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WAS JESUS THE PRIESTLY MESSIAH? A STUDY OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT'S TEACHING OF JESUS' PRIESTLY
OFFICE AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF JEWISH
HOPES FOR A PRIESTLY MESSIAH

A thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Theology

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA:		QUMRAN:	
Sap.	Wisdom of Solomon	CD	Damascus Document
Sir.	Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach, Ecclesiasticus	1QS	Rule of the Community
		1QSa	Rule of the Congregation
1, 2 Macc.	1, 2 Maccabees	1QSB	Blessings
Jub.	Book of Jubilees	1QM	War Scroll
Test.:	Testament of:	1QpIs	Isaiah Commentary (fragments)
Reub.	Reuben		
Jos.	Joseph	1QpHab	Habakkuk Commentary
Sim.	Simeon		
Jud.	Judah	4Qflor	Florilegium
<u>Ep. Arist.</u>	Letter of Aristeas	4Qpatr	Patriarchal Blessings
Sib. Or.	Sibylline Oracles	4Qtest	Testimonia
eth. Enoch	Ethiopic Book of Enoch	11QMelch	Melchizedek Fragment
slav. Enoch	Slayonic Book of Enoch		
		RABBINIC LITERATURE	
Ps. Sol.	Psalms of Solomon	Targ.:	Targum: Jerusalem Jer.
FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS:		Midr. R.	Midrash Rabbah
<u>Ant.</u>	<u>Antiquitates Judaicae</u>	Bab. Tal.	Babylonian Talmud
		In Connection with the Targumim and Midrashim:	
<u>Bell.</u>	<u>Bellum Judaicum</u>	Cant.	Song of Songs
OTHER ANCIENT WORKS:		Qoh,	Qoheleth, Ecclesiastes
1 Clem.	1 Clement		
Rep.	<u>Republic</u>		
Tim.	<u>Timaeus</u>		

ABBREVIATIONS (Cont'd.)

Tractates of the Mishna and
Talmud:

San. Sanhedrin

Ned. Nedarim

Others:

Aboth RN Aboth of Rabbi
Nathan

Spec. Leg. De Specialibus Legibus

Praem. De Praemiis et Poenis

Gig. De Gigantibus

Vita Cont. De Vita Contemplativa

Leg. ad De Legatione ad Gaium
Gaium

PHILO JUDAEUS:

Opif. De Opificio Mundi

LA Legum Allegoriae

Cher. De Cherubim

Post. Cain. De Posteritate
Caini

Plant. De Plantatione

Ebr. De Ebriatate

Conf. De Confusione
Linguarum

Migr. Abr. De Migratione
Abrahami

Heres Quis Rerum
Divinarum Heres

Congr. De Congressu
quaerendae Eru-
ditionis gratia

Fuga De Fuga et
Inventione

Somm. De Somniis

Abr. De Abrahamo

Mos. De Vita Mosis

Decal. De Decalogo

ABBREVIATIONS (Cont'd.)

NAMES, TEXTS, TITLES, SERIES, ETC.:

- AC Augsburg Confession
- AP Apology of the Augsburg Confession
- BAG Arndt, William F., and F. Wilbur Gingrich. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. A translation and adaptation of the fourth revised edition of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und den übrigen urchristlichen Literatur. Second edition revised and augmented by F. W. Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker from Walter Bauer's fifth edition, 1958. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- BDF Blass, F., and A. Debrunner. A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. Translated and revised from the 9th German edition by Robert A. Funk. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961.
- FRLANT Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- IDB The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. 4 Vols., Nashville: Abingdon, 1962.
- it. ittala.
- JBL Journal of Biblical Literature.
- Jos. Josephus.
- KEKNT Kritisch-Exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, begründet von H. A. W. Meyer, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- LXX Septuaginta.
- MPG Migne, J. -P., ed. Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Graeca. 161 Vols. Paris, 1857-66.
- MPL Migne, J. -P., ed. Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina. 221 Vols. Paris, 1844-63.
- MT Massoretic Text
- NEB Bible, The New English. Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1961.

ABBREVIATIONS (Cont'd.)

<u>NICNT</u>	<u>The New International Commentary on the New Testament.</u> Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
N.T.	New Testament.
<u>NTS</u>	<u>New Testament Studies.</u>
O.T.	Old Testament.
R.	Rabbi.
RSV	<u>Bible, Holy. The Holy Bible and Apocrypha of the Old Testament.</u> Revised Standard Version. New York: Nelson, 1946, 1952, 1957.
SP	Samaritan Pentateuch.
<u>TDNT</u>	Kittel, Gerhard, and Gerhard Friedrich, editors. <u>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.</u> 10 Vols. Trans. by G. W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76.
<u>ZNW</u>	<u>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der älteren Kirche.</u>

OTHER ABBREVIATIONS:

aor.	aorist	subj.	subjective
cent.	century	s.v.	<u>sub. voce</u> , under the word
cor.	corresponding	Syr.	Syriac
fr.	fragment	var.	variant reading
Gk.	Greek	<u>z. St.</u>	<u>zur Stelle</u> , at the place (of the passage), in a commentary
Hb.	Hebrew		
<u>h.l.</u>	hapax legomenon, used only once		
Lat.	Latin		
N.F.	<u>Neue Folge</u> , New Series		
pres.	present		
Pt.	Part		
ptcp.	participle		

CHAPTER I

Statement of the Problem

THE OFFICE OF CHRIST

132. For what threefold office was Christ anointed?

Christ was anointed to be my Prophet, Priest, and King.¹

The use of the category "priest" to describe the person and work of Jesus Christ is firmly rooted in Scripture and tradition. The Epistle to the Hebrews named Jesus as "High Priest" (2:17, for example) and (great) "priest" (10:21), and applies Ps. 110:4 to him. First Clement (36:1) echoes this appellation. Subsequent church fathers used the concept especially in connection with the teaching of Christ's self-sacrifice.² The Lutheran Confessions refer to Christ as "highpriest" (AC XXI, 2) and as the New Testament's "priest who sacrifices for sin" (AP XXIV, 58).³ Francis Pieper's thorough discussions of Christ's

¹A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism. A Handbook of Christian Doctrine (St. Louis: Concordia, 1943), p. 107.

²J. N. D. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, 2nd ed., (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), p. 382 mentioned especially Gregory of Nyssa, Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarem, 16-17, and Contra Eunomium, 6. Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, 3 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1951), 2:334, n. 10, pointed to Eusebius, Church History, I, 2.

³The context of the former reference is the invocation of the saints and Jesus' sole mediatorship; Scripture passages appealed to are 1 Tim. 2:5; Rom. 8:34; and 1 John 2:1. The context of the latter reference is the argument over the priest's role in the "sacrifice of the Mass;" the entire Epistle to the Hebrews is called on for support, along with 2 Cor. 3:6. Bengt Hägglund, History of Theology, trans. by

active obedience, vicarious satisfaction, and his work of reconciliation and intercession all fall under the heading "The Sacerdotal Office of Christ," one part of "The Threefold Office of Christ."⁴ Thus the dogmatic tradition of the church has preserved for our catechesis the ancient and Scriptural use of sacerdotal categories to describe the person and (especially) the work of Jesus Christ.

In modern times, however, there has appeared a cleavage (and sometimes a chasm) between systematic (dogmatic) theology and exegetical (Biblical) theology.⁵ Especially in the area of Christology, numerous recent studies have examined the New Testament's proclamation of Jesus' claims and deeds not only in the light of the church's dogmatic tradition but also against the background of the Old Testament-inspired hopes of the Jewish people and the Savior-expectations of the Hellenistic world.⁶

Gene Lund (St. Louis: Concordia, 1968), p. 313, maintained that the teaching of Christ's "threefold office" appeared first in the Protestant dogmatic tradition in John Calvin and John Gerhard.

⁴Dogmatics, 2:333-4, 342-84. Passages referring to sacerdotal functions of Christ throughout the New Testament (e.g., 2 Cor. 5:19; Matt. 20:28; 1 John 2:2) are more important as the Scriptural basis for this section than any passages using the High Priest title in Hebrews.

⁵To the extent that exegesis has been freed from domination by dogmatics to become an equal interdependent partner, this has been beneficial. To the extent that exegesis has attempted to become an autonomous discipline, neither inspired by nor guided by the faith whose content dogmatic theology expresses, this has been regrettable at best, disastrous at worst.

⁶Included in these would be the works of the "life of Jesus" genre and the many monographs on aspects of Messianism. As current examples of the culmination of such studies we could name Oscar Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, rev. ed., trans. by S. C. Guthrie and C. A. M. Hall, The New Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), and Ferdinand Hahn, The Titles of Jesus in Christology, trans. by H. Knight and G. Ogg (New York: World, 1969).

The discovery and/or publication of additional source materials documenting the ways in which the Old Testament religion was preserved in intertestamental Judaism⁷ have inspired and facilitated the study of Jesus' claims and deeds from this new perspective. This background material has been used in the exegetical task. Historical studies have examined the connections and contradictions between the claims inherent in Jesus' words and deeds (and the proclamation of the New Testament writers) and the proclamation of the New Testament writers) and between the expectations of his Jewish and Samaritan contemporaries as regards his role as king and prophet.⁸ The Christian use of titles such as "Son of Man," "Lord," "Savior," and "Son of God" has also been studied in the light of the Jewish and Hellenistic background.⁹ Jesus and the New Testament writers were aware of and were responding to their contemporaries' hopes for a messianic king and prophet.

As regards Christ's priestly office, however, the situation is considerably less clear. The exegetical historical study can find evidence that Jews in the intertestamental period harbored a hope for a new (chief) priest, an anointed one of Aaron, and that they ascribed sacerdotal functions to various end-time redeemer figures.¹⁰ An

⁷R. H. Charles, ed. and trans., The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913) and the various editions of the Dead Sea Scrolls would be prime examples.

⁸See, Cullmann, Christology, pp. 13-50, 111-136.

⁹Ibid., pp. 137-314; Hahn, Titles, pp. 15-53, 68-128, 279-333.

¹⁰See, Cullmann, Christology, pp. 83-107; Hahn, Titles, pp. 229-239.

unresolved question, however, is whether Jesus' words and deeds or the New Testament's proclamation of him reflect a conscious attempt to respond to these hopes, whether it be by contradicting or correcting them or by proclaiming their fulfillment.

Some current students of the Bible, in fact, have proposed that intertestamental and sectarian Judaism's hope for a priestly messiah¹¹ is a legitimate line of Old Testament hope which both Jesus and the New Testament proclaim as having been fulfilled in Jesus, the Messiah.¹² They have suggested that the teaching in Hebrews about Jesus' high priesthood is but one surfacing of a tradition of this proclamation within the early church. Further evidence for this tradition, they have claimed, can also be found in the New Testament outside of Hebrews. It may perhaps be traceable to a conscious assertion of Jesus himself.

To test such proposals is the specific purpose of this study. Mindful of the dogmatic tradition regarding Christ's priestly office and

¹¹We shall consistently use this phrase, rather than "High Priest Messiah," "Messianic (High) Priest," or some other substitute. It is both grammatically sound and also reflects the fact that the fundamental Old Testament concept is that of "priest." The lower case letters show that we operate with a broad definition of "messiah": a chosen instrument of God, through whom he saves and blesses.

¹²See Gerhard Friedrich, "Beobachtungen zur messianischen Hohepriestererwartung in den Synoptikern," Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, 53 (1956):265-311; Joachim Gnllka, "Die Erwartung des messianischen Hohenpriesters in den Schriften von Qumran und im Neuen Testament," Revue de Qumran, 2 (1960):395-426; Olaf Moe, "Das Priestertum Christi im NT ausserhalb des Hebräerbriefes," Theologische Literaturzeitung, 22 (1947):335-338; and C. Spicq, "L'origine johannique de la conception du Christ-Prêtre dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," Aux Sources de la tradition chrétienne, Mélanges . . . Maurice Goguel, Bibliothèque Théologique (Paris: Delachaux & Niestle, 1950), pp. 258-269.

aware of the new perspective in Christology afforded by historical studies of messianic hopes, we have undertaken a study of the New Testament's teaching of Jesus' sacerdotal title and office against the background of the Jewish hope for a priestly messiah. Was Jesus aware of and responding in any way to these contemporary hopes? Were the New Testament writers presenting and proclaiming Jesus as the fulfillment, correction, or contradiction of those expectations? These are the questions we have summarized under the title: "Was Jesus the Priestly Messiah?"

Description of Methodology

The study of this question requires a methodology which includes historical studies in Judaism, exegesis of New Testament passages, and critical comparison. Our procedure will be first to present a comprehensive picture of the expectation within Judaism of a priestly messiah (Chapter II). The contents of the relevant texts, including the Old Testament passages in which the roots of this hope lie, will be described, followed by an attempt to trace the historical development of this peculiar line of messianism in relation to Jewish history. This will lead to an analysis of the personal qualifications and the nature of the work of the priestly messiah.

Turning to the New Testament, we shall note the contents and undertake to interpret those passages which mention (or appear to mention) an aspect of Jesus' sacerdotal office or a connection to the Jewish hope for a priestly messiah. Recognizing that the Epistle to the Hebrews in its entirety represents a special kind of datum within the New Testament in this regard, we shall divide this portion of the study

into: 1) an examination of the New Testament writings outside of Hebrews for evidence that they are proclaiming Jesus as the priestly messiah in response to Jewish hopes (Chapter III), and 2) a study of Hebrews, specifically, with reference to the roots, interpretation, and purpose of its teaching of Jesus' priesthood and its use of the title of High Priest (Chapter IV).

The conclusion of this study (Chapter V) will consider the results of the preceding chapters and make a critical comparison of the personal characteristics and the nature of the work of the Jewish priestly messiah and the person and work of Jesus Christ in his priestly office according to the New Testament. We shall then state our conclusions about their relationship.

Statement of Purpose and Value

Thus, on a narrower scale, this study aims to test an hypothesis in one area of New Testament Christology and to present conclusions regarding it. Since the question involves also the relationship of Judaism to the New Testament, this study also aspires to make a contribution to the ongoing task of methodically examining and carefully describing that relationship. Inasmuch as a major section of the study deals with the Epistle to the Hebrews, it also includes among its goals the attempt to add to the current discussion of the proper background and purpose of Hebrews.

As an historical and exegetical study of an aspect of Christological doctrine which has been preserved primarily in our dogmatic tradition, this study hopes also to be an example of serious exegetical work which is also aware of its proper relationship to the church's

systematized body of doctrine. As an historical and exegetical study in New Testament Christology, it harbors the modest hope of providing sound information to define even more sharply the teaching about Christ's sacerdotal office, so that the church may attain a fuller understanding of her Lord and his work as revealed in the New Testament. If this study helps Christians better understand the sacerdotal office of Christ and worship and serve him as the Christ, Prophet, Priest, and King, it will have accomplished its purpose.

TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY

CHAPTER II

THE PRIESTLY MESSIAH IN JUDAISM

In order to answer the question, "Was Jesus the Priestly Messiah?" we need first to examine as thoroughly as possible the concept of the priestly messiah in Jewish expectations. That is the goal of this chapter. Its scope extends back into the Old Testament itself, for therein lie both the roots and the earliest flowerings of the hope for a priestly messiah. Our procedure shall be: 1) to assemble information from texts dealing with the priesthood, holders of the office of chief priest, and a priestly messiah to come; 2) to reconstruct the historical development of the claims and hopes regarding the high priesthood, sketched against the background of the religious and political history of the Jews; and 3) to analyse the personal qualifications and the nature of the work of the priestly messiah.

Old Testament Passages

Individuals in various circumstances exercised priestly functions both before the organization of the "priesthood" in the days of

Aaron¹ and also afterwards, outside the Levitical order.² But the history of Israel's "official" priesthood, and of the priest called the "Great," "Chief," or "High Priest,"³ begins in the wilderness: in connection with the building of the ark of the covenant, the establishment of the worship centered about it, and the appointment of servants to care for the ark and perform the cultic duties.⁴

¹E. g., Cain, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job; see "Priest," The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible, ed. by John D. Davis, rev. edition ed. by H. S. Gehman (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1944), p. 491, and Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel, 2 vols. (New York; McGraw-Hill, 1965), 2:345.

²See Judg. 6:18, 24, 26; 13:16; 1 Kings 18:30; "Priest," Westminster Dictionary, p. 491; de Vaux, Israel, 2:361-2.

³ $\text{הַיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הָיָה לְנוֹתָן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל}$, Lev. 21:10.
 $\text{הַיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הָיָה לְנוֹתָן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל}$, Num. 35:25, 28; 2 Kings 12:11; 22:4, 8;
 23:4; 2 Chr. 34:9; Neh. 3:1, 20; 13:8; Hag. 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 4; Zech. 3:1, 8; Sir. 50:1 (Hb.).

$\text{שָׂרֵפְטָא דְּבַרְשִׁיבַת}$, 2 Kings 25:18; Jer. 52:24; 2 Chr. 19:11;
 24:11; 26:20; ($\text{שָׂרֵפְטָא דְּבַרְשִׁיבַת}$) 31:10.

And simply בְּרֵשִׁיבַת (as the head of the clergy): 1 Kings 4:2;
 2 Kings 11:9-10; 12:8-9; 16:10-11; 22:12-14; Is. 8:2

In older Greek writings, $\text{הַיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הָיָה לְנוֹתָן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל}$ is regularly rendered $\delta \epsilon \rho \epsilon \upsilon \varsigma \delta \mu \acute{\epsilon} \gamma \alpha \varsigma$. It is in the books of the Maccabees that $\delta \alpha \rho \chi \acute{\iota} \epsilon \rho \epsilon \upsilon \varsigma$ begins to be used of this office-holder; it is a term from the Seleucid chancery for "a man whom the king appointed as head of the state religion in a particular district or town," de Vaux, Israel, 2: 398.

⁴Critical scholars of the Graf-Wellhausen tradition reinterpret the Old Testament passages regarding Aaron, Levi, and the priests in the light of their hypothesis of Israel's religious development; see R. Abba, "Priests and Levites," IDB, 3:880-886. Our survey of the Old Testament Texts shall accept the historicity of the passages in which they occur. Apropos are the words of Menahem Haran, Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel, An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), p. vi, where he defends his use of the medieval Jewish exegetes, "whose perception of the literal meaning of the Biblical text (in contradistinction to its elucidation by means of literary and historical criticism)

Then bring near to you Aaron your brother and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests--Aaron,⁵ and Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar (Ex. 28:1).

After a description of the holy garments which are to be made for them, this chapter concludes with the words: "This shall be a perpetual statute for him and for his descendants after him" (Ex. 28:43).⁶ The Levites, according to Num. 3:5-10, were subsequently appointed to serve Aaron and his sons, "performing duties for him and for the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister at the tabernacle" (Num. 3:7; compare 1:50). Whatever may have been their previous tribal history, from this point on the Levites were a "priestly tribe."⁷

The consecration ($\text{קִדְּשׁוּ אֶת אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת בָּנָיו}$, Ex. 29:1) or "ordination" ($\text{וְאֶת אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת בָּנָיו קִדְּשׁוּ}$, 29:9) of Aaron and his sons included investiture in holy garments. But only Aaron was invested with the ephod, breastpiece, turban and crown (29:5-6). According to Ex. 29:7, only Aaron was also anointed with oil, but Ex. 40:9-15 reports that Aaron and his sons were both anointed.⁸ Lev. 21:10 indicates that anointing was part of the

was quite often incisive and worthy of admiration, and in which regard the moderns have no advantage over them."

⁵Unless otherwise noted, all quotations of Scripture and of the Old Testament Apocrypha are from The Holy Bible and Apocrypha of the Old Testament, RSV (New York: Nelson, c. 1946, 1952, 1957).

⁶See also Ex. 29:9 and Num. 18:19: "It is a covenant of salt for ever before the Lord for you and for your offspring with you."

⁷De Vaux, Israel, 2:358-371, thoroughly discussed the Levites. He followed the higher-critical theory, but found evidence that the Levites were a priestly tribe "at least" as early as the first half of the eighth century, if not earlier, p. 362.

⁸Lev. 8:5-13 also reports that Aaron was anointed but not his sons. In this passage, however, Moses also anointed "the tabernacle and all that was in it" (8:10). The report in Ex. 40:9-13 asserts of Aaron's

ceremony consecrating the chief priest, as it begins a description of the behavioral regulations necessary to preserve the purity of the one who serves in that role by saying:

The priest who is chief among his brethren upon whose head the anointing oil is poured, and who has been consecrated to wear the garments, . . .

Thus the Old Testament establishes that the anointing of the one who was to serve as chief priest was a part of the ceremony of ordination or consecration to that office from the time of Aaron on. He is יְהוֹדֵי אֱלֹהִים
אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמַח⁹

The function of the priests was to serve in and, with the help of the Levites, to guard and to move the tabernacle.¹⁰ To the chief priest was entrusted the ephod, with whose help he gave divine oracles.¹¹ To him also was given the Urim and Thummim (Ex. 28:30), a device for rendering decisions by casting lots. Moses' blessing upon the tribe of Levi (Deut. 33:8-11) includes a description of the function of the Levitical priests among the people, expressed in the keenly-honed conciseness of poetry:

sons that "their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood (אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמַח אֱלֹהִים) throughout their generations" (40:15b). Ps. 133:2 is a poetic reference to Aaron's anointing.

⁹Lev. 4:3, 5, 16; 6:15; cf. Num. 35:25. To maintain that the anointing of the high priest was first a post-exilic ritual and that this feature, as well as the anointing of all priests, was inserted into the Pentateuch in its post-exilic redaction (de Vaux, Israel, 2:347) is to use redaction criticism in a blatant attack on the clear meaning of the text.

¹⁰Ex. 27:20-21; Num. 1:53; 3:38; 4:5-6; Deut. 10:8.

¹¹De Vaux, Israel, 2:349-352, discussed the ephod.

They shall teach Jacob thy ordinances, and Israel thy law; they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt offerings upon thy altar.¹²

It has been said often and correctly that the common thread which runs through all the priests' functions (to serve in the Holy Place, to deliver oracles, to give instruction, to bless the people,¹³ to bring a sacrifice to the altar or burn incense upon the altar) is mediation. The priest is a mediator and the priesthood is an institution for mediation.¹⁴ This thought is represented nowhere more graphically than in the instructions given for the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16. Moses is to relay to Aaron all of the instructions for the sacrifices and other ceremonies of that day (Lev. 16:1-28). This procedure is to be repeated annually (16:29-31), with the chief priest in the key role of making atonement "for himself and for his house and for all the assembly of Israel" in the Holy Place (16:11-17):

And the priest who is anointed and consecrated as priest in his father's place shall make atonement, wearing the holy linen garments; he shall make atonement for the sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. And this shall be an everlasting statute for you, that atonement may be made for the people of Israel once in the year because of all their sins (Lev. 16:32-34).

The chief priest's mediating role is epitomized in this ceremony.

The book of Numbers includes two passages which speak of the service of Aaron's sons and of the succession to the status of "the (chief)

¹²Deut. 33:10. Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, 2 vols., trans. by D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 1:244-249 emphasized especially the giving of torah.

¹³Num. 6:22-27.

¹⁴De Vaux, Israel, 2:357.

priest" which Aaron held. Aaron's two eldest sons, Nadab and Abihu, died childless after having offered unholy fire before the Lord, but Eleazar and Ithamar continued to serve as priests in Aaron's lifetime (Num. 3:1-4), with Eleazar (the elder of the remaining sons) both appointed in charge of the Levites (Num. 3:32) and, subsequently, designated as Aaron's successor (Num. 20:23-29). At the time of Aaron's death, Moses took Eleazar to Mount Hor and transferred to him Aaron's garments.¹⁵

The son of Eleazar, who, it is safe to assume, also succeeded to the status of chief priest, was Phinehas.¹⁶ The Old Testament records several notices of his service: that he was, for instance, superintendent of the gatekeepers (1 Chr. 9:20) and that he delivered an oracle (Judg. 20:27-28).¹⁷ But the most significant incident in connection with Phinehas, the incident which was remembered and celebrated in later traditions,¹⁸ is recorded in Numbers 25. For his zeal on behalf of the Lord, shown in his slaying of an offending Israelite man and a Midianite woman in the apostasy at Shittim, Phinehas was given this promise:

¹⁵ Eleazar had already been anointed, according to Ex. 40:15. The succession obviously fell to him because he was older than Ithamar. In later years genealogical lineage to Aaron through Eleazar or Ithamar would become an issue in family rivalries over the priesthood and the high priesthood (see below).

¹⁶ Ex. 6:25. See also the genealogies in 1 Chr. 6:3-15; 6:50-53; Ezra 7:1-5.

¹⁷ Further references: Num. 31:6; 2 Chr. 13:12; Josh. 22:9-34; 24:33; cf. Num. 10:1-10.

¹⁸ E.g. Ps. 106:30-31; Sir. 45:23-24; 1 Macc. 2:26, 54. The phrase in Ps. 106:31 is especially interesting: Phinehas interposed, and the plague was stayed—"and that has been reckoned to him as righteousness from generation to generation for ever."

Behold, I give to him my covenant of peace, and it shall be to him, and to his descendants after him, the covenant of a perpetual priesthood ($\text{וְהָיָה לְךָ וְלְבֵיתְךָ}$) (Num. 25:12-13).

Long remembered, this promise became the basis of the claims of some later families in the time of the restoration.¹⁹

The information regarding the activities and the succession of the chief priests following Phinehas is not complete and must be pieced together from genealogical lists, miscellaneous Old Testament references and later traditions.²⁰ We must recognize that the genealogical lists have missing elements and are not records of the unbroken chain of succession of chief priests. There is obviously also no assurance that the miscellaneous Old Testament references to various chief priests have preserved a complete picture.

Many years after the scene in Numbers 25, near the end of the period of the judges, we find Eli functioning as chief priest,²¹ keeper

¹⁹The "sons of Phinehas," Ezra 8:2; cf. 1 Esdras 5:5; 8:29.

²⁰See the excellent chart in the Westminster Dictionary, s.v. "High Priest," pp. 245-247. Three late genealogical lists are given:
 1) 1 Chr. 6:3-15, the lineage from Aaron-Eleazar-Phinehas through Zadok to Jehozadak, who went into exile. (Zadok's ancestors as in this list did not serve as chief priest in an unbroken chain.)
 2) 1 Chr. 6:50-53, a repeat of the above list from Eleazar to Ahimaaz, son of Zadok.
 3) Ezra 7:1-5, the genealogy of Ezra, which parallels 1 Chr. 6:3-15 but omits the portion from Amariah, son of Meraioth, to Johanan and the name of Jehozadak.

²¹ אֵלִי , 1 Sam. 1:9; 2:11. His genealogy is nowhere given in full, but a comparison of 2 Kings 2:27 with 1 Chr. 24:3, 6, leads to the conclusion that Eli was of the lineage of Ithamar. Josephus says that he was the first of the sons of Ithamar to serve as high priest, but there is a lack of clarity as to whether he succeeded Abishua or Uzzi, Ant., V, 2, 5; VIII, 1, 3. (Perhaps it was an inability of a descendant of Eleazar to fulfill all the qualifications listed in Leviticus 21 which

of the ark of the covenant at Shiloh. Because of the evil behavior and intransigence of his two sons, however,²² a prophecy of doom was delivered. A "man of God" came to Eli and said that, despite God's earlier promise that "your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me for ever" (1 Sam. 2:30), God would cut off the strength of his house. Then was given a promise:

And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest (*וְיָקָם לִי כֹהֵן אֱמִינֵן*)²³ who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind; and I will build him a sure house, and he shall go in and out before me for ever (1 Sam. 2:35).

The reechoing words of this promise must have fed the hopes of many pious Jews down through the years.²⁴

The fulfillment of the prophecy of the destruction of the house of Eli came in connection with the events in the time of David and Solomon. When the priests of Nob were put to the sword for assisting David

necessitated the breaking of the chain of succession from father to eldest son.)

2 Esdras 1:2 names an Eli as a son of Eleazar in the genealogy of Ezea there given. This list, however, departs from the list in 1 Chr. 6 already at the fifth name. There is no guarantee, either, that the same Eli is meant.

²²According to Josephus, *Ant.*, V, 11, 2, Eli's son Phinehas officiated as chief priest during Eli's lifetime, after Eli had resigned the office to him due to advancing age.

²³Compare the wording of the promise of a prophet, Deut. 18:15-18. It is in this kind of phrase that "messianic hopes" are rooted.

²⁴Another enlightening incident from approximately the same period is reported in 1 Sam. 13:8-14. It was the foolish usurpation of a priestly function (the offering of the burnt offering) which earned for Saul the displeasure of God and lost for him the kingship. King and priest had definite functions, which were not to be confused. Certain sacerdotal functions were entirely off limits, even to the king. There is little evidence for a portrayal of an Israelite king as acting in truly sacerdotal roles and no precedent for the combining of the two offices into one person as under the Hasmonaeans.

(1 Sam. 22:11-19), Ahimelech, who held the office of chief priest (compare 1 Sam. 21:1-6), was also slain²⁵ Abiathar, one of the sons of Ahimelech, escaped and fled to David (1 Sam. 22:20-23). He functioned as priest among David's band.²⁶ But there was no son of Ahimelech to take charge of the tabernacle itself under the continuation of Saul's reign, and so, it appears, that duty fell to the current head of the other priestly family: Zadok, the descendant of Eleazar.²⁷ But in David's reign, when the ark of the covenant was moved to Jerusalem, Zadok and Abiathar are named together as assisting and leading (1 Chr. 15:11-12; 2 Sam. 6:12-15). Zadok and Ahimelech, son of Abiathar,²⁸ cooperated in organizing the priests according to the appointed duties in their service, sixteen heads of houses of the sons of Eleazar and eight of the sons of Ithamar.²⁹ But in the conspiracies at the end of David's

²⁵ Ahimelech's brother, Ahijah (אֲחִיָּהוּ, 1 Sam. 14:18-19), their father, Ahitub, and their uncle, Ichabod, are all mentioned before him as descendants of Phinehas, son of Eli (1 Sam. 14:3).

²⁶ 1 Sam. 23:6-12; 30:7-8; cf. Mark 2:26.

²⁷ Critical scholars have made a great mystery and problem of the origin of Zadok (cf. de Vaux, Israel, 2:372-4). Many feel he may be identified with the "young man of valor" who was of the house of Aaron, who came out with the others to turn the kingdom over to David (1 Chr. 12:28). The genealogical lists of 1 Chronicles 6 and Ezra 7 (and also 1 Chr. 24:3) identify him as of the lineage of Eleazar. The hypothesis here expressed concerning these events is to be found in Westminster Dictionary, p. 245.

²⁸ 2 Sam. 8:17 also names Ahimelech, son of Abiathar, as "priest" with Zadok. Some consider the construction of this name and patronymic as a copyist's error (of transposition). Others assign the incidents to an unknown date in David's reign. Westminster Dictionary, s.v. "Abiathar," p. 3, suggests that Ahimelech, Abiathar's son, had assumed the duties of his father due to Abiathar's advanced age.

²⁹ 1 Chr. 24:1-31. This passage makes an interesting distinction when it notes (v. 5) that there were "officers of the sanctuary and officers of God (שָׂרֵי-קִדְשׁ וְשָׂרֵי-אֵלֹהִים) among both the sons of Eleazar and the sons of Ithamar."

reign, Zadok was loyal to David but Abiathar favored Adonijah (1 Kings 1:7-8). As a result, after David's death, Solomon deposed Abiathar, banished him to his estate at Anathoth (1 Kings 2:26-7), and placed Zadok alone in the place of "the priest" (1 Kings 2:35). Thus the prophecy against the house of Eli was fulfilled, the office of chief priest was returned to the descendants of Eleazar and Phinehas, and the name of Zadok became associated with the loyal and legitimate holders of the office of chief priest.³⁰

Following the apparent order, the next Old Testament passage dealing with the priesthood which provides background for understanding the development of the Jewish hopes for a priestly messiah is Jer. 33:17-18 (MT).³¹ In the "Book of Consolation," embedded in a chapter of oracles of hope and promise of restoration, we find also the following promise, which links the future Davidic rule and the Levitical priesthood:

³⁰Zadok was assisted by his son Ahimaaz during his lifetime (2 Sam. 15:27, 36; 17:20), but there is no record that Ahimaaz held the office of chief priest. 1 Kings 4:4, naming the high officials of Solomon, names first "Azariah, the son of Zadok." 1 Chr. 6:9 names an Azariah who was son of Ahimaaz. The office of the chief priest did not pass out of the family of Zadok until the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

³¹The date and authenticity of this passage is in question on text-critical grounds, since it is not preserved in the LXX. John Bright, Jeremiah, The Anchor Bible, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1965), pp. 284-5, discussed the problem and said that 32:14-26 "is entirely lacking in the LXX and may well be a later addition to the book" (p. 298). He pointed out that verses 14-18 are based on the poetic oracle in Jer. 23:5-6, except that:

- a) the name יהוה אלהינו is here applied to Judah-Jerusalem;
- b) the מלך is made to refer to a continuing dynasty rather than to an individual; and
- c) the promise is broadened to include a never-ending succession of Levitical priests who serve beside the king.

The final two sayings of the section also depend on Jer. 31:35-37, except that again the Lord's eternal promises to his people are applied to

For thus says the Lord, David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn cereal offerings, and to make sacrifices for ever (Jer. 33:17-18).

Verse 21 echoes the same thought, including the idea of a "covenant" which has been made not only with David but also with "the Levitical priests my ministers." Verse 22 concludes with a promise of many descendants both to David and to the Levitical priests.

Following the Massoretic Text according to its patent intent, we would conclude that this important linking of the Davidic messiah and the Levitical priests was forged by Jeremiah in an oracle spoken "while he was shut up in the court of the guard" (Jer. 33:1), that is, 588/587 B.C. The fact, however, that these verses are part of a section (33:14-26) which is not included in the Septuagint (compare after Jer. 40:13LXX) makes the question of their date and authenticity not a literary-critical but a text-critical issue.³² We must reckon with the possibility

the Davidic line and to the Levitical priests. Thus the whole section shows signs of being later reworkings of original Jeremianic materials.

³²Literary criticism of style and content can be used (as "internal evidence") in evaluating textual variants; thus the three points made by John Bright (see note 31, above) can be used to argue the non-originality of the section. The fact that the content of the verses can be well explained as coming from a later time also points to their non-originality.

In discussing chapters 46-51 of Jeremiah, Bright, Jeremiah, p. LXXVIII, made the plausible suggestion that the textual differences between the MT and the LXX are due to the separate circulation of the materials "until sometime after the textual traditions lying behind the LXX and MT had diverged." Though the text had long ago achieved fixed form and the Jeremiah book had been accorded canonical status, as late as ca. the second century B.C. "no single standard form of the book (and no single text) as yet existed." At some time between the sixth and second centuries, the section Jer. 33:14-26MT was drawn into a Hebrew text-tradition of the book of the prophet Jeremiah, but not into the

that these verses are not to be dated in the time of Jeremiah, but that they are later re-interpretations of Jeremianic oracles which were included in the book of the prophet Jeremiah at a later period in one (Palestinian) text-tradition.³³

Several circumstances, however, serve to strengthen the possibility that these verses are authentic: First, Jeremiah's ancestry was that of a priestly family in Anathoth, the home of Abiathar (of the house of Eli and the lineage of Ithamar).³⁴ Jeremiah would not be likely to be enamored of any developing claims to special status by the Zadokite family. Secondly, Jeremiah's "temple sermon" (Chapter 7) represents a critical attitude toward the temple and cult as then practiced. The prophet who attacked both the lack of righteousness in the lives of the princes of Judah and the lack of true religion on the part of those who

text-tradition behind the LXX. Why? Was there conscious expansion of the scope of earlier Jeremianic prophecies in Palestine—for some special reason in response to historical developments? Would there be any reason for such material to be suppressed in the LXX?

Perhaps the beginning of the divergence which led to differing text-types goes all the way back to the flight of various groups (and the taking of Jeremiah himself) to Egypt already in the sixth century (Jer. 43:5-7; cf. 44:1).

³³See, Bruce Vawter, "Levitical Messianism and the New Testament," The Bible in Current Catholic Thought, ed. by J. L. McKenzie, Saint Marys Theology Studies, 1 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1962), pp. 83-4. This would by no means indicate that the passage is of less significance for our subject. It only means that we would consider this kind of link between the Davidic and Levitical hopes to have been forged in a later time than Jeremiah's. Even if the words are not to be taken as part of the authentic text of the Old Testament Scripture, they testify nonetheless to a form of the developing Jewish hope.

³⁴See Haran, Temples and Temple-Service, p. 87, n. 2.

were leaders of worship at the temple may well have included both the hope for a proper priesthood and prophecies of a legitimate successor to David among his oracles of promise.

The last portion of the book of the prophet Ezekiel contains promises of future restoration--both of the nation and its inhabitants (chapters 33-39) and of the temple and its community (chapters 40-48). According to Ezek. 40:1, it was in the "twenty-fifty year of our exile" (573 B.C.) that these latter visions of the restored temple and its community were given to this priest-prophet of the exile.³⁵ In chapter 44 he turns to the question of who shall be allowed to enter the temple and who is to be excluded from the sanctuary (compare verse 5). Foreigners are to be excluded (verse 9). Because of their association with the worship of idols, the Levites also are to be punished (verses 10, 12). They may do certain deeds of service in the sanctuary (oversight of the gates, slaying of the burst offerings), but

they shall not come near to me, to serve me as priest, nor come near any of my sacred things and the things that are most sacred . . . Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, to do all its service and all that is to be done in it. But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok (לְהַכִּי־סֹדֵי־יְהוָה אֲלֵי־יָמִים בְּנֵי־צָדוֹק) who keep charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come near to me to minister to me: and they shall attend on me to offer me the fat and the blood, says the Lord God; they shall enter my sanctuary and they shall approach my table, to minister to me, and they shall keep my charge (Ezek. 44:13-16).

³⁵ Ezekiel was a priest, deported to Babylon in 597 B.C. (Ezek. 1:1; 33:21; 40:1). "In him are combined in unique fashion the activities and interests of the prophet, priest, pastor or 'watchman', apocalypticist, theologian, 'architect' of the new Temple, and the organizer of the ecclesiastical community," J. Muilenburg, "Ezekiel," Peake's Commentary on the Bible, ed. by M. Black and H. H. Rowley (London: Nelson, 1963), p. 569.

Thus Ezekiel designated the sons of Zadok as the chosen and legitimate priestly family for the days of eschatological restoration.³⁶ This distinction was a reward for their faithfulness in a time when others were unfaithful and were losing their rights. This narrowing of the designation of the legitimate priests to the family of Zadok took on great importance in the intertestamental period.³⁷

The post-exilic writings of the Old Testament represent God's word of direction, admonition, and encouragement to this people in the restored community. The completion of the rebuilding of the temple was of utmost importance, so that the glory of the Lord might return to the land. Then the Lord would be rightly honored and worshipped there, and he would again give his blessing to the land (Hag. 1:2-11; compare 2:7). Under the Persian suzerainty, it may have been necessary to avoid speaking of the "governor" as a "messianic King."³⁸ But the national cultic leader, in the Persian vassal states, was probably a local official of high rank. Thus in the post-exilic writings, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, "governor of Judah," and Joshua son of Jehozadak, "the high priest," are regularly mentioned together.³⁹ This reflects the de facto

³⁶The word of judgment given against the Levites may be the reason relatively few of them returned from Babylon with Ezra (Ezra 2:36-40, 58), Muilenburg, "Ezekiel," Peake's p. 589.

³⁷It should be noted that no mention whatsoever is made in Ezekiel of the "chief" priest.

³⁸אֲדָמָה. Ezekiel already used אֲדָמָה instead of אֲדָמָה for the future messianic king, Ezek. 34:24, e. g.

³⁹אֲדָמָה אֲדָמָה - אֲדָמָה and אֲדָמָה אֲדָמָה, Ezra 3:2; Hag. 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 4; Zech. 4:14 (cf. 3:1; 4:6). No Jew, however, would miss the messianic allusion in Zerubbabel's name: "Branch of Babylon."

sharing of leadership by these two men and the harmonious balance that was supposed to exist between the holders of these two offices established for God's restored people.

Of special interest are Zechariah, chapters 3, 4, and 6. In chapter 3 Joshua the high priest is standing before the angel of the Lord. Satan (שָׂטָן) is there accusing him. Joshua is clothed in garments signifying repentance. The angel of the Lord declares that his iniquity is taken from him⁴⁰ and commands that he be clothed in rich apparel. He is crowned with a turban.⁴¹ The angel of the Lord then continues, speaking to Joshua:

Thus says the Lord of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my charge, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here (Zech. 3:7).⁴²

⁴⁰ It is not clear whether this signifies the removal of Joshua's sin alone (Karl Elliger, Das Buch der zwölf Kleinen Propheten, II, 5th edition, Das Alte Testament Deutsch, XXI [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964], p. 120) or that of the whole people, whom he represents (Von Rad, Theology, 2:287). Elliger, pp. 121-2, says, however, that the important issue is not whether some specific historical charge levelled at Joshua personally must be removed; Zechariah is not "supporting" Joshua against some opponents in the community.

⁴¹ קִטְרוֹן , headwrap of priest or king, cf. Is. 62:3 (qere); Sir. 11:5; 47:6. $\text{קִטְרוֹן הַגָּבִיחַ$ is the special word for the turban of the high priest (Ex. 28:4, 37, 39; 29:6; 39:28, 31; Lev. 8:9; 16:4) except in Exek. 21:31, where it refers to the royal turban. See J. M. Myers, "Turban," IDB, 4:718. Elliger, Buch der zwölf, p. 122, says that the vision reflects a real rite of investiture: a formal objection; its removal by absolution; the giving of the turban as a sign of office.

⁴² Of the fact that Joshua is granted (as once was Moses) to draw near to the heavenly sanctuary in which the majesty of God dwells, Elliger, Buch der zwölf, p. 122, says: "Das ist der wahre Hohepriester der Heilzeit!" Elliger explains the prophetic nature of the passage: a revelation has been given to Zechariah which points beyond the man of whom he was thinking—to him whom Hebrews recognized as the true high priest. "Jesus Christus hat Zutritt zu Gott gewonnen und vertritt seine Gemeinde, wenn der Satan sie anklagt"

A promise to bring "my servant, the Branch," and to remove the guilt of the land in a single day follows (Zech. 3:8, 11). Thus this vision speaks again of the election and privilege of the chosen chief priest. It also summons Joshua, historically, to fulfill that office.

Zechariah, chapter 4, introduces the vision of the gold lampstand with seven lamps and the two olive trees standing by it (Zech. 4:2-3). An oracle tells Zerubbabel that by virtue of the Spirit of the Lord the mountain shall become as a plain before him, and that he shall complete the building of the house of the Lord (verses 6-9). The seer then presses the interpreting angel for an explanation of the two olive trees on the right and on the left of the lampstand.

Then he said, "These are the two anointed (אֲנֻי־בְרִיָּה אֲשֶׁר עִמָּךְ, LXX οἱ δύο υἱοὶ ῥῆς πλειόητος) who stand by the Lord of the whole earth (Zech. 4:14).⁴³

Here the priestly and royal leaders of the restored community (in Zechariah's mind, Joshua and Zerubbabel) are represented as two specially chosen and empowered servants of the Lord, two channels of blessing for his people. They enjoy a true partnership as they are accorded equal status.

⁴³Some question whether the RSV has properly translated אֲנֻי־בְרִיָּה אֲשֶׁר עִמָּךְ (=sons of oil) as "anointed." De Vaux, *Israel*, 2:399 says "it is unlikely that the text refers to anointing at all; the expression 'sons of oil' is never used anywhere else for 'anointed one,' and the word for oil is not the one used for anointing-oil." Elsewhere de Vaux argues that the anointing of the high priests was not part of the ancient consecration ritual but rather was first practiced perhaps "from the end of the Persian period" (p. 400). Elliger, *Buch der zwölf*, p. 105, however, considers the phrase properly translated with "Gesalbten," i.e., "als Vollmachtbegabte, als zweigeteilter Messias im Dienste des Herrn der Welt" (p. 111). The unusual phrase may have been used here in order to avoid giving a more detailed interpretation which would have excited Persian suspicions (p. 111).

Their close and harmonious relationship, each in his assigned sphere, seems to be the point also of the difficult passage in Zech. 6:9-14. The prophet is instructed to take some materials and make (two) crowns,⁴⁴ one to be placed on the head of Joshua, the high priest.

Then the prophet is to say to him (Joshua):

Thus says the Lord of hosts,
 "Behold the man, Branch is his name,
 Where he is, there is sprouting up,
 And he shall build the Temple of Yahweh."⁴⁵

Because of the play on his name⁴⁶ as well as the references to his building of the temple and his ruling (לִקְשֵׁל , verse 13), it is logical to assume that the oracle, spoken to Joshua, also speaks of Zerubbabel⁴⁷

⁴⁴MT יְצַרְוּהוּ ("crowns, wreaths"); LXX $\sigma\tau\epsilon\phi\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$. In the apparatus of Biblia Hebraica (3rd ed.) R. Kittel said that some Greek MSS read a singular form; he suggested emending the text and reading יְצַרְהוּ . Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, ed. by P. Kahl et al. (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1970) likewise proposed this reading and noted that also the Syriac versions and the Targumim reflect the singular form.

⁴⁵Zech. 6:12, as translated by P. R. Ackroyd, "Zechariah," Peake's Commentary on the Bible, ed. by M. Black and H. H. Rowley (London: Nelson, 1963), p. 649.

⁴⁶ פָּרֹחַ , "Branch, Sprout"-- זֵרְבָבֶל , "Begotten in (seed of?) Babylon." Once again, a more explicit reference may not have been advisable lest the Persians perceive that Zerubbabel was considered something more than a "governor." Others feel that the absence of his name indicates that he has, in fact, been removed by the Persians for Messianic pretensions. Then Joshua is seen as being crowned and as combining in himself priestly and princely functions.

⁴⁷See Yehezkel Kaufmann, History of the Religion of Israel, Vol. 4: From the Babylonian Captivity to the End of Prophecy, trans. by C. W. Efroymson (New York: Ktav, 1977), pp. 294-7; he pictured the prophet pointing to the second, unoccupied, crown while speaking the oracle. The critical view is that an original Zerubbabel oracle has been reapplied to Joshua (or another) after Zerubbabel's demise, cf. Elliger, Buch der zwölf, pp. 129-30. A yet later editor would have changed the original

—-and of that "Branch" of whom he was a prototype. Then the plural, "crowns," is clearly fitting, with Joshua having received one as high priest while the other was stored in the temple as a reminder⁴⁸ for the appointed day when he who is to wear it shall come. Then verse 13 can be translated thus, with the prophet demonstrating the close partnership of the two office holders:

And he (emphatic, i.e. Zerubbabel or the royal messiah) shall build the Temple of Yahweh,
 And he (emphatic, i.e. Joshua or the priestly messiah) shall bear his glorious office (of priest),
 And he (Zerubbabel or the royal messiah) shall sit and rule upon his throne,
 And he (Joshua or the priestly messiah) shall be as priest upon his throne (LXX at his right hand)
 And peaceful counsel shall be between them both.⁴⁹

וְיָבִינָה אֶת הַבַּיִת
 וְיִשָּׂא אֶת הַכֹּהֵן
 וְיָשֵׁב וְיִמְשֵׁל עַל-כִּסֵּאָו
 וְיִהְיֶה כַּכֹּהֵן עַל-כִּסֵּאָו
 וְיִצְוֶה שְׁלָמִים בֵּין הַכֹּהֵן וּבֵין הַמֶּלֶךְ

Interpreted in this way, Zech. 6:9-14 is in harmony with the thrust of Zechariah chapters 3 and 4, and witnesses to Zechariah's prophecies concerning the two "sons of oil" designated to hold the royal and the priestly leadership over God's people.

As for the Persian period subsequent to Zechariah, the canonical books of the Old Testament provide only three meager glimpses into the details of the priesthood and the high priestly office. Speaking and

"at his right hand" (v. 13, LXX) to "upon his throne" (MT), in order to combine the royal and priestly functions into one ruler as is found in Ps. 110 (Ibid., 130-131).

⁴⁸ לְיָדָאָה, v. 14, a reminder to God of his promise--as well as to Heldai, Tobiajah, and Josiah the son of Zephaniah.

⁴⁹ See Ackroyd, Peake's, p. 649. The LXX reading would probably be the original. An alternative view is to see the passage speaking of sacerdotal and royal functions combined in one person--as they were before Aaron and will be again in the future fulfillment.

writing after the rebuilding of the temple under Haggai and Zechariah's encouragement, a "messenger of the Lord" delivered oracles of judgment against the community's cultic laxity (Mal. 1:6-14, for example).⁵⁰ Mal. 2:1-9 is addressed to the priests, whom the Lord threatens to put out of his presence (verse 3 LXX). The explanation that follows refers to the covenant with Levi and the proper function of a priest:

So shall you know that I have sent this command to you, that my covenant with Levi may hold, says the Lord of hosts. My covenant with him was a covenant of life and peace . . . True instruction (אֱמֻנָה) was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips.⁵¹ He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. . . .⁵¹ But you . . . have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts (Mal. 2:4-6, 8).

This passage tells us, firstly, that the functioning of the priesthood of the post-exilic community was open to severe criticism. In order for blessings to come again, the priesthood must be purified. Secondly, the relationship between the Lord and the priests rests on a "covenant with Levi," with perhaps an echo of the promise to Phinehas ("covenant of peace," Mal. 2:5; Num. 25:12).⁵² Thirdly, the function

⁵⁰ אֱמֻנָה, Mal. 3:1. Malachi is dated between Zechariah and Ezra-Nehemiah, i.e., between 520 and 450 B.C. Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, trans. by P. R. Ackroyd (New York; Harper and Row, 1965), sec. 61, pp. 442-3, narrows this down to the first half of the fifth century B.C., shortly before the time of Ezra-Nehemiah.

⁵¹ Similarly, the task of "my messenger" (Mal. 3:1), in preparing the way of the Lord, includes purifying the "sons of Levi" and refining them "like gold and silver, till they present right offerings to the Lord" (3:3).

⁵² There is no mention, however, of "sons of Zadok" or "sons of Aaron," and there appears to be no great distinction made between "priests" and "Levites."

of the priest as a giver of instruction (סֵּטֶר יִיִּן) is greatly emphasized (Mal. 2:6-7).

A second glimpse is given in the book of Nehemiah, which refers to several individuals who held the office of chief priest during the days of Nehemiah:⁵³ Joiakim,⁵⁴ Eliashib (Neh. 3:1, 20; 13:4-7, 28), Jehoiada (=Joiada, Neh. 12:10; 13:28), Jonathan,⁵⁵ and Jaddua.⁵⁶ Nehemiah, the governor, had to deal with two instances of priests' actions which threatened to defile the cult or the priesthood. During Nehemiah's absence, Eliashib had given a storeroom of the temple to a certain Tobiah for a chamber; Nehemiah saw to it that this was reversed (Neh. 13:4-9). At the end of the same chapter is a brief report of how one of the sons of Jehoiada married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite.

⁵³He first returned to Jerusalem in the 20th year of Artaxerxes (Artaxerxes I, 465-424 B.C.), i.e. 445/4 B.C. (Neh. 1:1; 2:6). After twelve years he returned to Susa (433/2 B.C., Neh. 5:14). He later returned to Jerusalem (Neh. 13:6-7). See W.S. McCullough, The History and Literature of the Palestinian Jews from Cyrus to Herod (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1975), p. 39.

⁵⁴"Son of Jeshua," Neh. 12:10, 12; cf. Josephus, Ant. XI, 5, 1.

⁵⁵=Johanan, Neh. 12:10-11, 22-23; cf. Josephus, Ant. XI, 7, 1. He is also referred to in the Elephantine papyri.

⁵⁶Neh. 12:11, 22. According to Josephus, Ant. XI, 8, 4-7. he was high priest when Alexander visited Jerusalem in 332 B.C. and he died about the same time as Alexander, ca. 323 B.C. If this is the same Jaddua, the presence of his name in this list in Nehemiah says something about the date of the writing of the final form of these "memoirs of Nehemiah." It could also be an insertion from a later hand.

Nehemiah banished him for having defiled the priesthood and the "covenant of the priesthood and the Levites" (Neh. 13:28-29).⁵⁷

The final glimpse, a more positive picture, is provided by the figure of Ezra himself.⁵⁸ Ezra is designated as "the priest," "the scribe," and "the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven" (Ezra 7:11-12). The genealogy recorded in Ezra 7:1-5 clearly means to give him the credentials of one who is the legitimate descendant of the lineage of the chief priests. God was with Ezra, and he was also officially empowered by the Persian king (Ezra 7:6). As chief priest and leader of the community, in an office recognized by the Persian king, Ezra was both the cultic and legal leader of the Jews. His zeal for purity and his strictness in enforcing the law are clear (see Ezra chapters 9-10, for example). In Ezra we see one who, for his time, set a laudable example of what the leadership functions of the chief priest should be.

We now conclude our survey of Old Testament texts by noting two passages which bear witness to a "priesthood of a higher order:"

⁵⁷ Ezra 2:61-63 also reports that Nehemiah excluded from the priesthood some who claimed to be sons of priests but whose genealogical records were not found to be in order.

⁵⁸ Whether Ezra returned before Nehemiah, in the 7th year of the reign of Artaxerxes (=Artaxerxes I, i.e. 458/7 B.C.) and was Nehemiah's contemporary (cf. Neh. 8:9), or whether he returned to the 7th year of the reign of Artaxerxes II (=397 B.C., cf. Ezra 7:7), a generation or so after Nehemiah (cf. Ezra 10:6 to Neh. 12:10 and the mention of Johanan in the Elephantine papyri) is not of paramount importance for our purposes. H. Hummel, The Word Becoming Flesh (St. Louis: Concordia, 1979), pp. 600-610 defended the early date for Ezra's return and dealt cogently with the various historical problems raised.

Gen. 14:18-20 and Ps. 110:4.⁵⁹ Genesis 14 portrays Abram the patriarch, exalted, victorious, and noble among the greatest kings of the international scene of his time. And yet, he was willing both to receive a legitimate blessing from and to give a tithe to Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High. Abram has made war with the kings of the East who had pillaged Canaanite cities, including Sodom and Gomorrah, and had taken Lot and his goods. Abram is returning from his victory and is on his way to return to the king of Sodom his goods. Then appears this mysterious figure:

And Melchizedek king of Salem (מֶלְכִּי־צֶדֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם) brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High (אֱלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן). And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything (Gen. 14:18-20).

The Canaanite worship of "God Most High" (אֱלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן) is known from extra-Biblical texts, and the fusion of priest and king in ancient city-kingdoms is not unusual.⁶⁰ Thus Scripture here connects the worship of God Most High by this Canaanite priest-king and the worship of the true God, Yahweh, by the patriarch of Israel.⁶¹ Melchizedek was aware

⁵⁹To the Christian interpreter it is clear that these passages establish a type and prophesy concerning the Messiah, David's Lord. But when interpreters attempt to explain them apart from their prophetic function and to integrate them into some scheme of Old Testament history or theology, they find these passages mysterious indeed. Here we shall simply give the two texts within their obvious context.

⁶⁰Gerhard von Rad, Genesis A Commentary, trans. by John Marks, The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), pp. 174-5.

⁶¹Cf. Gen. 14:22MT: ". . . to the LORD God Most High, maker of heaven and earth" (אֱלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ).

that God Most High had helped Abram; Abram acknowledged Melchizedek as a priest of God Most High. Furthermore, if "Salem" signified Jerusalem (compare Ps. 76:2), Abram is thus associated with the site of the city of David; he paid the respect of a legitimate tithe to the individual who (at that time) held the place which would later be occupied by the Lord's anointed.⁶²

The Old Testament's only other mention of Melchizedek as well as the order of priesthood he represented is in Ps. 110:4, a passage which harmonizes satisfactorily with this understanding of Gen. 14:18-20. The superscription designates this as a Psalm of David, and our Lord's own words (Matt. 22:41-45) indicate that in it David was speaking, by the Spirit, of the Messiah, Son of David:⁶³

⁶¹Cf. Gen. 14:22MT: ". . . to the LORD God Most High, maker of heaven and earth"

⁶²Von Rad, Genesis, pp. 175-6, argued that this was, in fact, the purpose of the chapter: to convince patriarch-loyal residents in Judaea outside of Jerusalem to accept the (costly) support of the temple in the city of David. The chapter, a literary patchwork using (in part) ancient materials but displaying anachronisms and affectations, was inserted here by a redactor and cannot be successfully connected to the rest of the patriarchal narratives (p. 170). Von Rad's remarks about the literary composition and historical background are well taken, but there is no need to deny the historicity of the events narrated and therefore the truth of Abram's paying honor to him who is the prefigurement (type) of the Lord's anointed. The fact that the offices of priest and king are held by one and the same individual is obviously important.

⁶³Those who are reluctant to acknowledge verbal inspiration and direct messianic prophecies resort to a multitude of explanations about this Psalm.

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool. . . ."

The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (אֲנִי-יְהוָה כֹּהֵן לְעֹלָמִים עַל-דִּבְרֵי-אֱלֹהִים)
 (מִלְכִּיזֶדֶק).

David, possessor of the throne of the city of Jerusalem and so the legitimate heir of Melchizedek, is also an inspired prophet of the anointed who shall come. That one shall be David's son and Lord. He shall reign at God's right hand over all his enemies and shall hold forever the priesthood of the order of Melchizedek. Several groups will appear to claim to know the fulfillment of this passage before its true fulfillment shall have been revealed.

Priesthood in the Old Testament Apocrypha

The apocryphal books of the Old Testament contain passages which both re-echo things said in the canonical books about the priesthood and the high priests and also reveal historical developments regarding the high priestly office in intertestamental times. The work of the prince Zerubbabel and the priest Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, is re-told and celebrated for example, in 1 Esdras 5:48, 56.⁶⁴ But the most important texts for our subject are two long passages in the book of the Wisdom of Jesus, son of Sirach.⁶⁵

⁶⁴We shall follow the RSV in naming and numbering the books of Ezra/Esdras. Thus this is 1 Esdras, the apocryphal book (=Esdras A' in the LXX: III Esdras in the Vulgate), which was probably written between 300-100 B.C. and appears to have been Josephus' source of information for the period from ca. 538-400 B.C. Eissfeldt, Introduction, sec. 77, p. 576, assigned it to the 2nd century B.C.

⁶⁵According to the prologue, the Greek version is a translation which was made in Egypt shortly after the 38th year of the reign of

Chapters 44-50 of Sirach are an historical review of Israel's past under the title "Let us now Praise Famous Men" (44:1); it leads up to the praise of "Simon the high priest, son of Onias" (50:1). To Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (and also to Joseph, Shem, Seth and Adam, 49:15-16) is allotted one or two verses each (44:16-23). The covenants God has established are referred to (Noah, verse 18; Abraham, verse 20; Jacob, verse 23). Moses' glory is sung in five verses (Sir. 45:1-5). But to praise Aaron, the author takes seventeen verses (Sir. 45:6-22), and he makes several references to the "everlasting covenant" made with him:⁶⁶

He exalted Aaron, the brother of Moses, a holy man like him of the tribe of Levi.

He made an everlasting covenant with him, and gave him the priesthood of the people. (Sir. 45:6-7).

Aaron was vested, given the long robe (*ποδύρη*) and the ephod (verses 7b-8), the embroidered holy garment and Urim and Thummim (verse 10), and the turban and crown (verse 12).

Euergetes (Ptolemy Physcon Euergetes II, 169-116 B.C.), i.e. ca. 132 B.C., by the grandson of the author, Jesus ben Sirach son of Eleazar of Jerusalem (cf. Sir. 50:27). Because of the praise of Simon son of Onias (usually taken to be Simon II, son of Onias II), the writing of the original is dated ca. 200-175 B.C. (Eissfeldt, Introduction, sec. 88, p. 597, suggests 190 B.C.) Part of a Hebrew MS has been found in the Cairo geniza and Hebrew fragments are among the discoveries at Qumran, cf. J. T. Milik, Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea, trans. by J. Strugnell, Studies in Biblical Theology (Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1959), p. 32, and T. A. Burkill, "Ecclesiasticus," IDB, 2:13-21, esp. 14-15.

⁶⁶ See Ellis Rivkin, A Hidden Revolution (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), Ch. 5, "Ben Sira and Aaronide Hegemony."

No outsider ever put them on, but only his sons and his descendants perpetually. . . .
 Moses ordained him, and anointed him with holy oil;
 it was an everlasting covenant for him and for his descendants all the days of heaven,
 to minister to the Lord and serve as priest and bless his people in his name (45: 13b, 15).

He was chosen to offer sacrifices and incense to the Lord, to make atonement for the people (verse 16), to have authority in judgments and statutes, and to teach and enlighten Israel with the Law (verse 17). Aaron was protected from those who conspired against him (verses 17-19), and God allotted him a special lot and inheritance (verses 20-22). The "covenant of peace" with Phinehas,⁶⁷ son of Eleazar, "third in glory" (verse 23) is also recalled:

Therefore a covenant of peace was established with him,
 that he should be leader of the sanctuary and of his people,
 that he and his descendants should have
 the dignity of the priesthood for ever (Sir. 45:24).

At this point the chronological sequence of the historical review is interrupted in order to insert, next to the Aaronic covenant, a note about the Davidic covenant:

A covenant was also established with David, the son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah: the heritage of the king is from son to son only; so the heritage of Aaron is for his descendants (Sir. 45:25).

The two covenants, Aaronic and Davidic, are set side by side, but in the author's thought the Aaronic covenant is of more extensive significance. The kingship went from David to his son and to his son--and the chain

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 196: "The significance of this covenant with Phinehas must be stressed, for the line of Phinehas in Ben Sira's day was traced through Zadok down to the contemporary High Priest Simon (cf. 1 Chr. 24:1-3; Ezra 7:1-5; 6:50-53). Ben Sira upholds this High Priestly line, sees it as a rightful monopoly of altar and Law originally invested in Aaron, and prays that it prove to be everlasting. Ben Sira is thus a fervid and loyal Zadokite who grounds his loyalty in the literal commands of the Pentateuch."

could be stopped (as it, in fact, had been). But the priesthood is to all of Aaron's descendants forever! This historical review continues from Joshua and Caleb to Solomon and all the important subsequent kings and prophets. In the concluding section (Sir. 49:11-13) Zerubbabel, Jeshua and Nehemiah are all mentioned; but, strangely, no mention is made of Ezra.

Finally Jesus son of Sirach arrives at his goal; to praise his near contemporary, Simon the high priest, son of Onias (Sir. 50:1-21).⁶⁸ Simon is praised for his efforts to repair and care for the temple, for considering "how to save his people from ruin," and for fortifying the city "to withstand a siege" (Sir. 50:1b-4). Ben Sirach describes the glorious sight of Simon coming out of the inner sanctuary and going up to the altar before all the "sons of Aaron" and the "whole congregation of Israel" (verses 5-13). The people's worship and prayers and Simon's blessing of them are portrayed in glowing terms (verses 14-21). His work is to administer the temple, provide leadership for the people (including "national security" leadership), go into the sanctuary and offer at the altar on their behalf, lead their worship and bestow on them the Lord's blessing.

The Hebrew manuscript of Jesus (Joshua) ben Sirach includes two important passages which are missing in the Greek translation. The end of the poem in praise of Simon, son of Onias, includes a prayer for

⁶⁸I.e., Simon II; Simon may have been a relative of Jesus ben Sirach, see Josephus, Ant. XII, 2, 5; Sir. 50:27.

peace among the sons of Simon, so that the covenant with Phinehas might be maintained for ever (Sir. 50:23-24Hb.):

δύμη ὑμῶν ευφροσύνην καρδίας
καὶ γενέσθαι εἰρήνην ἐν ἡμέραις ἡμῶν
ἐν Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ αἰῶνος.

ἐμπιστεύσαι μεθ' ἡμῶν τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἡμῶν
λυτρωσάσθω ἡμᾶς.

(LXX, corresponding verses)

יְהִי לָנוּ שְׂמֵחָה בְּיָמֵינוּ
וְשָׁלוֹם בְּיָמֵינוּ

וְיִשְׁמַח אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיָמֵינוּ
וְיִשְׁמַח אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיָמֵינוּ
וְיִשְׁמַח אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיָמֵינוּ
כִּי יִשְׁמַח אֱלֹהֵינוּ

These words would seem to fit in the time after Simon's death, during the period of rivalry between Onias III, Jason, and (perhaps) Menelaus. The author is anxious about the trouble which might arise and even threaten the continuation of a son of Phinehas in the high priesthood. If these verses are original, it is easy to understand how and why the translator into Greek, several generations later, would have introduced the changes he did: in order to recast the (no longer relevant) specific prayer for peace "between them" and for the continuation of the covenant with Phinehas into a general prayer for peace "in our days" and for salvation. If they are original, these verses testify to the existence of the conviction that the promise to Phinehas meant the continuation of Simon II's heritage in the high priestly office during the growing conflict with Hellenism under the Seleucid kings.

The Hebrew manuscript also preserves a passage after Sir. 51:12 (Sir. 51:12:i-xviiHb.) for which there is no Greek equivalent and

in which God is praised for his choice of the house of David and the sons of Zadok:⁶⁹

אֵלֹהֵינוּ לְמַצְמִיחַ קָרוֹ לְבֵית דָּוִד כִּי לְעוֹלָם אַתְּדַוּוּ
 אֵלֹהֵינוּ לְבִנוֹתָר בְּבִנְיָ צְדוֹק לְכֹהֵן כִּי לְעוֹלָם אַתְּדַוּוּ

If this section was original, it may have been omitted from the Greek translation as irrelevant in a day (132 B.C.) when the high priest was no longer of the family of Zadok. Whether original or added subsequently, it testifies to the zealous support of the Zadokite line as well as to the repetition of the two-fold hope for a royal and a priestly fulfiller of God's promises.⁷⁰

In summary, then, the relative space devoted by Jesus ben Sirach to Aaron, the first chief priest, and Simon, the current high priest,

⁶⁹Quoted here are verses viii-ix. In our source for the text, Israel Levi, ed., The Hebrew Text of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, Semitic Study Series, no. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1904), they are labelled with letters: h) and i). The authenticity of this section is discussed in Alexander di Lella, The Hebrew Text of Sirach. A Text-Critical and Historical Study, Studies in Classical Literature, 1 (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1966), pp. 102-105. He considered the passage probably not authentic, but subsequently inserted by a member of the Qumran sect. If it is authentic, it may have been removed from the Greek and most Hebrew MSS in order to avoid embarrassing the Hasmonaeans; in this case its MS preservation could be due to members of the Qumran sect. J. Trinquet, "Les liens 'sadicites' de l'Écrit de Damas, des manuscrits de la Mer Morte et de l'Ecclesiastique," Vetus Testamentum, 1 (1951): 290, also connected the Hebrew version of Sirach to the Qumran community.

⁷⁰Another interesting passage to note is Sir. 24:10. In the context of a great poem of praise to Wisdom personified, Wisdom is presented as saying that she tabernacles in Jacob: "In the holy tabernacle I ministered before him, and so I was established in Zion." To praise hypostasized Wisdom, the poem attributes a lofty sacerdotal (mediating) function to her.

indicates the centrality of that office for the Jewish community a little after 200 B.C.⁷¹ The Aaronic and Davidic covenants were considered to constitute a pair, but there is no concentration on Davidic hopes and the author's higher esteem for the priestly line is clear.⁷² The correct lineage for the high priestly office goes through Pinehas and Eleazar to Aaron, and in the Hebrew manuscript there is special mention of the "sons of Zadok."⁷³ The cultic aspects of the high priest's role are stressed, but his political and legal leadership of the community is also referred to. The tensions associated with the growing conflict with Hellenism under the Seleucids may also be hinted at in the Hebrew manuscript.

The books categorized under the heading "Maccabees" provide historical information regarding the Seleucid and Hasmonaean periods. They also reflect prevailing ideologies and hopes regarding the priesthood and the high priestly office in the second and first centuries B.C.⁷⁴ In the days of compromise and Hellenization (1 Macc. 1:11-14),

⁷¹McCullough, History and Literature, p. 89, points to Josephus, Ant. XII, 2, 5, and 6, as indications that also the Ptolemies recognized the high priest as the governor of Judaea as well as its religious head.

⁷²Rivkin, Revolution, p. 191, says that for ben Sirach and his contemporaries "the supremacy of the Aaronides was the leitmotiv of the Mosaic law."

⁷³The author's vexations included "the foolish people that dwell in Shechem" (Sir 50:25-26), but there is no discussion of the priesthood with reference to the Samaritan schism.

⁷⁴W. H. Brownlee, "Maccabees, Books of," IDB, 3:201-215: 1 Maccabees is a book of the Hasmonaean princes, written ca. 110 B.C. 2 Maccabees is an epitome of the Hasmonaean history by a (probably) anti-Hasmonaean Hasidean in Alexandria ca. 100 B.C. 3 Maccabees, which deals with the Ptolemaic period, was probably written by an Alexandrian Jew of

at the time of the death of Seleucus IV Philopator (175 B.C.), the office of "high priest"⁷⁵ became a prize to be sought after through unscrupulous means. 2 Macc. 4:7-10 tells of the first (recorded) deviation from the traditional custom of succession:

When Seleucus died and Antiochus who was called Epiphanes succeeded to the kingdom, Jason the brother of Onias [Onias III, son of Simon II] obtained the high priesthood by corruption. . . .⁷⁶

When the king assented and Jason came to office, he at once shifted his countrymen over to the Greek way of life (εὐθείως πρὸς τὸν ἑλληνικόν 2 Macc. 4:7, 10).⁷⁷ Χαρακτήρα τοῦ ὄμοφύλου μετέστησε,

Jason, at least, was still a member of the legitimate high priestly family going back to Joshua, Zadok, Phinehas, and Eleazar. But his dishonest deed opened the door for further abuses, and so he was undone by one yet more treacherous (and wealthy) than he: Menelaus, brother of Simon, of the tribe of Benjamin.⁷⁸ This unscrupulous unqualified man

Hasmonaean persuasion after 100 B.C. but before the beginning of Roman rule. 4 Maccabees, a philosophical discourse on the supremacy of religious reason over all passions, celebrates martyrdom and was written by a Diaspora (perhaps Alexandrian) Jew between 18-37 A.D.

⁷⁵ ἀρχιερεὺς, according to de Vaux, Israel, 2:398, a technical term in the Seleucid chancery, denoting "a man whom the king appointed as head of the state religion in a particular district or town," cf. 1 Macc. 10:20.

⁷⁶ He promised to pay the king 360 talents of silver plus another 80—and to add another 150 talents if he were given authority to establish a gymnasium and to enroll the men of Jerusalem as citizens of Antioch (2 Macc. 4:8-9).

⁷⁷ See also 2 Macc. 11:1-3: after the victory of Judas Maccabeus, a certain Lysias, "the king's guardian and kinsman," mounted an army against the Jews. "He intended to make the city a home for Greeks, and to levy tribute on the temple as he did on the sacred places of other nations and to put up the high priesthood for sale every year."

⁷⁸ 2 Macc. 4:23-27; cf. 3:4. Josephus, Ant. XII, 5, 1; XV, 3, 1, says that Jason's successor was his younger brother, also named Onias, who was also called Menelaus. If this be so, he would be a son of Simon II and a Zadokite.

obtained the high priesthood by simply outbidding Jason by 300 talents of silver (2 Macc. 4:24-25). He banished Jason and instigated the murder of the former (pious) high priest, Onias, who had gone into hiding (2 Macc. 4:30-38). Pursuing a course of duplicity and bribery, this Menelaus attempted to cheat his overlords (4:27), withstood riots of the people of Jerusalem against his brother and himself (4:39-49), survived a counter-rebellion led by the ousted Jason (5:5-10), and eventually assisted Antiochus in a sack of the sanctuary of the temple itself (5:15-22). His evil is eloquently phrased by the epitomist of 2 Maccabees:

Menelaus, because of the cupidity of those in power, remained in office, growing in wickedness, having become the chief plotter against his fellow citizens.⁷⁹

The antipathy toward Menelaus and the importance of the proper genealogical pedigree may also be reflected in words which the Hasidim spoke two years later, when Alcimus approached with the army of Demetrius. Jerusalem was under the control of Judas Maccabeus, but "the lawless and ungodly men of Israel," led by Alcimus, "who wanted to be high priest,"⁸⁰ induced Demetrius to send Bacchides with an army against Jerusalem (1 Macc. 7:1-11). "A priest of the line of Aaron has come with the army, and he will not harm us," said the Hasidim (verse 13).⁸¹

⁷⁹ 2 Macc. 4:50. His deeds followed him, however, and in 163 B.C. Antiochus Eupator, with whom Menelaus had allied himself, ordered him put to death (2 Macc. 13:1-8).

⁸⁰ Alcimus was a descendant of Aaron but not of the high priestly line; see Westminster Dictionary, p. 246.

⁸¹ Our emphases added. They turned out to be sadly mistaken, see vs. 16-18.

Thus Alcimus was "placed in charge of the country" and given a force to help him (1 Macc. 7:20). He wrought "great damage in Israel" (verse 22). He held the high priesthood for about three years⁸² and suffered a stroke and died in 159 B.C. (1 Macc. 9:54-57). The office of high priest was then vacant for about 7 years.⁸³

After the death of Judas Maccabeus, the leadership of the Jewish struggle for independence passed to his brother Jonathan. During the consolidation of the Hasmonaean rule, Jonathan, who was of the priestly family of Joarib,⁸⁴ accepted appointment as high priest from Alexander Epiphanes (Alexander Balas), a contender for the Syrian crown (1 Macc. 10:18-20).

So Jonathan put on the holy garments in the seventh month of the one hundred and sixtieth year,⁸⁵ at the feast of tabernacles . . . (1 Macc. 10:21).

Thus began the period in which the Hasmonaean rulers claimed for themselves the title of high priest.⁸⁶ Jonathan's successor, his brother Simon, also claimed it⁸⁷ and was confirmed in that office by the will of

⁸²Josephus, Ant., XII, 9, 7; XX, 10, 1.

⁸³159-152 B.C. Ibid., XX, 10, 1.

⁸⁴1 Macc. 2:1, 5; cf. (Jehoiarib) 1 Chr. 24:7 and Neh. 12:6, 7, 19. This was not a family of the high priestly line of Zadok.

⁸⁵Of the Greeks, i.e., 152 B.C.

⁸⁶See the opening of the letter to the Spartans, 1 Macc. 12:6; "Jonathan the high priest, the senate of the nation, the priests, and the rest of the Jewish people to their brethren the Spartans, greeting."

⁸⁷1 Macc. 13:42: ". . . and the people began to write in their documents and contracts, 'In the first year of Simon the great high priest and commander and leader of the Jews'" (ἀρχιερέως μεγάλου καὶ στρατηγού καὶ ἡγουμένου Ἰουδαίων). Cf. 1 Macc. 14:17, 20, and 15:2; "the priest and ethnarch."

the people (1 Macc. 14:35), by king Demetrius (verse 38), and by an official action of "the Jews and their priests" (verses 41-49).⁸⁸ Simon's son John (Hyrcanus) became high priest after his father's death, and his deeds were recorded in "the chronicles of his highpriesthood" (1 Macc. 16:23-24). Coins struck by John Hyrcanus (and his successors) testify further to the Hasmonaean claim to the high priesthood, and to their hand-in-glove relationship with "the council:"⁸⁹

יְהוֹנָתָן בֶּן־חֲנַנִּי
הַגָּדוֹל מִכָּל־הַכֹּהֲנִים

Josephus even concluded that in John Hyrcanus were combined the offices of prophet, priest and king:⁹⁰

He was esteemed by God worthy of the three privileges--the government of his nation, the dignity of the high priesthood, and prophecy.

With John Hyrcanus ruling the people as high priest our review of the historical information in the books of the Maccabees-- and in the Old

⁸⁸ See McCullough, History and Literature, p. 127. According to Rivkin, Revolution, pp. 217-221, this official legitimizing of a non-Zadokite as high priest was contrary to the written Pentateuchal law and was thus "an audacious revolutionary act." It was carried through by the Pharisees in a great assembly. From this point in history dates the split between the Sadducees (Zadokites, adherents of the written law only) and the Pharisees (adherents of the two-fold, written and oral, system of law).

⁸⁹ See Emil Schürer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135), a new English version rev. and ed. by G. Vermes and F. Millar et al., vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, Ltd., 1973), p. 603. On pp. 603-5 examples of coins from the reigns of Judas Aristobulus I, Alexander Jannaeus, John Hyrcanus II and Mattathias Antigonus are given.

⁹⁰ Ant., XIII, 10, 7. Unless otherwise indicated, translations of Josephus are from William Whiston, Josephus Complete Works (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1960).

Testament apocrypha—comes to a close.⁹¹ But there is yet one important passage to describe. It is a scene which gives indirect witness to how its anonymous author thought about the events he reported. The scene is in 1 Macc. 2:1-28, the incident which touched off the Maccabean revolt. Mattathias, the priest, and his sons were in the assembly at Modein, where the king's officers were enforcing the law requiring everyone to offer sacrifice at the heathen altar. Not only did Mattathias defy the officer's order, but when he saw a Jew coming forward in the sight of all to offer the sacrifice

. . . he burned with zeal and his heart was stirred. He gave vent to his righteous anger; he ran and killed him upon the altar. At the same time he killed the king's officer who was forcing them to sacrifice, and he tore down the altar. Thus he burned with zeal for the law, as Phinehas did against Zimri the son of Salu (1 Macc. 2:24-26).

With this narrative account leading to the reference to the incident in Numbers 25, for which Phinehas was rewarded with the promise of the covenant of peace for ever, the author of 1 Maccabees may be implying two things:

(1) The bearing of arms in battle by the people's priestly leaders was justified in such a case as was facing the Hasmonaeans. Phinehas killed the pagan woman whose people were providing the occasion to apostasize and the Israelite man who was giving in to the temptation. Mattathias

⁹¹3 Maccabees 1:1-2:24, a 1st century B.C. reminiscence, recounts how Ptolemy Philopator, attempting to enter the sanctuary of the Jerusalem temple, was prevented from doing so by popular protest and intercessory intervention by the high priest Simon [=Simon I, the Just]. Simon offered an eloquent prayer; Ptomlemy swooned and departed.

4 Maccabees, written in the Diaspora in the Roman period, has no reference to the historical high priesthood nor any hopes about it.

(and his sons) were doing precisely that--out of zeal for the law of the Lord.

(2) Because of this zeal which led to such drastic and courageous action, because they are heirs of Phinehas in this pure zeal for the law of the Lord, the Hasmonaeans may deserve to be considered heirs of Phinehas also with respect to their holding of the high priestly office, by a genealogy "according to zeal," if not according to the flesh.

Whether that be the opinion of the author of 1 Maccabees or not, there certainly were many who would not have agreed. Happy and hopeful after the first victories, they subsequently became disillusioned with the Hasmonaeans, rejected their claims to the priesthood, and harbored a hope for the restoration of a legitimate high priest and leader for God's purified people. For the texts which testify of their hope we turn now to the pseudepigraphic writings of sectarian intertestamental Judaism.

Priestly Messianism in the Testaments of the
Twelve Patriarchs and Related Writings

The most important source, for our topic, among the pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament is also the most problematic: The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.⁹² The last thirty years have seen renewed critical study of these documents and an attack on R. H. Charles' widely-accepted

⁹²They are preserved in about 14 Greek MSS, an (5th-6th cent. A.D.) Armenian version, Latin and modern versions; see M. de Jonge, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs A Critical Edition of the Greek Text, Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece, I/II (Leiden: Brill, 1978), XI-XXXII. Hebrew and Aramaic fragments of very similar materials have been found in the Cairo geniza and among the writings of Qumran; see P. Kahle, ed., Cairo Genizah, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1959), p. 27, and Milik, Ten Years, pp. 34-5.

view of their origins. Charles' critical text⁹³ regularly preferred the shorter text-form as more nearly original; his translation marked with brackets all suspected Christian interpolations. He considered the Testaments an essentially Jewish composition. The basic text was a pro-Hasmonaean document from the later years of John Hyrcanus. Jewish interpolations were subsequently inserted by opponents of the Hasmonaeans' claim. (These are evident in the passages designed to revive the hope for a messiah from Judah.) Finally, Christian interpolations were inserted in the time of the early church.

The critical evaluation of Charles' position culminated in the counter-proposals of M. de Jonge. He challenged the idea that a simple removal of Christian interpolations from the present manuscripts could yield the true form of an earlier Jewish writing. Rather, he said, the Testaments are a Christian composition, making use of some older Jewish materials.⁹⁴ De Jonge subsequently modified his views, replying gratefully to criticism from the scholarly community and acknowledging the need to give more weight to the possible Jewish origin of large portions of both the content and the form of the material.⁹⁵ The value of de Jonge's work

⁹³The Greek Versions of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1908); see also The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 2:282-367, and The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Translations of Early Documents, Series 1 (London: SPCK, 1917), pp. vvii-xxiii.

⁹⁴The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Study of Their Text, Composition and Origin (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1953); see also Milik, Ten Years, p. 35.

⁹⁵See "The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the New Testament," Studia Evangelica, I, ed. by K. Aland, Texte und Untersuchungen, 73 (Berlin: Toepelmann, 1959): 546-556; "The Interpretation of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs in Recent Years," in Studies on the

lies neither in his theory of Christian composition nor in his dividing up of the Christian and Jewish traditions, but rather in his demonstration that Charles was not scientific in his preference for the shorter text-types. The Testaments certainly can be used for the study of intertestamental Judaism, but it cannot be blithely assumed that a Jewish document is arrived at by adopting the shorter text-form and excising "Christian interpolations" (as identified by the editor). Graphic is the statement of Morton Smith:⁹⁶

The Testaments' historical value is that not of a landmark, but of a stream bed. . . .
In the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs we have the Christian branch of the stream.

But as the result of numerous confluences and changes of direction, there are strewn on the bed the residue of various traditions from the years 200 B.C. to 200 A.D.: Hellenistic, Hasmonaean, Essene, Pharisaic, and Christian. Aware of the dangers of oversimplification, we shall proceed to present the important passages from this document.⁹⁷

Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, ed. by M. de Jonge, Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha, 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1975): 183-192, and "Christian Influence in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," pp. 193-246 of the same volume.

⁹⁶"Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, The," IDB, 4:578.

⁹⁷Two recent studies have attempted to chart a direction for post-de Jonge study of the Testaments. Jürgen Becker, Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Testamente der Zwölf Patriarchen, Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums, 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1970), made a thorough text- literary- and tradition-critical study and stated a conclusion not too different from Smith's "Ein Grundstock aus der Hand eines Verfassers wurde im Verlauf eines anonymen Wachstumsprozesses u.a. um die Tugen- und Lasterparänese vermehrt. Dieses erweiterte Werk ist endlich in der christlichen Kirche nochmals bearbeitet worden" (p. 3). In text-criticism, Becker calls for eclecticism (pp. 28-9).

H. Dixon Slingerland, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Critical History of Research, Society of Biblical Literature Monograph

The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs purports to be the death-bed testament of each of the sons of Jacob to his respective children. Each testament follows the same pattern, which includes historical allusions to incidents in the lives of the sons of Jacob, visions and (supposed) predictions of the future, and ethical paraenesis to the progeny. Most of the material dealing with priestly messianism is in the visions of the future, but some relevant references are to be found also in the instructional sections.

Typical, both in content and the (apparent) overlaying of Jewish and Christian traditions, is Test. Reuben 6:7-12:⁹⁸

For to Levi God gave the sovereignty and to Judah with him and to me also, and to Dan and Joseph, that we should be for rulers. 8) Therefore I command you to hearken to Levi, because he shall know the law of the Lord, and shall give ordinances for judgment and shall sacrifice for all Israel until the consummation of times, as the anointed High Priest, of whom the Lord spake (ἀρχιερέως Χριστοῦ, ὃν εἶπε Κύριος). 9) I adjure you by the God of heaven to do truth each one unto his neighbour and to entertain love each for his brother. 10) And draw ye near to Levi in humbleness of heart, that ye may receive a blessing from his mouth. 11) For he shall bless Israel and

Series, 21 (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977), surveyed current research and noted the inability of critical approaches to solve the problem of the Testaments' origin (pp. 91-106). He proposed studying them without having the question as to Jewish or Christian origin uppermost in one's mind (p. 107) and taking them in their present form as testifying to both Judaism and Christianity. Slingerland's interest, however, was the theology of the Christian community in which the redaction took place --an interest which his proposed methodology might serve. For the student of intertestamental Judaism to use the Testaments, however, some degree of literacy and/or tradition criticism appears to be indispensable --a fact which Slingerland also acknowledged (p. 108).

⁹⁸Unless otherwise indicated, English translations are from Charles, Testaments (1917); the edition of the Greek text used was that of de Jonge, Testaments (1978). In giving Charles' English version, however, we shall not reproduce his brackets. (In this passage, e.g., he bracketed all the words in verse 7 after "sovereignty.")

Judah, because him hath the Lord chosen to be king over all the nation. 12) And bow down before his see, for on our behalf it will die in wars visible and invisible, and will be among you an eternal king.

There is no reason to question the Jewish origin of verses 7-8. If verses 11b-12 also are Jewish, relating to the Hasmonaean dynasty, the material would also have been amenable to a Christian reinterpretation.

But the most important passage for priestly messianism in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the locus classicus for an eschatological priest, is in Testament Levi 18. Testament of Levi 17 describes seven jubilees (periods of forty-nine or fifty years) of the priesthood, beginning with a great and perfect priesthood (of Aaron). In the fifth, sixth and seventh jubilees, the priesthood is taken hold of by darkness. The reign of evil progresses to a climax: "And in the seventh shall be such pollution as I cannot express before men, for they shall know it who do these things" (Test. Levi 17:8). These priests are taken captive (that is, into the exile of Babylon) and in the fifth week (period of 7 years) of the seventh jubilee they return to their country and renew the house of the Lord (that is, return from exile and rebuild the temple).

And in the seventh week shall come priests, (who are) idolators, adulterers, lovers of money, proud, lawless, lascivious, abusers of children and beasts.⁹⁹

⁹⁹Test. Levi 17:11. Charles, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, II, z. St., says that this refers to the Hellenizing chief priests at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

The author then puts into Levi's mouth the following prophecy:¹⁰⁰

1) And after their punishment shall have come from the Lord, the priesthood shall fail.

2) Then shall the Lord raise up a new priest.

(Τότε ἔγερσῆι Κύριος ἱερέα καινόν).

And to him all the words of the Lord shall be revealed;

And he shall execute a righteous judgement upon the earth for a multitude of days.

3) And his star shall arise in heaven as of a king,
Lighting up the light of knowledge as the sun of the day,
And he shall be magnified in the world.

4) He shall shine forth as the sun on the earth,
And shall remove all darkness from under heaven,
And there shall be peace in all the earth.

5) The heavens shall exult in his days,
And the earth shall be glad,
And the clouds shall rejoice;
And the knowledge of the Lord shall be poured forth upon the earth,
as the water of the seas;¹⁰¹

And the angels of the glory of the presence of the Lord shall be glad in him.

6) The heavens shall be opened,
And from the temple of glory shall come upon him sanctification,
With the Father's voice as from Abraham to Isaac.¹⁰²

7) And the glory of the Most High shall be uttered over him,
And the spirit of understanding and sanctification shall rest upon him in the water.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰Test. Levi 18:1-14. These words are best considered as reflecting either the writer's own view of the messianic fulfillment which had come in the Hasmonaeon dynasty or (more likely) his hope for the fulfillment of God's promised salvation in a true priestly savior yet to come.

¹⁰¹Charles bracketed this entire line; there is no textual warrant for omitting it.

¹⁰²Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, II, z. St. suggests that John Hyrcanus is meant as the fulfillment of these words. He is reported to have received a bath qol in Josephus, *Ant.*, XIII, 10, 3. John Hyrcanus is also considered the fulfillment of Test. Levi 8:11-14, where Charles saw the threefold office apportioned to Levi and v. 14 says "a king shall arise in Judah, and shall establish a new priesthood, after the fashion of the Gentiles."

¹⁰³Charles bracketed the words "in the water" as a Christian interpolation. Greek MS e (11th cent., Mt. Athos) omits them. This same MS also inserts a long passage into this chapter after 18:2.

- 8) For he shall give the majesty of the Lord to His sons in truth for evermore;
 And there shall none succeed him for all generations for ever.
- 9) And in his priesthood the Gentiles shall be multiplied in knowledge upon the earth,
 And enlightened through the grace of the Lord:
 In his priesthood shall sin come to an end,
 And the lawless shall cease to do evil.
 And the just shall rest in him.¹⁰⁴
- (10) And he shall open the gates of paradise,
 And shall remove the threatening sword against Adam.
- 11) And he shall give to the saints to eat from the tree of life,
 And the spirit of holiness shall be on them.
- 12) And Beliar shall be bound by him,
 And he shall give power to His children to tread upon the evil spirits.
- 13) And the Lord shall rejoice in His children,
 And be well pleased in His beloved ones for ever.
- 14) Then shall Abraham and Isaac and Jacob exult,
 And I will be glad.
 And all the saints shall clothe themselves with joy.

Thus the historical failure and punishment of the priesthood as an institution occasioned the hope for the appearing of a new priest. He would have knowledge of the law of the Lord, the spirit of understanding and of sanctification. His work is that of priest and end-time deliverer: to execute righteous judgment, remove darkness, bring an end to sin, open the gates of paradise, bind Beliar, and give power to his children. His time will be a time of joy, of the increase of the knowledge of the Lord among the Gentiles, of grace, of an end to lawlessness--a time of rest.

Testament of Levi, chapter 5, might lead to the conclusion that this priest to come exists now already as a heavenly being, "the angel who intercedeth for Israel" (Test. Levi 5:6; compare Test. Dan 6:2). The angel who so identifies himself, and who serves as the interpreter of the vision there recorded says: "Levi, I have given thee the blessings of

¹⁰⁴ Charles bracketed this entire line. Greek MS e omits it also (see note 103).

the priesthood until I come and sojourn in the midst of Israel" (Test. Levi 5:2).

Other passages in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs show that a royal messiah from Judah is also known, but that the priestly messiah from Levi is apparently considered to be superior to him. According to Test. Issacher 5:7, the Lord will glorify both Levi and Judah; both will receive an inheritance: Levi the priesthood and Judah the kingdom. Other passages speak of the salvation of Israel arising from Judah and Levi:

And there shall arise unto you from the tribe of Judah and of¹⁰⁵ Levi the salvation of the Lord; and he shall make war against Beliar (Test. Dan 5:10; compare Test. Levi 2:11-12).

The saints will be rescued from Beliar and will rest in Eden (Test. Dan 5:11-12). Naphthali urges his descendants to be united "to Levi and to Judah. For through them shall salvation arise unto Israel" (Test. Naph. 8:2; compare Test. Gad 8:1; Test. Jos. 19:11 Armenian). Likewise Simeon tells his sons to obey Levi and Judah, because the salvation of God shall arise from them:

For the Lord shall raise up from Levi as it were a High-Priest, and from Judah as it were a King God and man, He shall save all the Gentiles and the race of Israel (Test. Sim. 7:2).¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Charles bracketed "Judah and of." He argued (Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, II, z. St.) that "tribe" is singular and that therefore originally there was only one name. This must have been Levi, since only Test. Gad 8:1 (corrupt) puts Judah before Levi and only Test. Judah 24:5-6 (an insertion from the first century B.C.) and Test. Naph. 8:2 (corrupt) derive the messiah from Judah. Therefore he deleted "Judah" here as a later insertion.

¹⁰⁶ Charles bracketed the words "God and man" and "the Gentiles and." There is no warrant for this.

Here the expectation of two future figures has clearly been brought side by side.¹⁰⁷

Of these two figures, the messiah from Levi appears to be sovereign over the messiah from Judah. Judah, for example, commands his children to love Levi.

for to me the Lord gave the kingdom, and to him the priesthood, and He set the kingdom beneath the priesthood. To me He gave the things upon the earth; to him the things in the heavens (Test. Jud. 21:2-3).

The Lord chose Levi, not Judah, to draw near to him, to eat of his table, and to offer him first fruits.¹⁰⁸

The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs clearly testify to the hope for a priestly messiah from Levi. There appears no compelling reason to attribute the origin of this tradition to post-Christian times. The idea of a priest to come fits into the picture of the Jewish hopes and beliefs as we have traced them from the Old Testament and into post-exilic times. There are several historical periods into which the ideas embedded in the Testaments could well fit: the time of persecution under the Seleucids and of the Hellenizing high priests Jason, Menelaus,

¹⁰⁷The point of Charles' excisions, of course, is to leave an original Jewish text which featured only one figure.

¹⁰⁸Test. Jud. 21:5; cf. also Test. Reub. 6:7-12, quoted above on p. 50.

We must also mention Test. Judah 24, in which the messiah is called the seed of Judah and a messiah from Levi is not mentioned. The words "from my seed" are lacking in the Armenian version. Charles (Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, II, z. St.) argued that this entire passage is a later interpolation: vs. 1-3 are dependent on Test. Levi 18, and vs. 5-6 are a separate messianic fragment from a later time. Thus he again handled the text arbitrarily, in order to accommodate his theory that an original priestly messianism in the Testaments has been overlaid with the insertions from a subsequent Jewish redactor reviving the hope for a royal messiah from Judah. This is neither necessary nor convincing.

and Alcimus, the time of the seven year vacancy in the high priesthood, or even the time of the reaction to the Jonathan's elevation to the high priesthood. The association of the ideas of the Testaments with those of the Book of Jubilees and their relationship with the Damascus Document and the writings of Qumran support the assigning of the emergence of the Testaments' priestly messianism to the second century B.C., when the historical events occurred which split Judaism into clearly separate parties and sects.

While it contains no "messianic doctrine" per se,¹⁰⁹ the priestly-oriented 2nd century B.C. Book of Jubilees does reflect Jewish hopes and attitudes similar to those found in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Qumran writings.¹¹⁰ As a kind of midrash on Genesis, Jubilees finds opportunity to exalt Judah and Levi far above their brothers, as is clear in the blessings in Jub. 31:12-20: Isaac places Levi on his right hand and Judah on his left.

¹⁰⁹ See James VanderKam, Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees, Harvard Semitic Museum Harvard Semitic Monographs, No. 14 (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977), p. 280, and Gene Davenport, The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees, Studia Post-Biblica, 20 (Leiden: Brill, 1971, p. 71. VanderKam argues that Jub. 31:18, in which Charles (Apocrypha and Pseudopigraphia, II, 61) finds a reference to the messiah, predicts the "Judean descent of the Davidic dynasty" (p. 280). Davenport (p. 65) considers it a probable reference to "Judah as the remaining tribe, in whom the remnants of the tribes find the fulfillment of their destiny." He calls it a "non-eschatological passage" which reflects "eschatological pre-suppositions" (pp. 57-59).

¹¹⁰ S. Tedesche, "Jubilees, Book of," IDB, 2:1002-3, reflects the commonly held position that Jubilees was written under the Hasmonaean hegemony and that the author was a "supporter of the Maccabean pontificate." But VanderKam, Studies, pp. 251-2, argued that the author of Jubilees could not possibly have supported the Maccabean pontificate. He interpreted Jub. 31:15a as alluding to the de-facto leadership role of

He then prophesies, speaking first to Levi:¹¹¹

May the God of all, the Lord of all the ages,
Bless you and your children throughout all the ages.

(14) And may the Lord give you and your seed greatness and great glory, and cause your seed, from among all flesh, to approach him and to serve him in his sanctuary, as the Angels of the Presence and as the holy ones. As they, may the seed of your sons be glorified, made great, sanctified, and may he make them great through all ages.

(15) Judges, princes, and chiefs shall they be
Over all the seed of Jacob.

Their functions will include speaking the Lord's Word, pronouncing his judgments, and blessing his people (verse 15b-d). They are joined to the Lord and share his table, and those who bless them shall be blessed and those who curse them shall, in turn, be cursed (verses 16-17). Then he speaks to Judah:

The Lord give you strength and power
To tread down all who hate you.
Judge you shall be, you and one of your sons,
Over the sons of Jacob.
May your name and the name of your sons go forth
And transverse every land and region (Jub. 31:18).

The Gentiles will tremble before Judah's seed, and in Judah will be found the deliverance of Israel and peace (verses 18-20). Those who

the post-exilic but pre-Maccabean high priests and dated the book after Judas Maccabeus' first victories but before the bestowal of the high priesthood on Jonathan (i.e., between 163/1 and 152 B.C., p. 283). Davenport, Eschatology, discerned three strata in Jubilees and dated the earliest one to a time after the influence of Hellenism and before the Maccabean wars (p. 14); a redactor added Jub. 1:4b-26; 23:14-31; and 50:5 and reworked the intervening materials in early Hasmonaean times (166-160 B.C., p. 15), and a second redactor is responsible for 1:26-28 (and other insertions focusing on the sanctuary) during the reigns of Simon and John Hyrcanus (140-104 B.C., pp. 15-16).

¹¹¹Jub. 31:13-15. This translation is from Davenport, Eschatology, pp. 100-101. He considered verse 14 a prose interjection (cf. p. 60). VanderKam, Studies, p. 248, noted that the Latin version of Jubilees omitted the word here translated as "chiefs."

bless Judah will be blessed, and those who curse him will be rooted out and destroyed from the earth (verse 20).

Thus Jubilees emphasizes the heritage of Levi and Judah (with Levi named first, and blessed on the right hand!) and provides second century B.C. corroboration for the Jews' focusing on the priesthood as the institution through which God will save, teach and bless his people in the coming time of deliverance. The twofold hope for "anointed of the Lord"¹¹² reflected in the post-exilic writings, in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, and in the writings of Qumran has in the Book of Jubilees supporting evidence from the first half of the second century B.C.¹¹³

¹¹²Davenport, Eschatology, p. 58, n. 1, referred to the "generic use of maschiach in the Old Testament" and suggested that the word "messiah," if used, not be capitalized, in order to designate that the Hebrew concept is "functional" and that "its specific content is contextually determined." See also L. Silberman, "The Two 'Messiahs' of the Manual of Discipline," Vetus Testamentum, 5 (1955):81-82.

¹¹³Davenport, Eschatology, p. 60, n. 1, said that while the Qumran writings and Jubilees reflect similar concepts of priestly activity "their identification of the authentic priesthood differs." Jubilees speak of the Levites in general, but the Qumran writings emphasize the Zadok priesthood. But "a Qumran editor could have assumed that the Zadokites were the ones in whom the purity of the Levitical office was preserved." The point of view of the final redaction, the "present edition" of Jubilees, is that "the Temple cult has become so corrupted that it no longer is the authentic cult" (p. 77).

VanderKam, Studies, pp. 258-282, discussed the close relationship (but subtle difference) between Jubilees and the Qumran writings; he suggested that the author of Jubilees was a "proto-Essene" Hasid. The tendency to exalt Levi and Judah is definitely related to the "messianism" of the Qumran writings (p. 280, n. 124).

Many also date most of Book III of the Sibylline Oracles in the second century B.C.¹¹⁴ The outlook of these materials is largely syncretistic and universalistic,¹¹⁵ but they include references to a king who is to come and to the restoration of the temple. According to the careful argumentation of John Nolland, one such passage may fit into the historical situation of the early Maccabean period, namely Sib. Or. III, 265-94, in which the important lines are given at 288-290:¹¹⁶

There is a royal tribe, whose family shall never stumble (φυλή βασιλείας, ἡς γένος ἔσται ἀπταστον): and this in the circuit of times shall have dominion and shall begin to raise up a new shrine of God.

Nolland dated this at a time before the attachment of popular hopes to the Hasmonaeans and so considers the hope expressed to refer to a "messianic figure of the royal tribe" who "would soon come as the eschatological Temple restorer."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ John J. Collins, The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, No. 13 (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1972), p. 33; he would not include lines 350-488. Valentin Nikiprowetsky, La Troisième Sibylle, Études Juives, IX (Paris: Mouton, 1970), pp. 216-7, however, concluded that a date in the first century B.C. is preferable.

¹¹⁵ They testify to the tendency in Egyptian Judaism to find ways to express the Jewish religion in keeping with the Hellenistic culture of its adopted surroundings and to the validity of the attempt to express Jewish beliefs in Hellenistic forms (Collins, Oracles, pp. 53-55).

¹¹⁶ "SIB. OR. III. 265-94, An Early Maccabean Messianic Oracle," Journal of Theological Studies, New Series 30 (1979):158-166. In the historical sketch, the section 265-94 tells the history from the deportation to Babylon up to the restoration of the temple in such a way as to address a second century B.C. situation under the guise of retelling sixth century B.C. events. Parallels to this are seen in Daniel, Jubilees, and, probably, the Song of Azariah.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 165-6. It is thus an important early association of the restoration of the temple with the coming of the messiah (p. 159). It

Messianic Hope of the Damascus Document

In the Damascus Document (CD)¹¹⁸ are passages which speak of the hope of a coming "anointed one" of Aaron (or Aaron and Israel). This is said in the context of a community whose leadership is of the priestly order of the family of Zadok. The passages mentioning a "messiah" (and the forms used) are:

- CD 12:23 Those who follow these statutes in the age of wickedness until the coming of the Messiah of Aaron ([יְמֻד חִשְׁיָא] יְחִשְׁיָא)
 אֲדָרְוֹן)
- CD 14:19 This is the exact statement of the statutes in which [they shall walk until the coming of the Messia]h of Aaron and Israel (יְחִשְׁיָא יְחִשְׁיָא) who will pardon their iniquity.¹¹⁹
 אֲדָרְוֹן וְיִשְׁרָאֵל)
- CD 19: 10-11 These will be saved at the time of visitation, but the rest will be delivered to the sword when the messiah of Aaron and Israel comes (יְחִשְׁיָא יְחִשְׁיָא).¹²⁰
 אֲדָרְוֹן וְיִשְׁרָאֵל)

makes no statement about a priestly messiah, but testifies to the shape of messianic speculations in pre-Hasmonaean times.

¹¹⁸ Unless otherwise noted, our source for the text of CD and the Qumran writings is Eduard Lohse, ed., Die Texte aus Qumran Hebräisch und deutsch (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964). Of the CD he says: it is a pre-Christian document recording the establishment of a community in apocalyptic colors; this community had a strict interpretation of the law. Two MSS were found in the Cairo geniza and fragments have been found at Qumran. Except where noted, English translations are from G. Vermes, ed. and trans., The Dead Sea Scrolls in English, 2nd ed., (Middlesex: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1975).

¹¹⁹ Italicized words in Vermes' translation indicate Scripture quotations or headings in the text. Bracketed letters are reconstructions of missing or unclear portions of the MS text.

¹²⁰ Columns 19 and 20 of CD are from MS B, which Vermes does not translate; the English is ours.

CD 20:1 . . . until the coming of the messiah from Aaron and from Israel
 (יְדָוּד קֹשֵׁיִן מֵאַהֲרֹן וּמֵיִשְׂרָאֵל)¹²¹

The full meaning of these passages is not entirely clear, but they obviously speak of a figure¹²² who shall come in the day of God's eschatological deliverance and judgment. Both the name of Aaron and the priestly leadership of these covenants¹²³ argue for calling this figure a "priestly messiah." Nothing can be concluded, on the basis of the Damascus Document alone, about the qualifications or functions of this anointed figure or about his relationship to any other eschatological figures. Two points, however, can be established about the view of these covenants regarding the priesthood and their community's leadership: 1) priority in the community was given to the priest (CD 13:2-5; 14:3-6), among whom was "the priest who enrolls the congregation;"¹²⁴

¹²¹In CD 2:12 and 6:1 "His (holy) anointed ones" refers to prophets.

¹²²Johann Maier, Die Texte vom Toten Meer, 2 vols. (München/Basel: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1960), 2:44-45, argued for one messianic figure in CD and gave extensive further literature. Charles, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, 11, 795, theorized that "Israel" refers to the figure's paternal ancestry and "Aaron" refers to his maternal ancestry. Herod, an Israelite, and Miriamne, a Hasmonaean and thus a descendant of Aaron, had two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus. Thus this Zadokite community would have supposedly attached its hopes to these two sons. Charles was ingenious, but wrong.

¹²³At least part of whom became the Qumran community (Damascus = a place of exile, cf. CD 7:15.)

¹²⁴וְיָבִיאוּ אֵת אֵלֶיךָ אִישׁ מֵאֶתְּךָ (14:6). His qualifications are given (7-9): between 30 and 60 years old and learned in the book of Meditation ([וְיָבִיאוּ אֵת אֵלֶיךָ]) and in all the judgments of the law. It is assumed that the priestly leadership was of the sons of Zadok. The historical figure Zadok is mentioned in CD 5:5 and the בְּנֵי צַדִּיק in 4:1 (=Ezek. 44:15) and its interpretation, 4:3: "The sons of Zadok are the elect of Israel, the men called by name who shall stand at the end of days. Behold the exact list of their names according to their generations . . ." (CD 4:3-5).

2) a role was also allotted to a lay leader, as CD 7:20 speaks of a (coming) "Prince of the whole congregation" (נְשִׁי כָּל קְהִלַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל), who fulfills the prophecy of Num. 24:17.¹²⁵ Beyond this we can establish nothing more definite without turning to the closely related writings from Qumran for further illustration and corroboration.

The Hope for a Priestly Messiah
in the Writings from Qumran

Similar phrases, along with more material about the eschatological expectations of this community, are to be found among the writings discovered at Qumran.¹²⁶ Thus the Community Rule (1QS) testifies to the hope for a prophet and two anointed persons when it says that the "men of holiness"

shall be ruled by the primitive precepts in which the men of the community were first instructed until there shall come the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel (וְיָבֹאוּ אֵלָיו שְׁנֵי מְשִׁיחֵי אַהֲרֹן וְיִשְׂרָאֵל , 1 QS 9:10-11).

Attached to the same scroll was a short "Rule for all the congregation of Israel in the last days."¹²⁷ Column 2 includes a series of lines which are difficult both to read and to interpret (1QSa 2:12, 14, 20).

Lohse has reconstructed the text of 1QSa 2:11-12 thus: אֵם יוֹלֵד [אֶל]

¹²⁵In which the "star" is interpreted as the "Interpreter of the Law who shall come to Damascus." Neither is identified as an "anointed." A messianic understanding of Num. 24:17 is reflected also in Test. Jud. 24:1; 1QM 11:6; and 4Qtest 9-13.

¹²⁶For a sober presentation of the community's eschatological hopes, see Vermes, Scrolls, pp. 47-52. For another view, see L. H. Silberman, "The Two 'Messiahs' of the Manual of Discipline," Vetus Testamentum, 5 (1955):77-82.

¹²⁷1QSa 1:1. This is commonly called the "Rule of the Congregation" (Lohse: "Die Gemeinschaftsregel"), but Vermes has given it the title "Messianic Rule."

וְהָיָה כִּי יָבִיאוּ אֶת־כָּל־בְּנֵי־אֹהֶל־מִוֶּדָּע וְכָל־בְּנֵי־אֹהֶל־עֵדוּת לְפָנָיו. But Vermes translated the entirety of lines 11-12 as a heading:

[This shall be the ass]embly of the men of renown [called] to the meeting of the Council of the Community when [the Priest-]Messiah shall summon them.

Both Lohse and Yigael Yadin¹²⁸ would agree with Vermes that the messiah of Aaron, the priestly messiah, is meant, as is clear from the following lines:

He shall come [at] the head (יְבוֹיָא אֶת־כָּל־בְּנֵי־אֹהֶל־מִוֶּדָּע וְכָל־בְּנֵי־אֹהֶל־עֵדוּת) of the whole congregation of Israel with all [his brethren, the sons] of Aaron, the Priests, [those called] to the assembly, the men of renown; and they shall sit [before him, each man] in the order of his dignity. And then [the Mess]iah of Israel shall [come] (וְיָבִיאוּ אֶת־כָּל־בְּנֵי־אֹהֶל־מִוֶּדָּע וְכָל־בְּנֵי־אֹהֶל־עֵדוּת לְפָנָיו), and the chiefs of the [clans of Israel] shall sit before him, [each] in the order of his dignity . . . (1QSa 2:12-15).

When all have been gathered and properly seated for the eschatological meal, "the Priest" (אֲדֹנָיִךְ) is to be the first to extend his hand and bless the first fruits of the bread and wine (11. 18-20); "thereafter, the Messiah of Israel (מְשִׁיחַ יִשְׂרָאֵל) shall extend his hand over the bread . . ." ¹²⁹ This scene at the eschatological meal leads to the understanding that the Qumran community expected (in addition to a prophet) two end-time messiahs, the anointed of Aaron, a priestly messiah, to whom is given priority, and the anointed of Israel, a princely messiah. ¹³⁰

¹²⁸Lohse, *Texte*, p. 282. Yigael Yadin, "A Crucial Passage in the Dead Sea Scrolls, IQSa ii, 11-17," *JBL*, 78 (1959):238-241, esp. p. 240.

¹²⁹1QSa 2:20; our emphasis added.

¹³⁰Here is clear what was unclear in the Damascus Document: that there is a second, separate figure. In fact, 4Qpatr. clearly refers to a royal Davidic messiah in line three, where Gen. 39:10 is interpreted as identifying a descendant of David with the true Israelite kingship: ". . .

The duality of leadership in the end-time is also reflected in the War Scrolls (1QM) and (most likely) in the fragments of "Blessings" (1QSb) at the end of the Community Rule scroll.¹³¹ This latter collection appears to have given the words to be used when the "master"

(מִשְׁכֵּי יֵל) blessed:

- 1) all the members of the covenant (column 1),
- 2) (apparently) the chief priest (columns 2-3)
- 3) the sons of Zadok, the priests (columns 3-5), and
- 4) the prince of the congregation (column 5).

In the War Scroll, the prince of the congregation is a leader in the end-time battle,¹³² but (since this is a holy war) it is the high priest, speaking prayers and liturgies, and the priests, giving signals with sacred trumpets, who really direct and send forth the warriors in the

until the Messiah of Righteousness comes, the Branch of David" (אֵל בְּרֵךְ דָּוִד וְיֵשׁוּעַ מִשְׁכֵּי יֵל וְיֵשׁוּעַ מִשְׁכֵּי יֵל). Vermes, *Scrolls*, p. 224, says that this implies "that all non-Davidic rulers, such as the contemporary Hasmonaean priest-kings, occupy the throne unlawfully." The expectation of several figures at the end is also attested by 4Qtest., a collection of Old Testament passages of eschatological significance, which includes Deut. 18:18-19 (prophet); Deut. 33:8-11 (blessing of Levi); and Num. 24:15-17 (scepter out of Israel).

In IQM 11:7 "your anointed ones" (מִשְׁכֵּי יֵל) are the prophets, and in 11QMelch the "Anointed one" is the interpretation of the "messenger" of Is. 52:7 (וְיֵשׁוּעַ מִשְׁכֵּי יֵל, 1. 18).

¹³¹It is not clear whether the descriptions in either of these documents refer to eschatological figures or to historical individuals who held these offices in the community--or to both.

¹³²1QM 5:1; cf. 4Qflor. 1:7-13; 1QSb 5:20-29; 1QpIs, fr. 1.

course of the battle.¹³³ The dominant role clearly belongs to the high priest and to "his brethren," the priests.

Several other passages supply information about the personal qualities and the functions of the priestly messiah. An epithet for "the priests" throughout the Qumran writings is "sons of Zadok."¹³⁴ Although it is recognized that some "sons of Zadok" followed their own counsel and pursued their own inclination "apart from the Council of the Community" (4Qflor 1:17), it is also a safe assumption that the priestly leadership of the Qumran community was of the Zadokite line (compare especially 1QSa 2:1-3). The priestly messiah of the end-time would scarcely be other than a Zadokite. It is also to be assumed that the priestly messiah, who is to interpret and teach the law, will be (like the "Priest who enrolls the congregation," CD 14:6) "learned in all the judgments of the Law."

We have already referred to passages which show the functions of the eschatological priestly messiah to be: 1) to preside at and give the first blessing at the community's eschatological meal (1QSa 2:11-22), and 2) (probably) to offer prayers, give encouragements, and speak blessings during the end-time battle (1QM 15:4; 16:13; 18:5). To these we may add references in passages which ascribe functions to a (or any) priest, functions which we might safely assume were believed to be

¹³³ כּוֹיָדֵן קָרִיאָט, 1QM 2:1; 15:4; 16:13; 18:5; 19:11. For the priests, see, e.g., 1QM 7:15; 8:2. The War Scroll might be properly considered a commentary on or elaboration of the phrase "and he shall make war against Beliar" (Test. Dan 5:10).

¹³⁴ 1QS 5:2, 9; 1QSa 1:2, 24; 2:3; 1QSb 3:22.

fulfilled also by the priestly messiah to come. Thus, in the Blessings (1QSb), the high priest (apparently) is blessed "in righteous judgment" (2:26) and for victory, dominion, and peace (3:3-7, 18-21). And, continuing, the priests are blessed because they have been chosen:

[to inquire] into all His precepts in the midst of His people, and to instruct them as He commanded (1QSb 3:23-24),

to number the saints and to [bless] your people (4:23),

to attend upon the service in the Temple of the Kingdom and decree Destiny (אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהֵי) in company with the Angels of the Presence (4:25-26),

to be holy among His people, and an [eternal] light [to illumine] the world with knowledge and to enlighten the face of the congregation. . . (4:27),

to glorify His name and His holiness . . . (4:28).

And the Habbakuk commentary, interpreting Hab. 1:5, ascribes to "the Priest" the function of interpreting God's Word (given in prophecies) for the end-time:

They, the men of violence and the breakers of the Covenant, will not believe when they hear all that [is to happen to] the final generation from the Priest [in whose heart] God set [understanding] that he might interpret all the words of His servants the Prophets, through whom He foretold all that would happen to His people and [His land] (1QpHab 2:5-10).

The "Interpreter of the Law who is coming to the land of Damascus" (CD 7:18-19; compare 6:5, 7) may also refer to the eschatological priestly messiah.¹³⁵ The priests of the community also have authority to render

¹³⁵ See Milik, Ten Years, p. 127, and his whole discussion of the community's messianism and its significance, pp. 123-128. He claimed that the interpretative function of the priestly messiah grew in importance as the community moved into the 1st century A.D. In the time of the writing of the War Scroll, the messianic king is supposed to have come into greater prominence (p. 127). These words may also refer to the Teacher of Righteousness.

judgments, decisions, "concerning doctrine, property, and justice" (1QS 5:2-3); surely the priestly messiah will have no less authority.

Thus the scope of the functions of the priestly leadership ranged from ceremonial duties (leading in worship, bestowing blessings, presiding at meals) to teaching activities (interpreting prophecy, giving instruction in the law, spreading knowledge), and to practical judicial authority (rendering decisions, giving judgments), and even extended into the area of responsibility for the community's "safety and salvation": the high priest and the priests direct the movements for achieving the victory against their enemies, for their enemies are also the enemies of God.

Survey of Other Jewish Writings

The expectation of a priestly messiah which we have just described was rooted in Old Testament texts but developed in the context of particular historical events. By New Testament times it was essentially a sectarian view. This was the inevitable result, inasmuch as the "parties" and "lines of thought" of Judaism diverged into numerous strands in the course of the conflict with Hellenism.¹³⁶ To make our report complete, we shall here give a brief account of the handling of the question of the high priesthood in various other branches of the Jewish stream before and during the New Testament period; thus we shall also demonstrate their non-involvement in priestly messianism.

¹³⁶ Martin Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period, trans. by J. Bowden, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 1:252.

Josephus, servant of God (Bell., III, 8, 3), descendant of the Hasmonaeans (Vita, 1), patronized by the Romans (Vita, 75-76), an "historian for the ages" and "propogandist for his own times,"¹³⁷ has preserved much information concerning the high priesthood throughout Jewish history.¹³⁸ A typical summary passage is in Antiquitates book XX, chapter 10, in which Josephus, the historian, gives a summary enumeration of all the high priests.¹³⁹

Josephus, priest and Pharisee, commander-in-chief of Galilee (66-67 A.D.), and captive of the Romans, held firmly to the hope of a glorious future for Israel;¹⁴⁰ but he repudiated the kind of zealous nationalism which continued the rebellion against Rome.¹⁴¹ From his career and from his reports, it is to be deduced that he himself held to

¹³⁷William Farmer, Maccabees, Zealots, and Josephus An Inquiry into Jewish Nationalism in the Greco-Roman Period (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 22.

¹³⁸In part he simply repeats Old Testament information, but for the intertestamental and Roman periods he preserves much valuable information from various other sources.

¹³⁹From Moses to Solomon's temple: thirteen; from Solomon's temple until its destruction: eighteen; from the restoration to Antiochus Eupator: fifteen; Jacimus and the Hasmonaeans: nine; from Herod's time to the destruction of the city: twenty-eight (appointed by Herod and the Romans from no eminent families).

¹⁴⁰A. Schlatter, Die Theologie des Judentums nach dem Bericht des Josefus, Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie, series 2, vol. 26 (Gutersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1932), pp. 252-63; Marinus de Jonge, "Josephus und die Zukunftserwartungen seines Volkes," Josephus-Studien Untersuchungen zu Josephus, dem antiken Judentum und dem Neuen Testament, Otto Michel zum 70. Geburtstag gewidmet, ed. by O. Betz, K. Haacker, and M. Hengel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974), p. 212.

¹⁴¹Farmer, Maccabees, p. 22; de Jong, "Josephus," pp. 216-218.

no specifically "messianic" belief; the eschatological element in his hope was "concealed if not completely absent."¹⁴² While his historical reports reflect the hopes of others (hopes which led to action¹⁴³) he himself does not endorse them, counseling repentance instead. Perhaps it is fair to say that the true Josephus was Josephus the Pharisee, for whom the law was the perfect divine gift entrusted to the Jews, specifically to the priests as its preservers and teachers.¹⁴⁴ Personally, he, like Philo, represents a far different accommodation to conditions in Roman times from that which is represented by those among whom the hope for a priestly messiah flourished.¹⁴⁵

The same is true of Philo, perhaps even more so!¹⁴⁶ This loyal Jew of Alexandria absorbed the Greek philosophical tradition to the

¹⁴²Hengel, Judaism, 1:254; cf. Schlatter, Theologie des Judentums, pp. 258-9. M. de Jonge, "Josephus," p. 216, refers to it as "Messianismus ohne Messias." See also F. J. Foakes-Jackson, Josephus and the Jews The Religion and History of the Jews as Explained by Flavius Josephus (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1930), p. 33.

¹⁴³E. g., Bell., VI, 2, 1; de Jonge, "Josephus," p. 212.

¹⁴⁴E.g., Contra Apion, II, 15-42; Schlatter, Theologie des Judentums, pp. 253-4; Foakes-Jackson, Josephus, p. 33; Samuel Sandmel, Judaism and Christian Beginnings (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 267-277.

¹⁴⁵Interesting and illustrative is Josephus' report of how the "Zealots" chose (by lot) a new high priest from the legitimate clan in 67 A.D. (Bell., IV, 3, 7-8). They may have done this in order to install a Zadokite as high priest (de Jonge, "Josephus," p. 214), but Josephus roundly condemns the action.

¹⁴⁶See Hengel, Judaism, p. 254.

maximum.¹⁴⁷ He was an interpreter of the inspired Scripture of the Old Testament who found in the text an allegory of the human soul in its relationship to God.¹⁴⁸ Without denying the historicity of the Biblical characters or narratives, he sought, through allegory, to attain to their "underlying meaning" (*ὑπόνοια*);¹⁴⁹ he defined and delineated this in terms of the categories of Greek philosophy.¹⁵⁰ Philo, like Josephus, held to the superiority of the Jewish religious tradition.¹⁵¹ Philo, like Josephus, held no eschatological hope of the imminent advent of a messiah.¹⁵² But in Philo's case, this was due largely to his universalistic re-interpretation of Judaism in harmony with Greek philosophy.

As regards the historical institution of the high priesthood, Philo gives every indication of accepting the high priests as historical individuals who really did what is described in the Old Testament.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁷ Sandmel, Judaism, pp. 280, 300. Cf. H. Wolfson, Philo Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, second printing, rev., 2 vols., (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1948), 1:86.

¹⁴⁸ See F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, trans., Philo with an English Translation, 11 vols., The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1949), 1:xii-xvi; Sandmel, Judaism, pp. 282-4.

¹⁴⁹ Wolfson, Philo, 1:115, 124-6; but see the restrictions on accepting the literal meaning, pp. 116-124.

¹⁵⁰ See Sandmel, Judaism, p. 284.

¹⁵¹ I.e., the Law of Moses. See, Mos. II, 1-20; Wolfson, Philo, 2:189-192.

¹⁵² See Sandmel, Judaism, pp. 299-300. But he did speak of the promises of the messianic age, to be brought in by repentance, Wolfson, Philo, 2:407-419.

¹⁵³ E.g., Mos. I, 301, 304; II, 3, 31; Leg. ad Gaium 278 (kingship is considered inferior to priesthood), 307.

But the underlying meaning of the high priestly figure can sometimes lead far afield.¹⁵⁴ The tenor of his interpretation can be illustrated by quoting this aside in Philo's discussion of Gen. 31:10:¹⁵⁵

For there are, as is evident, two temples of God: one of them this universe, in which there is also as High Priest His First-born, the divine Word, and the other the rational soul, whose Priest is the real Man (*ὁ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν ἄνθρωπος*); the outward and visible image of whom is he who offers the prayers and sacrifices handed down from our fathers, to whom it has been committed to wear the aforesaid tunic, which is a copy and replica of the whole heaven, the intention of this being that the universe may join with man in the holy rites and man with the universe.

Because of the idea of mediation, the high priestly figure is connected, in Philo's system, to the *λόγος*, the intermediary between the transcendent God and the world in which men's lives are lived. Philo's system of philosophical re-interpretation of Judaism has no connection with the priestly messianism of other sectarian groups. Even though he lived in a time of political and messianic ferment (ca. 20 B.C. to after 40 A.D.), Philo made little mention of the significant events in Judaea during his time. He was loyal to his people and his tradition, but his understanding of the true Jewish religiosity was not tied to events in Palestine nor to such a socio-religious institution as the historical high priesthood.

¹⁵⁴In Somm. II, 188-9, e.g., Philo's misunderstanding of Lev. 16:17 leads him to speak of the high priest in the holy of holies as being between human and divine in nature; cf. Spec. Leg. I, 11-16. In Fuga 106-8, cf. 116-7, the high priest (at the time of whose death the fugitives may return from the cities of refuge) is interpreted "scientifically" and according to the "hidden meaning." He is "not a man, but a divine Word" (*λέγομεν γὰρ τὸν ἀρχιερέα οὐκ ἄνθρωπον ἀλλὰ λόγον θεῶν εἶναι*). The high priest's garments, then, are the world (110).

¹⁵⁵Somm. I, 215; cf. Migr. Abr. 102. English translations are from Colson and Whitaker, Philo. Sandmel, Judaism, called Philo's *λόγος* "God's ambassador to man, and man's suppliant or advocate to God," p. 298.

A few passages in the writings which contain the teachings of the rabbis¹⁵⁶ refer to an individual who would fulfill perfectly the high priestly office in the days of the messiah.¹⁵⁷ The Biblical source of this expectation appears to have been Zech. 4:14 and 6:13.¹⁵⁸ Thus the Aboth of Rabbi Nathan says:¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶The Targumim, Midrashim, and Mishnah-Talmud contain written distillation of teachings from the Tannaitic age. A good description of this literature is in Sandmel, Judaism, pp. 55-6, 103-128.

¹⁵⁷According to J. Levy, Neuhebräisches und Chaldäisches Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1883), 3 s.v., חַשִּׁיחַ meant "Gesalbte, Geweihte," especially: 1) the high priest, and also 2) the Messiah, the son of David; cf. e.g., Me'ilah 10a, 18a, 19a (the latter two in the phrase "the Prince or the Anointed High Priest"), and חַשִּׁיחַ שְׂעִבְרַי ("Provisional High Priest"), San. 19a.

But Billerbeck, Paul Billerbeck and Hermann Strack, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, 4th ed. (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1965), 1:6, asserted: "in der rabbinischen Literatur ist M. [= חַשִּׁיחַ, חַשִּׁיחַ מְלִיכָה; Aramaic חַשִּׁיחַ מְלִיכָה] durchgängig Titel des endgeschichtlichen Heilskönigs." He also pointed to Ps. Sol. 17:32; 18:5 (p. 11). The rabbis would in no way have spoken of a truly "priestly messiah," nor of a "messiah" who was both priest and king, *ibid.*, 4:452-462.

¹⁵⁸Targ. Zech. 6:13 makes this passage refer to two individuals, Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:462.

¹⁵⁹Aboth RN 34. According to Anthony Saldarini, trans., The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan (Abot de Rabbi Nathan) Version B, Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity, XI (Leiden: Brill, 1975), p. 13, the core of this collection existed before 200 A.D. But Judah Goldin, trans., The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan, Yale Judaica Series, X (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), whose English translation we are quoting, p. xxi, dated its composition not later than the 3rd or 4th century A.D. Only Tannaitic authorities are quoted in it (Saldarini, Fathers, p. 16; Goldin, Fathers, p. xxi). Italics in the quoted text indicate Old Testament Scripture quotations.

Similarly, with the verse, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth (Zech. 4:14). This is a reference to Aaron and the Messiah, but I cannot tell which is the more beloved. However, from the verse, The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou are a priest for ever after the manner of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4), one can tell that the Messianic King is more beloved than the righteous Priest.¹⁶⁰

And tractate Sukkah of the Babylonian Talmud relates:¹⁶¹

And the Lord showed me four craftsmen [Zech. 2:3]. Who are these 'four craftsmen'? R. Hana b. Bizna citing R. Simeon Hāsida replied: The Messiah the son of David, the Messiah the son of Joseph, Elijah and the Righteous Priest.

This כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל, the high priest of the end-time, is also elsewhere identified as Elijah or Melchizedek.¹⁶² The rabbinic hope for a righteous high priest in the days of the messiah is further attested to by the inscription on over-struck coins from the time (132 A.D.) of the revolt led by Simeon bar Kosiba (whom rabbi Akiba designated as the "messiah"): "Simeon Prince of Israel

(שמעון נשיא ישראל) ...

Eleazar the Priest

(אלעזר הכהן)."¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ Goldin, Fathers, p. 207, pointed out that the preceding passage dealt with the י inserted into Judg. 18:30, by which Jonathan the grandson of Moses became the grandson of Manasseh because of his improper behavior. The connection ("similarly") seems to be that the priests, too, because of their improper behavior, lost whatever position of priority they might have had.

¹⁶¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all English quotations of the Babylonian Talmud are from I. Epstein, ed., The Babylonian Talmud, 35 vols. (London: Soncino Press, 1948-52). This passage is Sukkah 52b.

¹⁶² Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:462-5; see below.

¹⁶³ Schürer, History, p. 606, cf. p. 544. J. Jeremias, "Ἡ ἐλιάς," TDNT, 2:933.

But for the rabbis the priest of the end-time was always distinct from and subordinate to the messiah, the son of David.¹⁶⁴

Priestly Characteristics or Functions Associated
with Other End-Time Figures

But we must also take note of how various Jewish writings, roughly contemporary with the New Testament,¹⁶⁵ attribute sacerdotal functions to various end-time figures, namely: Elijah, Melchizedek, Michael, the Son of Man, and Adam. The roots of this association appear to lead from three directions: the angelic intercessor,¹⁶⁶ an ascended man who will return with the messiah,¹⁶⁷ and the primal heavenly man (Urmensch).¹⁶⁸ But our interest is not so much to sift through theories

¹⁶⁴See Aboth RN 34 (quoted above, p. 68). Midr. R. Num. 6:1 sets down the orders of precedence in general: a Sage takes precedence over a King of Israel, and a King takes precedence over a High Priest (1 Kings 1:33).

¹⁶⁵Apocalyptic as well as rabbinic writings dealing with the end-time hope or with heavenly figures involved in the end-time fate of Israel. (Sandmel, Judaism, p. 206, claimed that while the eschatological hope is present in the rabbinic traditions, it is becoming almost peripheral.) The time of the provenance of these ideas (ca. 200 B.C. to 300+ A.D.?) is difficult to determine precisely. Few of the documents themselves are clearly pre-New Testament.

¹⁶⁶See Zech. 1:12; 3:1-5; Job 16:19-21; 19:25; 33:23.

¹⁶⁷See Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:462-5; he theorized that in post-New Testament times (possibly out of polemical motives) the rabbis named one or another (ascended human) figures as the high priest of the end-time.

¹⁶⁸See E. Käsemann, Das wandernde Gottesvolk, FRLANT, N.F., 37 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939), pp. 124-140. He suggested that the later figures also bore the priestly office because they were all regarded in some way as reincarnations of Adam, the Urmensch.

of origin as it is to document the connection of "priestly elements" to specific end-time figures.

Based mostly on Mal. 3:23-24, supported by the note concerning his zeal for the law in 2 Kings 2:11,¹⁶⁹ it was expected that Elijah, who had ascended into heaven, would return in a role of honor at the end-time.¹⁷⁰ Elijah was apparently thought of as having angelic status in heaven, making it possible to interpret him as the "angel of the covenant" (Mal. 3:1), who shall come to prepare the way before the Lord. Some priestly functions were ascribed to him: he is to turn Israel to God (Mal. 3:23-24); he is the heavenly scribe who keeps a record of the deeds of Israel and he restores the tribes of Jacob (Sir. 48:10); and he is the intercessor for Israel.¹⁷¹

Elijah expectations and high priestly hopes apparently grew together. In some places Elijah and the $\text{P } \overline{\text{T}} \overline{\text{X}} \text{] } \overline{\text{S}} \overline{\text{T}} \overline{\text{D}}$ were mentioned side by side.¹⁷² Elsewhere, Elijah himself was declared to be the

¹⁶⁹Cf. 1 Macc. 2:58: "Elijah because of great zeal for the law was taken up into heaven."

¹⁷⁰On the return of Elijah see Targ. Mal. 3:1, 23-24; Sir. 48:9, 12; 49:10; eth. Enoch 90:31; 93:8; 4 Ezra 6:26; Pesiqta 9(76a); Mark 9:11; Matt. 17:10. As an example, Midr. Ps. 43:3 says that, just as two redeemers (Moses and Aaron) were sent to the generation in Egypt, so also in the messianic age two redeemers will be sent. Ps. 43:3 speaks of them: "Send your light and your truth." "Light is the prophet Elijah out of the house of Aaron and "Truth" is the messiah the son of David. Elijah is apparently associated here with Phinehas; light is the symbol of his priesthood (Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:463). For further references see Jeremias, " $\text{P } \overline{\text{T}} \overline{\text{X}} \text{] } \overline{\text{S}} \overline{\text{T}} \overline{\text{D}}$," TDNT, 2:928-941.

¹⁷¹Midr. R. Esther 3:9; Midr. R. Qoh. 4:1; the full range of his heavenly functions is covered in Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:764-798, cf. Jeremias, TDNT, 2:931.

¹⁷²See Sukkah 52b, quoted above, p. 69; pesiqta 51a.

end-time high priest.¹⁷³ Apparently to facilitate this identification, some passages maintained the descent of Elijah from Aaron (or Levi).¹⁷⁴ Elsewhere Elijah was identified with Phinehas.¹⁷⁵ The identification of Elijah as the high priest of the end-time is not made, expressis verbis, in any demonstrably pre-New Testament document. But the New Testament itself reflects a lively expectation of the return of Elijah, possibly in a priestly role.¹⁷⁶ With his priestly parentage, John the Baptist (who could also be mistaken for the messiah, John 1:21) is identified with Elijah.

In Melchizedek, the offices of kingship and priesthood could be seen together, but he was not at all a prominent figure in rabbinic eschatological speculation.¹⁷⁷ Only a few passages speak of Melchizedek

¹⁷³Targ. Jer. I Ex. 40:9-11; Targ. Jer. I Deut. 30:4; Targ. Lam. 4:22; cf. Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:462-4.

¹⁷⁴Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:463, 789-798.

¹⁷⁵Via the "angel of the covenant" (Mal. 3:1), the "covenant of peace" (Num. 25), and the priestly covenant discussed in Mal. 2. Cf. Targ. Jer. Ex. 6:18; Midr. R. Num. 25:12; Pirqe R. Eliezer 29. Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:464, found it surprising that Phinehas himself was nowhere named as high priest of the end-time.

¹⁷⁶See, e.g., Matt. 17:10-13; 27: 46-49; Mark 9:11-13. Belief in the return of Elijah before the parousia may also be reflected in Rev. 11:3-13.

¹⁷⁷Most interpretations of Gen. 14 emphasized not the mysterious figure of Melchizedek but rather the greatness of what Abraham received: specifically, the priesthood. Melchizedek was considered a link in a chain, passing the priesthood on from Noah to Shem (to Melchizedek) to Abraham to Aaron. Rabbinic interpreters noted from Genesis 11 that Shem outlived Abraham and identified Melchizedek as Shem (with a new name or title): Mishna, Ned. 32b; Targ. Jer. I and II Gen. 14:8; see Fred Horton, The Melchizedek Tradition, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, XXX (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 114-20.

as the one who will appear at the end-time in the role of the high priest. Aboth of Rabbi Nathan 34 (quoted above, page 69) implies that Melchizedek is the $\text{P}^{\text{ר}}\text{ט}^{\text{ל}}\text{ך} \text{J}^{\text{ש}}\text{ל}^{\text{ל}}\text{ד}$ in its use of Ps. 110:4,¹⁷⁸ and in Midr. R. Cant. 2:13 no. 4 the four craftsmen of Zech. 2:3 are named: Elijah, the messiah, Melchizedek, and the priest anointed for war.¹⁷⁹

Josephus' interpretation of Genesis 14 was also really more interested in Abraham than in Melchizedek,¹⁸⁰ but Philo speculated on the supra-mundane meaning behind the historical figure of Melchizedek: Melchizedek represented the $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma \nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ and the $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ (LA III, 79-82; compare Abr. 235-6) and the self-taught knowledge of God (Congr. 99). His priesthood was unique and without antecedents.¹⁸¹

Among the writings found at Qumran, the Genesis Apocryphon offers a fairly literal Aramaic translation of Gen. 14:18-20¹⁸² which attaches

Concerning the interpretation of Ps. 110, see Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:452-465. There is no trace of a messianic interpretation in the rabbinic sources until the second half of the 3rd century A.D., and then it is applied more to the time than to the person of the messiah.

¹⁷⁸Billerbeck, Kommentar, 4:464, explained that the words of Ps. 110:4 are here taken to mean that the messiah is a prince over Melchizedek and therefore is more beloved than the $\text{P}^{\text{ר}}\text{ט}^{\text{ל}}\text{ך} \text{J}^{\text{ש}}\text{ל}^{\text{ל}}\text{ד}$; hence Melchizedek is the $\text{P}^{\text{ר}}\text{ט}^{\text{ל}}\text{ך} \text{J}^{\text{ש}}\text{ל}^{\text{ל}}\text{ד}$.

¹⁷⁹Horton, Melchizedek, pp. 124-30, analyzed these passages and Bab. Talmud Sukkah 52b and determined that the identification of Melchizedek as the priest of the end-time was a later development, but not an anti-Christian polemic.

¹⁸⁰Ant., I, 10, 1-2; Bell., VI, 10, 1. Horton, Melchizedek, pp. 82-3; there is no attempt to relate the Aaronic priesthood to Melchizedek.

¹⁸¹See Horton, Melchizedek, pp. 54-60, esp. p. 59.

¹⁸²Gen. Apocryphon 22:14-17; see Horton, Melchizedek, pp. 61-64.

no eschatological significance to Melchizedek. But the situation is different in the fragments labelled 11QMelch.¹⁸³ There Melchizedek appears as a heavenly being (מִלְכִּיזֶדֶק, 1. 10) who will appear in the "year of his good favor" (שָׁנַת דְּרַצוֹן לְמַלְכֵי צְדָקָה, 1. 9). He will make atonement for the sons of light (1, 8) and execute judgment against Belial and those of his lot (בְּלִיַּל וְעַל... רִיבֵי אֲוֵרָה לֵן, 11. 12, 13). An anointed prophet (the מָבֵרֶשֶׁת of Is. 52:7) announces his reign (11. 16-19). Horton concludes:¹⁸⁴

We have just enough of the original document to tell that the author considered Melchizedek to be a superior being of some sort who will appear at the end of days to bring atonement for the sons of light and who is the direct opponent of Belial. We do not have enough of the document left to satisfy our curiosity about how the Melchizedek of Gen. xiv and Ps. cx could become such a figure or even to say (apart from the conjectured reading of line 5) that the Melchizedek of the 11QMelchizedek and the Melchizedek of Gen. xiv and Ps. cx were considered by the author to be one and the same.

11QMelchizedek introduces features new to the eschatological speculations of Qumran, as it makes Melchizedek into a heavenly being. In this, the closest point of contact among the other writings from Qumran may be the figure of Michael in the War Scroll.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³Text in A. S. Van der Woude, "Melchisedek als himmlische Erlösergestalt in den neugefundenen eschatologischen Midraschim aus Qumran Höhle XI," *Oudtestamentische Studien*, 14 (1965):354-73, revised in M. de Jonge and A. S. Van der Woude, "11QMelchizedek and the New Testament," *NTS*, 12 (1965-6):301-26; English translation in Vermes, *Scrolls*, pp. 265-8, and Horton, *Melchizedek*, pp. 67-9. Paleographic evidence suggests a date around 50 A.D. (Horton, pp. 73, 82). The assigned title should not mislead us to assume that the entire document was originally a treatise on Melchizedek; from the extant portion, it appears to be a midrash pesher on eschatological texts.

¹⁸⁴*Melchizedek*, pp. 79-80.

¹⁸⁵Michael is the Prince of Light and the opponent of Belial in 1QM 13:9-10; 17:5-9; cf. Horton, *Melchizedek*, p. 81. Horton (pp. 168-70) also asserted that there is no direct connection of 11QMelch to Hebrews. Nonetheless, for some, the Melchizedek materials in Hebrews (esp. Heb.

The Old Testament had described angels serving at the throne of God (Is. 6:1-3) and interceding for people on earth (Zech. 1:12; 3:1-5; Job 33:23; compare 19:25). This motif was continued in post-Old Testament writings.¹⁸⁶ Specifically and especially, the archangel Michael came to be named as Israel's patron,¹⁸⁷ her helper as a heavenly intercessor¹⁸⁸ and a heavenly as well as an earthly warrior.¹⁸⁹ But the intercessory activity of this angelic helper of God's people is not represented as a specifically sacerdotal function. He mediates, but as a patron at court, a champion of Israel's cause, not as a priest.

Dan. 7:13 speaks of one "like a son of man," a figure which is taken up and described further in the Ethiopic version of the Book of

7:2-3) are also evidence of the existence of some form of pre-Christian eschatological Melchizedek speculation, cf. Käsemann, Gottesvolk, pp. 130, 134; Gottfried Wuttke, Melchisedech, der Priesterkönig von Salem, Beiheft zur ZNW, V (Berlin: Alfred Topelmann, 1927), pp. 6-13. Certain fathers of the Church also noted the existence of "Melchizedekians" who honored Melchizedek over Christ (see Wuttke, pp. 27-37; Horton, pp. 90-101).

¹⁸⁶E. g., Test. Levi 5:6; Test. Dan 6:2; Jub. chs. 17-18; Rev. 8:3-4. See Otto Betz, Der Paraklet Fürsprecher im häretischen Spätjudentums, im Johannes-Evangelium und in neu gefundenen gnostischen Schriften, Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentums, II (Leiden: Brill, 1963), pp. 60-64.

¹⁸⁷Dan. 12:1; eth. Enoch 20:5.

¹⁸⁸Eth. Enoch 68:2-3; Asc. Is. 9:23 (where he is also the heavenly recording angel, cf. Dan. 12:1); Pesiqta R. 44; cf. Billerbeck, Kommentar, 2:97; 3:532; and Th. Gaster, "Michael," IDB, 3:373, who reported a fragment from Qumran with the words: "Words of the book which Michael rehearsed among the angels."

¹⁸⁹Dan. 10:13, 21; 1QM 17:5-9 (cf. 9:14-16; 13:9-10); eth. Enoch 10:11; Midr. R. Ex. 18:5; Rev. 12:7-9.

Enoch.¹⁹⁰ He is a heavenly being who reveals hidden treasures, will defeat the persecutors of God's people, support the righteous and be a light to the Gentiles. After his ascension into heaven, Enoch also became such a heavenly figure, and in eth. Enoch 71:14-17 it appears that Enoch himself has become the heavenly Son of Man. Enoch is also the heavenly scribe.¹⁹¹ In later texts he is portrayed in intercessory roles.¹⁹² Thus Enoch and the Son of Man are closely related heavenly figures in apocalyptic works. To them are ascribed some of the functions associated with angelic intercessors.

In some syncretistic traditions of Judaism, there appears the influence of a general conception of the primal man (Urmensch) as the ideal man and a type of the redeemer.¹⁹³ The glorious state of Adam before the fall is magnified in works such as the Slavonic version of the Book of Enoch and the Vita Adae et Evae.¹⁹⁴ Part of this glorification of Adam was the ascription of the priesthood to him. Before the tabernacle was erected, the first-born performed the priestly services;

¹⁹⁰ R. H. Charles, trans., The Book of Enoch, Translations of Early Documents, Series I (London: S.P.C.K., 1966), p. xiv, dated the Similitudes (chs. 37-71) ca. 105-64 B.C.

¹⁹¹ Eth. Enoch 12:3-4; 15:1; 89:70-71; Jub. 4:23; slav. Enoch 64:5.

¹⁹² See Hans Windisch, Der Hebräerbrief, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, XIV, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1931), p. 71: the references are to the Slavonic Book of Enoch and the pseudo-Clementine Homilies and Recognitions.

¹⁹³ Joachim Jeremias, "Ἰαδὰίμ," TDNT, 1:142-3.

¹⁹⁴ Slav. Enoch 31:2-3; Vita Adae et Evae, 13-14.

hence Adam, as the first-born of the world, took on the priestly garment (Gen. 3:21), which is of one piece.¹⁹⁵

Another kind of Adam speculation can be noted in Philo. Interpreting Genesis 1 and 2, Philo taught a two-fold creation of the *κόσμος νοητός* and the *κόσμος αἰσθητός*. Corresponding to these, there are two Adams. The first Adam, of the noetic world, is the "heavenly man" (Opif. 69-71, 134) and is also identified with the *λόγος* (Conf. 146), the chief mediator between God and the material world.¹⁹⁶

The Historical Development of Priestly Messianism

Having now completed a survey of the pertinent texts and gathered data from them, we shall now sketch the development of the claims and hopes concerning the anointed high priest/priestly messiah against the background of the history of the Jews.

The Pentateuch reports the special designation of Levi as the priestly tribe and the appointment of Aaron and his sons as chief priest and priests, respectively, in the wilderness.¹⁹⁷ In earlier times, heads of families performed priestly functions, and Moses incorporated into

¹⁹⁵ See Käsemann, Gottesvolk, pp. 124-131; every subsequent high priest then bears the office as a reincarnation of Adam, then, according to his reconstruction of the tradition.

¹⁹⁶ See further: LA III, 29; Congr. 99; LA I, 31-2; Vita Cont. 7.

¹⁹⁷ It is appropriate to begin such a sketch of "messianic hopes" by considering the divine institution of the sacred office, the failures of those who held it, and the threats and promises made regarding it. The historical high priest (and king and prophet) and the eschatological priest (and king and prophet) are agents ("anointed") through whom God intends to save, lead and bless his people. Such an approach is exemplified by Joachim Becker, Messiaserwartung im Alten Testament, Stuttgarter Bibelstudien, 83 (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1977),

himself the roles of all three offices (prophet, priest, and king). But the creation of Israel as a nation, and the construction of the tabernacle and the establishment of the worship centered on it necessitated the designation of specific individuals to care for the holy place and to conduct its worship on behalf of all the people. Aaron and his sons were installed for this function in ceremonies of investiture and anointing. The task and privilege of "coming in and going out before the Lord" was given to Aaron and was promised to his descendants into perpetuity. This promise, a "covenant of peace," was repeated to Aaron's grandson Phinehas, as a reward for his zeal on behalf of the Lord.

As time passed, a gap appeared between the standard of holiness required of the chief priest and the qualifications of the ones who actually held the office.¹⁹⁸ This first appeared in the Old Testament in the days of Eli and his sons and led to the important contrast (1 Sam. 2:27-36) between the present disobedient and unqualified priests and a future righteous priest whom God promised to "raise up." The tension between man's present and God's future was noted in pre-monarchal times! The banishment of Abiathar and installation of Zadok at the time

and, specifically for priestly messianism, by A. Zerafa, "Priestly Messiah."

As regards the Pentateuch, we reject the Graf-Wellhausen tradition of interpretation, which tends to make the texts mean, in historical reality, the exact opposite of what they say.

¹⁹⁸The same gap subsequently appeared, with the passing of time, in regards to the royal office, leading to oracles of judgment against the kings (and "shepherds of the people") and promises of a future legitimate heir to the promises to David concerning his son's reign.

of Solomon represented a fulfillment of that threat and promise. The entire episode could serve as a source of warning or hope in the future.

The defeat of Judah, the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the exile of the leaders of the people were rightly looked upon as God's judgment upon the people as well as the office holders of its institutions. Not only the kingship, but also the institution of the priesthood was abrogated with the destruction of the temple. This judgment, however, was not without the gracious words of a promise of restoration. Restoration included the return of the people to the land, the establishment of the son of David upon the throne, a new day of prosperity for Jerusalem, and also the rebuilding of the temple as well as the fulfillment of God's promises to the "sons of Levi," the "sons of Zadok" (Jer. 33:17-22; Ezekiel, chapters 40-46). These oracles of restoration have the same effect for the priesthood that the royal messianic oracles concerning the "Branch" of David have for the kingship: they establish the hope for "one who is coming" who will fulfill that office according to God's will. He will be the agent of God's care and blessing for his people that God intended him to be. He will be the opposite of the self-serving individuals who carried on their power-struggles from those offices in the pre-exilic times.

The historical references and prophetic visions of Haggai and Zechariah reflect the hope of realizing God's intent in the restored community: that king and high priest should be the "two sons of oil," the two conduits of God's blessings to his people, and that each should function in his own sphere, working harmoniously with the other. This was the intent to which Zerubbabel and Joshua were called, and this was the

prophet Zechariah's proclamation of God's will for those who would wear the two crowns: that peace be maintained between them.

We have only hints of what in fact happened in the Persian period after Zerubbabel and Joshua. On the one hand, the office of chief priest probably began to rise to a role of de facto equality with that of the king (who was no longer called king, but rather "prince" and "governor"). On the other hand, Malachi reflects the inroads of cultic laxity in the priesthood, speaks oracles of judgment, and holds up anew the original high standards of the "covenant of peace" with "Levi." Nehemiah, as governor, wielded authority over compromising chief priests in his time. In Ezra, again, we see one who claimed the title chief priest (through the line of Zadok), and who was clearly a strong and strict leader of the Jewish community. Meager as this information for the Persian period is, it seems safe to conclude that the gap between God's intent and man's performance was still present. The "peace between them" which Zechariah envisioned was not realized.

The post-exilic Jewish community was a "non-conformist" religious group within a political system not of the same religious base. It was challenged by the encounter first with oriental, then with Hellenistic culture. Gradually, the people of the post-exilic community experienced significant changes on several fronts. Politically, the Jewish colony adjusted to being a vassal state within an empire. Yet the hope for independence called for a "messiah" through whom God would restore the glory of the kingdom. Philosophically, the learned of Judaea responded, by rejection or assimilation, to the syncretistic mix of oriental dualism and Greek philosophy which was Hellenism. Ethnically, Jews began to understand

themselves as a people scattered throughout the world but bound to their own tradition of the worship of the one God and devotion to his law. Sociologically, the aristocratic class of priests and "elders of the people" began to emerge as leaders, with input from the scribes, teachers of the law. The high esteem and high calling¹⁹⁹ of the chief priest are reflected in the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach. All of this was developing during the Persian and Ptolemaic periods, for which we have slender evidence. But the stage was being set for the explosion which ended the brief Seleucid domination and for the divergence of "Judaism" into different streams in the ensuing years. Based on Old Testament passages, rooted in historical events involving the high priestly office, an eschatological "priestly messianism" was about to blossom with great intensity.

With the beginning of the Seleucid domination at the opening of the 2nd century B.C., pressures from within and without for Hellenization increased swiftly. The corruption of the times wrapped itself also around the office of high priest (ἀρχιερεύς), which, in the Seleucid system, was also the top political appointment in the province. Gone were the days of the pious Simon II, praised by ben Sirach. Now the office became available for a price; and so Jason could and did obtain it, deposing his brother. Indeed, it was available even to someone not fully qualified genealogically, so long as he had enough money and the right connections: Menelaus (neither Zadokite nor even Aaronide) purchased it. The scandalous gap between God's intent for this sacred office as a channel of blessing and the behavior of the human holders of

¹⁹⁹ E. Rivkin, Revolution, p. 191, referred to a "hierocratic society" under "Aaronide hegemony."

the earthly institution was again most apparent; and the gap was widening. At the same time, the enforced Hellenization and intense persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes fanned Jewish hopes for God's intervention on behalf of his people. As times became worse, the expectation of the imminent divine action became even more keen. The hope that God would keep his promise to reestablish, guide and bless his people through his chosen agents (anointed) would feature the high priest (the de facto leader of the community in recent times) as a prominent if not predominant figure. It is in this historical context that the Book of Jubilees and the earliest form of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs belong.²⁰⁰ Persecution by a foreign king threatened to end the Jewish religion and so the people "Israel." Mindful both of the Old Testament promises and the de facto political importance of the high priest, Jewish religious leaders expressed their hope for an imminent divine intervention and for salvation through the sending of a "new priest" (Testament of Levi 18).²⁰¹ With the office of the high priesthood held by the Hellenizing Zadokite Jason, by Alcimus, by the unqualified Menelaus, or being vacant for seven years, the years 174-152 B.C. mark the logical period for the emergence of the hope for a new priest. This is the period

²⁰⁰ Specifically, the passages which speak of salvation arising from Levi and Judah together can be well understood as re-expressions of Zech. 4:14 from the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

²⁰¹ The hope for a prince from Judah continued, but the focus of leadership in the high priesthood led to the elevation of the priest from Levi to equal or superior status.

of the end of the Seleucid domination and of the beginning of the victories of Judas Maccabeus.²⁰²

A turning point came when the brothers of the insurgent Judas attempted to legitimize their position as leader of the people by being designated and installed as ἀρχιερεὺς. No strict Jewish religious leader, zealous for the traditions of the Old Testament, could have recognized as legitimate the appointment of Jonathan by Alexander Ballas. Although a priestly family, the Hasmonaeans were not of the Zadokite line! The situation was in no way improved when, at Jonathan's death, Simon was called, acclaimed and installed as high priest by action of the council in Jerusalem (1 Maccabees 14). Jonathan, Simon, and (until 104 B.C.) John Hyrcanus enjoyed the support of the (Hasidim-)Pharisees, but this is no doubt the period during which the Essenes broke away from those Hasidim who became the Pharisees and went into the desert under the teacher of righteousness.²⁰³

Pharisaism continued its own development as a political and religious party. It held the greatest influence over the people and made

²⁰²The later portrayal of Mattathias as "Phinehas redivivus" in 1 Macc. 2 may reflect some early hopes that in the Hasmonaeans salvation was arising "from Levi." In the time of Judas Maccabeus, however, it appears the Hasmonaeans were making no claims either to the high priesthood or to the kingship. They were priest warriors, zealous for God; even Simon was installed only "until a trustworthy prophet should arise" (1 Macc. 14:41). They enjoyed great popular support; the religious leaders no doubt granted them their support also, but not without some calls for caution.

²⁰³The "wicked priest" of the Qumran writings was originally Jonathon or Simon.

its peace (or tried to) with the various rulers of the times.²⁰⁴ Its (nomistic) ideal for Israel and its hope for the future developed in such a way as to include no prominent role for an eschatological priestly messiah.²⁰⁵

But among the dissenters who went into the desert, it was different. They repudiated both the legitimacy of the Hasmonaean high priesthood and the compromises which the Pharisees were willing to make for the sake of their twofold system of the law. They constituted themselves as the community of those to be saved, the true Israel, and devoted themselves to the strictest keeping of the law. They had a strong priestly leadership and intended to keep scrupulously all the rules of worship, but with the focus on the entirety of the law rather than on the temple. Both their ordering of their community and their teachings regarding the coming salvation reflected an understanding of the dual aspect of God's blessing and leading his people through its institutional leaders: an anointed from Aaron and from Israel. Thus it was the covenanters of Qumran who continued the kind of hopes expressed in the

²⁰⁴S. Zeitlin maintained that the division of Pharisees and Sadducees dated from the days of Zerubbabel and Joshua, whom each party, respectively, supported; see, e.g., "The Essenes and Messianic Expectations," Solomon Zeitlin's Studies in the Early History of Judaism, 2 vols. (New York: KTAV, 1974), 2:357-61. Zeitlin's student, E. Rivkin, however, documented their emergence from the time of the assumption of the high priesthood by the Hasmonaean, Revolution, pp. 185-90, 211-51. Zeitlin agreed that this was the turning point for the Essene sect, p. 367.

²⁰⁵The "righteous priest" is mentioned rarely and is only a shadowy adjunct to the messiah, the son of David.

Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.²⁰⁶ This group continued its opposition to the Jerusalem high priesthood (and temple calendar) into the Roman period. In their zeal, in their isolation, in their peculiar stream of Hasidic tradition, they ordered their lives and nurtured their hopes for imminent salvation and the coming of a priestly messiah.

In other streams of Judaism during the Roman period eschatological hopes focused on the son of David (Ps. Sol., for example) or other apocalyptic figures (as in Ethiopic Enoch, for example). Eschatological fervor and political activism aimed at independence were subdued in the Realpolitik pursued by Sadducees and Pharisees alike. Rebel activists did not have the immediate or full support, generally, of the religious leaders. But the fact that in both the rebellions (66-70 and 132-5 A.D.) rebel leaders announced a new priest associated with them²⁰⁷ reveals that the thought of a twofold leadership in the day of eschatological salvation was very much alive and not only among the Qumran convenanters.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶The hopes expressed in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Damascus Document, and the writings of Qumran are related, but exactly how is not clear. The find at Qumran included the Damascus Document and fragments of a form of the Testaments of Levi and Naphthali. Yet the specific words used for the eschatological figures changes within these three writings. The hope for a priestly messiah, however, is constant.

²⁰⁷Cf. Josephus, Bell., IV, 3, 7-8, and the coins from the time of Bar Kosiba, Schürer, History, p. 606.

²⁰⁸After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., Rabbinic Judaism emerged as the prevailing conception of the Jewish religion. The focus shifted nearly entirely to the keeping of the Torah.

Jewish apocalyptic literature of the period separated the eschatological salvation-bringer from current historical institutions and events by making him a man from heaven who would descend at the end-time. He might be identified with various heavenly figures of Jewish tradition, and sacerdotal functions may be ascribed to him; but his qualifications and functions had nothing to do with the historical high priesthood or the Old Testament promises about it.

Finally, the encounter of Judaism with Hellenism resulted in the kind of development found in Philo. Here a whole new way of understanding Judaism emerged which did not deny the historicity of earthly institutions such as the high priesthood, but which placed an entirely new meaning upon them. Once again, the question of who presently held or who would in God's future hold the office of high priest was totally irrelevant to this kind of interpretation of Scripture. By New Testament times it was only in the Qumran sect that the tradition of polemic against the Jerusalem high priesthood and the hope for a legitimate anointed from Aaron were linked together as historical raison d'etre and eschatological expectation.²⁰⁹

The Person and Work of the Priestly Messiah

In conclusion, we are now ready to make some summary analytical statements concerning the person and work of the priestly messiah. We have gathered materials from the diverse literature of Judaism and have

²⁰⁹Opposition to the Jerusalem temple cult lived, of course, among the Samaritans, but their eschatological hope focused on a "Restorer," not a new anointed priest.

found priestly messianism as a vital aspect of the eschatology of only one sect at the time of the New Testament. What personal characteristics would they have been looking for, and what would they have expected his specific role and function to be?

What is most clear about the personal qualifications of the one expected to come is that he must be genealogically legitimate: of Levi, of Aaron, and (in the context of the Qumran writings it can be reasonably assumed) of Zadok. To fulfill the Scriptural promises, his proper genealogy must be known or validated.

Beyond this, other personal qualifications are self-understood requirements from at least the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs forward. He must have a perfect knowledge of the law (Torah) of the Lord, and he shall be holy: first in the sense that his sins shall be removed through bestowal of the spirit of sanctification (compare Zechariah 3; Testament of Levi 18), and, secondly, in the sense that his behavior shall be upright. He is to do only what is pleasing in the sight of the Lord.

While the Old Testament emphasized the cultic functions of the high priest at the central place of worship, the hope of intertestamental Judaism merged cultic and community leadership functions, shifting the focus from worship at the sanctuary to the community's special needs. Having left behind the temple and its system of sacrifices, the covenanters who looked for a priestly messiah no longer focused on his role of "drawing near to the Lord" to offer sacrifices to the Lord for all Israel and to burn incense upon the altar of the Lord. But even if he was not to "come in" to the Lord literally to offer sacrifice, he must "come in"

metaphorically, in the sense of having access to the Lord's presence and counsel. For he also was to "go out" (metaphorically) from the Lord to the people, to give ordinances and judgments, to teach the Torah, and to bless the people. The forgiveness of sins was to be proclaimed in his days, which would be a time of restoration and eschatological joy.

In the special context of the hopes of the Qumran community, both the cultic and community leadership functions of the chief priest underwent special adaptation: he was to preside at the community's cultic meal (1QS^a) and also to bless, encourage and direct the forces battling in the final war against the enemy, Beliar (1QM).

The chief priest of the end-time was therefore in fact the supreme leader of the people of God in the age of salvation, predominant over the messiah from Judah (Israel). The ultimate responsibility for the weightiest matters lay in the priest's hands: it would be through him that God would reveal his instruction, including his instruction for the security and victory of his people in the eschatological battle. The chief priest was to be God's main agent in the day of his intervention. Not only would the chief priest direct the war ("make war") against Beliar and rescue the saints from him, but, through his agency, other events of the age of salvation would be accomplished: the Gentiles' knowledge of the Lord would be increased and the gates of paradise opened to the elect of God.

In Jewish apocalypses outside of the Qumran sect, the function of heavenly mediation was also ascribed to various figures, already in heaven now but returning at the end. Although 11QM^{elch} speaks of

Melchizedek as a heavenly figure, the function of heavenly mediation cannot be established as a function of the priestly messiah in the stream of tradition represented by the Qumran community.

CHAPTER III

IS JESUS THE PRIESTLY MESSIAH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT OUTSIDE OF HEBREWS?

We turn now to the New Testament with the question: Was Jesus the priestly messiah? We shall divide our investigation into two separate chapters: priestly messianism in the New Testament outside of Hebrews (Chapter II), and the teaching of Hebrews on the priesthood of Jesus (Chapter IV). The goal of this chapter is to present and evaluate the evidence that the New Testament outside of Hebrews proclaims Jesus as the answer to Judaism's hopes for a priestly messiah.¹

¹Even if our evaluations and conclusions do not accept certain evidence or claims, we shall have to act as the "devil's advocate" in reporting all possible lines of argumentation.

At the outset we must mention also that some might see indirect evidence for an application of the title of high priest to Jesus in the New Testament outside of Hebrews in the manner in which Hebrews itself introduces the titles of "priest" and "high priest." It might be argued that the high priestly Christology of Hebrews was not a creation of the author but lay rooted in the Christian tradition before him. Since form critical studies have suggested that Hebrews depended on traditional materials in other passages (e.g. 1:1-3; 4:12-13), is it not also likely that in its designation of Jesus as high priest Hebrews drew on an earlier Christian tradition? This could be supported by appealing to several prior conclusions, e.g:

a) The high priestly title is first applied to Jesus in Hebrews (2:17; 3:1; 4:15) in an "off-hand" manner. There is not sufficient preparation or explanation of it; it appears that the author assumed that his readers already knew of Jesus as high priest. His point would have been to describe Jesus' priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek. See Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Hebraer, KEKNT, 13, 12th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), p. 164, and Wolfgang Nauck, "Zum

The Synoptic Gospels

Priestly messianism has never been considered a prominent theme in the Christology of the Synoptic Gospels. Nevertheless Gerhard Friedrich has set forth numerous observations regarding the expectation of a

Aufbau des Hebräerbriefes," Judentum Urchristentum Kirche, Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias, Beiheft zur ZNW, 26 (1960), 2nd ed. (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1964), p. 203-5.

b) The high priest title may have been a part of the "confession" (Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 10:23) which the author and readers shared (3:1: ὁ ἀπόστολος καὶ ἀρχιερεὺς τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν) and which the author used as a basis of his encouragements. See Otto Michel,

"ὁμολογία," TDNT, 5:215; Michel, Hebräer, pp. 172-5; and Günther Bornkamm, "Das Bekenntnis im Hebräerbrief," Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum, Gesammelte Aufsätze, 2, Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie, 28 (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1959), pp. 188-203.

c) First Clement (36:1; 63:1 64:1) also calls Jesus high priest; if it is not dependent on Hebrews for this, it may reflect a church tradition and thus testify to the existence of a Christian tradition outside of Hebrews which identified Jesus as a priest. Joseph Fisher, ed. and trans., Die apostolischen Väter, Schriften des Urchristentums, 1 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1956), p. 8, said that the dependence of 1 Clement on Hebrews cannot be conclusively established. But Donald A. Hagner, The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome, Supplements to Novum Testamentum, 34 (Leiden: Brill, 1973), asserted 1 Clement's acquaintance with and dependence on Hebrews (p. 179) and documented that assertion with numerous parallels and allusions (pp. 179-195). Gareth L. Cockerill, "Heb. 1:1-14, 1 Clem. 36:1-6 and the High Priest Title," JBL, 97 (1978):437-440, also argued that the traditional material used in Hebrews 1 and 1 Clement 36 referred to Jesus as *υἱός* but that 1 Clement's association of this traditional material with the *ἀρχιερεὺς* title was based on the argument in Hebrews, which shows that the *υἱός* is also *ἀρχιερεὺς*. On the other hand, Harold Bumpus, The Christological Awareness of Clement of Rome and Its Sources (Cambridge: University Press, 1972), p. 113, concluded that Clement's use of the high priestly title is based on Jewish intertestamental literature and not on Hebrews' victim-priest ideal; the high priest-Christology of 1 Clement fails to convey any atoning theology (p. 122).

The inconclusive nature of such speculations regarding Hebrews' relationship to earlier Christian traditions is clear; nothing can be firmly established regarding the likely existence of a high priest-Christology outside of Hebrews through this line of argumentation. An example of a careful and stimulating attempt to delineate prior tradition from Hebrews'

priestly messiah reflected in the Synoptic Gospels.² Following the lead of such studies, we might find an understanding of Jesus as the priestly messiah reflected in the Synoptic

- 1) use of certain titles for Jesus,
- 2) narratives of specific incidents in Jesus' ministry,
- 3) description of characteristic actions of Jesus, and
- 4) accounts of Jesus' conflict with the Jewish authorities (and especially the role of the temple in that conflict).

One line of argumentation interprets the appellation ὁ ἄγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ (Mark 1:24=Luke 4:34)³ as a reflection of priestly messianism and, working from that interpretation, proposes a similar background for the titles "Son of God" and "Christ."⁴ In Mark 1:24 (=Luke 4:34) the

interpretation and expansion of it is Heinrich Zimmerman, Die Hohepriester Christologie des Hebräerbriefes, Rektoratsrede, Phil. theol. Akademie Paderborn (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1964), pp. 19-25; he also assumed that the high priestly title was applied to Jesus in the Christian tradition before Hebrews, but asserted that Hebrews made the death on the cross the central sacerdotal act of Jesus.

²"Beobachtungen zur messianischen Hohepriestererwartung in den Synoptikern," Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, 53 (1956): 265-311. Reactions to Friedrich's observations can be found in Ferdinand Hahn, Christologische Hoheitstitel, FRLANT, 83, 3rd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), pp. 235-45, and Joachim Gnilka, "Die Erwartung des messianischen Hohenpriesters in den Schriften von Qumran und im Neuen Testament," Revue de Qumran, 2 (1960):395-426. Further materials are in J. Coppens, "Le Messianisme sacerdotale dans les écrits du Nouveau Testament," La Venue du Messie, Recherches Bibliques, 6 (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962), pp. 101-112, and Andre Feuillet, The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers, trans. by M. J. O'Connell (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975), pp. 29-30.

³See also John 6:69; Acts 3:14; 4:27, 30 (Παῖς); Rev. 3:7.

⁴Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 275-6; Feuillet, Priesthood, p. 70; Hahn, Hoheitstitel, pp. 235-238.

demoniac in the synagogue confesses that Jesus is *ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ*. The background of this is not easy to explain; there is no traceable tradition of the use of this phrase as a title for the royal messiah.⁵ The following Marcan summary (Mark 1:34) reports that the demons were not allowed to speak because they recognized him. Recasting Mark 1:34 in the report of the healings at evening, Luke 4:41 adds that the demons cried out "οὐ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ." Then Jesus instructed them that they should not speak, because they knew that he was τὸν Χριστόν. Luke assumed there was no difference in the meaning of *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *ὁ Χριστός*, and *ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ*.⁶

This *Χριστός* who is *ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ* could well be not the royal "annointed" but rather the priestly "anointed one." "Holy" designates something set apart, belonging to the divine sphere, especially for service to God.⁷ Therefore it has a special cultic sense. Holiness was

⁵Rudolf Bultmann, Das Evangelium des Johannes, KEKNT, 2, 10th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoech & Ruprecht, 1964), p. 344.

⁶John 6:69 also records *ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ* in Peter's confession; the parallel in Matt. 16:16 is *ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος*, in Mark 8:29 *ὁ Χριστός*, and in Luke 19:20 τὸν Χριστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ. John also apparently considered *ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ* a messianic title and an appropriate substitute for *ὁ Χριστός* and *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ*. Thus both in Luke and John these three appear to have been considered as somewhat interchangeable terms.

Oscar Cullman, Die Christologie des Neuen Testaments, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1963), p. 292, also pointed out the close relationship between holiness and sonship in John 10:36 (he whom the Father has sanctified and sent claims to be the Son) and in Luke 1:32-35 (the holy child is to be the Son of God).

⁷Cullmann, Christologie, p. 292 said that the title conveyed the unique Herausgenommensein of Jesus out of all the orders of creation,

required especially of the priests in the Old Testament,⁸ and Aaron was the "holy one of the Lord" (Ps. 105:16LXX; compare. Sir. 45:6). Holiness especially was expected in the priestly messiah (Test. Levi 18:6-7). Thus one might hypothesize that *ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ* was an early designation of Jesus as the priestly messiah,⁹ which was later merged with and replaced by the *Χριστός* title. In this context, then, *Χριστός* would also refer to the anointed priest.

Over against this interpretation of the "Holy One of God" we must note that the Codex Vaticanus recension of the Septuagint (interpreting "Nazirite" of the MT and LXX-A recension) applies the phrase also to Samson,¹⁰ and that the question in Mark 1:24 is basically the same as that of 1 Kings 17:18 (*Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί*), where the prophet Elijah is being confronted. Prophets also are called "holy"

but that *ὁ ἅγιος* was not a messianic designation. Bultmann, Johannes, p. 344, also gave it a general meaning: it expressed the fact that Jesus confronts the world as the transcendent one who belongs to God. (But Bultmann also noted the special applicability of the term to the cultic sphere and pointed out certain connections between John 6:62-70 and Jesus' passion; hence "the Holy One of God" in John 6:69 may be looking forward to John 17:9 and may designate the one who has consecrated himself as a sacrifice for the world.)

⁸E.g., Ex. 19:22; 28:36; Lev. 21:15; 22:9; 2 Chr. 5:11; 23:6; 35:3.

⁹Ernst Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Markus, KEKNT, I, 2, 12th ed., edited by Gerhard Sass (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953), z. St., agreed in finding a cultic-priestly background to the phrase; he saw in Jesus priestly motifs of the eschatological Vollender.

¹⁰Judg. 13:7; 16:17 LXX-B. See Wm. Lane, The Gospel According to Mark, NICNT, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), p. 74, n. 117, and Eduard Schweizer, "Er wird ein Nazoräer heissen," Judentum Urchristentum Kirche, Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias, Beiheft zur ZNW, 26 (1960), 2nd ed. (Berlin: Alfred Topelmann, 1964), pp. 90-93.

(for example 2 Kings 4:9; Sap. 11:1), and so it is equally likely that in Mark 1:24 Jesus is portrayed as the end-time charismatic prophet.¹¹ Furthermore, in Acts 4:27, 30, it is the Servant of the Lord (παῦς) who is "holy."

Nonetheless, this connection between ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ on the one hand and ὁ χριστός and ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (compare also Mark 3:11; 5:7) on the other hand has suggested an attempt to explain those latter two titles from the background of priestly messianism.¹² The origin of the Son of God title for Jesus has not been satisfactorily explained from materials which make up the religious background of the New Testament.¹³ If this was a messianic title in Judaism, it could have designated not only the royal messiah, but also the priestly messiah. A father-son relationship between God and the priests was

¹¹Hahn, *Hoheitstitel*, pp. 237-8. According to Eduard Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Markus, Das Neue Testament Deutsch*, 1, 11th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), p. 28, this pericope reflects a very early tradition, in which Jesus was looked upon as a charismatic, grasped by the (Holy) Spirit of God, in whom Israel's long-awaited salvation had come.

¹²Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 279-80

¹³Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. by K. Grobel, 2 vols. (New York: Scribners, 1951, 1955), 1:50, said that although it is unclear whether or not Son of God was already current as a messianic title in Judaism, it is very possible that the New Testament use of it referred originally to the royal messiah. Hahn, *Hoheitstitel*, pp. 328, 332-3, said that it was not directly related to messianism but rather involved a combination of various elements. Cullmann, *Christologie*, pp. 280-1, also expressed the opinion that, although the title was applied to the king in Judaism, it was not a messianic title in and of itself; its New Testament use came from outside of Jewish messianism.

implied in Mal. 1:6 and Test. Levi 4:1; 18:6.¹⁴ Ps. 2:2 was also applied to the high priest in Midr. R. Ps. 2 (13a).¹⁵

The original intent of the *Χριστός* title might also be explained in this light.¹⁶ Jesus himself never used the title of himself, perhaps because it was too susceptible to being misunderstood by the people who were looking for a nationalistic and political savior. Ernst Lohmeyer concluded that Jesus was not called *Χριστός* as the Jewish messiah.¹⁷ This may be correct as regards the royal messiah, the Son of David. But may not Jesus have been called *Χριστός* in analogy with the Jewish hope for a priestly messiah? *πῦψις* was used not only of the king but also of the high priest. That *Χριστός* could be used also to refer to a priestly figure is shown by Luke 3:15 (cf. John 1:25), where the people wonder whether John the Baptist (the son

¹⁴But Mal. 1:6 is figurative language, Test. Levi 4:1 (cf. Armenian text!) claims no special honor for the son, and Test. Levi 18:6 mentions the fatherhood of God in general Old Testament terms. Hahn, Hoheitstitel, pp. 283-4, said that the idea of the priestly messiah cannot come into the picture as an explanation for the Son of God title in the New Testament.

For a recent defense of the thesis that "a royal, Davidic theology" integrates the Christological titles (esp. "Son of God") in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, see Brian M. Nolan, The Royal Son of God, The Christology of Matthew 1-2 in the Setting of the Gospel, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, 23 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979).

¹⁵But this is only one reference, in face of the many applications of Psalm 2 to the king. See Paul Billerbeck and Herman Strack, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, 4th ed., 4 vols. (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlags-Buchhandlung, 1965), 3:675-77, where they cited Ps. Sol. 17:23-4; Midr. R. Ps. 2:2, no. 3 (13a); cf. also Wm. G. Braude, trans., The Midrash on the Psalms, 2 vols., Yale Judaica Series, 13 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 1:36-37.

¹⁶Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 301-3.

¹⁷Gottesknecht und Davidsson, Symbolae Biblicae Upsalienses, 5, 2nd ed., FRLANT, 61 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953), pp. 104-5.

of a priest) might not be $\acute{\omicron}\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$. A similar thought could have lain behind the application of the Christ title to Jesus.¹⁸ Referring to one designated priest as well as king, $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ could most adequately describe the full dignity of Jesus.¹⁹

Not only their use of titles for Jesus, but also the Synoptics' narratives of the beginning of Jesus' public ministry may be interpreted as an attempt to proclaim Jesus as the fulfillment of hopes for a priestly messiah. Thus, the account of the baptism of Jesus might be seen as his consecration to the priesthood.²⁰ The case in support of this interpretation is strengthened through a comparison with Testament of Levi 18: the heavens open, there is a bath qol, and the Spirit descends.²¹

The actual content of the voice, however, presents a problem. In Matt. 3:17 the voice from heaven speaks the words of Is. 42:1, which was originally applied to the Servant of the Lord. At Luke 3:22 D,

¹⁸A link from Jesus to the priestly tribe might be forged by noting that Elizabeth, as the wife of a priest, should have been a Levite; therefore Mary, her kinswoman (Luke 1:36), would have been a Levite.

¹⁹According to Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 301-3, Cyril of Jerusalem, Katechese 10, 11 (MPG 33, 676a) said that "Jesus" was the name of the redeemer and "Christ" was the name of the priest.

²⁰Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 280-4. He also noted the subsequent connection of a Christian's baptism and his consecration to the general priesthood (cf. 1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Peter, and Jerome, MPL, 23, 166a). Against this line of interpretation, see Hahn, Hoheitstitel, pp. 340-1, and Cullmann, Christologie, pp. 65-7.

²¹Gnilka, "Erwartung," p. 413, and Hahn, Hoheitstitel, p. 346, n. 1, pointed out that in Test. Judah 24:2 the heavens opened and the Spirit was poured out on the royal messiah also. Charles, of course, considered Test. Judah 24:2 dependent on Testament Levi 18, but without warrant.

it., and in some fathers, the voice is the equivalent of Ps. 2:7.²² Mark 2:22 and the remaining manuscript authorities for Luke 3:22 have what appears to be a conflation of Is. 42:1 and Ps. 2:7, constructed so as to make the voice address Jesus directly. Friedrich ventured to suggest the connection of Psalm 2 to the priestly messiah. The priestly messiah supposedly took to himself some royal characteristics, for instance that he was sovereign over the messiah from Judah (for example, Test. Levi 8:11-14; Test. Jud. 21:2-5), Psalm 110 might have been applied to the messiah as priest-king, and the same process may have taken place in the interpretation of Psalm 2, as is reflected in the Midr. R. Ps. 2 (13a).²³ According to Friedrich, this interpretation of Jesus' baptism as his consecration to the priesthood would also fit into a schematic progression in Matthew from king (chapters 1-2,

²²Gnilka, "Erwartung," pp. 412-3, agreed that to read Ps. 2:7 in Luke 3:22 would indeed mean that Luke understood the baptism as Messiasweihe in contrast to Messiasproklamation. But Luke does not say consecration to what. Even if the Western reading is correct, we simply cannot interpret Ps. 2:2 as applying to the priestly messiah on the basis of one rabbinic passage.

²³Friedrich also suggested that the citation of Ps. 2:7 in Heb. 5:5 was a reminiscence of the baptism of Jesus, presupposed a priestly-messianic interpretation of Ps. 2:7, and might attest to the antiquity of Ps. 2:7 in the voice in the baptism narrative. Hahn, Hoheitstitel, pp. 238-9, and Gnilka, "Erwartung," p. 413, n. 84 disagreed strongly. And rightly so, for Friedrich has stretched too far in grasping at the straw of Midr. R. Ps. 2:7. For the (more appropriate) connection of the baptism narrative to Jesus' ministry as Son and Servant, the true Israel, see, e.g., Lane, Mark, pp. 53-58.

genealogy and birth) to priest (chapter 3, baptism), to prophet (chapters 5-7, Sermon on the Mount).²⁴

The Marcan temptation account is so closely bound to the baptism account that they may be regarded as a single unit. Uniquely, Mark notes that after Jesus was tempted he was "with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him" (Mark 1:13). This might be understood as a portrayal of Jesus which echoes the condition of Adam in paradise, where he had power over the beasts. Jesus, like the priestly messiah, overcomes Beliar and opens the gates of paradise (cf. Test. Levi 18:10).²⁵

Not only the temptation narrative (Mark 1:18) and the title with which the demons addressed Jesus (Mark 1:24) but also the general fact of Jesus' activity as an exorcist may reflect a conception of him as the priestly messiah.²⁶ He has come at the end of the age to destroy the power of the demons. The priestly messiah was to wage war against the enemy, bind Beliar, put the demons to nought and rescue the saints from their power (cf. Test. Levi. 18:12; Test. Dan 5:10-11). Casting out demons was not expected to be part of the work of the anointed prophet (it is lacking from the list in Matt. 11:5) nor of the royal messiah.²⁷

²⁴This proposed scheme shows no awareness of Matthew's structure or Christology as described in Jack D. Kingsbury, Matthew: Structure Christology Kingdom (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975).

²⁵Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 284-5; Hahn, Hoheitstitel, p. 239, found this very unlikely.

²⁶Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 277-8.

²⁷Gnilka, "Erwartung," p. 409, discounted the value of the Testament of Levi passage because he felt that it had been worked over by a Christian redactor. He pointed out that the Son of Man drives the devil to hell in eth. Enoch 55:4 and that the Davidic messiah controls evil spirits in Pseudo-Philo 60:3 and eth. Enoch 10:11-16.

When Jesus' authority as an exorcist was challenged, he replied:

But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man; then indeed he may plunder his house (Mark 3:27).

This can be interpreted very well in the light of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Jesus has come to rob (rescue) men from Satan's power. To do this he must first bind the strong man of the house (that is, Beliar himself). Behind such a picture may lie a conception of Jesus' work shaped in terms of the work of the priestly messiah.²⁸

Thus in quick succession in Mark Jesus was baptized (consecrated), overcame temptation, opened the gates of paradise, and began his ministry with an attack on the kingdom of Beliar. A connected narrative which intended to portray Jesus as the priestly messiah may have been the original form of these accounts of the beginnings of Jesus' public ministry.

Also for Luke there is a close connection between baptism and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.²⁹ Jesus' baptism, his anointing with the Holy Spirit, his exorcisms and his proclaiming of the jubilee year all belong together and may point to his role as the priestly messiah.³⁰

Luke 4:18-19 (=Is. 61:1-2) begins: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me . . ." If the outpouring of the Holy Spirit comes at baptism, then this refers to Jesus' baptism, which Luke calls an anointing. The "captives" released may be interpreted as those held

²⁸Also, when Jesus sent his disciples to spread his ministry, he gave them this same power over unclean spirits (Mark 6:7=Mark 10:1).

²⁹See Acts 10:37-8, where both are also connected with bringing wholeness to those oppressed by the devil.

³⁰Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 285-6.

by Beliar. The proclamation of the year of Jubilee also fits properly into the priestly activities in the cultic sphere.³¹

The Synoptic Gospels elsewhere describe actions of Jesus which might be characterized as sacerdotal, reflecting his functions as the priestly messiah. In Matt. 9:1-8 (=Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26) Jesus claimed the authority and demonstrated his power to forgive sins.³² The forgiveness of sins was supposed to be a function neither of the royal messiah nor of the Son of Man.³³ Perhaps in this Jesus was acting as the priestly messiah.³⁴

³¹Gnilka, "Erwartung," p. 413, pointed out that the Holy Spirit was also to be poured out upon the royal messiah. Hahn, Hoheitstitel, p. 239, emphasized that Is. 61:1-2 clearly refers to the prophet, a fact which Friedrich himself admitted. Friedrich's point here involved two large logical leaps: 1) that Luke's Isaiah quotation refers to the event of Jesus' baptism, and 2) that Luke's understanding of Jesus' baptism as an anointing pointed to Jesus' consecration to a priestly ministry.

³²„ But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" (Matt. 9:6). But it is not certain that "Son of Man" here is a title; it may simply be the equivalent of "I."

³³Lohmeyer, Markus, p. 54; in Gottesknecht, p. 47, Lohmeyer suggested it may have been a function of the Servant of the Lord. Cullmann, Christologie, p. 163, also argued that Mark 2:10 reveals a combining of Servant and Son of Man motifs (cf. Mark 8:31). But Gnilka, "Erwartung," p. 409, asserted that the forgiveness of sins was attributed to the royal messiah (Ps. Sol. 17) and to the Son of Man (eth. Enoch 69:27).

³⁴Thus Friedrich, "Beobachtungen." pp. 293-4: cf. Test. Levi 18:9. But Jesus' words and deeds are a pointed claim that he can forgive sins on his own authority, to do on earth what God does in heaven. The scribes rightly considered this claim as blasphemy. It went beyond the announcement of forgiveness (which both priest and prophet might have done) or the assertion that there would be forgiveness "in his days."

The accounts of Jesus' blessing the little children (Matt. 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17) or the disciples (Luke 24:50-51) may also present Jesus as performing a characteristically priestly function, namely, the blessing of the people.³⁵ Fathers bless children and masters bless disciples, but to bless the people in the name of God was the function especially of the priests.³⁶

Five times the Synoptic Gospels record feeding miracles in a lonely place.³⁷ While various Old Testament motifs are echoed in these accounts,³⁸ Jesus' presiding at these meals is also reminiscent of the priest who was to preside at the eschatological meal in Qumran:³⁹ ordering the host to divide into companies,⁴⁰ he blessed the food.

³⁵Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 294-297; he claimed that the children were brought not for healing but for a blessing, even though the word κατευλόγει is used only in Mark 10:16. He suggested that when the pericope was later used to support the practice of infant baptism, the element of blessing receded and terms associated with the baptismal rite ("laying on of hands," "do not hinder them") were inserted; this has obscured the sacerdotal activity of Jesus in the present form of the account.

Both Hahn, Hoheitstitel, p. 239, and Gnllka, "Erwartung," p. 416, noted that to speak a blessing is not a uniquely sacerdotal function.

³⁶Num. 6:22-27; Sir. 45:15; 50:22; Jub. 31:15; Test. Reub. 6:10-11; IQS 2:1; 6:5.

³⁷Matt. 14:13-21=Mark 6:32-44=Luke 9:10-17; Matt. 15:32-39=Mark 8:1-10. A sixth record is in John 6:1-13.

³⁸E.g., Moses and the exodus (Ex. 16:13-21; 18:21); the true shepherd feeding the people (Ezek. 34:26-29; Ps. 23:1); and the offering of the "Bread of the Presence" (Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:5-9).

³⁹IQSa 2:17-20.

⁴⁰Mark 6:39, συμπόσια (= ΠΙΓΗΒΠ); the men of Qumran also assembled themselves into the numerical "companies" enjoined in Ex. 18:21 (see, e.g., IQSa 1:14-15; Lane, Mark, p. 229).

All three Synoptic Gospels likewise report Jesus' presiding at the Last Supper with his disciples (Matt. 26:20-29; Mark 14:17-25; Luke 22:14-38). While it is true that a rabbi would preside, as paterfamilias, at the Passover meal with his disciples, Jesus' special words and deeds of interpretation at the Last Supper connected that celebration also to his self-sacrifice on the cross. It might be possible to consider him as presiding at that meal not only as paterfamilias but also as a priest at a sacrifice.⁴¹

As Jesus was rejected by the Jewish leaders, he called the new Israel to follow him. In the course of this growing rift, Jesus and the religious establishment in Jerusalem encountered one another as adversaries. In fulfillment of God's plan, their conflicting claims clashed, leading to the denouement of the crucifixion and resurrection. Within the Synoptic Gospels there are accounts of these conflicts which might suggest that one of the claims that Jesus was making over against the religious authorities was that he was the anointed priest of the end-time.

Thus, after Jesus had cleansed a leper (Matt. 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-16), he told the man to go to the priests and to make the offerings which Moses commanded, "as a testimony to them."⁴² The

⁴¹Feuillet, Priesthood, p. 30, stated that "once the sacrificial character of the rite performed by Jesus at the Last Supper is assured, Jesus' priestly attitude on this occasion is automatically demonstrated." But this is not so much an explanation of the background of the Synoptic accounts as it is a subsequent expansion on the deeper meaning inherent in the scene.

⁴²εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς, Matt. 8:4; Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14. The RSV translates the αὐτοῖς as "to the people," but the priests are probably meant. See Lane, Mark, p. 88.

full weight of these words may be apparent only by considering Jesus' activity as that of the priestly messiah.⁴³ He came, but the official priests of Judaism did not recognize him. Therefore he sent this man, whom he had cleansed and certified as clean (a priestly function), to the priests as a testimony against them.⁴⁴

On another occasion, after he and his disciples had plucked some grain and eaten it on the sabbath, Jesus was challenged to say by what authority he and his disciples had violated the sabbath.⁴⁵ In Matthew's report, before answering that the Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath, Jesus pointed out that king David once assumed a special privilege, that the priests worked in the temple on the sabbath and remained guiltless (Num. 28:9-10), and that "something more than the temple is here." Jesus claimed for himself authority over the temple, an authority corresponding to (and greater than) that of the Old Testament priests or king David. This could have been the authority of the priestly messiah.⁴⁶

⁴³Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," p. 294.

⁴⁴For this use of εἰς μαρτύριον, see the LXX at Hos. 2:14; Mic. 1:2 ("against you" = ἐν ὑποτί); Luke 9:5 ("against them" = ἐπ' αὐτοῖς). But Lohmeyer, Markus, p. 48 (cf. Ergänzungsheft [1953], p. 6), emphasized that it was Jesus' act of fulfilling the Mosaic statutes which was a testimony to the priests: testimony that the Vollender had come, who ends all cultic sacrifices. On the various ways to interpret Jesus' intent in this passage, see Lane, Mark, pp. 85-88.

⁴⁵Matt. 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5. In Luke Jesus answers that the Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath; in Mark he answers the same, with the additional explanation that the sabbath was made for man and not vice versa.

⁴⁶Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," p. 289. Ernst Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Matthäus, KEKNT, Sonderband, 1, ed. by Werner Schmauch (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), p. 184, agreed that in this passage there is an argument from a deep opposition against the priesthood and the temple. In the new age, which Jesus brings and is, all are priests;

The way in which Jesus' clash with the authorities focused on the temple is symbolized graphically in his cleansing of the temple.⁴⁷ Here one might see Jesus, as the priestly messiah, entering his proper realm and purifying it.⁴⁸ After the cleansing of the temple, the Jews challenged Jesus' authority "to do this."⁴⁹ Jesus justified his action by means of a counter-question concerning the validity of the baptism of John. Thus Jesus acted as the priestly messiah and referred to the baptism of John, his consecration to the office of the priestly messiah as his authority for such action. If John's baptism was from God, Jesus had authority to cleanse the temple.⁵⁰

hence the disciples' actions were justified through the priestly exception. In David's action lay a pre-figurement of the abrogation of the priestly privilege for the few. But Jesus may also simply be claiming a royal messianic authority for which David's action set the precedent.

⁴⁷Matt. 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46. A cleansing is also recorded in John 2:13-17.

⁴⁸Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 297-301. But Gnllka, "Erwartung," pp. 415-6, countered that no action expressly related to cultic and priestly matters could be seen, and Hahn, Hoheitstitel, p. 239, said that if this were presented as the act of a high priest, then Jesus would have to enter the sanctuary itself. This action took place in the forecourt of the Gentiles.

Friedrich further pointed out that, according to Matt. 21:14, Jesus then also healed the lame and the blind in the temple. (This is the only healing miracle reported in Jerusalem.) Jesus might be pictured as not only purifying the temple, but as leading his restored people into it, instituting a new order.

⁴⁹Matt. 21:25-27; Mark 11:27-33; Luke 20:1-8. Friedrich assumed that the antecedent of "this" was the cleansing of the temple; Lohmeyer, Markus, p. 240, tended to agree. But because of the difficulty of connecting the temple cleansing and the baptism of John, other explanations of "this" have been suggested, especially: that it refers to the miracles. Friedrich's interpretation, of course, takes care of that supposed difficulty.

⁵⁰See also Lohmeyer, Markus, p. 242.

Jesus' posture over against the temple was also at issue in his hearing before the Sanhedrin. He was accused of having said: "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands."⁵¹ This testimony prompted the high priest to ask Jesus directly: "Are you the *Χριστός*?"⁵² Jesus affirmed it, and the high priest charged him with blasphemy. Both the high priest's question and the charge of blasphemy related to Jesus' temple saying, the content of which was the real grounds for the conviction of Jesus.⁵³ Threats to destroy and promises to rebuild the temple were the words of God himself in the Old Testament (Jer. 7:13-15; Mic. 3:12; compare Ezek. 40:1-43:17). But Jesus claimed that this would be part of his own activity. Therefore he put himself in God's place and

⁵¹Mark 14:58; cf. Matt. 26:61. John 2:19 reports a version of this saying after the cleansing of the temple; see also Mark 15:29; Matt. 27:40; Acts 6:14.

⁵²Mark 14:61. Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 292-3, also pointed out the connection between the *Χριστός* title and the building of the *ἑκκλησία* in Matt. 16:16-19. After Simon confessed Jesus as *Χριστός*, Jesus clarified the meaning of that confession with two sayings which added priestly messianic elements:

- 1) *Πέτρος* (not Barjonah) was to be his name, and "on this rock I will build my *ἑκκλησία*." The eschatological priestly messiah had come to establish his eschatological community.
 - 2) He gave Peter the "power to bind and to loose." The priestly messiah had and conferred the power to forgive sins.
- Thus Jesus' words at Caesarea Philippi already established the connection between his office as *Χριστός* and his building of his new temple, the *ἑκκλησία*.

⁵³The report of the conspiracy against Jesus followed on the account of the cleansing of the temple, Mark 11:18; Luke 19:47.

(in his accusers' eyes) committed blasphemy. In this situation, the high priest asked Jesus if, then, he was the Χριστός. Assuming his awareness of sectarian opposition to the Jerusalem temple⁵⁴ and of the hope for a new priest, we might rightly understand the high priest as asking Jesus: "Are you the priestly messiah?"⁵⁵ Jesus' answer affirmed this and explained that his messianic priesthood is a heavenly priesthood.⁵⁶

Perhaps Jesus' Holy Week conflict with the authorities is aptly epitomized in the encounter over the question "Whose son is the messiah?" Questioning the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus quoted Ps. 110:1 in order

⁵⁴See Oscar Cullmann, "L'Opposition contre le Temple de Jérusalem, Motif commun de la Théologie Johannique et du Monde Ambiant," New Testament Studies, 5 (1958-59):157-173; CD 4:15; 1QpHab 12:7.

⁵⁵Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 289-90. But Gnilka, "Erwartung," p. 415, and Lohmeyer, Markus, p. 327, both pointed out that the royal messiah was to build a new temple in the place of the old, desecrated one (eth. Enoch 90:29; cf. Targ. Is. 53:5; Billerbeck, Kommentar, 1:1003-5).

It should also be pointed out that the early church did not interpret Jesus' temple saying as a clear assertion of his fulfillment of the hopes for a priestly messiah. John 2:21-22 referred it to the body of Jesus, which, in the new covenant, replaces the temple. Or, it was taken to mean that the old temple, to be destroyed, was Judaism and the new temple, to be built, was the eschatological community of God, the Church. See Gnilka, "Erwartung," pp. 414-5, and Lohmeyer, Markus, p. 327.

⁵⁶Mark 14:62. Cullmann, Christologie, pp. 87-8, said that the quotation from Psalm 110 here showed that Jesus considered it his task to fulfill the true priesthood. He further explained that his priesthood was a heavenly priesthood, just as he would explain to Pilate that his kingdom was not of this earth (John 18:36). Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 289-90, felt that "Son of Man" did not fit well in this context and that Son of Man elements had been inserted into passages originally about the priestly messiah. But Hahn, Hoheitstitel, pp. 239, 177, n. 3, considered the temple word the later insertion. Thus both try to "explain" the passage by "explaining away" whatever does not fit into their scheme of interpretation.

to show the logical impossibility of calling ὁ Χριστός the Son of David because David, in the spirit, called the anointed one his Lord.⁵⁷ The main point seems to be a negative one: Jesus exposed the popular Son of David messianism as inadequate to express the fullness of the Scriptural promise. The political leader whom the Jews expected was different from the savior of whom Psalm 110 spoke and who Jesus was. The question: "Whose son is the messiah?" would presuppose more than one possible answer. It might become more comprehensible if the alternatives were seen to be: Son of David or Son of Levi?⁵⁸ If questions about the genealogy of the messiah and the relative dignity of the priest and king in the messianic age were live issues in contemporary Judaism, may they not be reflected here?

Finally, two other incidents from the Synoptics' account of Jesus' passion may reflect his status as the priestly messiah. After the

⁵⁷Two things are clear from this encounter: both sides agreed that 1) David was the human author of Psalm 110, and 2) that the messiah is addressed in Psalm 110.

⁵⁸Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 286-9; he also pointed out that this whole discussion took place in the temple. Gnilka, "Erwartung," pp. 416-18, agreed that the denial of the false Son of David eschatology is clear, but that it is not clear just what should take its place. But David Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, The Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion, 2 (London: The University of London, The Athlone Press, 1956), pp. 160, 163, said that Jesus was polemicizing against the popular conception of the messiah, but that he was not necessarily opposing the messiah's Davidic ancestry. This was a typical haggada question, in which the opinion of one school of tradition is set in supposed opposition to a Scripture verse. Its purpose was to prove that Scripture and tradition are both right and can stand next to each other. If both were right, then the messiah is more than the Son of David, but he is the Son of David. Then this passage would corroborate Jesus' conception of the messiah as Son of David and would not require affirming the alternative of a priestly messiah of Levi/Aaron.

Sanhedrin condemned Jesus, they began to mock him (Matt. 26:67-8; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63-5). At the subsequent trial before Pilate, Jesus would be tried, condemned and mocked as a royal messiah, but this taunting before the Sanhedrin might be better understood as the mockery appropriate for a pretender to the office of a priestly messiah.⁵⁹ Jesus was blindfolded, struck, and then urged to "prophesy" who it was that struck him. This may refer to the kind of ability to prophesy which was granted to the high priest.⁶⁰ Thus, before the Sanhedrin, Jesus would have been accused, condemned and mocked as the priestly messiah.⁶¹

Lastly, according to Matt. 27:47=Mark 15:35, some of those who heard Jesus cry "Eli, Eli . . ." from the cross thought that he was calling Elijah.⁶² If Jesus' contemporaries so quickly associated his words

⁵⁹Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 291-2.

⁶⁰Priests were seers in the Old Testament, using Urim and Thummim (Ex. 28:30; Lev. 8:8; Num. 27:21; cf. Test. Levi 8:2). John 11:51 also preserves the note that what the high priest said was (unbeknownst to him!) "prophecy."

⁶¹But Lohmeyer, Markus, pp. 330-331, suggested that the mocking in Mark may echo Is. 50:6, which applied to the Servant. Hahn, Hoheitstitel, p. 239, said that it could apply to the prophet as well. And Billerbeck, Kommentar, 1:641, 2:439, and Lane, Mark, p. 540, demonstrated that this mocking was that of the royal messiah. The Babylonian Talmud, San. 93b, reflects an interpretation of Is. 11:2-4 to the effect that the (royal) messiah will judge neither with his eyes nor with his ears, but through his sense of smell. Hence the "blindfold" test described here, which the Talmud reports was also administered to Simon bar Koziba.

⁶²Elijah was expected to return at the end-time. Priestly functions were attributed to him. But Hahn, Hoheitstitel objected that here Elijah is clearly thought of not as the eschatological priest, but as the one who is present to help in emergencies.

with Elijah, this might indicate that, in their minds, Jesus was in some way connected to an eschatological priestly hope.⁶³

Thus we have seen that a wide variety of passages in the Synoptic Gospels have been interpreted as reflecting Jesus' ministry in terms of the priestly messiah. But there are many objections to such interpretations in specific passages, and often alternative explanations are at least equally probable. The case for priestly messianism in the Synoptic Gospels is by no means compelling and is in many respects very weak.

The Epistles of Paul and Peter

In their epistles we also find St. Paul and St. Peter using cultic and perhaps sacerdotal terms and motifs to interpret the work of Christ. These, too, may be considered evidence for the conception of Jesus as the priestly messiah in the early church.⁶⁴ We shall here enumerate these terms and the passages in which they appear, with a brief note on their significance as sacerdotal elements in New Testament Christology.

In Rom. 5:2 the result of the work of reconciliation is that "through [Jesus Christ] we have obtained access (τὴν προσαγωγήν) to this grace in which we stand . . ." This is repeated in Eph. 2:18 ("access . . . to the Father") and 3:12 (in Christ Jesus "we have boldness and confidence of access . . ."). Paul used this term from the Old

⁶³ Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," p. 292; this is not a very convincing argument.

⁶⁴ See esp. Olaf Moe, "Das Prietertum Christi im NT asserhalb des Hebräerbriefes," Theologische Literaturzeitung, 72 (1947):335-338, and C. Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux, 2 vols., Études Bibliques (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1952-3), 1:155-166.

Testament⁶⁵ to describe the salvation worked in Jesus.⁶⁶ Accordingly, Christ might be considered as the priestly προσαγωγεὺς.⁶⁷

If Romans 3:25 is interpreted concretely,⁶⁸ it might be considered an identification of Christ with the mercy seat (ἐλαστήριον) of the Old Testament. But one must ask whether Paul meant to refer specifically to the אֲשֶׁר־בְּיָמֵינוּ, or, more generally, "a means of reconciliation."⁶⁹

⁶⁵See, e.g., Ex. 21:6; Num. 25:6; 27:5.

⁶⁶Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, KEKNT, 4, 13th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), p. 130, noted the similarity to εἴσοδος in Heb. 10:19, but felt that Paul had used this originally cultic term in a metaphorical sense, with regard to access to the present state of grace. Karl L. Schmidt, προσαῶ, προσαγωγή, κ.τ.λ. TDNT. 1 131-4, noted the connotations of its use in the language of the law courts or the king's court as well and suggested that it expresses the general fact that Christ leads men to God and reconciles them with him. Cf. the use of προσαῶ, however, in 1 Peter 3:18, below.

⁶⁷This term was applied to Christ by Gregory of Nazianzus, according to Michel, Römer, p. 130, and Schmidt, "προσαῶ, κ.τ.λ." TDNT, 1:132. It could indicate an earlier acceptance of Christ's sacerdotal function of providing access.

⁶⁸See Moe, "Priestertun Christi," pp. 337-8.

⁶⁹Friedrich Büchsel, "ἐλαστήριον," TDNT, 3:320-323, said that this question cannot be answered definitively, but emphasized that God makes the means of reconciliation what it is and that Christ is the ἐλαστήριον through faith. He felt that Paul has probably spiritualized the concept. See also Michel, Römer, pp. 106-7.

In Eph. 5:2 Paul calls Christ our προσφορὰν καὶ θυσίαν.

His work is described in cultic terms. He is the sacrifice (compare

τὸ πάσχα 1 Cor. 5:7), who gave himself (τοῦ . . . παραδόντας
ἑαυτὸν, Gal. 2:20).⁷⁰

According to Rom. 8:34, Christ is at the right hand of God and intercedes (ἐντυγχάνει) for Christians in the face of God's judgment. The exaltation motif from Ps. 110:1 is connected with the work of heavenly intercession. A priestly function is attributed to the exalted Lord.⁷¹

The death of Jesus is interpreted as the self-sacrifice of the priest-victim by St. Peter in 1 Peter.⁷² Thus 1 Peter 1:19 presents Jesus

as the sacrificial lamb, and behind ἀνγενέσκειν . . . σώματι . . . ξύλον

⁷⁰J. Behm, "θυσία" TDNT, 3:185 claimed that Paul used the idea of sacrifice figuratively, as a clarifying aid in his explanation of the saving significance of the death of Christ.

⁷¹Cf. Herb. 7:25; Michel, Römer, p. 216; Spicq, Hébreux, 1:156, n. 2. Spicq (see also pp. 159, 164) listed a few other terms which are used by Paul and also in Hebrews: "blood of the covenant" (1 Cor. 11:25; Heb. 9:20; 10:29; 13:20), ἁγιασμός (Rom. 6:19, 22; 1 Cor. 1:30; 1 Thess. 4:3-7; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:15; cf. Heb. 12:14 and 1 Peter 1:2), and ἀπολύτρωσις (Rom. 3:24; 8:23; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:7, 14; 4:30; Col. 1:14; cf. Heb. 9:15; 11:35). Behm, "θυσία," TDNT, 3:185, also pointed out Paul's (figurative-spiritual) use of cultic language in describing the Christian life (Rom. 12:1) and the apostolic service (Rom. 15:16; Phil. 2:17).

⁷²Moe, "Priestertum Christi," p. 337; Spicq, Hébreux, 1:139-144. E. G. Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: Macmillan, 1946), pp. 93-95, saw the Old Testament motifs of the Passover lamb, the Suffering Servant, and the scapegoat combined in 1 Peter to illustrate the meaning of Christ's death.

of 2:24 stands the idea that the cross is the altar and the body of Christ is a sacrifice.⁷³ That 1 Peter also considered Jesus as the self-sacrificing priest could be corroborated by the preceding section of the letter, which described Christians as priests who offer pleasing gifts to God through Christ. According to Moe,⁷⁴ this presupposed the high priesthood of the Lord. First Peter 3:18 also declares that Jesus died *ἵνα ὑμᾶς* [var. *ἡμᾶς*] *προσαγάγη τῷ θεῷ*. The expression and the context lead to the supposition that *προσαγάγη* is here used as a cultic term.⁷⁵ In his vicarious atoning death, Jesus fulfilled a cultic, priestly function.

The Johannine Writings

Within the Johannine writings have been found numerous nuances and hints which might be taken as indications of an inclination to look upon Jesus and his work from a priestly perspective.⁷⁶ Indeed, John

⁷³The phrase "our sins in his body" blends two thoughts: the idea of sacrifice and the idea of vicarious suffering for punishment.

⁷⁴"Priestertum Christi," p. 337.

⁷⁵It is used with a personal object in Ex. 29:4, 8; 40:12; Lev. 8:24; Num. 8:9, 10. Schmidt, "*προσάγω, προσαγωγή*," TDNT, 1:131-134, also noted its use in the language of the law courts (cf. Ex. 21:6; Num. 25:6; 27:5) and of the royal court (see note 66, above). See further BAG, s.v., who related it to admission to the presence of the great king, and Selwyn, First Peter, p. 196.

⁷⁶The main points discussed here are made by C. Spicq, "L'origine johannique de la conception du Christ-prêtre dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," Aux Sources de la tradition chrétienne, Mélanges . . . M. Goguel, Bibliothèque Théologique (Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé S.A., 1950), pp. 258-269; he proposed that the teaching of Christ's high priesthood, which the (Alexandrian-educated) author of Hebrews developed for his particular purpose, had its roots in the Johannine catechesis. See also Mary E. Clarkson, "The Antecedents of the High Priest Theme in Hebrews,"

18:15-16 makes a passing reference to "another disciple, . . . known⁷⁷ to the high priest, [who] entered the court of the high priest along with Jesus" and through whose influence Peter also was admitted to the courtyard. Some identify him as John, the son of Zebedee, and accept him as the author of the fourth Gospel.⁷⁸ This forges a link between John and the Jerusalem high priests and would explain the sacerdotal inclinations of the Johannine writings.

In two passages there may be a portrayal of Jesus in the vestments of the high priest. John 19:23 notes that Jesus' robe was seamless

Anglican Theological Review, 29(1947):89-95; Cullmann, Christologie, pp. 104-7, Spicq, Hébreux, 1:109-11; Moe, "Priestertum Christi," p. 338; Hahn, Hoheitstitel, p. 234; and Feuillet, Priesthood, pp. 32-48, where he argued that the last Servant song (Is. 52:13-53:12) suggests that the Servant is a priest. I. de la Potterie, "La tunique sans couture, symbole du Christ grand prêtre?" Biblica, 60 (1979):266-8, and Anton Dauer, Die Passionsgeschichte im Johannesevangelium, Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament, 30 (München: Kosel-Verlag, 1972), pp. 187-9, also responded (negatively) to Spicq's arguments.

⁷⁷ Leon Morris, The Gospel According to John, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), p. 752, n. 30 (citing C. H. Dodd), claimed that γνωστός implied more than a mere acquaintance, perhaps a member of the high priest's circle or a kinsman. But A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1930), p. 332, gave linguistic examples to show that the word did not refer to friendship, but only meant that the person in question was no stranger.

⁷⁸ The ἄλλος μαθητής (John 20:2, 3, 4, 8) is the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 20:2), whom many take to refer to John the disciple, the son of Zebedee, cf. e.g., Morris, John, pp. 9-12, 16-17, 30, and 752, n. 2, where he speculated as to how the son of Zebedee might be of a priestly family or well-known to the high priest. Rudolf Schnackenberg, Das Johannesevangelium, Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, IV (Freiburg: Herder, 1975), 3:266-7, pointed to the lack of the definite article in John 18:15 and argued against identifying the ἄλλος μαθητής there with John 20:2.

(ἅν δὲ ὁ χιτῶν ἄραφος), all of one piece, like that of the high priest.⁷⁹ Likewise, the long robe (ποδήρη) which the risen Christ is wearing in Rev. 1:13 has also been interpreted as a high priestly garment.⁸⁰

An understanding of the essentially priestly nature of Jesus may also lie behind John 1:14, which signals the importance of the incarnation in the statement that the pre-existent Word became flesh. God incarnate, a mediator by birth, Jesus would be the mediator par excellence and therefore the priest par excellence. In Jesus the λόγος "tabernacled" (ἐσκήνωσεν) among us and "we beheld his glory."⁸¹

⁷⁹Ex. 31:10; Lev. 21:10; Jos., Ant., III, 7, 45; Philo, Fuga, 110-112; Morris, John, p. 809, n. 54, and Raymond E. Brown, The Gospel According to John (xiii-xxi), The Anchor Bible, XXIXA (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970), 920-1, followed this identification. But Schlatter, Johannes, p. 350, considered it uncertain, and Dauer, Passionsgeschichte, p. 188, and Schnackenburg, Johannesevangelium, 3:318, rejected it. I de la Potterie, "tunique," passim, demonstrated it highly unlikely; after a careful linguistic analysis of the LXX and Josephus, he concluded: "l'interprétation 'sacerdotale' de la tunique de Jésus ne peut se prévaloir d'aucun appui dans la tradition biblique ou juive" (pp. 265-6).

⁸⁰See, e.g., E. Lohse, Die Offenbarung des Johannes, Das Neue Testament Deutsch, 11, 9th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), p. 20; Ex. 28:4, 27; Sap. 18:24. The golden girdle is a royal symbol (cf. 1 Macc. 10:89). Both are here on "one like a Son of Man." But Potterie, "tunique," pp. 262-3, showed that also ποδήρη was not a fixed term for priestly robes.

⁸¹The δόξα "tabernacled" in the tabernacle/temple (Ex. 33:9-10; Num. 9:15; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Hag. 2:7); the name of God "tabernacles" (Ps. Sol. 7:5); God "tabernacles" in the temple (Jos., Ant., III, 202; VIII, 106); and wisdom "tabernacles" among men (eth. Enoch 42:2; Sir. 24:4, 8. God's tabernacling with his people will be the ultimate communion (Rev. 21:3)).

John 1:14 does represent a re-interpretation of a cult-oriented complex of ideas. Just as the divine glory manifested itself and dwelt among the people in the place and in the exercise of the Old Testament cult, so also the new covenant believers contemplate an epiphany of the δόξα of God in Christ, the living temple and center of the new cult. But the inference is not that Jesus is a priest, but that he replaced the temple as the place of the revelation of the glory of God.

John 2:13-22 not only reports the cleansing of the temple,⁸² but also adds the question concerning authority, a temple-saying of Jesus, and a confessedly post-Easter interpretation. Jesus entered his Father's house not as a usurper, but as one in full authority;⁸³ his action might be seen as a type of his entry into the heavenly sanctuary following his resurrection.⁸⁴ The cleansing of the temple might symbolize the purification necessary for instituting a new order of worship.⁸⁵ When the Jews challenged his authority, Jesus answered: λύσατε τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον, καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερῶ αὐτόν.⁸⁶ John 2:20-21 gives the post-Easter interpretation, according to which

⁸² τὸ ἱερόν, 2:14, 15; this might show Jesus' claim to sacerdotal authority.

⁸³ Jesus had testimony (John 5:30-47) and glory (John 7:39; 8:54; 12:28; 13:31-32) from the Father.

⁸⁴ Spicq, "L'origine," p. 259; Potterie, "tunique," pp. 266-7, opposed this as not a "Johannine" way of thinking.

⁸⁵ Spicq connected this to Heb. 9:23. But, as in the Synoptics, this action took place in the outer courts.

⁸⁶ Bultmann, *Johannes*, pp. 88-91, said the cleansing of the temple was Jesus' attack on the Jews and their sanctuary; it expressed the conflict between the Revealer and the world. Eschatology fulfills itself in the fate of Jesus, in which the Jews do have a role, as those who destroy him. What happens to Jesus will be the sign, but it will bring judgment to the world. Schlatter, *Johannes*, pp. 74-83, called this section "Das Evangelium für die Priester;" Jesus challenged them to repent from their use of the temple as a self-serving source of material income or a cause for pride.

ἄσῳν meant the body of Jesus. Thus John's meaning might be formulated: the body of Christ is to play in the new covenant the same role that the earthly temple played in the old covenant, and that the death and resurrection of Jesus are the conditions of the new cult.⁸⁷

In John 17, the "Sacerdotal Prayer,"⁸⁸ Jesus addressed his Father before offering his sacrifice. He prayed to God to sanctify his disciples and declared that he sanctified himself in order that his disciples might be sanctified in the truth. Through this sanctification, Jesus' own were to be separated from the world and equipped for their service.⁸⁹ These thoughts may be reflected elsewhere in John, too. Jesus, the Holy One of God (John 6:69), whom the Father sanctified (ἁγιάσεν)

⁸⁷ Thus Spicq found in this passage the evidence of an important theological theme for the Johannine writings: that the body of Christ replaces the temple as the place where God dwells and where God and man meet. This is also reflected in John 1:14 (see above), in John 1:51 (Jesus=Bethel, where messengers ascend and descend), John 7:37-39 (cf. Ezek. 47:1-11, the source of living waters/the Holy Spirit), John 17:21-23 (Jesus=the ultimate place of union between God and the believers), and Rev. 21:22 (God and the Lamb are the temple of the heavenly Jerusalem). See Yves Congar, The Mystery of the Temple or The Manner of God's Presence to His Creatures from Genesis to the Apocalypse, trans. by R. F. Trevett (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1962), pp. 117-150, esp. 138, and Feuillet, Priesthood, p. 40.

But to have said this is by no means to have said that Jesus is presented as the priestly messiah, as Potterie, "tunique," p. 266, and Dauer, Passionsgeschichte, p. 189, n. 158, rightly pointed out.

⁸⁸ Thus named since David Chytraeus; but Cyril of Jerusalem inferred Jesus' priesthood from it, in Ioh., 17:9 (MPG, 74, 505), cited by Spicq. See Feuillet, Priesthood, pp. 19-79, esp. 49-79, in which he paralleled the structure of John 17 to the ceremony described in Lev. 16 (prayer/sacrifice for 1) self; 2) close associates; and 3) the rest of the faithful. But R. E. Brown, John (xiii-xxi), p. 747, saw only the priestly aspect of intercession in this prayer, not the cultic picture of a priest about to offer sacrifice.

⁸⁹ Cf. Ex. 28:41. Spicq narrowed the meaning of this to specify the separation of the Twelve and their adaptation for their ministry in the apostolic office.

for his mission (John 10:36), devoted himself to accomplishing the work of his self-sacrifice, as both priest and victim, which his Father had given him (John 10:18).⁹⁰ Thus Jesus' work would be that of a high priest.

John's Gospel also portrays Christ as the Way (John 14:6; compare "Door" in John 10:1,7). He goes to the Father (John 13:1; 14:12; 16:28); the disciples are to follow him to heaven, there to be re-united with him (John 14:23; compare 10:16) and in him to be united with God (John 17:21-23). This, too, might reflect a priestly conception of Jesus' saving work. Salvation for the disciples is access to God and union with him in the heavenly sanctuary; Jesus has broken open the way and leads his own there.⁹¹ He is both the Shepherd and the Way.

Further details which might reflect a priestly interpretation of Jesus' person and work in John include the emphasis on Jesus' innocence

⁹⁰ ἀγιαζέειν taken in a cultic sense, "to sanctify, consecrate," John 17:19 bis; cf. 17:11 and Heb. 2:11; 10:10; Feuillet, Priesthood, p. 177. Τελειοῦν (John 17:23; cf. Heb. 2:10; 5:9; 7:28), may also mean cultic consecration, based on the LXX (Ex. 29:9, 29; 33:35; Lev. 4:5; 8:33); this sense is not assured in John 17:23, however. Schnackenburg, Johannesevangelium, 3, 210-214, recognized the LXX background of consecration both for sacrifice and for priesthood, but still did not interpret this passage as presenting Jesus as a "priestly messiah." Bultmann, Johannes, p. 391, n. 3, said that ἀγιαζέειν in John 17:19 meant "zum Opfer weihen" (as in Ex. 13:2; Deut. 15:19) but hardly "Priesterweihe" (as in Ex. 28:41). Jesus is not here portrayed as priest and victim at the same time. This "sanctification" must be understood from the viewpoint of sending.

⁹¹Cf. Rev. 7:17; Heb. 6:20; 9:24; 12:2; 13:20; 10:19-20. Potterie, "tunique," p. 267, did not agree that this is a properly sacerdotal function, however.

and blamelessness,⁹² which contributes to the description of him as both high priest and perfect victim. First John 2:1 also designates Jesus as the Paraclete, and thus as the heavenly intercessor.⁹³ Jesus is also called an "expiatory victim" (ἱλασμός) in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10.⁹⁴ Olaf Moe⁹⁵ also pointed out that Christians, washed in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 1:5; 7:14; compare 1 John 1:7), have been made priests according to Rev. 1:6. As in 1 Peter, this could lead to the supposition that Jesus, the consecrator, is the high priest.

⁹²John 8:46; cf. 1:29, 36; 1 John 2:1-2; 3:3, 5, 7.

⁹³See also John 14:16, where Jesus promises "another Counselor" (ἄλλον παράκλητον).

⁹⁴Cf. ἱλάσκεσθαι, Heb. 2:17. Feuillet, Priesthood, pp. 76-7, pointed out the connection of the word to the Old Testament cult and the Day of Atonement (Gk.: ἡμέρα ἑξιλασμοῦ). He suggested it also alluded to Is. 53:10.

⁹⁵"Priestertum Christi," p. 338; he concluded the high priest-Christology was no specialty of Hebrews, but rather was reflected in various New Testament writings. Spicq, "L'origine," p. 169, concluded that Hebrews' high priest-Christology was dependent on the Johannine catechesis. He also observed that nearly all early Christian documents concerned with cult, priesthood, and the exalted Christ as high priest are closely associated with Asia Minor. He listed 1 Peter, Revelation, the Gospel of John, Polycarp, Ignatius, and (therefore also) probably Hebrews; the only exception is 1 Clement. He suggested (as did Clarkson, "Antecedents," pp. 89-95) that the priests converted to Christianity mentioned in Acts 6:7 fled to Asia Minor. Hahn, Hoheitstitel, pp. 234-5, agreed that some priestly motifs are present, but doubted that there was an independent Johannine conception of Jesus as high priest. Gnilka, "Erwartung," pp. 421-5, argued that the priestly elements in John are not those of the end-time priestly messiah of Jewish expectation, but of the atoning, freely self-sacrificing Servant. According to Gnilka, Spicq claimed too much for his evidence, but may have been right in saying that Hebrews has worked out further thoughts which are expressed also in John.

Conclusion

We have attempted to present evidence that outside of Hebrews the New Testament presents Jesus as the priestly messiah and, at the same time, to point out objections and alternative interpretations for various passages. The results of our inquiry justify the following conclusions: Some specific "priestly elements" are present in the Christology of the New Testament outside of Hebrews, but these are not reflections of the contemporary sectarian Jewish hope for the priestly messiah.

The first and obvious point to make is that the New Testament outside of Hebrews nowhere expressis verbis calls Jesus "priest," "high priest," or "Anointed of Aaron."⁹⁶ Furthermore, the New Testament shows no interest in demonstrating that Jesus had the proper Aaronide-Zadokite genealogy to be the authentic fulfiller of the high priestly office. Indeed, the direct witness of the New Testament is that Jesus was a son of David, of the tribe of Judah.⁹⁷ Jesus' titles of Χριστός

⁹⁶Friedrich, "Beobachtungen," pp. 303-11, offered the weak explanation that this was due to: 1) the difficulty the early church faced in explaining to Judaism how Jesus, a non-Aaronide, could be a legitimate high priest and not a blasphemous usurper; and 2) a Son of Man Christology in some places apparently obscured what was originally a high priestly Christology.

⁹⁷Only Hebrews tried to explain how Jesus could be high priest even though he was not of the tribe of Levi. Friedrich's interpretation of Matt. 22:41-46 was not convincing.

In point of fact, the historical figure in the Synoptic Gospels who comes closest to fulfilling the qualifications of the "priest of the end-time" is not Jesus but John the Baptist, the "restorer," of a priestly family, who was "Elijah." See Bruce Vawter, "Levitical Messianism and the New Testament," The Bible in Current Catholic Thought, ed. by John L. McKenzie (New York: Herder and Herder, 1962), pp. 97-98.

and "Son of God" are better understood as originating in a royal messianism.⁹⁸

Certain aspects of Jesus' ministry, as described in the New Testament outside of Hebrews, may have their background in the functions of the Old Testament priests, but, as we saw, they often admit of alternative explanations. Furthermore, they are not elements which are prominent in the Jewish expectations for a priestly messiah. These "sacerdotal elements" can be viewed as clustered around three complexes of ideas.

The first, featured prominently in the Gospels, is Jesus and the temple. This has a twofold aspect:

a) Jesus' stance over against the temple and his conflict with the priestly leaders of its cult. In this he might be seen to have a similar outlook to that of the Qumran community and the high priest they hoped for. (But other groups harbored hostility toward the Jerusalem cult, too.)

b) Jesus' temple-saying, which led to an understanding of his body as the replacement of the temple. This (and the related idea of his mediatorship as God incarnate) was an idea alien to Jewish priestly messianism.⁹⁹

The "priestly elements" in this complex of ideas are connected to the Old

⁹⁸ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ remains a puzzling phrase; but it is not necessarily sacerdotal. Friedrich's attempt to find priestly messianism in the Χριστός and Son of God titles was not convincing.

⁹⁹ Melchizedek in 11QMelch is taken to be an angelic figure (מִלְכִּי־צֶדֶק), not the priestly messiah. See Fred Horton, The Melchizedek Tradition, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, 30 (Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 73-80.

Testament idea of the place where God's presence dwells¹⁰⁰ and of providing access to God. It is much broader than just the priesthood, and quite different from the Jewish expectation of the priestly messiah, who would restore the legitimate service to the temple.

The second complex of ideas is prominent in the passion narratives and especially the epistles of Paul and Peter; the interpretation of the death of Jesus as a sacrifice. The Lord himself explained the Old Testament so that the crucifixion was understood as having been prophesied therein. It was understood as the death of the innocent, uncomplaining Servant (Isaiah 53). In places it was interpreted further, with help from Old Testament cultic language, as a sacrifice. Because Jesus, as Lord, was always on the initiative, it was therefore a self-sacrifice. But to say that any such cultic sacrifice language points to Jesus as priest as well as victim is to jump to a hasty conclusion. The self-sacrifice of the Servant and the sacerdotal action of a priest offering sacrifice are to be kept distinct. There is also no connection in this complex of ideas to anything associated with Jewish priestly messianism.

The third complex of ideas has to do with the work of the exalted Lord; this comes to the fore in Rom. 8:34 and in the Johannine writings.¹⁰¹ This also has two aspects, which may be seen to have different Old Testament roots:

a) He enters God's presence and so creates/becomes a way of access for

¹⁰⁰ It might even be connected to Jesus as Son of David, the "house" God promised David in response to his offer to build a house for God (2 Sam. 7:11).

¹⁰¹ We include some words of Jesus (e.g., John 17) spoken before his death but spoken "sub specie aeternitatis," as the Son who is returning to the Father.

the people. Here the cultic language (προσαγωγή) is strong, but one could also think of Moses/Joshua, the leaders of the pilgrim people into the promised land, or of the kings as "Shepherds" for the Old Testament background.

b) He makes intercession in the heavenly sanctuary. Here we recall that not only the high priest, but also Moses and the Servant (Is. 53:12) made intercession; in heaven are the intercessor-angels.

The priestly messiah of Judaism was to draw near to God and offer sacrifices and prayers. But there is no mention of his opening a new way into the heavenly temple or of his ascending there to make intercession!

There remains one set of circumstances in which we must leave open the possibility of a connection of Jesus' ministry to the work of the priestly messiah: Jesus' work as an exorcist, especially the description of the import of that work in Matt. 12:29 (=Mark 3:27).¹⁰²

The similarity of this parabolic saying to the description of the work of the priestly messiah in Test. Levi 18:12 evokes caution about rejecting any connection or influence. The priestly messiah was to lead in the final battle against the spiritual powers of evil. This Jesus did in his ministry through his frontal attack on the kingdom of Beliar.¹⁰³ While other interpretations of Jesus' explanation of his actions may be possible, it is best to leave the question open on this point.

¹⁰²Luke 11:22 omits the thought of "binding."

¹⁰³Cf. also the role of the chief priest in 1QM.

Thus, with one possible exception, our conclusion is negative. While there are some "priestly elements" in the Christology of the New Testament outside of Hebrews, Jesus is not presented there as the priestly messiah.

CHAPTER IV

IS JESUS THE PRIESTLY MESSIAH ACCORDING TO THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS?

Issues in the Interpretation of Hebrews

We now turn with our question to that singular New Testament epistle, Hebrews. Only here in the New Testament is Jesus specifically called "priest" and "high priest."¹ Is Hebrews' teaching of Jesus' priesthood a conscious response to the Jewish sectarian hope for a priestly messiah? To answer that question we must delve into three of the most disputed questions concerning Hebrews:

- 1) What is the proper philosophical-religious context in which to understand the author's categories of thought?
- 2) How may the purpose of the letter be defined in relationship to the identity and historical situation of the addressees?
- 3) What is the origin, content, and role in the letter of the teaching of Jesus' priesthood?

The answers to these questions are integral to the theme of this chapter. Therefore, before analysing the characteristics of the person and nature

¹ ἱερεὺς, in the quotation of Ps. 110:4, in Heb. 5:6; 7:17, 21; implied in 8:4; ἱερεῖά μὲγαν, Heb. 10:21; ἀρχιερεὺς, Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14 (ἀρχιερεῖά μὲγαν); 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11. Cf. ἱερωσύνην, Heb. 7:24.

of the work of Christ, the high priest, in Hebrews, we shall present our own views as follows:

1) The author's thought-world is that of a Hellenistic Jew from a background best illustrated by the Alexandrian Jewish tradition.²

2) The addressees were a Jewish-Christian separatist group (perhaps a house-church) in Rome which kept aloof from other Christians and, in the face of the imminent recurrence of persecution, was tempted to take refuge in the safe haven of Judaism, a religio licita.

3) The teaching of Christ's priesthood is one point in a series of typological-exegetical arguments advanced in support of the letter's hortatory purpose (which is expressed most pointedly in 10:19-39).

These represent a refinement of views which were widely held in the first half of this century; they run contrary to some of the most recent commentators' thinking on these questions.³ Therefore we shall preface our argumentation with a brief report of the history and current state of the question on these issues.⁴

²Of course, his conversion to Christianity introduced important new elements into his thoughts, especially in the area of eschatology; see C. K. Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews," The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology, Essays in Honor of C. H. Dodd, ed. by W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: University Press, 1956), pp. 363-393.

³E.g., G. W. Buchanan, To the Hebrews, The Anchor Bible, 36 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1972), pp. 246-267; P. E. Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), pp. 10-19.

⁴Two helpful articles are F. F. Bruce, "Recent Contributions to the Understanding of Hebrews," The Expository Times, 80 (1968-9): 260-264, and G. W. Buchanan, "The Present State of Scholarship on the Hebrews," Christianity, Judaism and Other Graeco-Roman Cults, Essays in Honor of Morton Smith, ed. by J. Neusner, Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity, 12 (Leiden: Brill, 1975), Pt. I, pp. 299-330. Both considered

Current State on These Questions

Earlier commentators on Hebrews spent considerable energy on questions revolving around the identify of the author and his background in Hellenism, particularly his relationship to Platonism as mediated by Philo Judaeus. Ceslas Spicq is the principle modern representative of this interest. Having surveyed the history of the study of Philonism in Hebrews,⁵ he concluded that the author of Hebrews⁶ was a "disciple of Philo converted to Christianity."⁷ But such a close connection to Philo was never unanimously accepted.⁸ Otto Michel summarized the two major misgivings which the work of many previous scholars raised about too close an association of Hebrews with Philonism:⁹ 1) the connection

the publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls as a critical event in the modern development of the study of Hebrews.

⁵ L'Épître aux Hébreux, 2nd ed. 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1952), 1:39-40. He named H. Grotius (1644), J. B. Carpzov (1750), and J. J. Wettstein (1752) as the earliest New Testament scholars to note the similarity between Hebrews and Philo.

⁶ Whom he took to be Apollos, a conjecture earlier ventured by Luther.

⁷ Hébreux, 1:88-89, where he quotes a phrase of E. Ménégos. He restated this view in a recent popular commentary, C. Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux, Sources Bibliques (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1977), p. 15.

⁸ B. F. Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951 reprint of an 1889 publication) might be considered the epitome of 19th century caution; on p. ixi he noted important differences between Hebrews and Philo, but nonetheless said: "The style of the Book is characteristically Hellenistic, perhaps we may say, as far as our scanty evidence goes, Alexandrine; but the teaching itself is . . . characteristically Palestinian."

⁹ Der Brief an die Hebräer, KEKNT, 13, 12th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), pp. 552-3.

of Hebrews to rabbinic materials and apocalyptic motifs (as demonstrated by Fr. Delitzsch, E. Riehm, and J. Bonsirven), and 2) the variance in theological structure, namely that Philo's writings represent a metaphysical system of thought while Hebrews is a historical and eschatological message.¹⁰ Nonetheless, Michel and others could affirm some association of the author with Alexandria;¹¹ and even R. Williamson's thorough refutation of Spicq's conclusion of dependence on Philo¹² acknowledged that Hebrews shares much with the Alexandrian Jewish religious tradition.¹³

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 553, concluded that one can isolate individual traditions which Philo and Hebrews held in common, but that the attempt to assemble these into a description of formal relationship is of secondary significance, for "der Hellenismus Philos ist von anderer Art als der unseres Briefes."

E. Käsemann, Das wandernde Gottesvolk, FRLANT, N. F., 37 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939), p. 140, advanced the theory that Philo and Hebrews, independent of each other, fused the late Jewish priestly messianism with the Gnostic Urmensch myth. He considered Jewish apocalyptic and Gnostic writings as the proper background against which to understand Hebrews and regarded Philo's work as an independent parallel development. Few have followed him in this view.

¹¹ Michel, Hebräer, p. 40; F. F. Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews. NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), p. xxxiii; H. W. Montefiore, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1964), pp. 7-8.

¹² Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews, Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des Hellenistischen Judentums, 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1970); on pp. 577-9 he concluded that Hebrews' Christian faith that the "eternal reality" was revealed in the historical life of Jesus established a great gulf between Hebrews and Philo (the Platonist). The author of Hebrews was no "Philonist," or, if he was, he made a change of philosophical outlook so drastic as to be almost beyond belief.

¹³ Ibid., p. 580, n. 1; but this is no proof of Philonic influence (p. 576). See also his (correct) refutation of the notion that Hebrews' Logos(-Sophia) Christology is dependent on Philo's Logos teaching (pp. 409-34), in the course of which he acknowledged that Hebrews used Alexandrian terminology (pp. 411, 431). The strength and limitation

The publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls was especially significant for the study of Hebrews. Since their appearance, interest has shifted, subtly, from the author's background to the identity, character, and situation of the addressees. In former days these had been described as Hellenistic-Jewish Christians in Alexandria,¹⁴ Asia Minor,¹⁵ Rome,¹⁶ Cyprus,¹⁷ and Corinth,¹⁸ as Jewish Christians in Palestine around the time of the Jewish revolt,¹⁹ and even as Gentile Christians.²⁰ But study of this question in the light of the Qumran

of his work is expressed in this sentence (p. 431): "But there is hardly sufficient evidence in Hebrews--where Jesus is never explicitly called the Logos--to support the view that Philo's thought in particular, as distinct from Alexandrian thought in general, had exerted a specially powerful influence" (our emphases).

¹⁴S. G. F. Brandon, The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church (1951), pp. 239-40, cited by Bruce, "Contributions," p. 261.

¹⁵T. W. Manson, "The Problem of the Epistle to the Hebrews," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, 32 (1949/50):1-17; it was written to the churches in the Lycus valley to oppose what later became the Colossian heresy. Also W. F. Howard in Interpretation, 5 (1951), cited by Bruce, "Contributions," p. 260.

¹⁶William Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews An Historical and Theological Reconsideration, The Baird Lecture, 1949 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951), passim (p. 44, e.g.). See also M. Franzmann, The Word of the Lord Grows (St. Louis: Concordia, 1961), pp. 237-46.

¹⁷E. Riegenbach, Der Brief an die Hebräer, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament von Theo. Zahn, 14 (Leipzig: A Deichert, 1913), pp. xlvi-xlviif.

¹⁸Montefiore, Hebrews.

¹⁹C. H. Turner, Catholic and Apostolic (1931) and A. Ehrhard, The Framework of the New Testament Stories (1964), both cited by Bruce, "Contributions," p. 261.

²⁰J. Moffat, The Epistle to the Hebrews, The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scripture, 40 (New York: Scribner's 1924) p. xvi.

writings has refocused interest on Palestine. Some now consider the recipients of Hebrews to have been Palestinian converts to Christianity from Judaism of an Essene type, perhaps even including some of the priests mentioned in Acts 6:7.²¹ The letter was written, then, to instruct them in a correct full Christology which incorporated Melchizedek²² in his right relationship to Jesus and demonstrated the category of priesthood as having been fulfilled in Jesus.²³

A few scholars have also described the recipients of Hebrews in the light of early Samaritan Christianity.²⁴ Scobie made the following points:

²¹Spicq had already referred to this passage in his speculations about the addresses in Hébreux, 1:226-8 (before the Qumran find was connected to this); he expanded his hypothesis, making the Qumran connection in "l'Épître aux Hébreux, Apollos, Jean-Baptiste, les Hellénistes et Qumran," Revue de Qumran, 1 (1958/59):365-390. The same connection is maintained in O. Cullmann, "The Significance of the Qumran Texts for Research into the Beginnings of Christianity," The Scrolls and the New Testament, ed. by K. Stendahl (New York: Harper, 1957), pp. 19-32; Y. Yadin, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Epistle to the Hebrews," Scripta Hierosolymitana, 4 (1958):36-55; and H. Kosmala, Hebräer--Essener--Christian, Studia Post-Biblica, 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1959), pp. 1-43.

²²M. de Jong and A. S. Van der Woude, "11QMelchizedek and the New Testament," NTS, 12 (1965/66):301-326, saw Hebrews' Christology as a possible corrective to wrong ideas about Melchizedek (as in 11Melch) among Christian converts from Essene-type Judaism. But Bruce, "Contributions," p. 263, rightly pointed out that this is not the point of the Melchizedek portion of Hebrews' argument. And in his thorough and sober study, Fred Horton, The Melchizedek Tradition, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, 30 (Cambridge: University Press, 1976), began with the assumption of a connection between 11QMelch and Hebrews but found that his study led him to abandon that position (pp.vii-viii, 152-172, esp. 167-9).

²³This would establish a logical link between the priestly character of the Qumran community, their priestly messianism, the priests converted to Christianity, and Hebrews' teaching of Jesus' priesthood. This view, which we shall oppose, is also accepted as plausible by Hughes, Hebrews, pp. 14-15; cf. Williamson, Philo and Hebrews, pp. 431-2.

²⁴See Charles H. H. Scobie, "The Origins and Development of Samaritan Christianity," NTS, 19 (1972/3):392-414, esp. 409-414, and the

- 1) Later Samaritan documents used Hebrews,²⁵ a fact which shows the propinquity of Hebrews' thought and the appeal of its argument to those of a Samaritan background.
- 2) As a Christological treatise, Hebrews deals with angels, Moses, and Joshua, all three of which are important in Samaritan writings.²⁶
- 3) Hebrews rejects a Davidic Christology in order to present a Christology which could be accepted by Samaritan Christians, "for whom Davidic messianic conceptions were anathema."²⁷
- 4) Hebrews reflects the "two worlds" of heaven and earth, as is in the Memar Marqah.
- 5) Hebrews' teaching regarding Melchizedek corresponds to a Samaritan interest in Melchizedek.²⁸
- 6) In its discussion of priesthood, sanctuary, and sacrifice, Hebrews shows no interest in contemporary Judaism nor the temple in

further literature there cited, and J. Macdonald, The Theology of the Samaritans, The New Testament Library (London: SCM Press, 1964), p. 421. The post-New Testament period date of the Samaritan documents is a difficulty in this entire approach.

²⁵Scobie, "Origins," p. 409, cited R. J. F. Trotter, Did the Samaritans of the Fourth Century Know the Epistle to the Hebrews?, Leeds University Oriental Society Monograph Series, No. 1 (Leeds, 1961). See also J. Macdonald, ed. and trans., Memar Marqah The Teaching of Marqah, 2 vols., Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 84 (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1963), 1, 43.

²⁶Scobie, "Origins," pp. 410-11; Hebrews is thus demonstrating the inadequacy of these three categories, which the Samaritan Christian recipients might have been tempted to use.

²⁷Ibid., p. 411; in this Hebrews is like the speech of Stephen in Acts 7 and John. Scobie said Hebrews' Christology is centered in the idea of priesthood. But the idea of sonship is also basic, and Psalms 2 and 110 (Davidic, royal Psalms) are fundamental to the argument of the epistle. (Scobie discounted their presence as due to the citation of a testimonia source, p. 411, n. 5.)

²⁸Ibid., p. 412; he cited (n. 4) J. Freudental's hypothesis that part of the Eupolemus fragments (in Eusebius' Praeparatio Evangelica, book IX) are by "Pseudo-Eupolemus," a Hellenistic Samaritan author who linked Melchizedek to Mt. Gerizim. "Salem," then, in "king of Salem," would not refer to Jerusalem, G. Barrois, "Salem," IDB, 4:166, suggested tentatively an identification of Salem with "Shalem, a city of Shechem" (Gen. 33:18 LXX, Lat., Syr.; RSV: ". . . safely to the city of Shechem"); cf. John 8:23, "Salim," which some locate near Shechem.

Jerusalem;²⁹ its arguments are "based on the Pentateuch and on the Tabernacle."³⁰

7) The description of the golden altar of incense inside the Holy of Holies (Heb. 9:3-4) corresponds to the Samaritan Pentateuch recension of Exodus (where Ex. 30:1-10 comes between Ex. 26:35 and 36).³¹

8) Hebrews 11 omits Aaron and Phinehas, includes several judges and the patriarch Joseph, and breaks off its historical review at precisely the point of the building of the Jerusalem temple.³²

This is an interesting line of thought, which could eventually also account for some of the similarities between Hebrews and John. But there are too many serious objections to be raised for us to be able to accept

²⁹We agree with this observation, but shall explain it differently, as being due to the fact that the author is carrying on an exegetical (not historical) argument in Diaspora Judaism.

³⁰Scobie, "Origins," p. 412. True, the comparison is consistently with the tabernacle and the worship associated with it, which are described in the Pentateuch. But the argument in many places rests on passages from the prophets and the writings, e.g. Ps. 2:7 (Heb. 1:5; 5:5); Ps. 110:1, 4 (passim); Psalm 8 (Heb. 2:6-8); Psalm 95 (Heb. 3:7-11); Jeremiah 31 (Heb. 8:8-12 and 10:16-18); Psalm 40 (Heb. 10:5-7); and Hab. 2:3-4 (Heb. 10:37-38). Scobie attributed this to the fact that the author was not a Samaritan, though the recipients had been. But the non-Pentateuchal references are pervasive; the arguments are not "based on the Pentateuch."

³¹Ibid., pp. 412-3. This is a telling point, which can be gainsaid only by referring to the variety of test-types extant before the standardization of the MT. It would be the author's text!

³²In this it corresponds to Acts 7: as a contrast to both of them, see Sir. 49-50. Scobie concluded by noting the theological themes which his article found in Acts 7, John, and Hebrews (pp. 413-4): futuristic eschatology is minimal and fulfillment is stressed; Davidic Christology is rejected and Mosaic Christology is developed; Christ's ascension/exaltation has virtually displaced the resurrection in importance; heavenly intercession is emphasized; true worship is a key topic; and the eschatological reunion of God's people may be a theme. He also referred to the fact that the Samaritans called themselves "Hebrews," but discounted the importance of this since the superscription to the New Testament epistle was added later.

the conclusion that the recipients of Hebrews were Christians from a Samaritan background.³³

All this makes clear how important it is to assess the relationship of the doctrine of Jesus' priesthood in Hebrews to the author's goal in writing. If Hebrews is a Christological tract, giving the "mature" teaching of Christ's high priesthood, then that Christological mystery is the unique emphasis and the key message of the letter, which the author wished to teach.³⁴ The alternative is to understand the discussion of Christ as high priest as one point in the exegetical arguments which support the author's hortatory purpose. He is sending a Scripturally-based "word of encouragement" (Heb. 13:22, *λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως*) to Christians who are tempted no longer to hold fast to their confession, but to "shrink back" into Judaism (Heb. 10:38-39).³⁵

³³In addition to the objections already noted, there is the fact that this view does not offer a clear explanation of the historical situation of the addressees, the persecutions they faced or their temptation to "shrink back" into Judaism. Like the hypothesis of Essene connections, it concentrates on the doctrinal (Christological) contents of Hebrews without taking sufficient account of the fact that the doctrinal sections support a specific practical exhortation.

³⁴Earlier studies sometimes over-emphasized this doctrinal approach. But we have also seen that those recent scholars who argue for Essene or Samaritan connections have focused on the Christological teaching and its projected antitheses in order to ascertain the author's purpose.

³⁵That Hebrews is a sermon whose goal is in the paraenetic sections was demonstrated by W. Nauck, "Zum Aufbau des Hebräerbriefes," Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche, ed. by W. Eltester, Festschrift für J. Jeremias, 2nd ed., Beiheft zur ZNW, 26 (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1964), pp. 199-206; see also Micel, Hebräer, pp. 26-7.

The Background of the Author's Language

Faced with this array of diverse opinions, we hold that it is of first importance to emphasize the Alexandrian-Jewish background of the author's thought.³⁶ Fortuitously, most of the significant terms in this regard occur within three passages: Heb. 8:1-7; 9:23-24; and 12:25-29. We shall demonstrate the importance of the Alexandrian conceptual background through a citation of these passages, with appropriate notes and further references.

³⁶In the wake of Williamson's thorough study, no one would continue to hold to Spicq's extreme position that the author of Hebrews was a former disciple of Philo. Nor would anyone deny Michel's important points that his conversion to Christianity led him to regard history as the arena of God's saving deeds and to hold to the apocalyptic hope for a future consummation as part of his eschatology. But neither of these points can gainsay the evidence that for certain words and concepts in Hebrews, particularly those touching on cosmology, the nearest parallels are in Alexandrian Judaism. For an exhaustive assembling of parallels, see Spicq, Hébreux, vol. 1, ch. III, and his article "Alexandrinismes dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," Revue Biblique, 58 (1951): 481-502; outside of the ones to be discussed below, the most important parallels are those regarding the Son as mediator and agent of creation on the one hand and Sophia-Logos as an intermediary figure on the other hand (ἀπαύγασμα, Χαρακτήρ, δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα, Heb. 1:1-4; Sap. 7:21-26; 8:6; 9:1-2, 9: Philo, Plant, 18; Fuga 12; Opif. 18; Spec. I, 81; Somm. I, 241.)

It was especially the Alexandrian tradition of Diaspora Judaism which took up the task of merging the religion revealed in the Old Testament with the insights of the Greek philosophers (see, e.g., Eduard Zeller, Die nacharistotelische Philosophie, Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung, pt. 3, sec. 2, 5th ed. [Leipzig: O. R. Reisland, 1923], p. 264). Philo, a brilliant syncretistic thinker, represents the culmination of the development of this tradition, which included the LXX translators, Eupolemos, Aristobulos, the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Letter of Aristeas, as well as 3 and 4 Maccabees and book III of the Sibylline Oracles (which cannot be definitely dated before New Testament times). For a discussion of pre-Philonic Alexandrian Judaism see H. A. Wolfson, Philo, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1948), 1:17-27. While the author of Hebrews may not have been a former disciple of Philo, even Williamson and Michel agree that his writing was related to the Alexandrian tradition of Jewish thought.

Summarizing the point of the exegesis in chapter 7, Hebrews

8:1-2 says:

Now the point (κεφάλαιον) in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent (τῶν ἁγίων λειτουργὸς καὶ τῆς σκηνῆς τῆς ἀληθινῆς) which is set up not by man but by the Lord.

The tabernacle that is the real³⁷ one is the one that is in heaven³⁸

³⁷ἀληθινός (Heb. 10:22, in the sense of "sincere," and 9:24, parallel to the usage here), BAG, s.v., 3.: "genuine, real," of God over against false gods, of prophets and teachers over against false ones, and of the suffering, over against Docetism; "true in the sense of the reality possessed only by the archetype, not by its copies." Thus in Heb. 9:24 (see below) the "sanctuary" (ἅγια, pl.) which Christ has entered is not χειροποίητα, nor ἀντίτυπα τῶν ἀληθινῶν, but rather is heaven itself. ἀληθινός has the "sense of that which truly is, or of that which is eternal" (R. Bultmann, "ἀληθεύω, κ. τ. λ., C.," TDNT, 1:250). Cf. Philo, LA 1:32-3. Michel, Hebraer, p. 288, connected it not only to the "Himmliche," but also (without warrant) to the "Zukunftige;" then he said (rightly): "Allerdings wird man nicht die Tatsache vernachlässigen dürfen, dass es sich hier wie bei Philo und der Gnosis um ein Ringen um eine andere Wirklichkeit handelt als um die irdisch gegebene" (p. 289).

³⁸Similarly, in Heb. 8:5 the earthly priests serve the "copy and shadow" τῶν ἑπουρανίων. In Heb. 9:24 (see below) it is "heaven itself" (αὐτὸν τὸν οὐρανόν) which Christ entered, and in the preceding verse the things purified with the (Levitical) rites under the law are copies of the things "which are in heaven" (τῶν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς); these copies are contrasted with the "heavenly things themselves" (αὐτὰ . . . τὰ ἑπουράνια). ἑπουράνιος is elsewhere used of the heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1), gift (6:4), fatherland (11:16), and the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22). Also, those who reject the "one who warns from heaven" will be even less likely to escape than those who rejected "him who warned . . . on earth" (12:25).

and is set up by the Lord.³⁹ "This priest," described in chapter 7, does not offer sacrifice on earth; indeed, he would not be a priest at all on earth, seeing as

there are priests who offer gifts according to the law.⁴⁰ They serve a copy⁴¹ and shadow⁴² of the heavenly sanctuary (οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιά λατρεύουσιν τῶν ἑπουρανίων Heb. 8:4b-5a).

This is proved by a citation of the warning to Moses in Ex. 25:40LXX

Heb. 8:5c): ὄρα, γὰρ φησιν, ποιήσεις πάντα κατὰ τὸν

³⁹This sense of the passage depends on the LXX version of Num. 24:6-7. The idea corresponds to the sanctuary "not made with hands" (9:24) and the "greater and more perfect tent . . . not of this creation" (τῆς μεζζονος καὶ τελειοτέρας σκηνῆς . . . οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως, 9:11).

⁴⁰Michel, *Hebräer*, p. 290: "Der himlische Hohepriester passt nicht in die Struktur dieser Zeit und Welt hinein." Even better, Buchanan, *Hebrews*, p. 134: "God creates nothing unnecessarily;" since there were already priests to offer "according to the law," God would not have created a duplicate priesthood (cf. Heb. 7:14). Therefore this priest's function is not on earth but in heaven. This is a point which leads away from any connection with the priestly messianism of Judaism. Hughes, *Hebrews*, p. 292, n. 4, argued that the present tense (λατρεύουσιν) indicates that the temple ministry in Jerusalem had not yet come to an end.

⁴¹ὑποδείγμα, in the sense of "pattern," or "example," Heb. 4:11; cf. *Ep. Arist.* 143; Philo, *Heres*, 256; John 13:15; in a pejorative metaphysical sense (*BAG*, s.v., 2.: "copy, imitation") only here and Heb. 9:23.

⁴²σκιά, here and Heb. 10:1; cf. Col. 2:17: a shadowy likeness which is contrasted with αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων (Heb. 10:1). *BAG*, s.v., 2.: "shadow, foreshadowing (in contrast to reality)." "Foreshadowing" is justified by the phrase in Heb. 10:1 (re: the law) and Col. 2:17 (re: foods, drinks, and feasts): σκιά τῶν μελλόντων But Heb. 8:5 shows that that which is foreshadowed as "coming" also already exists as the "heavenly."

τύπον⁴³ τὸν δεχθέντα σοι ἐν τῷ ὄρει. Finally, verse 6 argues the superiority of Christ's ministry on the basis of the comparison between the heavenly (true, type) and the earthly (copy, shadow) sanctuaries and the first and second covenants associated with each:

But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent (διαφορωτέρας)⁴⁴ than the old as the covenant he mediates is better (κρείττονος),⁴⁵ since it is enacted on better (κρείττοσιν) promises.

⁴³BAG, s.v., 5.: "(arche)type, pattern, model (Pla., Rep. 379A . . .) a technically, model, pattern Ac 7:44; Hb. 8:5." Exodus 25:40 (where the Hebrew has אֲרֵכְתִּיפִי אֲשֶׁר־בְּרָאָה) was of great important to Judaism, for it established the link between the heavenly and the heavenly sanctuaries. Philo incorporated it into his cosmology and praised Moses as the "artificer of the archetypes" (Mos., 2, 71-76; cf. Plant. 27; LA 3:102).

It should be pointed out that our usual terminology (O.T. "type," and N.T. "antitype") is the reverse of Hebrews', which uses ἀντίτυπος in 9:24 in the sense of "copy" (corresponding to the "Platonic doctrine," BAG, s.v., 2). If we continue our ordinary usage, we must remember that the N.T. "antitype" is also the original "archetype" (see Hughes, Hebrews, p. 293).

⁴⁴The comparative form is used in the exact same kind of construction in Heb. 1:4: . . . τοσοῦτῳ κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων ὅσω διαφορώτερον παρ' αὐτοὺς κληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα. Elsewhere in the N.T. the word is used only in Rom. 12:6 and Heb. 9:10, in the sense of "various." In the sense "outstanding, excellent," BAG s.v., 2. cites Ep. Arist., 97.

⁴⁵In this word the goal of the author's exegesis comes to the fore: to argue the superiority of the new covenant in Christ. Thus the Son is better than the angels (1:4); the lesser [Abraham] is blessed by the better [Melchizedek] (7:7); we have a better hope (7:19) and a better covenant (7:22; 8:6); the heavenly things were purified by better sacrifices (9:23); Christians have a better and abiding (μένουσα) possession (ὑπαρξεν, 10:34); the O.T. believers looked for a better (ἐπιθυροῦσαν) fatherland (11:16); some endured torture, that they might receive a better resurrection (=a better life in the resurrection, 11:35); God had foreseen something better for us (11:40); and the blood [of Christ] speaks better (RSV: "more graciously") than the blood of

Many of the same notes are struck in two verses in chapter 9 (23-24). This chapter (verses 1-10) describes the regulations for worship in the earthly sanctuary (τό . . . ἅγιον κοσμικόν,⁴⁶ 9:1) and their (limited) effect (verses 9b-10).⁴⁷ With these are contrasted⁴⁸ (verses 11-28) the action of Christ in⁴⁹ the "greater and more perfect"⁵⁰ tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation)"⁵¹ and its

Abel (12:24). It is all better because it is heavenly, genuine, everlasting. In the cosmological terminology is an axiological judgment (see A. Cody, Heavenly Sanctuary and Liturgy in the Epistle to the Hebrews [St. Meinrad, Ind.: Grail Publications, 1960], pp. 83-4).

The same criterion for weighing value is evident in the author's use of ἡ πῆλη (a minore ad maius) in Heb. 2:2-4; 9:13-14; 10:28-9; 12:9; and 12:25.

⁴⁶A direct opposite of ἐπουράνιος; for its use in this sense in Aristeas, Philo, and Josephus, see Michel, Hebräer, p. 298, Hebrews uses κόσμος in 10:5; 11:7, 38.

⁴⁷They "deal only with food and drink and various ablutions, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation" (καιρῶν διορθώσεως); cf. Heb. 9:13: "for the purification of the flesh" (τῆς σαρκός).

⁴⁸The δέ in 9:11 (rather than the one in 9:6) is the partner of the μὲν in 9:1; cf. Michel, Hebräer, pp. 304-5.

⁴⁹Technically, in the "sanctuary" (τὰ ἅγια, v. 12) which he entered by passing through (διὰ) the "greater and more perfect tent," i.e., the "outer" (cf. 9:2-3, 6-7) tent of the heavenly archetype.

⁵⁰τελειότερα. Since "perfect" is an adjective that does not admit of comparison, perhaps a better rendering would be a paraphrase like Michel's (Hebräer, p. 311): "besser geeignet zum himmlischen Dienst."

⁵¹ὅς ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως (9:11). ΚΤΙΣΙΣ (BAG, s.v., 1. b. .) "the sum total of everything created, creation, world," Ep. Arist., 139; Sib. Or. V, 152; Sap. 16:24. But this phrase (with ταύτης), "this world" (earthly in contrast to heavenly)," is also reminiscent of

effect, namely: the purification of consciences⁵² and the securing of an eternal⁵³ redemption and inheritance for those who wait for him (verse 28). Having referred to Moses' sprinkling of the tent and vessels with blood (verse 21) and to the principle that "under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (verse 22), the author continues (verses 23-24):

ἀνάγκη οὖν τὰ μὲν⁵⁴ υποδείματα⁵⁵ τῶν ἐν

ἱερός τε ὁμοίως τε ἰσχύει is elsewhere generally rendered by αἰών; re-related passages in Hebrews would be Heb. 1:2, 6:5; 9:26; and 11:3.

⁵²Verse 15; see also Heb. 9:9; 10:2, 22.

⁵³αἰώνιος in the sense of everlasting, another expression for the superiority of the salvation (Heb. 5:9), redemption (9:12) and inheritance (9:15) associated with the covenant (which is also αἰώνιος, 13:20) of which Christ is the μεσσίτης (Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). This is the new covenant (καίνος, Heb. 8:8=Jer. 31:31; 8:13; 9:15; νέας, 12:24; δεύτερος, 8:7; 10:9), which displaces (8:7) and "makes obsolete" (8:13) the first covenant (πρώτος, 8:7, 13; 9:1, 2, 6, 8, 15, 18; (10:9). Also, the "former (προαγομένης) commandment is set aside" and "a better hope is introduced" (7:18). And similarly, the sacrifices offered according to the law are abolished in order to establish the sanctification which is through the doing of God's will, "the offering of the body of Jesus once for all" (10:8-10).

⁵⁴The proliferation of μὲν . . . δέ constructions in Hebrews also demonstrates the author's relentless polemical comparisons of: angels and the son (1:7); Moses and Christ (3:5); the descendants of Levi and "this man" (7:5); mortal men and one who lives (7:8); the former commandment and the better hope (7:18-19); the former, without an oath, and this one, with an oath (7:30-21); the first covenant and when Christ appeared (9:1, 11); copies and the heavenly things themselves (9:23); daily sacrifices and the once-for all sacrifice (10:11-12); the earthly fatherland and the better, heavenly, one (11:15-16); and the earthly fathers and the "Father of spirits" (12:10).

⁵⁵On this unusual word, see note 41. Synonymous expressions are in Sap. 9:8: μίμημα σκηνῆς ἁγίας, ἣν προητοίμασας ἀπ' ἀρχῆς,

τοῖς οὐρανοῖς τούτοις⁵⁶ καθαρῖζεσθαι αὐτὰ δὲ
 τὰ ἔπουράνια⁵⁷ κρείττοσιν⁵⁸ θυσίαις παρὰ ταύτας.
 οὐ γὰρ εἰς χειροποίητα⁵⁹ εἰσῆλθεν ἄγχι
 Χριστός, ἀντίτυπα τῶν ἀληθειῶν,⁶⁰

and Heb. 10:1: σκιάν . . . οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων.
 In Philo, the λόγος, which is also the κόσμος νοητός (=the totality
 of the ἰδέαι, Opif. 4) is the εἰκὼν of God (e.g. Opif. 25; Plant. 50).
 At the same time, the ἰδέαι are the patterns of which the material crea-
 tion (κόσμος αἰσθητός) are εἰκόνες (Opif. 146; Ebr. 132, 134). The
 πράγματα (the "entities themselves" [?]; cf. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 305:
 "the real objects") recur in Hebrews 11:1 (cf. also 6:18): . . . πραγμάτων
 ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων. Thus the πράγματα themselves are invis-
 ible, i.e., not a part of the κόσμος αἰσθητός. The ὑποδείγματα
 are visible (cf. φαινόμενα, Heb. 11:3; Philo, Heres, 270) shadowy copies
 of the corresponding ἰδέαι (created invisible forms in the κόσμος
 νοητός) which, in turn, are the εἰκόνες of the "real objects"
 (πραγμάτων). Wisdom is the εἰκὼν of God, Sap. 7:26.

⁵⁶ I.e., the sprinklings by Moses referred to in Vs. 19-22.

⁵⁷ See note 38; its opposite is τὸ . . . ἄγχιον κοσμικόν, 9:1.

⁵⁸ See note 45.

⁵⁹ Used of idols and of the sanctuary of a false god in the LXX
 (e.g., Lev. 26:1; Is. 2:18; 16:12). Acts 7:48, 17:24 both consider a
 building erected through human technology unworthy to be a dwelling
 place for God. ἀχειροποίητος is used only in Mark 14:58 and 2 Cor.
 5:1, where synonyms are αἰώνιον, ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, and τὰ . . . μὴ
 βλεπόμενα (4:18), and antonyms are πρόσκαιρα (4:18), ἐπιγίαιος, and
 τὰ . . . βλεπόμενα (4:18). Hebrews (only in chapter 11) also contrasts
 the visible (τὸ βλεπόμενον, 11:3) with the invisible (μὴ . . . φαινόμενων,
 11:3; οὐ βλεπομένων, 11:1; τὸν ἄορατον [=God], 11:27) and character-
 izes faith as a manner of perceiving the unseen (11:1, 27).

⁶⁰ See notes 43 and 37.

αλλ' ⁶¹ εἰς αὐτὸν τὸν οὐρανόν, νῦν ἐμφανισθῆναι
τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ θεοῦ ⁶² ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν.

Thirdly, we point also to Heb. 12:25-28, where encouragement is given on the basis of consequences drawn from a contrast between Israel's coming to Mount Sinai ⁶³ and the Christians' ("you") coming to "Mount Zion."⁶⁴ Awe-inspiring as the experience at Sinai was (verse 21), it

⁶¹The polemical nature of Hebrews is also evident in the frequent use of ἀλλά in sharp contrast of: the coming of the message to "us" and "them" but its failure to benefit them (4:2); Christ did not usurp his office but was appointed by God (5:4-5); becoming a priest not by legal ancestry but by the power of indestructible life (7:15-16); not a sanctuary made with hands but heaven itself (9:24); not neglecting to meet but encouraging . . . (10:25); not of those who shrink back but who have faith (10:39); not to Mount Sinai but to Mount Zion (12:18, 22); we have here no lasting city but seek the coming one (13-14).

⁶²God does not dwell in a sanctuary made with hands (Acts 7:48; 17:24). One must go into "heaven itself" in order to appear "in the presence of" (τῷ προσώπῳ) God.

⁶³The (non-original) ὄρει of the Western and Byzantine text-types in v. 18 gives the correct interpretation and makes explicit the contrast: οὐ γὰρ προσεληλύθατε ψηλαφωμένῳ ὄρει (12:18) . . . ἀλλὰ προσεληλύθατε Σιῶν ὄρει [. . . ἐπουρανίῳ] (12:22). The description of the Sinai scene draws on both Ex. 19:16-25 and Deut.

4:10-12. The occasion for calling that mountain ψηλαφωμένῳ ("tangible," cf. Luke 24:39; 1 John 1:1) seems to be in Ex. 19:13 (cf. Heb. 12:20). But the reason for thus describing it was to assign it to the earthly, transitory sphere (κόσμος αἰσθητός). See J. W. Thompson, "'That Which Cannot be Shaken' Some Metaphysical Assumptions in Heb. 12:27," *JBL*, 105 (1974):582-3, where he cites parallels in Plato (Phaedo 99e; Tim. 28b, 31b) and Philo (*Cher.* 57, 73; *Post. Cain.* 20).

⁶⁴Which is "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, . . . the festal gathering and assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven" (12:23b-24a). Surely neither Zion nor Jerusalem is meant as a geographical location in this world, but rather indicates the salvation (Heilsgüter) bestowed upon those in the N.T. church. προσεληλύθατε (to which "proselyte" is related) indicates their conversion to Christianity, not a journey to Jerusalem in Judaea. See Bruce, Hebrews,

was still only a speaking of a warning "on earth."⁶⁵ But the Christians respond to "him who warns from heaven" and so have come to the heavenly Jerusalem.⁶⁶ Then, considering the present in the light of the eschaton, the author recalls the promise of Hag. 2:6 (Heb. 12:26):

His voice then shook the earth; but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven."⁶⁷

The author interprets this verse by integrating the language of cosmological dualism into his eschatology⁶⁸ (Heb. 12:27):

pp. 372-5, against Buchanan, Hebrews, pp. 222-3, 256, who held that "heavenly" referred to its divine origin and found it "normal to presume" that the recipients of Hebrews were "faithful Zionists" who had come to the promised land from the Diaspora and had heard the message of salvation from first-hand witnesses (2:3).

⁶⁵Heb. 12:25. A comparison with the LXX and Philo (Decal. 44) reveals that Heb. 12:18-21 has eliminated any references to the "heavenly" aspect of the Sinai event. For example, Deut. 4:11LXX says that the mountain burned $\piυρὶ \acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omicron\upsilon$, and Philo called it $\pi\hat{\upsilon}\rho \omicron\upsilon\rho\acute{\alpha}\nu\lambda\omicron\nu$, but Hebrews just lists, along with the other tangible, visible, and audible elements, $\kappa\epsilon\kappa\alpha\upsilon\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta \pi\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}$ (a "kindled fire"). See Thompson, "Assumptions," p. 583. Hebrews' assignment of the Sinai event to the sense-perceptible world required that any hints of a supernatural aspect of the accompanying phenomena be excised.

⁶⁶Just as surely as the phenomena associated with Sinai are "earthly," so those associated with Zion are "heavenly" (vs. 22-24).

⁶⁷This was an oft-cited passage in Jewish apocalyptic descriptions of the eschatological earthquake, cf. Thompson, "Assumptions," p. 581. $\sigma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega$ is used in Matt. 27:51 and $\sigma\alpha\lambda\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega$ in Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:25; Luke 21:26. $\tau\omicron\nu \omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omicron\nu$ is here taken as "sky" (the cosmological heaven" which is not "axiologically heavenly," Cody, Sanctuary, pp. 78, 84-5).

⁶⁸Thus Thompson, "Assumptions," pp. 583-7, who pointed out more parallels to Plato than to Philo.

"Yet once more," indicates⁶⁹ the removal⁷⁰ of what is shaken as of what has been made,⁷¹ in order that that which cannot be shaken⁷² may remain.⁷³

⁶⁹ *δηλοῦ*; in Heb. 9:6-10 (cf. 1 Peter 1:11) a similar spiritual interpretation is "made clear" by the Spirit.

⁷⁰ *μεταθέσις*, (BAG, s.v.) *Ep. Arist.*, Philo and Josephus, but in the N.T. only Heb. 7:12 ("change, transformation"); 11:5 ("translation" of Enoch); and here, 12:27 ("removal," BAG, l.).

⁷¹ God, through the Son, made all the worlds that are (*ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας*), but here the *πεποιημένα* are the "things made," i.e., of the material creation, for they are *τὰ ψηλαφωμένα* and *τὰ σαλευόμενα*, the tangible and transitory things of the earthly sphere. Cf. Philo, *Post. Cain*, 19-29, and Thompson, "Assumptions," p. 585, n. 23, who referred to Plato, *Tim.* 37D. He also pointed (p. 581) to the example of Esau in the context (12:16-17); he gave up his *πρωτοτόκια* (right to inherit) *ἀντὶ βρώσεως ρυῖας* and so became the "prototype of all who throw away the heavenly reality for the sake of the earthly one." (Cf. also *τῆς αἰωνίου κληρονομίας*, 9:15; also 1:14; 6:12.)

⁷² *τὰ μὴ σαλευόμενα*, yet another synonym for the things "not seen" (Heb. 11:1), *αἰώνιος* (see note 53), *ἑπουράνιος* (see note 38), "not made with hands" (9:11, 24), etc.; see Buchanan, *Hebrews*, p. 225; Philo, *Post. Cain.* 23; *Somm.* II, 221, 237. For further parallels in Plato, Plotinus and the *Hermetica* see Thompson, "Assumptions," p. 586. Michel, *Hebräer*, p. 475, recognized the connection to Greek thought but warned against transferring a thorough-going Greek idealistic dualism of spirit--flesh to Hebrews. "Die Welt der 'ewigen Dinge' ist wohl auch für den Hebr die Welt der eigentlichen Existenz."

⁷³ *μείνη* (aor. subj.), "may survive the event of the final judgment and continue permanently, forever," cf. Heb. 7:3 (Melchizedek, *εἰς τὸ διηνεκές*); 7:24 (Christ, *εἰς τὸ αἰῶνα*); 10:34; 13:14; and, in exhortation, 13:1 (cf. 1 Cor. 13:13). Especially revealing is Heb. 13:14: "For we have here no lasting city (*μένουσαν πόλιν*), but we seek the city which is to come (*τὴν μέλλουσαν*)." The "coming," however, already exists: it is being received (12:28) now by the Christians, who already share in those things (cf. Heb. 6:4-5!) which will survive the final shaking and remain permanently.

The kingdom which the Christians are receiving⁷⁴ is unshakable.⁷⁵ They are encouraged therefore to be grateful and thus to offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe. "For our God is a consuming fire."⁷⁶

Thus we find throughout Hebrews, but highly concentrated in these three passages,⁷⁷ an impressive catalogue of phrases with which

⁷⁴ παραλαμβάνοντες, pres. ptc., contemporaneous with the main verb, ἔχωμεν, pres. subj. The Christians are now receiving the kingdom and all the eternal gifts, cf. Heb. 6:4-5; John 3:36.

⁷⁵ ἀσάλευτον, in the N.T. only here and of the ship run aground, Acts 27:41. The kingdom which the Father gives (Luke 12:32) in Jesus is not of this world (John 18:36); Hebrews expresses this fact here in yet another word which contrasts the "earthly" and the "heavenly." For parallels in the stability of the heavenly (incorporeal) world in Plato and the Gnostic writings, see Thompson, "Assumptions," pp. 586-7. Within Hebrews, the use of βέβαιος (2:2; 6:19) and βεβαιώω (2:3; cf. 13:9) expresses a similar thought about the Christian message: it is effective, valid, and therefore firm, secure, and thus unshakable, permanent.

⁷⁶ Heb. 12:29; πῦρ καταναλίσκον = Deut. 4:24. This mirrors Heb. 12:18, thus framing the paragraph with an "inclusion." It also contrasts the supernatural (consuming) fire which God is and which is associated with the true (Christian) salvation/judgment over against the natural ("kindled," κεκαυμένω, Heb. 12:18, changed from the LXX) fire which was associated with the earthly phenomena at Mount Sinai. Finally, it also expresses (under another metaphor) the eschatological purifying ("removal" of all that is transitory, unworthy of God) which all must undergo and which only those in Christ, as recipients of the indestructible kingdom, will survive (cf. Bruce, Hebrews, pp. 384-5).

⁷⁷ We could also have studied in detail Heb. 1:1-4; 4:12-13; 7:11-19; 9:11-14; 10:1-4; 11:1-3, 13-16, 39-40; and perhaps even 13:7-17, in which Dieter Lührmann, "Der Hohepriester ausserhalb des Lagers (Hebr 13:12)," ZNW, 59 (1978):178-186, interpreted ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς (13:13) as not primarily a historical allusion but rather a call to leave the "earthly" in favor of the "heavenly," in analogy with Philo, Gig. 52-61.

the author contrasts the "earthly" and the "heavenly." Many of them have parallels in the terminology of Platonic dualism and are part of the language in which the Alexandrian tradition of Judaism attempted to describe the relationship of the transcendent God to his creation.⁷⁸ Hebrews is not a tract on metaphysics, and its author was certainly not a Platonist.⁷⁹ Hebrews is a passionate exhortation based on a relentless polemical exegesis, and its author used this battery of terminology axiologically⁸⁰ to argue the superiority of Christianity over Judaism. Hebrews is best understood when this Alexandrian-Jewish background of the author's thought-world is recognized.⁸¹

⁷⁸ See Cody, Sanctuary, pp. 36, 45-6. A concise description of the literature, motives, procedures and theological concerns of the Jews' presentation of their faith to the Greek world is given in P. Dalbert, Die Theologie der hellenistisch-jüdischen Missions-Literatur unter Ausschluss von Philo und Josephus, Theologische Forschung, 4 (Hamburg: Herbert Reich Evangelischer Verlag, 1954), see esp. pp. 15-26, 124-137.

⁷⁹ Buchanan, Hebrews, rightly pointed out that the Platonic world of ideas was not a "place" into which anyone (not even Christ) could "enter" except in the intellect.

⁸⁰ Cody, Sanctuary, pp. 78-84. On pp. 20-21 he pointed out the subtle but crucial difference between Judaism's and Hebrews' use of the heavenly model--earthly copy dualism; discussing Sap. 9:8, he wrote: ". . . for Wisdom the earthly sanctuary's being a copy of a heavenly model is something good because it is signed with the heavenly, while for Hebrews the earthly sanctuary's being merely a copy is something unfortunate because it is marked with the sign of the changing and the transitory and must sooner or later pass away. . . . For Wisdom, being a *πίσιμπα* is in the Temple's favor; for Hebrews, it is, in the final reckoning, against it."

S. Nomoto, "Herkunft und Struktur der Hohenpriestervorstellung im Hebräerbrief," Novum Testamentum, 10 (1968):18-19, made essentially the same point about the origin and use of the terminology. The "wohl ursprünglich aus dem Alexandrinismus stammenden Termini . . . bezeichnen den Typus . . . und den Antitypus . . ." But in content they are no longer closely related to Alexandrian allegory and metaphysics but rather are "völlig in den Dienst der heilsgeschichtlich-typologischen Betrachtungsweise gestellt. . . ."

⁸¹ Cody, Sanctuary, p. 155: "The theology of the economy of salvation is presented by the Epistle's author in the form of a symbolic

Literary Genre and Structure

An analysis of the literary genre and structure of Hebrews substantiates this assessment of its hortatory purpose and, with an examination of specific references to the addressees' situation, suggests the strong likelihood of a Roman destination. It has often been noted that Hebrews begins as a sermon and ends as a letter, and that it calls itself a *λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως*.⁸² Its author was an orator,⁸³ and its form is that of an early Christian sermon.⁸⁴

parable using the categories of Alexandrian dualism." The shadowy things of the old covenant attain perfection in the new covenant (economy) Christ introduced (Heb. 2:10; 7:19; 10:14).

A recent attempt to link Hebrews even more closely to a Philonic type of Judaism is L. Dey, The Intermediary World and Patterns of Perfection in Philo and Hebrews, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, No. 25 (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975), who considered the addressees of Hebrews as people who were neglecting (Heb. 2:3) the Christian message for a "particular tradition of Judaism" (exemplified by Philo) which promised "perfection and immediacy to God without intervening mediators" (p. 126).

⁸²Heb. 13:22; cf. Acts 13:15; 15:32; and Michel, Hebräer, p. 22, n. 1, where he assigned the expression to the language of Hellenistic Judaism and the early church. Heb. 5:11 and 6:1 also presuppose the situation of the spoken word.

⁸³Cf. the alliteration in the opening period, Heb. 1:1.

⁸⁴Michel, Hebräer, p. 25: "Hier im Hebr haben wir aber die erste Predigt vor uns, die alle Mittel der antiken Rhetorik und Sprachformen kennt und ins Christentum überträgt." Also in this, its form, Hebrews is linked to Hellenistic Judaism, *ibid.*, pp. 23-4, and H. Thyen, Der Stil der Jüdisch-Hellenistischen Homilie, FRLANT, N.F., 47 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), pp. 89-90 (for particulars, pp. 80-100, passim).

The form of Heb. 11, specifically, is also "nach dem Muster spätjüdischer Paradigmenreihen," Michel, Hebräer, p. 368; Thyen, Stil, p. 111; and R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, 2 vols., trans. by K. Grobel (New York: Scribner's, 1951, 1955), 1:96. It has a parallel in Philo, Praem. 11, concerning hope; Spicq, Hébreux, I, 76-77, saw the parallel form continuing (Heb. 11:6-31 = Praem. 12; Heb. 12:1 = Praem. 13-15).

It has also been noted that throughout Hebrews doctrinal instruction and practical encouragement alternate.⁸⁵ It is important to appreciate the role of the paraenetic sections in the structure of Hebrews.⁸⁶ Hebrews is not some patchwork piece, a doctrinal discourse with exhortations sewn into the seams. The entire written document is a literary version of a most carefully and artistically constructed sermon.⁸⁷ The exhortations are not some inserted afterthought, nor is

⁸⁵E.g., Franzmann, Word, p. 239.

⁸⁶Michel, Hebräer, p. 27: "Die Spitze des theologischen Gedankens liegt in den paranetischen Teilen." Similarly Nauck, "Aufbau," pp. 203-6; he saw movement from hearing to confession to obedience in the three main divisions, which he described; 1) Hear the Word of God in the Son Jesus Christ who is higher than the angels and Moses (1:1-4:13); 2) Draw near to God through the high priest of the heavenly sanctuary and hold fast to the confession (4:14-10:31); and 3) Be steadfast and follow Jesus, the pioneer and perfect of faith (10:32-13:17). But A. Vanhoye, La Structure Littéraire de L'Épître aux Hébreux Studia Neotestamentica, 1 (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1963), pp. 255-6 would find their views an over-emphasis of the hortatory sections.

⁸⁷Vanhoye, Structure, passim, esp. pp. 53-8, where he demonstrated the results of his analysis of the use of catch-words ("mot-crochets"=Stichwörter), inclusion, and "announcement of the subject," and p. 59, where he layed out the chiasmic plan of the main sections:

	<u>Section</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Dominant Type</u>	<u>Cor. Sec.</u>
a	1:1-4	Introduction		z
I	1:5-2:18	Name better than angels'	Doct.	V
II	A.3:1-4:14	Jesus, faithful	Exhort.	IV B.
	B.4:15-5:10	Compassionate high priest	Doct.	IV A.
III	p.5:11-6:20	Preliminary exhortation Jesus, the high priest,	Exhort.	III f.
	A.7:1-28	acc. to the order of Melch.	Doct.	III C.
	B.8:1-9:28	attains the fulfillment	Doct.	center
	C.10:1-18	cause of eternal salvation	Doct.	III A.
IV	f.10:19-39	Final exhortation	Exhort.	III p.
	A.11:1-40	Faith of the Ancients	Doct.	II B.
	B.12:1-13	Necessary Endurance	Exhort.	II A.
V	12:14-13:19	Peaceful Fruit of Righteousness	Exhort.	I
z	13:20-21	Conclusion	--	a

the doctrine "subordinate to" the exhortation.⁸⁸ Their intertwining is neither accident nor stylistic device, but rather the result of the profound connection between a firm hope and the urgent need for action.⁸⁹ The doctrinal center of the letter (8:1-9:28) has its corresponding hortatory "heart" in 10:19-39.⁹⁰

This last-named section assumes that the addressees are a group with their own history (verses 32-4). Along with Heb. 13:22-25, it establishes the fact that the document as we have it was no "general" epistle but was written (ἐπέστειλα, 13:22) from one who was not in their midst (compare 13:19) to a specific group.⁹¹ Hebrews gives various hints about their situation:

they came to faith by hearing the message from eye-witness (2:3);

they endured persecution, but not yet to the point of shedding blood (10:32; 12:4);

they endured exposure to public abuse and/or sympathized with others so treated (10:33);

they joyfully accepted the plundering of their property (10:34);

they had served and were serving fellow-Christians in a ministry of love and good works (6:10);

⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 255-6.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 254; he pointed to Heb. 13:14 (seek); 4:11 (strive); 5:11 and 6:12 (the problem of dullness, sluggishness); and especially 6:11: "L'espérance chrétienne authentique tend activement vers sa pleine réalisation." The author's use of exposition and paraenesis together shows "que le salut chrétien n'est pas un salut par la seule connaissance, mais un salut par la conversion (cf. 12, 1-13)." On p. 258 he compared exposition and paraenesis in Hebrews to two "systems" (like the "nervous" or "circulatory system") of a single organism.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 258.

⁹¹See e.g., Donald Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, 3rd (revised) ed. (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1970), pp. 699-700, 725-6.

they had become "dull of hearing" and "sluggish" (5:11; 6:12);

they were wavering in their confession (10:23);

they were neglecting τῶν ἐπισυναγωγῶν ἑαυτῶν (10:25);

they needed a better attitude toward their "leaders" (13:17; compare verse 7);

they were "timid," in danger of shrinking back into destruction (10:38-39);

they were personally known to the author (13:18-19);

they would have had an interest in knowing the news of the release of "our brother" Timothy (13:23);

they were some group for whom it would have been appropriate to send a special greeting (the only one in the letter) from οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας (13:24).

This last (not unambiguous) phrase justifies a consideration of Rome as the destination of Hebrews, and this is, in fact, the hypothesis which still accounts best for all the above details with known (rather than conjectured) circumstances.⁹² The conversion to Christianity of those who made up the Roman church is still shrouded in mystery, but the persecutions could well refer to the expulsion of the Jews under Claudius (49 A.D.: compare Acts 18:2) and/or to (the beginning of) the Neronian persecutions.⁹³ Their neglect of "assembling" and disrespect for

⁹² Ibid., p. 712: this is the most widely held view among modern scholars. Cf. esp. W. Manson, Hebrews, passim, esp. pp. 23-4, 162-7, 172-84; most of his argument is valid aside from his hypothesis of Hebrews' connection with Stephen and its goal as the defense of the Christian world-mission.

⁹³ Heb. 12:4 could imply that no Christians as yet had been martyred (leading to a date in the early 60's) or that other Christians had been martyred but the readers ("you") had not yet resisted to that point (leading to a date after the middle 60's); cf. Manson, Hebrews, pp. 163-7, where he chose the earlier period.

"leaders" can be understood if they were a separatistic "house church" within the larger fellowship of Christians in Rome.⁹⁴ Their timidity was a shrinking back into Judaism (against which the doctrinal sections argue), a religio licita, in the face of imminent more severe persecutions. These unsteady Christians, who had been Jews of the Hellenistic diaspora, Hebrews confronts with an appeal based on exegetical arguments of a Hellenistic nature. The best perspective from which to examine Hebrews' teaching of Jesus' high priesthood is one that looks for the situation of the addressees not in Palestine but in Rome.⁹⁵

Origin and Purpose of Hebrews' High Priest Christology

From the point of view of these sound presuppositions we now describe the origin and purpose of Hebrews' teaching of Jesus' high priesthood as the work of an exegete with a practical, pastoral purpose. The

⁹⁴Cf. Rom. 16:5, 14-15. Guthrie, Introduction, p. 700, n. 1, thought that Heb. 13:24 might suggest their separatistic tendencies also, taken in the sense of: "Greet your (own little group's) leaders and (also) all the saints (throughout the city)." Although the superscript of the letter is of questionable value for determining the addressees, there also was a synagogue of the Ἑβραίων in Rome (cf. Guthrie, p. 714, n. 1). Phil. 1:14-18; Acts 28:25 and the Jew-Gentile subjects treated in Romans might all be seen as hints that the Christians in Rome did not enjoy a happy unity in the early 60's.

The readers' acquaintance with Timothy also fits Rome, but not Rome exclusively. As further points Guthrie mentioned (p. 713): Hebrews is first used by Clement of Rome, who also called the leaders ἡγούμενοι (Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; 1 Clem. 1:3; cf. 21:6); the Roman church was reputed to have been generous (in contrast to the poverty of the Jerusalem church); Heb. 13:9's mention of foods might connect to the discussion of the issue in Romans 14.

⁹⁵Hebrews makes no clear reference to any current event or circumstance in Palestine.

author of Hebrews employed all the usual exegetical methodologies of his time.⁹⁶ But fundamental among these was his consistent system of typology,⁹⁷ built upon his conception of the continuity (fulfillment) and discontinuity (supersession, displacement)⁹⁸ between the revelation of the old and the new covenant. This he expressed in his opening words:⁹⁹

In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son

⁹⁶For a summary see F. Schröger, Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes als Schriftausleger, Biblische Untersuchungen, 4 (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1968), p. 312.

⁹⁷Nomoto, "Herkunft," p. 16. At the basis of his typology was his concept of salvation-history. Also in this kind of exegesis (finding two levels of meaning) the author of Hebrews stands in the tradition of Hellenistic (esp. Alexandrian) Judaism which, developing along other lines, produced Philo (see Schröger, Verfasser, pp. 306-7). Ursula Früchtel, Die Kosmologischen Vorstellungen bei Philo von Alexandrien, Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des Hellenistischen Judentums, 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1968), p. 103, pointed to the importance of Aristobulos for the development of this tradition of Old Testament hermeneutics, in which Philo (and ultimately the author of Hebrews) stand. Although Philo also had pagan models from which to learn allegory, Früchtel saw Philo's work as essentially Old Testament exegesis and his religion as essentially a "Schreibtischmysterium" (pp. 114-5).

⁹⁸The continuity is seen in the fact that he (and his readers) accept the Old Testament as Scripture and from it hear an authoritative and meaningful prophetic word. The surpassment is expressed everywhere there is an argument that the new is "better" (cf. note 45, above), and the displacement in places such as Heb. 7:18-19 and 8:13. As described above, Hebrews also expressed this continuity-discontinuity by using the cosmological terminology of Alexandrian Judaism. The principles of interpretation inherent in this approach to the Old Testament are discussed in G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, 36 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 101-104.

⁹⁹Heb. 1:1-2; see also $\nu\upsilon\nu \delta\acute{\epsilon}$ in 8:6; 9:26; cf. 9:11. Nomoto, "Herkunft," pp. 16-18.

He found it further substantiated in many ways in the Old Testament Scripture itself, but nowhere more explicitly than in Jer. 31:31-32:¹⁰⁰

The days will come, says the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in my covenant, and so I paid no heed to them, says the Lord.

So Hebrews' assertions regarding Jesus's high priesthood¹⁰¹ need represent neither the Christian adaptation of some Jewish traditions nor a response to Jewish sectarian hopes for a priestly messiah.¹⁰² They are simply the result of the application of the Christian author's special kind of exegesis to selected Old Testament passages regarding priesthood and the cult.¹⁰³ Obviously, in his development of this high priest Christology, the author of Hebrews has been guided, perhaps even stimulated, by details from the Christian tradition before him.¹⁰⁴ This would include especially the ascension and exaltation of Jesus,¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ As quoted in Heb. 8:8-9. Heb. 8:9b ("for they did not continue," etc.) corresponds to the LXX text-type (see LXX of Jer. 38:22); the MT has, as rendered by the RSV; ". . . my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord." The quotation continues in Hebrews 8, as Heb. 8:8-12=Jer. 31:33-34; Heb. 10:16-17 repeats Jer. 31:33-35. See also Nomoto, "Herkunft," p. 19.

¹⁰¹ Catalogued and examined below.

¹⁰² See Nomoto, "Herkunft," pp. 15, 17.

¹⁰³ Schröger, Verfasser, pp. 126-7.

¹⁰⁴ See esp. Nomoto, "Herkunft," pp. 23-25.

¹⁰⁵ Son and high priest are mentioned together in Heb. 4:14; 5:5-6; cf. also 1:3, 13:7:26-8; 8:1; 10:12-13; 12:2; A. J. B. Higgins, "Priest and Messiah," Vetus Testamentum, 3 (1953):335-6; F. Hahn, Christologische Hoheitstitel, 3rd ed., FRLANT, 83 (Göttingen: Vandenhoech & Ruprecht, 1966), p. 233.

his work of intercession,¹⁰⁶ and the interpretation of his death as a saving sacrifice.¹⁰⁷ It is unclear whether the actual designation of Jesus as high priest was also a part of the Christian tradition before Hebrews.¹⁰⁸ But there is, finally, no good answer to Schröger's question:

Warum sollte man dem Verfasser nicht zutrauen, dass er mit den messianischen gedeuteten Psalmen 2; 110 (LXX 109) und Ps 116 (LXX 114. 115) die Lehre vom Hohepriestertum Jesu entwickelt und entfaltet habe?¹⁰⁹

Hebrews' exposition of the high priestly office and work of Christ can be well understood as an exegetical tour de force of the author in the course of his inspired argument that the true meaning of the entire Old Testament appears only in the fulfillment in Jesus Christ.¹¹⁰ The argument of the superiority of Christ's priesthood is a major part of the letter,

¹⁰⁶ Rom. 8:34; Nomoto, "Herkunft," p. 13

¹⁰⁷ Rom. 3:25; cf. M. R. Clarkson, "The Antecedents of the High Priest Theme in Hebrews," Anglican Theological Review, 29 (1947):89-95. Nomoto, "Herkunft," p. 22, also pointed to the words of institution of the Lord's Supper.

¹⁰⁸ Among those who claim it was are Käsemann, Gottesvolk, p. 107; G. Friedrich, "Das Lied vom Hohenpriester im Zusammenhang von Hebr. 4, 14-5, 10," Theologische Zeitschrift, 18 (1962):95-115; and G. Schille, "Erwägungen zur Hohepriesterlehre des Hebräerbriefes," ZNW, 46 (1955): 84-109. See also Ch. III, note 1.

¹⁰⁹ Verfasser, p. 126. He demonstrated (pp. 121-4) that Heb. 5:7-10 is based on Psalm 116 (=Psalms 114-5LXX) and suggested that it was Psalm 110 (moving from v. 1 to v.4) which led the author of Hebrews to the figure of Melchizedek and the Gen. 14:18-20 passage, with whose help he then gave the correct explanation of Jesus' priesthood.

¹¹⁰ Schröger, *ibid.*, said it grew out of the author's "Schriftgnosis."

but it is still only one aspect of the larger systematic argument in which Hebrews demonstrates exegetically the superiority of the new covenant from the point of view of:

- 1) the validity and effectiveness of its revelatory word (Christ over the angels as mediators of revelation, Heb. 1:1-2:18);
- 2) the finality of its goal in the true sabbath rest (Christ over Moses and Joshua as leaders of the covenant people, 3:1-4:12);
- 3) the perfection and eternity of its priest (Christ over the Levitical priests, 4:14-7:28);
- 4) the effectiveness of the purification wrought by its sacrifice(s) (Christ' sacrifice, blood and sprinkling over the sprinkling with the blood of goats, calves, etc., 8:1-10:39);
- 5) the surety of the conviction that its way of faithful following of Jesus will reach the heavenly homeland (Christ the pioneer and perfecter of faith, whose day the O.T. heroes of faith awaited, 11:1-13:17).¹¹¹

Within this schema, the teaching of Christ's priestly office and work is one important logical part. And within that teaching, the interpretation of Melchizedek from Gen. 14:18-20 is an ancillary embellishment.¹¹²

The typological argument of the superiority of Christ's priesthood over the Levitical priests' priesthood could have been made without any reference to Melchizedek. But, directed to Gen. 14:18-20 by verse 4 of (the messianic!) Psalm 110,¹¹³ the author of Hebrews found there even

¹¹¹Points 1) and 2) pertains to the mediators of the covenant, 3) and 4) to its priesthood, and 5) to its "way."

¹¹²Nomoto, "Herkunft," pp. 15-16: Heb. 7:1-3 is not typology but allegory, which finds in the Scriptural description of Melchizedek an indication of the eternal nature of Christ's priesthood. Along with its interpretation (7:4-10), it serves "in der Weise als Hilfskonstruktion für die eigentliche typologische Ausführung in Hebr. vii 11-28 . . ."

¹¹³Schröger, Verfasser, p. 127. Horton, Melchizedek, pp. 85, 156-60, 170, also theorized that the main reason Melchizedek attracted so much attention (whether of Jews or Christians) was that he was the first priest mentioned in the Pentateuch.

more Scriptural material to illustrate¹¹⁴ the superiority of Christ, "priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

The Person and Work of Jesus as High Priest

Within this interpretative framework, we now catalogue and analyse Hebrews' assertions about the person and work of Jesus as high priest. As the mediator (*μεσότης*) of the new covenant (Heb. 9:15; 12:24; compare 13:20), Jesus is both the agent of its revelation (spokesman from God to man, 1:1; 2:3) and the officiant in its cult (representative of man before God, 9:24). Hebrews presents Jesus in this role of intermediary by asserting his twofold (divine-human) natures and his accomplishment of salvation through work on earth as well as in heaven.¹¹⁵

Personal Characteristics of Jesus as High Priest

Thus Hebrews 4:14 says that our great high priest is "Jesus, the Son of God," whom the opening period referred to as *ὡν*

¹¹⁴None of the usual terms of the "type-antitype" scheme is used for the relationship of Melchizedek and Jesus, only *ἰσομοιωμένους* (Heb. 7:3) and *κατὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα* (7:15). According to Horton, *Melchizedek*, p. 161, this second phrase included the idea not of succession but of recapitulation: "Every feature of significance in Melchizedek's priesthood is recapitulated on a grander scale in Christ's priesthood." (For examples, see our chart, below.) Horton (in our view, wrongly) interpreted *ἰσομοιωμένους* as part of a type-antitype scheme (pp. 161, 163); but the typological foreshadowing in the Old Testament in this chapter is the Levitical priesthood!

¹¹⁵Although he acknowledged the complexity of the problem, it was still a questionable decision when Oscar Cullmann assigned "High Priest" to the section of his book on "Titles Which Refer to the Earthly Work of Jesus," *The Christology of the New Testament*, 2nd Eng. ed., trans. by S. C. Guthrie and C. A. M. Hall, *The New Testament Library* (London: SCM Press, 1963), pp. 83-110.

ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ [= θεοῦ] (1:3).¹¹⁶ While the precise significance of this phrase for intra-Trinitarian relationships might be open for discussion, there is no doubt that Hebrews ascribes divinity to the Son, for it also understands Ps. 45:7-8 (ὁ θρόνος σου, ὁ θεός, ...) and Ps. 102:28-28 (σὺ κατ' ἀρχαίς, κύριε, . . .) as addressed to him (Heb. 1:8-12).¹¹⁷ This connection of his divine sonship and his appointment as high priest is made very clear in Heb. 5:5-6:

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

Similarly, Heb. 7:16 implies his divinity when it argues that he did not become a priest "according to a legal requirement concerning bodily

¹¹⁶ These two complementary expressions describe the special relationship of the Son to God the Father. Both ἀπαύγασμα and χαρακτήρ are hapax legomena in the New Testament, but see Sap. 7:26 (ἀπαύγασμα; parallel: ἀπὸρρα, of Wisdom) and Philo, Plant. 18 (Χαρακτήρ, of the λόγος). Both can have either a passive ("reflection," "imprint") or an active ("radiance," "seal") meaning, despite the passive morphology (. . . σμα) of ἀπαύγασμα (cf. BDF, par. 109; BAG, s.v.). The Greek fathers took ἀπαύγασμα in the active sense in this passage (cf. G. H. W. Lampe, ed., A Patristic Greek Lexicon [Oxford: Clarendon, 1961] s.v.: "radiance"), but Spiciq preferred the passive meaning (Hébreux, 2:6-7). Michel, Hebraer, p. 98, wished to preserve both emphases: "der Abglanz [ἀπαύγασμα] ist vom Licht abhängig, strahlt jedoch von sich aus weiter; der Abdruck [Χαρακτήρ] wird vom Wesen her genommen, gibt aber ein selbständiges Bild."

¹¹⁷ Michel, Hebraer, p. 118; of the translation which takes ὁ θεός (v. 8) as the subject (or predicate nominative: "Thy throne is God . . ."), Michel said: "diese abweichende Übersetzung ist so umständlich und irreführend, dass man sie besser vermeidet."

descent but by virtue of indestructible life" (κατὰ δύναμιν ζωῆς ἀκαταλύτου).¹¹⁸

Two other personal qualifications which Jesus brings to his priesthood are consequences of his divinity: holiness and eternity. Both are brought out in Heb. 7:23-28, of which we here quote verses 24-6:

. . . but he holds his priesthood permanently (ἀπαράβατον), because he continues for ever (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). Consequently, he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted, above the heavens.¹¹⁹

His sinlessness is likewise mentioned in Heb. 4:15 (χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας), and his eternity may also be indicated in 13:8.

From these references we see that the personal characteristics of Jesus, high priest, include, on the one hand, that he is:

the Son of God,
divine,
holy, sinless, and
eternal.

But the human nature of Jesus is also a necessary personal qualification for his service as a mediator between man and God.

¹¹⁸Our translation; the RSV ("by the power of an indestructible life") could mislead one to think of "a" good (moral, ethical) "life," but it is rather the everlasting (, h.l. N.T., BAG, s.v.: "indestructible, hence endless") quality of his divine life which qualifies Jesus for the priesthood. Cf. below, the next paragraph.

¹¹⁹The end of Heb. 7:28 summarizes the point, referring again to his eternity also, when it says that "the word of the oath (τῆς ὀρκωμοσίας) . . . appoints [as high priest] a Son who has been made perfect for ever."

Psalm 8:4 (=LXX 8:5, "man," "son of man") refers to him (Heb. 2:6, 9) and, in particular, Ps. 8:5a (=LXX 6a) is seen as an allusion to the time of Jesus' human life on earth, when, "for a little while," he "was made lower than the angels."¹²⁰ He is brother (Heb. 2:11-12) of those who are flesh and blood, and "he himself partook of the same nature" (2:14). This was a necessary qualification for his priesthood (Heb. 2:17):

Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people.

Human, he was also tempted, so that we do not have

a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning (Heb. 4:15; compare 2:18).

His faithfulness (Heb. 3:2, 6), reliance on God (5:7), and especially his learning of obedience through suffering (5:8; compare 10:5-10) all belong to his "being made perfect."¹²¹ But they can also be considered

¹²⁰ Heb. 2:7, 9. Ps. 8:6aMT= $\Pi\iota\sigma\iota\ \lambda\iota\gamma\iota\sigma\tau\omega\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \mu\epsilon\iota\omega\ \eta\ \tau\eta\ \delta\epsilon\iota\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\iota$ (RSV: "Yet thou has made him little less than God . . ."). Ps. 8:6a LXX (Heb. 2:7a): $\mu\lambda\iota\tau\omega\sigma\alpha\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu\ \beta\rho\alpha\chi\acute{\upsilon}\ \tau\iota\ \pi\alpha\rho'\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$. Note that in addition to understanding $\Pi\iota\sigma\iota\ \lambda\iota\gamma\iota\sigma\tau\omega$ as $\pi\alpha\rho'\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, Hebrews' argument also relies on a temporal meaning for $\beta\rho\alpha\chi\acute{\upsilon}\ \tau\iota$ (BAG, s.v., 2.) whereas the original $\mu\epsilon\iota\omega$ appears to have referred to rank. The point of this entire section (Heb. 2:5-18) is that the world to come is subjected not to angels (v. 5) but to (the "perfected" and glorified "Son of") Man (cf. Michel, Hebraer, pp. 133-4). It is the other side of the coin to Heb. 1:5-14, where the superiority of the divine Son over the angels is demonstrated. Taken together, Heb. 1:5-14 and 2:5-18 testify to Jesus' twofold nature as true God and true man.

¹²¹ Heb. 5:9; 7:21; 2:10; see below.

part of the example he gives to his brethren, inspiring us to endure the cross and shame and "run with perseverance the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1-2).

Thus we find, on the other hand, that Hebrews also establishes these personal characteristics of Jesus, the high priest:

he is "man," "the son of man,"
our brother,
flesh and blood,
partaker of the same nature;

he was tempted;

he was faithful;

he prayed to God for help;

he was obedient;

he suffered;

he serves as an example to his brothers as
the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

But Jesus' essential personal qualifications (as divine-human) alone did not qualify him to perform his high priestly work. He was appointed to that office by God himself and was able to enter into it upon his fulfilling of his historical mission through his obedience, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension and session at God's right hand. Jesus can do his work as the high priest of the new and better covenant only because he can enter and has entered the heavenly sanctuary. His exaltation is an essential prerequisite for his fulfilling the duties of this priesthood.¹²² And his earthly obedience, suffering, death, and resurrection are the necessary prerequisites for his ascension

¹²²This is widely recognized, cf. e.g., Nomoto, "Herkunft," p. 13.

and exaltation.¹²³ Hebrews refers to all of this by using *Τελειόω*, *κ. τ. λ.*,¹²⁴ and a study of this word-group in Hebrews reveals the special connection between Jesus' earthly life and death and his heavenly priesthood.

"Perfection"¹²⁵ was not attainable under the old covenant, through the law or the Levitical priesthood.¹²⁶ To provide it is one

¹²³ Thus, while he was eternally suited to be mediator between God and man as regards his divine nature, he had to fulfill his mission in the incarnation as regards his human nature in order to become a "cause of eternal salvation" for his brothers.

¹²⁴ *ΤΕΛΕΙΟΣ*: Heb. 5:14; 9:11; *τελειότης*: 6:1; *τελειόω* 2:10; 5:9; 7:19, 28; 9:9; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:23; *τελειώσις*: 7:11; *τελειωτής*: 12:2. We shall try consistently to translate using the word "perfect," but always recognizing that the question of its more precise connotation in Hebrews is complex (see BAG, s.v. *τελειόω*, where a special category is labelled "of Jesus" and many references are qualified with "perhaps"). For the linguistic background, which includes intellectual-philosophical (e.g., Plato), cultic (LXX), religiously ethical (e.g., Qumran), and Gnostic-spiritual (mystery religions) aspects, see G. Dellling, "*τέλος* " *κ. τ. λ.*, TDNT, 8:49-87, and Michel, *Hebräer*, pp. 224-9. Michel (pp. 227-8) described the three roots of this word group's usage in Hebrews, of which the second two are especially noteworthy: "a) eine Stufenfolge in der Erkenntnis: Reife--Unmündige stammt aus der hellenistischen Schulsprache und Didaktik. . . . b) Der Gerhormweg Jesu, der in einer kultischen 'Weihe' und eschatologischen Zeilsetzung seine Ausrichtung empfängt, steht im Mittelpunkt des Denkens. . . . c) Durchgehend ist auch eine Kritik an der priesterlich-kultischen Ordnung des ATs, die der Förderung von Dt 18:13 nicht genügen kann."

Alan Wikgren, "Patterns of Perfection in the Epistle to the Hebrews," NTS, 6 (1959-60):159-167, missed the point; he assumed that "moral or ethical growth and progress" (p. 160) was involved and then discussed the problems of applying this idea to Jesus.

¹²⁵ *τελειώσις*, only in Heb. 7:11 and Luke 1:45 ("fulfillment") in the New Testament.

¹²⁶ Heb. 7:11, 19; 9:9; 10:1. But it was demanded! Deut. 18:13 LXX: *Τέλειος ἔσῃ ἐναντίον Κυρίου τοῦ Θεοῦ σου.*

way of describing Christ's work.¹²⁷ It is a way to express the goal (τέλος!) of both the Old Testament saints¹²⁸ and of the Christians now.¹²⁹ Therefore it was fitting (ἔπρεπεν) that God should make him who was the pioneer of salvation (and who became "the pioneer and perfecter of our faith")¹³⁰ "perfect through suffering" (Heb. 2:10). This is all stated most clearly in Heb. 5:8-10:

Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered;¹³¹ and having been made perfect,¹³² he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

¹²⁷See Heb. 10:14 and below. Heb. 9:11 might also be categorized here for completeness; he does his work in (passing through) "the more perfect tent," i.e., in the (heavenly) sanctuary, better suited to the effecting of perfection.

¹²⁸See Heb. 11:40: the Old Testament heroes of faith do not attain it "apart from us," i.e., except in relationship to the New Testament fulfillment. Heb. 12:23, the spirits of δικαίων τετελειωμένων may also refer to the Old Testament saints who are now "made perfect" and are in the πανηγύρει καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ to which "we" have come.

¹²⁹Heb. 5:14; 6:1; the RSV, "mature, maturity," fails to communicate the deeper significance of the word-group.

¹³⁰The ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας whom God was to "make perfect" in the (timeless) statement of propriety in Heb. 2:10 is spoken of in 12:2 from the perspective of Christians looking (back) to his example. Since he has now gone through his "perfecting," he can here be called τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελεωτήν. This masterful phrase includes the ideas of Α and Ω, origin and goal, creator and example, establisher and bringer to completion (cf. Phil. 1:6; Hughes, Hebrews, pp. 522-3).

¹³¹ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν, a play on words which (according to Michel, Hebraer, p. 224, n. 1) was not uncommon and is to be found in line 177 of Aeschylus' Agamemnon.

¹³²Our translation of the aorist pass. participle; RSV = "being made perfect," which fails to focus on the temporal relationship.

Thus the completion of his whole earthly mission was necessary for his appointment to the priesthood: whereas the law appointed men in their weakness, the word of the oath appoints "a Son who has been made perfect (ΤΕΤΕΛΕΙΩΜΕΝΟΝ) for ever" (Heb. 7:28). "Having been made perfect" means having been tempted, having been faithful and obedient,¹³³ having suffered, having made purification for sin (Heb. 1:3) through his death on the cross,¹³⁴ that is, it means having completed his mission as the suffering servant-messiah. Thereupon Jesus was raised from the dead (Heb. 13:20), passed through the heavens (4:14), and sat down at the right hand of God (1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2) in heaven, where he can complete his high priestly work. Thus we find one more set of circumstances which is a sort of personal requirement (or perhaps a sort of "consecration") for Jesus' performing of his high priestly work:¹³⁵

he came to "do his Father's will;"

he learned obedience through suffering;

he died on the cross;

he was raised by the Father;

he passed through the heavens (ascension);

he sat down at the right hand of God.

Finally, since the comparison of Jesus and Melchizedek in Hebrews 7 has been the source of much speculation, we include here an

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See Heb. 10:5-10; "I have come to do they will."

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Heb. 12:2; 13:12; cf. 9:15 and also Luke 13:32 and John 19:30!

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He eternally had his divine qualifications and he had his "human qualifications" after his birth, but he had to complete this his full mission in order to function as the divine-human mediator. Cf.

analysis of what this section says about the person of Christ, high priest "according to the order of Melchizedek." Hebrews has not taken over (nor aimed to correct) some Jewish Melchizedek speculation, but draws on Scripture's description of Melchizedek (Gen. 14: 18-20 and the Ps. 110:4 reference) in order to illustrate¹³⁶ the superiority of Jesus' priesthood. The details he extracts and the application he makes can be listed thus:¹³⁷

Point from Scripture about Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1-3, 21)	Application to Jesus Demonstrating his Superiority
1) blessed Abraham	the inferior is blessed by the superior (7:7)
2) received tithe from Abraham	one might say that Levi paid him tithes (7:9)
3) "king of righteousness"	[? "Perfection" is attainable through <u>him</u> (7:11)] ¹³⁸
4) "king of peace" ¹³⁹	-----

Spicq, Hébreux, 2:118: "Si le Christ fut en médiateur dès sa naissance, il ne le fut à la perfection que par sa mort rédemptrice (Lc. XIII, 32)."

¹³⁶ See the discussion of ἀφωρισμένος and κατὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα in note 114, above.

¹³⁷ Since the author of Hebrews is the inspired New Testament interpreter of these Old Testament passages, we therefore also recognize in faith that the ultimate meaning and true interpretation of these Old Testament passages lie in these points which apply them to "the one of whom these things are spoken" (Heb. 7:13; cf. "this one," 7:21). Granted, puzzling historical questions are still left unanswered (cf. Horton, Melchizedek, pp. 50-52); so be it.

¹³⁸ In some respects, τελείωσις might be considered Hebrews' parallel term for δικαιοσύνη.

¹³⁹ Hebrews shows no interest in attempting to identify the Old Testament "Salem" with any geographical site, neither Jerusalem nor Shalem/Salim.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5) without genealogy ¹⁴⁰ | became a priest not according to a legal requirement regarding bodily descent (7:16) |
| 6) has neither beginning nor end of days; but continues | he lives (7:8), lives always (7:25, cf. 28), and is a priest by virtue of indestructible life (7:16) εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (7:24) |
| 7) God has <u>sworn</u> : "for ever" (Ps. 110:4=7:21) | the oath makes Jesus "surety" ¹⁴¹ (ἔγγυος) for a better covenant (7:22) for ever (7:28). |

The two most significant points that this comparison adds regarding Jesus' personal characteristics as priest are: 1) he is priest not by virtue of fulfilling legal requirements regarding bodily descent, for he was, in fact, a descendant of Judah (Heb. 7:14); and 2) he has no end of days and so he is a priest for ever, as the divine oath attests.

Jesus Priestly Work in Connection
with His Earthly Life and Death

Hebrews refers to Jesus' saving work in several very general phrases which might apply to the totality of his work,¹⁴² but most of the references to Jesus' priestly work can be categorized into: 1) those

¹⁴⁰ According to the principle quod non in torah non in mundo, this fact of Scripture's silence regarding Melchizedek's parentage (and death) justified the conclusion expressed in point 6.

¹⁴¹ H. 1. N.T., cf. Sir. 29:15-16; BAG, s.v., "guarantee," Spicq (Hébreux, 2:196) and Michel (Hebraer, p. 275) both pointed out its logical connection with the μεσίτης-μεσολετεύς concept. Taken from commercial-legal life, the expression expands on the meaning of Jesus' becoming a priest: his giving of himself for those for whom he "makes surety" undergirds the truth of God's oath that he is a priest for ever and guarantees the keeping of the promises of the new covenant.

¹⁴² E.g., he "became the source of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9) and "made purification for sins" (1:3).

connected with his earthly life and death, or 2) those connected with his ascension and entry into heaven (cf. Heb. 10:12).

Interpreting Psalm 40:6-8, Heb. 10:5-10 sees in Jesus the abolition of the old principle of sacrifices and offerings according to the law in favor of the principle of "doing God's will," which is the "offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:10). This, his death, "redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant" (Heb. 9:15) and ratifies (9:16-17) the new covenant of the forgiveness of sins (8:8-12; 10:16-17; compare 9:22). In his death he accomplished the sacerdotal functions of making "expiation (*ἱλασκέσθαι*) for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:19), "sanctifying"¹⁴³ his brothers, "making purification,"¹⁴⁴ and "making perfect" those who are being sanctified.¹⁴⁵ The displacement of the old covenant with the new also represents the turning of the aeons, as Heb. 9:26b makes clear: "But now he has

¹⁴³ *ἁγιάζων*, Heb. 2:11; cf. 13:12 ("through his own blood"); also 10:10, 14.

¹⁴⁴ *καθαρισμὸν . . . ποιούμενος*, Heb. 1:3; *καθαρίει* 9:14.

¹⁴⁵ Heb. 10:14: *μιᾱ γὰρ προσφορᾶ̄ τετελείωκεν εἰς τὸ διηνεκές τοὺς ἁγιαζομένους*. The "bringing to perfection" of the saints is, in Christ's sacrifice, an accomplished fact (*τετελείωκεν* perf. act.); and yet the saints are they who are being sanctified (*ἁγιαζομένους*, pres. ptcp., which denotes primarily *Aktionsart* but whose relative temporal relationship to the finite verb is determined from context, *BDF*, para. 339). Note also that *εἰς τὸ διηνεκές* is always the phrase for anyone other than Christ (Heb. 7:3; 10:1, 12, 14); for him alone is *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* reserved (5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21, 24, 28; 13:8).

appeared¹⁴⁶ once for all at the end of the ages¹⁴⁷ to put away sin¹⁴⁸ by the sacrifice of himself." In his death, by God's grace, he tasted death for (ὕπερ) everyone (Heb. 2:9) and confronted the enemy, having become incarnate, as 2:14-15 says

that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage.

¹⁴⁶Our translation of *νυνὲ δὲ . . . πεφανέρωται* (cf. Rom. 3:21!). The RSV ("But as it is . . .") seems to contrast the hypothetical repetition of Christ's sufferings (v. 26a) with the factuality of his once-for-all death. But the contrast is between *πολλάκις* and *ἅπας*, and thus between two aeons or spheres of existence: the one of law and wrath (Rom. 1:18-3:20) and repeated sacrifices (Heb. 9:25), and the new one (revealed in Christ) of the righteousness which is through faith (Rom. 3:22-26) and a once-for-all sacrifice.

¹⁴⁷*συντελεία τῶν αἰώνων*, BAG, s.v., "completion, close end . . . of the ages." The plural (only here in the New Testament in this phrase, but cf. Heb. 1:2; 11:3; 13:8, 21) may reflect the preservation of a phrase expressing the view of a succession of "ages" or "periods" of world history as is found in Jewish apocalyptic (Test. Levi. 10:2) and the Old Testament (Dan. 9:27LXX; *συντέλειαν καιρῶν*). Jesus' appearing is at the end of this world's history and represents the inauguration of the "age to come" (Heb. 6:5). See also 1 Peter 1:20: *ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν χρόνων*; 1 Cor. 10:11: *τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων*; and Gal. 4:4: *τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου*.

¹⁴⁸*εἰς ἀθέτησιν*, in the New Testament only here and Heb. 7:18 ("annulment"), has a strong juridical nuance (Spicq, *Hébreux*, 2: 269). Michel (*Hebraer*, p. 326) pointed to the singular of *τῆς ἁμαρτίας* and saw here a possible connection to "alte messianisch-priesterliche Hoffnungen," for which he cited Test. Levi 18:9 and Ps. Sol. 17:36, 41. While the language of this section ("end of the ages," "put away sin") is reminiscent of Testament of Levi 17-18, Michel's own reference to the Psalms of Solomon reminds us that these details are by no means associated exclusively with priestly messianism.

In all of these verses about Jesus' death, there is no explicit statement that while he was suffering on earth he was acting as "priest" as well as victim. The closest any passage comes to implying this is Heb. 2:17, which speaks of the human nature-aspect of his high priesthood and of his "making expiation" in the same context:

Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people.

Passages which speak of his sacrifice of himself (Heb. 9:26; 7:27), and which make clear the continuity between the shedding of his blood and his sacerdotal purification (9:12-14) likewise strongly imply that, in his death, already, Jesus was "himself the victim and himself the priest."

Jesus Priestly Work in Connection with His Exaltation in Heaven

But after he "had offered . . . a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12). In connection with his exaltation, Jesus functions as high priest both in that he himself entered heaven, thus opening access for his followers into God's presence, and in that he performs the cultic functions of purification and intercession there. He himself is the high priest who has "passed through the [cosmological] heavens" (Heb. 4:15) and entered behind the curtain (as *προδραμοῦς* 6:19-20) into the holy of holies to appear before God *ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν* (9:24; compare 6:20). In this, "through his flesh,"¹⁴⁹ he has inaugurated and

¹⁴⁹ Those who (as the RSV) take *τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ* in apposition to *τοῦ καταπετάσματος* confess some uncertainty as to how to explain it (his sacrificed body? the flesh of his incarnation which he "passed

dedicated¹⁵⁰ for "us" a "new"¹⁵¹ and living way" into the sanctuary (Heb. 10:19-20). His mission, whose purpose was to bring "many sons to glory" (2:10) was accomplished in the arising of his priesthood, in which "a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God" (7:19).

Having gained access by his ascension to the heavenly sanctuary, whither we have the hope of following him, Jesus performs there the sacerdotal duties of the new covenant. He enters "once for all into the

through"?); they would often be glad to dismiss it as a gloss (cf. Michel, Hebraer, p. 345; Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 168). Westcott (Hebrews, pp.

319-31, followed by the NEB) connected it to ὄδον, making the "whole clause . . . a compound noun, 'a fresh and living way through the veil'" (p. 320); this rightly focuses on "flesh" as his humanity and stresses the positive role of the incarnation in his saving mission (cf. also Spicq, Hébreux, 2:316; Heb. 2:14).

Even more refined than Westcott and Spicq are J. Jeremias, "Hebräer 10:20 ΤΟΥΤ' ἔστιν τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ," ZNW, 62 (1971), p. 131, and Hughes, Hebrews, pp. 407-10. They suggested the verse is a chiasm, with τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ corresponding to ἐνεκαίνισεν. A second δία is supplied or understood, making the phrase instrumental and referring it to "the incarnation seen in the light of the fulfillment of its purpose in the offering of the perfect and final sacrifice on the cross" (Hughes, p. 409). To this we would add the thoughts of his perfect obedience and faithfulness through temptation and consider it all as his "being made perfect," a process which culminated in the cross.

¹⁵⁰ ἐνεκαίνισεν, cf. Heb. 9:18; τὰ ἑγκαίνια (John 10:22) was the term (=Hanukkah) for "the festival of Rededication, . . . to commemorate the purification and rededication of the temple by Judas Macabaeus," 165 B.C. (BAG, s.v. ἑγκαίνια).

¹⁵¹ πρόσφατον, "new, recent," from "freshly slaughtered" (Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 168); Spicq, Hébreux, 2:316: it was chosen here as a synonym for καίνος but in ironic contrast to ζῶσαν (a new way to/of life in his sacrificial death).

Holy Place" through his own blood (Heb. 9:12) and serves there as a minister,¹⁵² offering the appropriate gifts and sacrifices (8:6, compare verse 3). With his own blood he purifies everything that requires it (Heb. 9:23). In particular, he sprinkles "our hearts . . . clean from an evil conscience" (Heb. 10:22). Indeed, his ministry works the purification of consciences (9:14), and therein lies one of its points of superiority over the ministry of the old covenant (9:9; compare 10:2), which dealt only with "regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation" (καιροῦ διορθώσεως, 9:10). His heavenly ministry also includes always being available to make intercession (ἐντυχαίνειν ὑπέρ . . . , Heb. 7:25) for those who draw near to God through him.¹⁵³ Having arrived in heaven as the forerunner, he serves as a firm anchor for our hope (Heb. 6:19-20) as well as an encouraging example (12:2-3) to all who now bear hostility (as he once did). From heaven, he is still able to sympathize with us (Heb. 4:15) and to "help those who are tempted" (2:18) "in time of need" (4:16). He mediates not only our requests for help but also our offerings to the throne of God:

Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God (Heb. 13:15-16)

Thus Hebrews intimates some sacerdotal functions of Jesus in connection with his life and death on earth, in which he came:

¹⁵²In Sir. 24:10 Wisdom says: ἐν σκηνῇ ἁγίᾳ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐλειτούργησα; hypostasized, pre-existent Σοφία (Sir. 24:1, 9) is also described as fulfilling the function of a priest.

¹⁵³See also ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, "on our behalf," Heb. 6:20; 9:24; and 2:9: to taste death ὑπὲρ πάντων.

to do God's will, which was
 to offer himself up as a sacrifice on the cross, thus
 redeeming from transgressions,
 ratifying the new covenant of the forgiveness of sins
 making expiation for the sins of the people,
 putting away sin at the end of the ages,
 sanctifying his brothers,
 making purification, and
 perfecting those who are being sanctified;
 to taste death on behalf of everyone;
 to destroy him who has the power of death, and thus
 to deliver all who through fear of death were subject to lifelong
 bondage.

But Hebrews speaks clearly of Jesus functioning in the heavenly high
 priesthood in that he passed through the heavens:

to open a new and living way for us into the sanctuary;
 to bring many sons to glory;
 to introduce a better hope, through which we draw near to God;
 to enter the heavenly sanctuary to offer the appropriate gifts and
 sacrifices;
 to sprinkle with his own blood all that there must be purified,
 and especially
 to sprinkle the hearts and consciences of those who approach God
 through him;
 to appear before God on our behalf and make intercession;
 to serve as a firm anchor for our hope and an example as we per-
 severe;

to sympathize with and help those who are tempted in their time of need; and

to mediate sacrifices of praise to God, both words of praise and deeds of charity.

Conclusion

The teaching of Jesus' high priesthood in Hebrews is consistent with the rest of New Testament Christology. It represents, in part, a development of the ascription of "sacerdotal" elements and functions to Christ in the rest of the New Testament. The rooting of Jesus' mediatorship in his nature as God incarnate, the indispensable significance of his earthly obedience and passion, the understanding of his death as a sacrifice and the view of his exaltation as the inauguration of a heavenly ministry of intercession all show that Hebrews is not some "maverick" speculation. It fits well in the development of New Testament Christological doctrine.

But Hebrews has made some original contributions to that development. In particular, these include:

- 1) the application of Ps. 110:4 to Jesus and the use of Gen. 14:18-20 to illustrate his priesthood;¹⁵⁴
- 2) the inclusion of the headings of priesthood and cultus in the systematic argument of the superiority of the new covenant in Jesus Christ;
- 3) the use of Old Testament passages, especially those dealing with the priesthood and cultic regulations, in a comprehensive system of typological exegesis; and

¹⁵⁴We also consider it most likely that Hebrews was the first actual application of the high priest title to Jesus.

4) the integration of the terminology of Alexandrian Judaism into his Christian eschatology¹⁵⁵ and his system of typologically-based argumentation.

Hebrews is, indeed, a special book of New Testament Christological teaching. But when studied carefully, it is seen to be not so isolated from the church's developing Christological tradition. From elements within that tradition, Hebrews constructed its teaching of Jesus' priesthood. Jewish sectarian priestly messianism is not needed to explain the background of the teaching of Jesus' priesthood in Hebrews. Indeed, a penetrating comparison of this teaching in Hebrews with the sectarian Jewish hopes shows that it is not only unnecessary to explain the background of Hebrews in this way, but also totally inappropriate. This present chapter has demonstrated the former point; the latter point we shall argue in our final chapter.

¹⁵⁵"The Beyond lay not only over him but also before him! The Beyond had also become history, salvation, and model in the eternal Son of God who had become man," Thorleif Boman, "Hebraic and Greek Thought-Forms in the New Testament," Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation, Essays in Honor of Otto A. Piper, ed. by William Klassen and Graydon Snyder, (New York: Harper, 1962), p. 17.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Was Jesus the priestly messiah? Having thoroughly examined the Old Testament and Jewish texts testifying to priestly messianism, and having studied in detail the New Testament teaching of Jesus' priestly office and work, we are now prepared to set the significant points of our findings side by side and to draw the conclusions which can provide an answer to our question.

Comparisons of Personal Characteristics

A comparison of the personal characteristics of the Jewish priestly messiah and Jesus, high priest, reveals a few points of superficial similarity but no areas of profound congruence. The validity of this assessment is verified throughout four areas of comparisons:

- 1) the attitude to the historical high priests of Jerusalem,
- 2) sinlessness and divinity,
- 3) earthly restoration or heavenly fulfillment?
- 4) one "anointed" or two?

1) The seeds of priestly messianism lay in the Old Testament. But the historical circumstances which prompted the lively intertestamental hope for a new priest (and, indeed, the entire raison de'etre of the Qumran sect) are to be found in the impropriety in genealogy and behavior, but especially in the genealogy, of the Jerusalem high priests

from the time of Simon on. The sectarian opponents of the Hasmonaeans strove to keep the written law strictly; this required that the priesthood must be held (according to God's promises) by a descendant of Aaron-Phinehas, as currently represented by the Zadokite family.

But the New Testament consistently attests that Jesus was of the lineage of David and of the tribe of Judah.¹ It nowhere describes his appearing as an attempt to reestablish a genealogically legitimate high priesthood in Jerusalem. Indeed, the New Testament does not even address the question of the legitimacy of the current Jerusalem high priests. It seems, rather, to assume that the contemporary office-holders are legally in office, even if they are not God-pleasing holders of the office.² Even in Hebrews the question of whether the present Jerusalem high priest is a legitimate holder of the office of the Levitical priesthood is ignored. True, a new priestly order has arisen to replace the old Levitical order. But this is not because of the shortcomings of the present office-holders. It has its source, rather, in the shadowy nature of the Levitical order itself.³ In its grand exegetical argument with the (authentic!) Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament, Hebrews sweeps right by all such historical questions of genealogical descent.

¹In connection with which "Moses said nothing about priests" (Heb. 7:14).

²John 11:49-52 says that Caiaphas (albeit unwittingly) prophesied, "being high priest," cf. Paul in Acts 23:2-5.

³If Hebrews was written before 70 A.D. and assumes the Levitical order is still functioning, it certainly appears also to assume that the present functionaries are the legitimate office-holders for the priesthood of that order.

Melchizedek is introduced not as a heavenly figure, a mythological personage, or even an incarnation of Adam who "passed the priesthood on," but rather as a Scriptural example which shows that there is such a thing as a priesthood which does not require a pedigree in order to claim legitimacy.⁴ In this Hebrews (as the whole New Testament) is miles apart from the basic presuppositions about the high priesthood among the sectarians who harbored the hope for a priestly messiah. Furthermore, the New Testament does not even appear to address the question of the difference!

2) The Jewish priestly messiah himself was to be holy, cleansed from sin, upright in his behavior, worthy to stand before God. He would know and keep the Torah and would teach it rightly. He would be holy by virtue of God's gift to him of the spirit of sanctification; and, in his day, sin would be done away with.

But nowhere in the sectarian priestly messianism⁵ is there the thought that the high priest will be holy and sinless because he is the

⁴In making this point, Heb. 7:13-14 might be considered a corrective instruction to former Qumran-type sectarians. But two considerations make this unlikely: 1) The point which these verses make is neither developed nor emphasized elsewhere in Hebrews. Such a drastic "change in the law" might deserve a more thoroughly-argued justification if Hebrews were addressing it as a corrective specifically to the position of Qumran-type sectarians, for whom the matter of genealogical qualification was so important. 2) The fact that Jesus was of the tribe of Judah made it equally difficult for all Jews to accept him as a priest. The justification given in Heb. 7:13-14, such as it is, would logically need to be addressed to any and all Jews, not just to those of a Qumran-type sectarian background.

⁵We must exclude Philo's interpretation, by which the high priest was in some sense "divine" when he entered the holy of holies.

divine Son of God nor that this holiness is something in which he will be "made perfect," that is, he will attain, complete, and prove it through his successful enduring of temptations and sufferings.⁶ What is unique about the "holiness and sinlessness" of Jesus in the New Testament, as emphasized in Hebrews, consists precisely of these two points: his holiness was essential, not bestowed or given by grace because he made purification for himself (compare Heb. 7:26-27); and his sinlessness was proved, perfected through his enduring, as a man, all that we are tempted by (4:15; 5:8). This juxtaposition of divine essence and faithfulness through human temptation is of paramount significance for the sinlessness of Jesus, the high priest, true God and true man. It is in an entirely different realm of thought from the Jewish expectations of a new priest. The Jews, furthermore, expected that in his day sin would come to an end. But nowhere did they ever connect that to the institution of the new covenant through the death of the high priest himself! But this is precisely what Hebrews asserts about the "putting away" of sin. It does so without any elaborate apology (compare Heb. 9:15-22) as it propounds these radically different thoughts.

3) Jewish hopes for a priestly messiah, as they lived among the Qumran sectarians, were integrally wrapped up with their hopes for the historical triumph of their community. The coming of the new priest, the anointed of Aaron, would bring salvation in the vindication of the life of their covenant community; it would issue into a victory that would

⁶ Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Hebräer, KEKNT, 13, 12th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), p. 228, failed to see this important difference and suggested a connection of the sinlessness of Jesus to the priestly messiah of apocalyptic Judaism.

re-establish the true Israel under God's special anointed ones.⁷ The enemy to be vanquished in the day of God's salvation was God's enemy as embodied in the enemy of their community: the Kittim=Romans.

But Jesus' priesthood works in a different realm and to a different goal. Even as his kingship was "not of this world" (John 18:36), so also his priesthood does not have to do with the fulfillment of ethnic hopes nor sectarian destiny. Their priest's work is on earth with the "chosen." But he died outside the gate (Heb. 13:12)⁸ on the accursed cross (Gal. 3:13) in order to taste death on behalf of all (Heb. 2:9; compare Gal. 4:14). To bring many sons to glory (Heb. 2:10; compare John 10:16) he calls them to follow him "outside the camp" (Heb. 13:13) where they endure abuse and affliction (Heb. 10:32-4; compare 12:2-4) in order to reach the heavenly homeland. Parochial and sectarian thoughts of historical vindication are utterly foreign to the New Testament's picture of Jesus' priestly work, which reaches its heavenly apex in his sprinkling of our hearts clean from an evil conscience (Heb. 10:22)

4) Jewish sectarian hopes focused on at least two "anointed."⁹ If Jesus were being proclaimed to Jewish sectarians as the priestly messiah, then the two figures of the Jewish hopes were merged into one

⁷Who, they surely expected, would arise from within their own group.

⁸I.e., not as what the Jews would consider an acceptable sacrifice, but rather as unclean refuse (c.f. Lev. 16:27-28).

⁹Nowhere does the New Testament clearly refer Jesus' title to his high priestly office.

person, Jesus.¹⁰ But the New Testament can nowhere be found to explain how or why it has merged these multiple figures into one.¹¹ It has no awareness of a need to address the problem.

These four areas of comparison show that the New Testament works with presuppositions fundamentally different from those of sectarian Judaism as regards the person of the priestly messiah. Nor does the New Testament even appear to address or attempt to justify the differences. This shows that the New Testament development of the teaching of Jesus' priesthood is not intended as a conscious corrective response to the Jewish sectarian hopes.

Comparisons of Descriptions of Priestly Work

Similarly, a comparison of the descriptions of the work of Judaism's priestly messiah and of Jesus in the New Testament reveals a few points of superficial similarity but thorough-going differences in orientation and emphasis. Thus, both the priestly messiah and Jesus draw near to God, enter into his presence, offer up sacrifices on behalf of the people and make expiation for sins; both represent the power of God in action for men against the devil.

¹⁰In fact, of course, Jesus is the prophet, priest and king, the fulfillment of all three of Israel's sacred offices (Deut. 17:14-18:22); the New Testament does merge them into one person, although in places John the Baptist seems to be considered a prophetic forerunner or a priestly restorer. The point here is the lack of any explanation for the change.

¹¹Melchizedek is not featured in Hebrews 7 as the "priest-king" of Jerusalem who illustrates how Jesus can be both priest and king in the same person! Nor can the Hasmonaeans be called upon as the precedent on which the New Testament relies in asserting that Jesus was both priest and king, as George W. Buchanan suggested, To the Hebrews, The Anchor Bible; 36 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1972), pp. 94-7, 254.

This last-named function represents a set of passages (Mark 3:27; Heb. 2:14-15; Test. Levi 18:12; 1QM) which include strong verbal similarities. But even here the New Testament has a fundamentally different concept of the nature of the battle. Jesus attacked the devil's hold on individual men (demon-possessed, in bondage to the fear of death) but the Jewish hope saw both the enemy and the triumph as one having to do with their sect. Their priest would serve on the battlefield. But Jesus met the enemy, finally, on the cross and defeated him "through death" (Heb. 2:14) by tasting death for every one (2:9).

The two most important aspects of the New Testament's high priest Christology are totally absent from Jewish priestly messianism: 1) that the high priest was "made perfect" ("consecrated") through his obedience and death, his own death as a self-sacrifice, and 2) that he was appointed/exalted to his work through his ascension to heaven with his shed blood, there to make purification and to intercede.¹² Jesus' death as a sacrifice and his heavenly intercession are not only featured prominently in Hebrews, they are also the two seeds, the two descriptions of his "sacerdotal work" before Hebrews out of which Hebrews developed its high priest Christology. Precisely these elements are lacking from the priestly messianism of sectarian Judaism.¹³ In Judaism,

¹²The importance of his "making purification" is clear from its mention in the opening period of Hebrews (1:3). Joseph Coppens, Les af-finités qumrâniennes de l'Épître aux Hébreux, Analecta Lovaniensia Biblica et Orientalia, Ser. IV. 1 (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962), pp. 30-31, also pointed out how much the emphases vary: the Jewish hope as in Qumran focuses greatly on the battle and community leadership and less on actual sacrifices, etc., while the New Testament mentions the battle with the enemy but greatly emphasizes the cultic functions in connection with the self-sacrifice and sprinkling with blood, etc.

¹³The only reference to self-sacrifice is in the final Servant Song, which Judaism did not interpret in such a way as to apply the suffering to any of its hoped-for saviors. According to Is. 53:12, the Servant

there are heavenly intercessors, angels or ascended figures. Sometimes it appears that one who now is an angelic or heavenly intercessor will at the end come down to be the new priest. But nowhere does the idea occur that he will then give himself up in a self-sacrifice and return to heaven to perform priestly service there. Hebrews presents its different teaching with no reference to these Jewish presuppositions and with no attempt to explain why the pattern of Jesus' career is the opposite of the Jewish pattern of the descending priest of the end-time.

Conclusion

Thus we conclude that neither the Christian tradition outside of Hebrews nor Hebrews itself proclaims Jesus as the fulfillment of Jewish hopes for a priestly messiah or even presents its teaching of Jesus' priesthood as a conscious correction in response to such hopes. The "priestly functions" ascribed to Jesus outside of Hebrews can be explained with reference to other passages in the Old Testament background, and Hebrews itself is a consistent development of that New Testament Christology in an exegetical argument, not a historical polemic.¹⁴ As

also intercedes. Thus both of these ideas, so seminal for the development of the high priest Christology, find their probable background in Jesus' reinterpretation of messiahship in terms of the Suffering Servant.

¹⁴This is the reason there is no clear reference to the Herodian Temple, to the current functionaries of the Levitical priesthood in Jerusalem, nor to any recent incident connected with the historical institution of the Jerusalem high priesthood. We cannot accept the explanation that all such references are lacking because Hebrews was written some 20 years or more after the temple had been destroyed, when the whole matter of the historical temple and priesthood was a forgotten and dead issue. We hold that Hebrews was written before 70 A.D., and that its point is that, although the cult may continue to be practiced in Jerusalem, Christians see that it has been made obsolete and will be shaken away.

such, Hebrews is best understood against the background of diaspora (Alexandrian) Judaism, and the situation it addressed is most readily identified with the situation in Rome in the middle or late 60's. Hebrews' way of talking about Jesus as high priest belongs to a world of thought entirely different from that in which the Jewish hopes for a priestly messiah arose, lived, and eventually died.

So the New Testament does not present Jesus as "the priestly messiah." The Jewish hope had sprouted from tiny seeds of Old Testament truth, but was twisted by the forces of human history and emotion into an inauthentic sectarian caricature. All such hopes are doomed, each to its own Masada.

But the Christian hope leads, over another path, to an everlasting destiny in the heavenly homeland. The New Testament teaching of Christ's priesthood is the proper description of the fulfillment of the Old Testament type of the priestly office, one of the institutions established by God through which he works to save and to bless his people. Jesus fulfills that type in a way so profound, so ineffable, that its true significance emerges only in the light that he himself sheds upon it.¹⁵ It is so surprising, so unexpected, so beyond our ability to know, that no form of human hope could begin to approximate it. It is the answer to God's promises, which are now first fully understood in him. Jesus was not the "priestly messiah." He was much more, for he was, and is, our

¹⁵ Bruce Vawter, "Levitical Messianism and the New Testament," The Bible in Current Catholic Thought, ed. by John L. McKenzie (New York: Herder and Herder, 1962), pp. 98-9.

great high priest who has passed through the heavens. . . . Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Heb. 4:14,16).

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