophet has already intervened at vs. 5 (*wāḏmar*, as in vs. 8) and intrudes yet a third time at vs. 11. Which of these three intrusions answers to the *objection* element in the *Call-Gattung*? Vs. 11 is Habel’s choice, because it is the characteristic moment, immediately following the *commission*, when the *objection* is raised in the normal *Call*-sequence.³⁵ For Habel, therefore, the intrusion at vs. 8 is simply a modification of the *Call-Gattung* necessitated by the council-setting of the narrative. But it must be stressed that this is a “modification” which radically transforms the character of the vocation. In no other case does an OT prophet volunteer

²⁹ S. Mowinckel (“Die Komposition des deuterocesajanischen Buches,” *ZAW* 8 [1931] 88-89) defines the whole section, 40:1-8, as a *Berufungsaudition*. Most commentators recognize the prophet’s call in 40:6-8.

³⁰ “The Form and Significance of the Call Narratives,” *ZAW* 77 (1965) 297-323, esp. p. 310.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 309-10.

³² *Ibid.*, 313.

³³ *Ibid.*, 315. Cf. F. M. Cross, “The Council of Yahweh,” 276 n. 11.

³⁴ Cf. R. Knierim, “The Vocation of Isaiah,” *VT* 28 (1968) 59. He does not discuss the intrusion at vs. 11.

³⁵ “Form and Significance,” 312.

willingly for his task.³⁶ Moreover, the "prototype" for the so-called modification of the Call-pattern is not, properly speaking, a Call-narrative at all.³⁷ The situation in 1 Kgs 22:19-21 resembles the commissioning of a prophet only insofar as it describes the response to a request for someone to do a piece of work on Yahweh's behalf. In all other respects, the scene in the council is quite unlike any of the encounters between Yahweh and his chosen human agents, whether prophets or deliverers. Isa 6:8 belongs to the genre of its prototype, a narrative of events in the heavenly council when it is assembled to make some fateful decision concerning the affairs of men. In terms of the normal sequence of the Call-*Gattung*, the intrusion at vs. 8 is a "modification," but it is the modification of one genre by another in a narrative; cf. Judg 6:11-24,³⁸ where two *Gattungen* have contributed to the shape of the story.

Another intrusive first person, introduced in the same characteristic form by *wāʾōmar*, is found in the LXX and Vg of Isa 40:6. The MT, Targum, and Syriac all read the third person, *wʾōamar*, implying no difference in the consonantal text. This reading is preferred by some commentators, being taken as either the "indefinite subject,"³⁹ or the indication of a dialogue between two of the unidentified heavenly voices. 1QIsa*, however, supports the Greek and Latin versions with its reading *wʾwmrh*, and C. R. North observes that "most moderns accept" this witness,⁴⁰ recognizing in this verse the only reference to the prophet himself throughout chs. 40-55.⁴¹ F. M. Cross, accepting the witnesses for the first person, remarks that the resultant "parallel to Isa 6,1-8 is remarkable."⁴² He recommends further comparison with Zech 1:14, but not, curiously, with Zech 3:5. Now in Isa 40:6 the first person of the prophet intrudes at the obvious place for such intervention, where the series of plural imperatives gives way to a singular injunction, *qʾrāʾ*, addressed to some individual from among those taking part in the scene. The moment of intrusion thus corresponds to 1 Kgs 22:21 and Isa 6:8. But in Isa 40:6 the intrusion

³⁶ O. Kaiser (*Isaiah 1-12* [SCM OT Library; London: SCM, 1972] 82) writes: "This answer (Is. vi, 8) forms an extreme contrast with Jeremiah at his call. This is a willing declaration of readiness on the part of a man who announces that he is ready for service in answer to a question that was not even addressed directly to himself."

³⁷ Habel himself acknowledges this fact ("Form and Significance," 310).

³⁸ Cf. E. Kutsch, "Gideons Berufung und Altarbau, Jdc. 6, 11-24," *TLZ* 81 (1956) 75-84.

³⁹ So C. C. Torrey (*The Second Isaiah* [New York: Scribner, 1928]) on both 40:6 and 57:14. The latter text offers another first-person introduction to an oracle in the Vg, but it is so textually uncertain that no account has been taken of this reading in this article.

⁴⁰ *The Second Isaiah* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1967) 76. U. Simon (*A Theology of Salvation* [London: SPCK, 1953] 43, 245) retains the MT, as does North, who interprets vs. 6 as a dialogue between two angelic beings which the prophet overhears (pp. 70, 77). In *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah* (2d ed.; Oxford: Oxford University, 1963) North had accepted the LXX at 40:6 as "certainly original" (73).

⁴¹ 50:4-9 is sometimes thought to be autobiographical. See C. R. North, *ibid.*, 72-74, 196, and the further references given there.

⁴² "The Council of Yahweh," 276.

constitutes an objection, offering resistance to the imperative.⁴³ This, according to Habel's analysis of Proto-Isaiah's call, answers to Isa 6:11. The single entry into the council scene by Deutero-Isaiah is equivalent to two of Proto-Isaiah's interruptions, i.e., 6:8 and 11, and is similarly the result of the fusion of two genres. At least, so the case seems to be, if Habel is correct in equating Isa 6:11 with the *objection* element of the Call-*Gattung*, as that *Gattung* is found in non-council settings. This equation, however, is open to question.

In all the cases cited by Habel, except the case of Proto-Isaiah,⁴⁴ the prophet or deliverer "objects" by reason of some sense of inadequacy from which he suffers.⁴⁵ By comparison with these other cases, Isaiah's resistance to his calling would seem to be reflected in his sense of uncleanness, which moved him to intervene (*wā'ōmar*) in his own person for the first time in the scene at vs. 5. Habel asserts categorically that it is the cry at vs. 11, "and not his initial response in v. 5 which belongs to this feature of the *Gattung*."⁴⁶ The basis of this assertion is the fact that the objection part of the Call-pattern contains, characteristically, an ejaculatory exclamation and an emphatic first-person pronoun (*ʔānōkī*). What, then, if not the distinctive features of the *objection* element of the Call, are the *ʔōy-lī*, introducing the prophet's intrusion at vs. 5, and the emphatic, indeed repeated, *ʔānōkī* in the same verse? It is these which compare with Jeremiah's *ʔāhā ʔādonāy* (Jer 1:6) or Gideon's *bī ʔādonāy* (Judg 6:15), while the "abrupt ejaculation"⁴⁷ of Isa 6:11, *ʕad māṭay ʔādonāy*, has its clear parallel in the cry of the *malʔak Yabweh* at Zech 1:12, *ʕad māṭay*. Zech 1:12 has its counterpart in the other vision in this "pair" (first and eighth) at Zech 6:8, where some member of the council—the subject of the verb is an unspecified "he"—at a point in the action comparable to the impassioned lamentation of the angel of the Lord at 1:12,⁴⁸ unexpectedly "cries aloud" (*wayyazʕēq*). If the source of this outburst is the *malʔak haddōbēr bī*, then this is the only instance where he actually participates in the scene and action of any of the visions, and his vociferous intrusion at this juncture, like the

⁴³ C. Westermann (*Isaiah 40–66* [SCM OT Library; London: SCM, 1969] 40) interprets vs. 6 as the prophet's objection, vs. 7 as the "substantiation of the objection," and vs. 8 as the reply to the objection. He also sees the Lament as the background of the objection, comparing Pss 39, 49, 90 and Job. Further comparison might be made with Isa 6:11 and Zech 1:12, which quote a conventional phrase from the Lament form.

⁴⁴ Also, perhaps, Deutero-Isaiah, whose resistance to his task is not due to some sense of inadequacy in himself. Similarly Ezekiel's resistance is only implicit (cf. N. Habel, "Form and Significance," 313) and has nothing to do with his own insufficiency. Is this another respect in which the council-setting radically modifies the Call-"norm"?

⁴⁵ Habel speaks of a sense of "total insufficiency," citing such cases as Moses (Exod 3:11), Gideon (Judg 6:15), and Jeremiah (Jer 1:6); see "Form and Significance," 300.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 312.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ The significance of the angel's use of the conventional lament formula is noted especially by Beuken, *Haggai-Sacharja 1–8*, 240, who also remarks (p. 251) that *wayyazʕēq* is "ein auffallendes Wort."

lamentation of the angel in the first vision, and Zechariah's outburst in the fourth, marks the high-point of the vision. The change of person is not simply a literary device to draw attention to the turban; it is a characteristic feature of a genre of narratives in which an unexpected outburst, a startling intrusion or a daring challenge (Job 1 and 2), brings the whole action to its point of climax. This feature is apparent not only in Zechariah's *Anwesenheitsvisionen* (1, 4, 8) but is typical of narratives describing scenes in the heavenly council — cf. Zech 1:12; 3:5; 6:8; Isa 6:8, 11; 40:6; 1 Kgs 22:21; Job 1:9; 2:5. Where a prophet himself takes part in these scenes, the climax is marked, distinctively, by the intrusive first person, *wā'ōmar*. 1 Kgs 22:19-21 is an example of this genre in its simplest outline form. Next to this stands Zech 3:1-7 as the clearest example of the same genre when a prophet participates in the scene. In Zechariah 1 and 6, the first and eighth visions, the genre is modified by the presence of the interpreting angel whose rôle gives to these two visions a *Formschema* similar to that of the rest of the cycle. But it is notable that in both of these visions there is some ambiguity about the identity of the angelic speakers, an ambiguity perhaps resulting from the introduction of the question-answer form into narratives in which an intermediary would not normally have any part to play.⁴⁹ The simpler form of the council-*Gattung* shows through the superimposed question-answer form. Can this council-*Gattung* be more precisely defined?

It has already been hinted above that the type of narrative under discussion should be defined as "a narrative of events in the heavenly council on an occasion when that council is gathered to make some fateful decision concerning the affairs of men." In fact, wherever in the OT the activities of the council are described, or the deliberations of the council may be thought to be alluded to, some decision of great moment is always involved. Apart from the narratives discussed in this article, compare such texts as Psalm 82, Deut 32:8, and, perhaps, Gen 1:26 and 11:7. Possibly this great "day of decision" portrayed in all the council scenes was actually the same day in the year in all cases; that one day specified as *hayyôm* in Job 1:6 and 2:1. E. C. Kingsbury identifies this day with the day in the New-Year Feast on which the "fixing of destinies" took place and draws out evidence to indicate a New-Year setting for 1 Kings 22; Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 1 and 10; Amos 9:1-4; Jer 26:1; Job 1-2.⁵⁰ All these texts, he concludes, present "a picture of Yahweh and his Council which met on a special

⁴⁹ Thus, in the first vision, the relationship between the angel of the Lord and the man standing "between the myrtles (mountains, LXX)" is not clear (cf. 1:8-11), and the prophet has part of the vision interpreted for him but hears and sees some things for himself which need no interpretation (e.g., 1:12-13). In the eighth vision the prophet seeks an explanation from the *mal'āk haddōbēr bî* (6:4), receives an answer from simply *hammal'āk* (6:5), and then hears an unidentified "him" directing the chariots to "go" (6:7, Yahweh ?) and crying aloud (6:8, Interpreting angel?).

⁵⁰ "The Prophets and the Council," 279.

day and on that day fixed the destiny for the next period of time."⁵¹ Unfortunately, owing to a lapse of memory which led him to suppose, mistakenly, that an intermediary is involved in the fourth vision of Zechariah,⁵² Kingsbury leaves Zech 3:1-7 entirely out of his discussion of the prophets-in-Yahweh's-council texts. In fact, of course, Zechariah 3 is distinguished by the absence of any intermediary. Moreover, a New-Year setting for this vision is also a possibility. The ritual preparation of the high priest for the celebration of the Day of Atonement may be reflected in this vision, and the Day of Atonement was one of the three main parts of that complex of festival-celebrations which took place at the autumnal "turn of the year."⁵³ Also, the distinctive ritual of the Atonement Feast has its closest parallel in certain rites of the Babylonian New Year.⁵⁴ Furthermore, it is probable that the investiture of the high priest is directly and deliberately modelled on the earlier ceremonies for the coronation and enthronement of the king,⁵⁵ which, in Judah at any rate may well have taken place normally at the New Year.⁵⁶ In addition, several commentators have suggested that the changing of the high priest's clothes in Zechariah 3 owes something to the ritual humiliation of the king in New-Year festival-ceremonies. That this fourth vision of Zechariah portrays an occasion in the council or court of Yahweh when a momentous decision concerning the future of the community at Jerusalem was made is, of course, obvious. In fact, in all respects except one, Zech 3:1-7 fits neatly into the pattern of scenes-in-the-Council-on-a-special-day, which Kingsbury draws out of the biblical evidence. Its missing feature is a reference to Yahweh's throne or to Yahweh as king, which Kingsbury lists as one of the five basic elements in council-scenes.⁵⁷

Kingsbury's five common elements of council-scenes are not, strictly speaking, formal elements defining the genre and are really only fully evident in 1 Kings 22 and Isaiah 6. Habel, for his part, examined only council-scenes in which it was possible to trace the underlying sequence of the *Call-Gattung*, offering otherwise a simplified formal comparison of only 1 Kings 22 and Isaiah 6.⁵⁸ If, however, the council-texts are examined, not with the pattern of a *Gattung* already in mind to which they may be made to conform, but simply in order to let whatever form they have speak for itself, then there would appear to be three basic elements in the structure of all the scenes in the council:

⁵¹ Ibid., 284.

⁵² Ibid., 279 n. 1.

⁵³ Cf. J. Kraus, *Worship in Israel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966) 68-69; also E. Auerbach, "Neujahrs- und Versöhnungs-Fest," *VT* 8 (1958) 337-43.

⁵⁴ R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1961) 508.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 400.

⁵⁶ "The Prophets and the Council," 283 n. 37; cf. J. Gray, *I and II Kings* (SCM OT Library; London: SCM 1964) 67-69.

⁵⁷ "The Prophets and the Council," 280-81.

⁵⁸ "Form and Significance," 310, where reference is also given to W. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel* (BKAT 13/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn; Neukirchener Verlag, 1969) 19.

(1) The narrative opens with a description of the scene which takes particular note of the positions and attitudes of all the main participants, i.e., normally, of Yahweh and his surrounding "host," but, sometimes, of individual members of the council who perform some clearly defined function (e.g., the *mal'ak Yahweh* and the *šatān* — cf. 1 Kgs 22:19; Isa 6:1-2; Job 1:6; 2:1; Zech 1:8; 3:1; 6:1-3). This element is missing from Isa 40:1-6, while in Zechariah 3 Yahweh's position is not mentioned, although it may well be implied.⁵⁹

(2) The second, central portion, of all the council-narratives, reports the dialogue taking place in the council and describes the actions and words of various members. The proceedings are always brought to a climax by the intervention of one particular participant — frequently a prophet — who settles the issue under discussion by his intervention, or who, by a sudden outburst or daring challenge, moves Yahweh, or his representative, to speak some decisive word or to inaugurate some decisive or fateful action (1 Kgs 22:20-21; Isa 6:3-8; Job 1:7-11; 2:2-5; Zech 1:9-12; 3:2-5; 6:4-8; Isa 40:1-6). Here it can be seen that the primary form of Isaiah 6 is that of a council-scene into which, at a suitable point, the objection element of the *Call-Gattung* has been introduced, i.e., at vs. 5.

(3) Following the climactic intrusion or outburst in the second stage of the narrative, the scene finally concludes with that word or deed of Yahweh, or his representative, which determines the future destiny of that person or group whose affairs have been under review (1 Kgs 22:22; Isa 6:9-10; Job 1:12; 2:6; Zech 1:13-17; 3:6-7; Isa 40:7-8 [9-11?]). Presumably, Zech 6:8 corresponds to this part of the *Gattung* in the eighth vision of Zechariah, unless *wayy'baqq'sū lālēket* (vs. 7) represents the "impatient" (RSV) interruption and *l'kū biḥall'kū b'āreṣ* Yahweh's following word of decision. If the latter is the case, then Zechariah 6 displays a third stage identical in structure with Isa 6:8-11, although, clearly, in the present form of the narrative of Zechariah 6, far greater emphasis is placed on the angelic outburst than upon the "impatience" of the charioteers.

The simple outline of the council-genre in the case of each text cited above may be more readily grasped from the following table:

	1 Kgs 22	Isa 6	Isa 40	Job 1	Job 2	Zech 1	Zech 3	Zech 6
Pt. I	19	1-2	—	6	1	8	1	1-3
Pt. II	20-21	3-8	1-6(7)	7-11	2-5	9-12	2-5	4-7(8)
Pt. III	22	9-10(11)	8(9-11)	12	6(7)	13(-17)	6-7	8

It will be seen from this analysis that, in the case of Zechariah's fourth vision, a form-critical study not only confirms the soundness of the MT's first person at the beginning of vs. 5, but also argues for the authenticity of vss. 6-7 as an in-

⁵⁹ The use of "stand before" in vs. 4 in the MT could indicate that Yahweh sat enthroned. The MT also introduces Yahweh into the scene at vs. 2, although the Syriac reading, "angel (of Yahweh)," is probably to be preferred in both cases.

tegral part of the total vision. These verses are otherwise often regarded as separate or separable from the context of the vision itself.⁶⁰ In Isa 6:1-13 the third intrusion by the prophet stands outside the basic structure of the genre as it is found in the other council texts, where a single intrusion or outburst provokes the final, conclusive word or deed of Yahweh. The meaning of the prophet's question at vss. 6, 11 is not altogether clear,⁶¹ but there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of vs. 11.⁶² It does not, after all, introduce an alien element into the genre but merely repeats the final part of the pattern. It is part of a narrative which, on any analysis, is remarkable precisely because of its three-fold first-person intrusions.

⁶⁰ Cf. the new paragraph at vs. 6 in the RSV, and the comments of W. A. M. Beuken, *Haggai-Sacharja* 1-8, 290-91, and P. R. Ackroyd, "Zechariah," 566b.

⁶¹ Cf. O. Kaiser, *Isaiah* 1-12, 83, where further references are given in note e.

⁶² Vss. 12-13 do not appear to be part of the original account of the prophet's call; cf. O. Kaiser, *Isaiah* 1-12, 84.