

## 12. THE FULNESS OF THE PRIESTHOOD

regard, one of the most significant of these is Psalm 110, an unquestionably royal and—for Christians—messianic passage.<sup>1353</sup> John Eaton, a scholar of the Psalms, summarizes the import and setting of these verses as part of:<sup>1354</sup>

the ceremonies enacting the installation of the Davidic king in Jerusalem... Items of enthronement ceremonial seem reflected: ascension to the throne, bestowal of the scepter, anointing and baptism signifying new birth as the Lord's son (v. 3<sup>1355</sup>), [and] appointment to royal priesthood.<sup>1356</sup> ... As [in Psalms] 2, 18, 89, [and] 101, the rites may have involved a sacred drama and been repeated in commemorations, perhaps annually in conjunction with the celebration of God's kingship, for which the Davidic ruler was chief "servant."

Note that, in Israelite practice, the moment of investiture would not necessarily have been the time of the king's *first* anointing. The anointing of the king that accompanied his definite investiture was, at least sometimes, preceded by a prior princely anointing. LeGrand L. Baker and Stephen D. Ricks have described "several incidents in the Old Testament where a prince was first anointed to become king, and later, after he had proven himself, was anointed again—this time as actual king."<sup>1357</sup>

Although there is little indication in the Old Testament that these Israelite rituals were given to anyone besides the king, there is significant non-scriptural evidence from later times that Jewish and early Christian groups intended to give analogous rites to others. For example, findings at Qumran and Dura Europos suggest that some Jewish groups attempted to democratize rituals that echoed the rites of the royal priesthood, enabling members of the community, and not just its ruler, to participate in a form of worship that ritually brought them into the presence of God.<sup>1358</sup> Indeed, a precursor of this tradition is evident in the account of God's promise to Israel that, if they kept His covenant, not just a select few but all of them would have the privilege of becoming part of "a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."<sup>1359</sup> Going back to the very beginning of the Bible, some scholars have concluded that the statement that Adam and Eve were created in the "image of God"<sup>1360</sup> is meant to convey the idea that "each person bears the stamp of royalty."<sup>1361</sup> As an example from the New Testament, note that similar blessings, echoing temple themes and intended for the whole community of the faithful, are enumerated in statements found in the second and third chapters of the book of Revelation.<sup>1362</sup> In the most direct of these statements, Revelation 3:21 declares: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."