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Convergences of Zoroastrian kingship from heaven and Jewish kingdom of God versus Hellenistic kingship

Christoph Elsas

Abstract: In the early time of Hitler's rule in Germany 1933 the classical research of Rudolf Otto "Reich Gottes und Menschensohn. Ein religionsgeschichtlicher Versuch" declared: the kingdom of God and its justice is not coming from any human effort. Otto indicated that the three synonyms at the end of the Christian main prayer "For yours is the kingdom (*basileia*) and the power (*dynamis*) and the glory (*doxa*) for ever" would also go with Zoroaster's miraculous *Khshathra* coming with the final suppression of all evil. In the Iranian kingship ideology the king was considered to hold his power from the supreme deity, with a strong ethical element. Convergences with Jewish traditions versus Hellenistic kingship are reflected in LXX's books of Judith, Daniel and Maccabees.

During the early stages of Hitler's rule in Germany, the classical research of Rudolf Otto on the historical contexts of Jesus' gospel of the kingdom of God appeared (1934).¹ In this volume, Marburg's well-known professor of Lutheran theology declared that the kingdom of God and its justice is not coming from any human effort. Moreover, Otto indicated that the three synonyms at the end of the so-called, Lord's Prayer: "For yours is the kingdom (*basileia*) and the power (*dynamis*) and the glory (*doxa*) forever," could well be paired with Zoroaster's, the old Iranian prophet's, miraculous *Khshathra*. The *Khshathra* is said to come with the final suppression of all lies, darkness, and evil, the raising from the dead, the Last judgement, and the miraculous transformation of the world.²

The Lord's Prayer combined the plea "Your kingdom come" with the plea "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." That meant for Rudolf Otto that the situation on earth is felt in contrast to a heavenly situation, and only the miraculous "kingdom of God" coming from heaven is transforming the earthly situation so that God's will is done afterwards and also by human beings.³

Already famous by his book "The Idea of the Holy," Rudolf Otto in his book on the kingdom of God stressed two lines of expression for overwhelming relig-

¹ R. Otto, *Reich Gottes und Menschensohn. Ein religionsgeschichtlicher Versuch*, München 1934. Cf. C. Elsas, *Das Heilige in Rudolf Ottos religionsgeschichtlichem Versuch zum Reich Gottes*, in: W. Gantke & V. Serikov (eds.), *100 Jahre "Das Heilige."* Beiträge zu Rudolf Ottos Grundlagenwerk (Theion: Studien zur Religionskultur 32), Frankfurt a. M. 2017, 79–89.

² Otto, *Reich Gottes*, 15f.

³ Otto, *Reich Gottes*, 24f.

ious emotions combined in the message of Christ: the Jewish traditions of Israel's God and the traditions of the Zoroastrian god Ahura Mazdâ precluded by the Old Indian god Varuna. Varuna was called the Asura, the Lord characterized by his secret divine wisdom and by his cosmic and ethical order and extending his luminous "kingdom" over the whole world: that is the divine compelling victorious power of order, form, creation overcoming enemies and hindrances.⁴ Zoroaster's religion included Indo-Iranian traditions of that kind together with his prophetic message of eschatology coming after the fight of the Wise Lord Ahura Mazdâ collecting all good powers in establishing justice against his enemy, the Evil Spirit Angra Mainyu/Ahriman, and all evil powers.⁵

Then applied to politics in the Iranian kingship ideology the king was considered to hold his power from the supreme deity, with a strong ethical element. It was the obligation of the Median priests, the Magi, to introduce the Persian kings into the relevant virtues. Convergences with Jewish traditions versus Hellenistic kingship are reflected in LXX's books of Judith, Esther, Daniel and Maccabees. In the historical books of Israel, the kingship of God "is cited solely to refute the claims of human kings (1Sam 8:7, 12:2; cf. Judg 8:23)" while the apocalyptic traditions of the eschatological kingdom of God affirmed "that a just and living transcendent reality is entering history and transforming it."⁶

In the Iranian kingship ideology since the 6th century BCE, "the king was not himself considered to be divine but to hold his power from the divine sphere, and in particular from the supreme deity, Ahura Mazdâ." This included a strong ethical element according the religion of Zoroaster: "the king is depicted as the upholder of truth and justice, a champion of the correct religious order against the forces of evil. The royal power is symbolically connected to a superhuman entity, the *khvarenah*, which was represented as a glow or flame and should be interpreted as the king's fiery splendor, glory, fortune, or fate. If the king proved unworthy, the *khvarenah* (and thus the kingship) left him, as has happened in mythical times to king Yima."⁷ According to Yasna 44:7 of the Zoroastrian Avesta, "one of the aspects of Ahura Mazda is Khshathra, who combines the idea of divine and human 'kingship,'" and "is presented as his creation along with Ârmaiti ('piety'). Yasna 33:10 speaks of 'kingship and justice (*asha*)' just as Mt 6:33 does in the New Testament. But the prophetic Zoroastrian sense of kingship is coopted for political ends by Darius, who begins his Behistun inscription (520 BCE), 'I am Darius, the Great King, King of Kings (...) Ahura Mazda bestowed

⁴ Otto, Reich Gottes, 11 f.

⁵ Otto, Reich Gottes, 13.

⁶ J. P. Brown, Kingdom of God, in: The Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. VIII, New York 1987, 304–312, here 304.

⁷ C. Grottanelli, Kingship in the Ancient Mediterranean World, in: The Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. VIII, New York 1987, 317–322, here 320 f.

the kingship upon me.”⁸ For he claimed to be the legitimate ruler after the death of king Cyrus who with his victory over Mesopotamian imperialism made it perfectly clear that the hard times of oppression and cruelty were over. He honored the besieged king as a privileged guest at the Persian court, presided as “king of Babylon” of the next New Year’s Festival in Babylon honoring Marduk, the god of the Babylonian Empire now being part of the Iranian Empire, and gave the exiled Jews the freedom to return to their land.⁹ The post-exilic biblical chapters Isa 40 and 45 bear a striking resemblance to Zoroaster’s Gatha in Yasna 44 on the creative powers of the Godhead in fathering justice and right thought, ordering heaven and earth and forming light and darkness. Deutero-Isaiah seems to have adapted those traditions in the biblical version that Israel’s god was angry with his people because of their past covenant misdeeds and therefore gave them over to the neo-Babylonians as punishment. The neo-Babylonians, however, went too far, and Israel’s god became angry with them and hence appointed a just ruler to punish them and set the Israelites free. Some of the mythic language in exilic and post-exilic literature may not necessarily only be Canaanite, but Mesopotamia mythological language and themes that have re-emerged owing to Persian influence at the old Mesopotamian mythological centers of learning and culture. That would provide one further reason for understanding the rise of apocalyptic dualism in the Bible.¹⁰ Septuagint’s version of Dan 6:26 f. even exaggerated the Aramaic tradition of Darius’ knowledge of Israel’s God and edict to honor him: “Let all people who are in my kingdom do obeisance and worship Daniel’s God, for he is an enduring and living God for generations and generations, forever. I, Darius, will do obeisance and be subject to him all my days . . .” (NETS transl. by R. T. McLay). And that became the center of 1Esdras as regards content.¹¹

From the historical king Darius the Great we know as famous headings of four inscriptions: “A great god is the Wise Lord, who created this earth, who created that sky, who created mankind, who created happiness for mankind, who made Dareios king: one king over many, one commander over many.” Unity and harmony were essential to the “happiness” God created for mankind. This original state of perfection was lost. Other inscriptions are telling, how “the Lie” (*drauga*, Old Persian for *drug*) – source of all confusion, conflict, and evil – entered existence, shattered unity, and spread rapidly in the years before Darius became king.

⁸ Brown 1987, 305 citing from G. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar, Texts, Lexicon*, New Haven 1953, 119.

⁹ P. M. Fontaine, *The Light and the Dark*, Vol. IV: Dualism in the Ancient Middle East, Amsterdam 1989, 261.

¹⁰ E. M. Meyers, *From Myth to Apocalyptic: Dualism in the Hebrew Bible*, in: A. Lange, E. M. Meyers, B. H. Reynolds III & R. Styers (eds.), *Light against Darkness: Dualism in Ancient Mediterranean Religion and the Contemporary World*, Göttingen 2011, 92–106, here 103.

¹¹ R. Heckl, *Die Gotteserkenntnis und das Bekenntnis des Darius in Daniel 6,27 f. (LXX) als inhaltliches Zentrum von 1Esdras*, in: E. G. Dafni (ed.), *Gottesschau – Gotteserkenntnis. Studien zur Theologie der Septuaginta 1* (WUNT 387), Tübingen 2017, 177–206.

But Ahura Mazdâ, the Wise Lord, made Darius king in response to this crisis, charging him to restore tranquility, harmony and happiness by overcoming the Lie.¹² Therefore in his Behistûn Inscription (IV: 62–65), Darius declares to live according to “Truth” (*arta*, Old Persian for *asha*): “Ahuramazdâ bore me aid, and the other gods who are [...] Neither to the weak nor to the powerful I did wrong.” And in his inscription from Susa (DSk) he declares: “Ahuramazdâ is mine, I am Ahuramazdâ’s; I am venerating Ahuramazdâ, may Ahuramazdâ help me!”¹³ As you can define biblical monotheism as monotheism of faithfulness between God and his people here you could see a monotheism of faithfulness between the heavenly king over many and the earthly king over many.

The other gods Darius plainly regarded as lesser divinities, subordinate to the Creator, Ahuramazdâ. There could be no tolerance for further opposition of Lie against Truth, as shown by the so-called Daivad Inscription (Persepolis H, 35–41) of Darius’ son Xerxes who destroyed a sanctuary of the “bad gods” (*daiva*, Old Persian for *daeua*). The text states, “Where previously the Daevas were worshipped, there I worshipped Ahuramazdâ with proper rites, in accordance with Artâ”, with Truth.

In the oldest parts of the Avesta, in the Gâthâs of Zoroaster, *khshathra vairya* had meant “desired rule, desired kingdom” and had embodied first the ruling power of Ahura Mazdâ and then the transcendent and future region into which this kingdom is extending.¹⁴ According to the Gâthâs in Yasna 43,8 and 46,1 and to Yasht 3,17 and 19,96 of the Avesta, the fight of the just human beings with the heavenly beings and all good creation against the Evil Spirit and his followers will end for the followers of Zoroaster with the cleansing of the world for perfect life on earth.¹⁵

Accordingly, in Yasna 35,10 *khshathra* describes “Good/Divine Rule” and “Power” and in some Yashts it is called one of the Amesha Spentas, the powers of charity around the creator Ahura Mazdâ. But in comparison with these Aves-

¹² B. Lincoln, The One and the Many in Iranian Creation Myths: Rethinking “Nostalgia for Paradise,” ARG 13 (2011) 15–30, here 17 f.; cf. P. Lecoq, Les inscriptions de la Perse achéménide, Paris 1997 and J. Curtis & S. J. Simpson (eds.), The World of Achaemenid Persia. History, Art and Society in Iran and the Ancient Near East, London – New York 2005.

¹³ A. Kuhrt, Can we understand how the Persians perceived ‘other’ gods/‘the gods of others’? ARG 15 (2013) 149–165, here 152; A. Kuhrt, The Persian Empire. A corpus of sources from the Achaemenid period, London 2010, 555 f. to the king’s position between gods and men.

¹⁴ O. Hansen, Art. in Carsten Colpe, Altiranische und zoroastrische Mythologie, in: H. W. Haubig (ed.), Wörterbuch der Mythologie II 4, Stuttgart 1986, 161–492, 368.

¹⁵ Fontaine, The Light and the Dark, 286–295; H. Koch, Iran, in: V. Haas & H. Koch, Religionen des Alten Orients, Teil I: Hethiter und Iran (GAT 1,1), Göttingen 2011, 17–144, here 93–95; H. Koch, Iranische Religion im Achämenidischen Zeitalter, in: R. G. Kratz (ed.), Religion und Religionskontakte im Zeitalter der Achämeniden (VWGTh 22), Gütersloh 2002, 11–26, here 15 and 24; M. Boyce, Zoroastrianism. Its Antiquity and Constant Vigor (Columbia Lectures on Iranian Studies 7), Costa Mesa 1992, 130f; M. Boyce & F. Grenet, Zoroastrianism under Macedonian and Roman Rule (Handbuch der Orientalistik 8,1,2), Leiden 1991, 363 f.

tic results the conception of Ahuramazdâ as a “political god” bestowing and preserving rule is an innovation in the history of religion as well as the politicization of dualism. A corresponding explication of *drauga-* as potential destabilization of political rule granted by the god of creation is not to be found in the Avestic texts.¹⁶ This *drauga-* of the Old Persian Inscriptions of the Kings corresponds to Avestic Drug, the “Lie,” surrounding the Evil Spirit Angra Mainyu/Ahriman in his opposition against Ahura Mazdâ and his Good Spirit Spenta Mainyu. Still in Islamic times the Zoroastrian book *Dênkart* refers to such dualistic traditions. The good ruler and the well-informed authority of religion are leaders on the side of the good powers in the fight of Ohrmazd and Ahreman (III 124) though the perfect connection of shining happiness (*xwarrah*) of kingdom and shining happiness of good religion will come only with the eschatological miraculous transformation of the world (III 129).¹⁷ For Zoroastrianism is “a religion in which world history is seen as a cosmic struggle between the forces of light led by Ahura Mazdâ ... and the forces of darkness led by Angra Mainyu ... This struggle will end with the victory of light, the resurrection of the dead, a general judgement ... and the final destruction of evil.”¹⁸

“Hellenistic kingship ideology, like Hellenistic culture in general, was a combination of Greek (Macedonian) and traditional Near Eastern traits. Kings were believed to be descendants of divine ancestors (through Alexander), godlike – in some cases divine – in life, and surviving as gods after their death.”¹⁹ In the ruler-cult²⁰ of Greek tradition in the early cult of *poleis* the epithet “god” meant an overwhelming power of the same value as a divine potency shown in the specific divine function to save and help in a fundamental situation for the welfare of a town. According to testimonies since about 400 BCE there have been solemn meetings of the thankful citizens, altars, sacrifices and shrines for such a man during lifetime “as for a god.”²¹ In addition to that in the 3rd century BCE there originated an institutionalized ruler-cult in form of official imperial cults of Hellenistic kings. Here the initiative came from the ruler’s interest for a sacral foundation and heightening of his power. Aristotle taught a man of outstanding virtue to be “like a god under human beings” and to gain the quality of a

¹⁶ M. Stausberg, *Die Religion Zarathustras. Geschichte – Gegenwart – Rituale*, Vol. I, Stuttgart 2002, 96.103.119 f.

¹⁷ Stausberg, *Religion Zarathustras*, 234.

¹⁸ R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, *Eschatology* (Encyclopedia of Religion 5), New York 1987, 148–151, here 149–150.

¹⁹ Grottanelli, *Kingship*, 321.

²⁰ For the following sections cf. C. Elsas, *Argumente zur Ablehnung des Herrscherkults in jüdischer und gnostischer Tradition*, in: C. Elsas & H. G. Kippenberg (eds.), *Loyalitätskonflikte in der Religionsgeschichte*, Festschrift für Carsten Colpe, Würzburg 1990, 269–281.

²¹ C. Habicht, *Gottmenschentum und griechische Städte*, ²1970, 3 ff.; M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion I*, München ²1974, 139.

living law.²² His pupil Alexander the Great developed an appropriate high conviction of his rule and was confirmed by the Egyptian high priest of the oracle of Ammon as the son of the god. As Alexander's successors in Egypt after his death, the Ptolemaic kings declared him officially to be a god and instituted an imperial cult for him with his own temple, own priests and special cultic dates of obligatory nature for the empire. That was the foundation of the ruler-cult in the Diadochs' kingdoms: the Ptolemaic in Egypt, the Seleucid in Syria and the Attalid in Asia Minor.²³

The Jews were confronted with such a ruler-cult after Alexander's campaign Palestine falling first to Ptolemaic and then to Seleucid rule. Though they had unrestricted religious freedom until 168 BCE there are clear references to Seleucid rule in the Greek Bible, more than in the Hebrew-Aramaic Bible. For example, the Septuagint's book of Judith (6:2) blames the boasting of Holofernes against Israel only Nebuchadnezzar to be god: "And who is god, if not Nabuchodonosor?" (NETS, transl. by C. *Boyd-Taylor*). But the readers of the Septuagint know that the Zoroastrian kingship defeated this mighty Mesopotamian ruler.

From its background in the Jewish community in the Mesopotamian diaspora in Hellenistic times, the book of Esther also in its Masoretic text testifies good knowledge of conditions in Iran. In describing the triumph of the Jews over their deadly enemy Haman, some of his sons get names of Zoroastrian *daevas*, the bad gods or demons (Esth 9:7–10).²⁴

The supplements in the Septuagint in the book of Esther also give a longer explanation of the reason for the feast of Purim. The Jew Mardochai had refused the sign of his last obedience, the proskynêsis, the Persian king was expecting from all members of the royal household for his deputy Haman (3:2). The Septuagint states that the Persian king himself was a good ruler: He tried to get justice in the country, but that refusal was a reason for his evil deputy Haman to ask the king for a law to kill all Jews in the huge Persian Empire. For he called the Jews to be a people hindering peace and unity in the empire by living according special laws and not the king's orders (to 3:13). But according tradition Mardochai won queen Esther for the cause of the Jews and requested the God of Israel (Esth C 2–5.7 to 4:17): "2Lord, Lord King of all powers ... 3you have made heaven and earth ... 4you are Lord of all ... 5you know, O Lord, that it was not in insolence nor pride nor for any love for glory that I did this, namely to refuse to do obeisance to this prideful Haman ... 7But I did this so that I might not set human

²² Aristotle, *Pol.* III 13,1284a, cf. A. *Wlosok* (ed.), *Römischer Kaiserkult*, Darmstadt 1978, 208.

²³ F. *Taege*, *Charisma I*, Stuttgart 1957, 287–299. 416–426; *Nilsson*, *Geschichte*, 150–185; *Wlosok* 1978, 10–13.

²⁴ Cf. A. *Hultgård*, *Das Judentum in der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit und die iranische Religion – ein religionsgeschichtliches Problem*, ANRW II 19.1 (1979) 512–590, here 552–553.

glory above divine glory, and I will not do obeisance to anyone but you, my Lord” (NETS, transl. by K. Jobes).²⁵

According to the confessions in the biblical Book Daniel this prophet stayed in Babylon as one of the exiled Jews with king Nebuchadnezzar until the first year of king Cyrus (1:23) and Daniel could interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dream: “King of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory” (2:36). But after three other kingdoms “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed” (2:44). After that interpretation “King Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel” and said: “Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries” (2:46). That means: the king understood at that moment that *proskynêsis* as a sign of last obedience belongs to the true God, that is the good and just ruler of the whole world. But then the biblical story goes on that nevertheless Nebuchadnezzar made a huge image of gold as a sign of his own kingship and commanded all people to “fall down and worship the image of gold” (3:4). Therefore, he lost his royal authority until he glorified “the king of heaven” (4:37). Knowing all this his son Belshazzar set himself up “against the Lord of heaven” (5:22) and was slain by king Darius of Iran. In Bible’s description king Darius had bad administrators and satraps but practiced his Zoroastrian kingship with justice and fear of God, even issuing a decree to “fear and reverence the God of Daniel,” because “his kingdom will not be destroyed” (6:26). The famous chapter Daniel 7 is telling again a vision of Daniel in the times of Nebuchadnezzar’s son Belshazzar: “thrones were set in place and the Ancient of Days took his seat” and “one like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven ... was given authority, glory and sovereign power” to “an everlasting dominion” (7:9–14) – with the interpretation: “the Saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom ... for ever and ever” (7:18). Our historical critical research found the four great beasts representing four kingdoms to be an Iranian tradition transmitted by the Seleucids to the Jews in Hellenistic times.²⁶

And for them the assumed names “Babylon” and “Nebuchadnezzar” meant the Seleucid king Antiochus IV (175–164 BCE) provoking the Maccabees to their victorious Jewish rebellion. According to the Septuagint’s description in 1Maccabees (7:33), there was no problem for the Jews to perform great sacrifices to Israel’s God in honor of the Seleucid rulers. But Antiochus minted coins showing his picture as victorious god Zeus in man’s form with the inscription “*Theos Epiphanês*.” He demanded the celebration of his birthday with sacrifices and festive meals every month and to place the respective altar of Zeus in Jerusalem’s temple. According to 2Maccabees (7:6), the Jews were brought by force to these celebrations – but in face of his deadly illness the tyrannical ruler Antiochus had to

²⁵ Cf. Taeger, *Charisma*, 434–438.

²⁶ Cf. Hultgard, *Judentum*, 524–529, 532–536, 538–541 zu Daniel 2 und 7; to 6,26 f. see my note 8.

confess (Esth C 2–5.7 to 9:12): “It is right to be subject to God and that a mortal should not think haughtily” (NETS, transl. by *J. Schaper*).

This description is confirming of the Jewish confession of the kingdom of God against the ruler-cult of Hellenistic kingship, though difficult to place with any sort of historical exactness. Therefore, some chapters before in 2Macc 1:13–17 there was no hindrance to combine this confession to the kingdom of God against the blasphemous Hellenistic kingship with another remembrance of the violent death of the Seleucid ruler Antiochus. It should be read as a memory of Antiochus I starting the ruler-cult of the Seleucids and of Antiochus III who confirmed the Seleucid control of Syria, Mesopotamia and Western Iran in 188 BCE, but was murdered one year later while plundering a temple of Bêl(-Ahura Mazdâ) in Susa.²⁷ 2Macc 1:13–16 states that Antiochus was slain by priests in the temple of the Iranian Nanaia(-Anâhitâ) after trying to get the temple’s treasure and probably the legitimacy of Zoroastrian kingship: by the old oriental ritual of *hieros gamos* the king wanted to participate of the divine sphere by marrying this goddess. In the Septuagint’s time the readers will have known that Zoroastrians spoke of Nanaia(-Anâhitâ) as the waitress of the glory of the Iranian kings who got their rule from Ahura Mazdâ as the god of heaven.²⁸ We may see the convergences of Zoroastrian kingship from heaven and the Jewish kingdom of God versus Hellenistic kingship, when the story has its climax with verse 17: “Blessed in every way be our God, who has delivered up those who have behaved impiously!” (NETS, transl. by *J. Schaper*).

In face of the brutal assimilation by force, Judas Maccabee founded his revolution on Deuteronomy’s conventions of war in the name of God’s rule which Flavius Josephus later called “*theokratia*” (*C. Ap.* 2.165). According to historical critical recognition, Deuteronomy’s conventions of war was a fiction supported by resistance and symbolic counter-violence. But as part of a monotheistic movement’s cultural semantics it could be actualized to a question of life and death in an historical situation similar to the decades of suppression by Assyria and Babylonia.²⁹ The literal fulfilment of cruelties like those written in Deut 7:2 “When the Lord your God had delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then ... show them no mercy!” would mean an expression of a fundamental attitude already. But also this is perhaps only literature.³⁰

The late chapters of Zechariah (9–11) had already asserted in 9:9 in front of the apotheosis of Alexander as a divine redeemer the vision of a true redeemer

²⁷ Cf. the articles “Antiochos 2. and 4.” in: *Der Kleine Pauly I* (1979) 388–389.

²⁸ Cf. *C. Elsas*, *Aredvi Sürâ Anâhitâ*, in: *Colpe, Mythologie*, 279–286, here 280–281; for the story at the end of this chapter showing good knowledge of the Iranian fire cult in the temples of Anâhitâ see *Hultgård*, *Judentum*, 577.

²⁹ *J. Assmann*, *Monotheismus und Sprache der Gewalt*, in: *P. W. Neuner* (ed.), *Das Gewaltpotential des Monotheismus und der dreieinige Gott* (QD 216), Freiburg 2005, 18–38, here 30.

³⁰ *Assmann*, *Monotheismus*, 32.

distinguished especially by his demonstrative non-violence:³¹ “See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” This “new” king is a counterexample to the king in the former theology of Ps 2:1–9 and especially in Hellenistic ideology of kingship. For he is practicing justice after having experienced redemption and help for himself, while chariot and horses are the counterexample to the “humble” king of peace.³² In accord with this it is possible to understand Ps 2:10–12 as a supplement from the later time after exile. Then the sentence “Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth” could be understood in a manner critical to violence: the “messianic” king of Zion will not grasp to the weapons but – according to Isa 11:4 and Zech 9:10 – to the word to get an end to the revolt of the gentiles.³³

³¹ Cf. E. G. Dafni, Alexander der Große und Antiochus IV Epiphanes in den Makkabäerbüchern, *Orthodoxes Forum* 32/1 (2018) 15–27, here 16 f. 19–24. 27.

³² E. Zenger, Der Mosaische Monotheismus im Spannungsfeld von Gewalttätigkeit und Gewaltverzicht. Eine Replik auf Jan Assmann, in: Assmann, *Monotheismus*, 39–73, here 57–59.

³³ Zenger, *Der Mosaische Monotheismus*, 59–60.