

NSBT NEW STUDIES IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

# The Royal Priest

Psalm 110 in Biblical Theology



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Series Editor: D. A. Carson



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# 1

## Introduction

In a sermon on Psalm 110 titled ‘Getting Excited about Melchizedek’, D. A. Carson commented:

Most of the controlling themes in the Bible do not resonate very well with the dominant secular culture of the West – and for that matter with many other cultures as well. Think through many of the controlling categories: Covenant, Priest, Sacrifice, Blood offering, Passover, Messiah, King, Day of Atonement, Year of Jubilee. I guarantee you that there are not a lot of people on the streets of Chicago asking, ‘I wonder when the Year of Jubilee is coming.’<sup>1</sup>

As Carson explains, priesthood and kingship are among Scripture’s many controlling themes that ‘do not resonate’ with Western culture. Priesthood is a strange notion to secular sensibilities. Moreover, kingship, particularly Scripture’s notion of kingship, is mostly a foreign concept in a postmodern, anti-institutional, autonomy-loving society.

So what do we do with Melchizedek, a figure who is both a priest and a king? He remains a mystery to many students of the Bible. After all, his name appears only twice in the entire Old Testament. His emergence in Genesis 14 is significant enough to need the space of three whole verses to describe his contribution to redemptive history (Gen. 14:18–20)! His name never appears again in the Old Testament except in Psalm 110:4, which describes the messianic king as a priest ‘after the order of Melchizedek’. Nevertheless, the Melchizedekian priesthood, not the Aaronic, is central to David’s messianic hope and essential to the saving work of Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> This quotation is taken from the published manuscript of Carson’s sermon (Carson 2013: 146).

## The Royal Priest

With such meagre time on the stage of the drama of redemption, how did Melchizedek rise to prominence in David's messianic expectation (Ps. 110:4)? Furthermore, what warrant did David have for combining the offices of kingship and priesthood in a single individual? From a historical standpoint, there is no evidence that any of Israel's kings also held the office of the priesthood. The Mosaic and Davidic covenants separated the offices of priesthood and kingship, not allowing the king and the priests to encroach upon each other's jurisdiction (2 Chr. 16:16–23). The union of these offices in Psalm 110 appears to be a novelty in the biblical record, leading some scholars to conclude that David received this information as a new special revelation from God.

Other scholars have tried to explain away the priestly role of the monarch in Psalm 110. For example, Gerleman's solution to the perceived dilemma was to assign Psalm 110 to the Maccabean period.<sup>2</sup> H. H. Rowley took a different approach, arguing that the psalm addressed two separate people: the king in verses 1–3 and the priest in verse 4.<sup>3</sup> Still others, such as F. L. Horton, claimed that the term 'priest' (*kōhēn*) in 110:4 referred to an administrative official.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the confusion is best captured by A. H. Edelkoort's proposal that the poet's belief that the Messiah would also be a priest for ever (Ps. 110:4) was simply an enthusiastic mistake.<sup>5</sup>

Many modern explanations of Psalm 110 give us the impression that David's hope for a priestly messiah is an anomaly in the biblical record – one that defies any biblical-theological rationale. And yet, Carson contends, '[p]recisely because he is both king and priest, the figure Melchizedek turns out to be one of the most instructive figures in the Bible for helping us put our Bibles together'.<sup>6</sup> Overstatement? Is this sermonic hyperbole meant for rhetorical punch? Or, as this book will argue, is the union of priesthood and kingship in Melchizedek precisely the clue that uncovers the larger biblical-theological foundation on which Psalm 110 is built?

For now, the question remains: why has the messianic portrait of a royal priest in Psalm 110 proven so problematic in the history of

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<sup>2</sup> Gerleman 1981.

<sup>3</sup> Rowley 1950.

<sup>4</sup> Horton 1976: 47–48.

<sup>5</sup> This observation from Edelkoort is taken from Paul 1987: 200. He cites Edelkoort 1941: 330–340.

<sup>6</sup> Carson 2013: 147.

interpretation? The answer, in part, relates to the confusion surrounding the concept of priesthood in modern biblical studies.

## Priesthood in crisis

Crispin Fletcher-Louis says, ‘Priesthood has been marginalized in modern biblical studies.’<sup>7</sup> Such marginalization may correspond, in Peter Leithart’s words, to the ‘severe beating’ priests took in twentieth-century philosophy, sociology and theology.<sup>8</sup> For the modern age of Kantian rationalism, the cultic affairs of priestcraft were nothing more than an ancient fiction.<sup>9</sup> In a world of electric light and radios (still more, mobile phones and the internet), an office that claims access to the divine realm had to be the product of an unenlightened age or the attempt of power-hungry individuals using religious affairs to gain power in society. The modern period’s disinterest in priesthood reflects, according to Fletcher-Louis, ‘a deeply felt antipathy to anything that smacks of high church spirituality’.<sup>10</sup>

It is no surprise, then, that modern Old Testament studies has taken a history-of-religions approach to formulating a theology of Israel’s priesthood. According to Fletcher-Louis, Old Testament scholarship has judged the descriptions of the priesthood (e.g. in Exodus–Numbers, Ezekiel, Joel, Zechariah 3 – 6, Malachi) as showing ‘a lamentable decline in Israelite religion from the pure faith of the prophets and the Deuteronomist into a post-exilic obsession with cultic order and institutional religiosity’.<sup>11</sup> Julius Wellhausen’s source-critical programme lifted ‘priestly texts’ (labelled as ‘P’) from their canonical context and laid them in the hands of post-exilic redactors in the business of producing pieces of political propaganda on behalf of power-hungry priestly sects.<sup>12</sup> As a result, the task of arriving at a coherent theology of the priesthood gave way to historical reconstructions of the cult in Israel’s history. Hence Richard

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<sup>7</sup> Fletcher-Louis 2006: 156.

<sup>8</sup> Leithart 1999: 3.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 1–7.

<sup>10</sup> Fletcher-Louis 2006: 156.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> The hypothesis known as the JEDP theory is most often associated with Julius Wellhausen. The JEDP theory asserts that the Pentateuch is a compilation of four different sources. The ‘Yahwist’ source (J for ‘Jehovah’) uses the name Yahweh for God. The ‘Elohist’ source (E) refers to God as Elohim. The ‘Deuteronomist’ (D) would have been responsible for Deuteronomy (and possibly Joshua–Kings). The ‘Priestly’ source (P) is post-exilic and concerned with Israel’s priesthood.

Nelson's criticism: 'Scholarly literature in this century [twentieth] has focused almost entirely on the problems of historical reconstruction. The theology of priesthood in the Bible has taken a backseat to its history.'<sup>13</sup>

New Testament scholarship has suffered from the effects of modernist assumptions about the nature of Old Testament priesthood. Alex Cheung identifies the lack of reflection on Christ's priesthood in conservative circles as an 'irony of modern evangelical scholarship'.<sup>14</sup> Some scholars deny that the historical Jesus had any priestly self-consciousness. Commenting on the Gospels, Jürgen Becker writes, 'If anything is incontrovertible from the Jesus material, it is that there is not the slightest connection between Jesus and the theological self-understanding of the Jerusalem priesthood.'<sup>15</sup> What about Hebrews, where Psalm 110 and its Melchizedekian priesthood are central to the Christological argument? Eric Mason observed in 2008 that despite renewed interest in the epistle to the Hebrews, 'relatively little has been written in recent years about its key motif, Jesus as high priest, but this was not the case in previous decades'.<sup>16</sup>

Happily, biblical scholarship has experienced a resurgence in literary, theological and canonical readings of Scripture.<sup>17</sup> Andrew Malone's 2017 NSBT volume, *God's Mediators*, is worth highlighting as a recent attempt at a comprehensive biblical theology of priesthood.<sup>18</sup> The time is ripe for fresh examinations of Scripture's priestly theology in biblical-theological perspective.

The goal of this book is not to develop a biblical theology of the priesthood but to consider how the union of priesthood and kingship in Psalm 110 fits in the canonical context of the Bible. Nevertheless, this study should help answer important big-picture questions such as: What constitutes a priest in the biblical narrative? What is the relationship between the Melchizedekian priesthood and Aaronic priesthood? Is Aaron's priesthood in some sense a 'royal priesthood'? Is Israel's identity

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<sup>13</sup> Nelson 1993: ix.

<sup>14</sup> Cheung 1986: 265.

<sup>15</sup> Becker 1998: 215.

<sup>16</sup> Mason 2008: 7.

<sup>17</sup> Since writing the original manuscript of this book, a handful of books on priesthood have been published. See e.g. Malone 2017; Perrin 2019; Schrock 2022.

<sup>18</sup> In the preface to *God's Mediators* (published 2017), Carson remarked, 'There is, as far as I know, no previous book-length *canonical* study of priesthood' (Malone 2017: ix; emphasis original).

as a ‘royal priesthood’ (Exod. 19:6) or Adam’s role as priest-king typologically connected to the royal-priestly messianism of Psalm 110? How do we explain the fact that Hebrews can speak of Jesus as the fulfilment of the Melchizedekian priesthood and simultaneously describe his atoning work according to the duties of the Aaronic priesthood? Is Jesus a priest during his earthly career? Answers to such questions will surface by situating Psalm 110 in biblical-theological and canonical context in order to harmonize Psalm 110 with the rest of the biblical data.

## The argument

The aim of this book is to develop a biblical-theological case for how David came to the conclusion that the Messiah would be a royal priest after the order of Melchizedek. These pages will argue that the Melchizedekian priesthood of Psalm 110 builds on the meaning and purpose of Adam’s royal priesthood in establishing God’s kingdom at creation and captures the order of priesthood associated with the Abrahamic covenant and redemption. In other words, Melchizedek is the type of servant-king Adam was supposed to be, and his priesthood, unlike the temporal Levitical priesthood, can mediate the promises of the Abrahamic covenant to the nations.<sup>19</sup> Melchizedek’s close association with the Abrahamic covenant in the literary context of Genesis is an essential clue in deciphering the biblical logic that informed David’s messianic convictions (cf. Ps. 110:4). Psalm 110:4 is evidence that David came to the realization that God’s promises concerning his heir (2 Sam. 7:8–16) were tied to God’s commitment to bless the nations through Abraham and his seed (cf. Gen. 12:1–3).

This argument depends in large part on the close relationship between kingdom and covenant in the structure of the Bible’s metanarrative. Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum have persuasively demonstrated that the relationship between God’s kingdom and humanity’s role in establishing that kingdom come together in the concept of covenant.<sup>20</sup> God’s kingdom comes through God’s covenants with human beings. These covenants begin with God’s covenant with creation (Adam), where God created

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<sup>19</sup> This argument will build on the fundamental components of what constitutes or defines a priest, namely covenant mediation (acting as an intermediary) and access to the presence of God. See Gentry and Wellum 2012: 318–324. For a fuller development of the meaning and design of priesthood in the Bible, see Wellum 2013.

<sup>20</sup> Gentry and Wellum 2012.

humans in his own image and commissioned them to rule the earth, perpetuate the divine image and worship in the garden of Eden (Gen. 1:26–28; cf. Gen. 2:15). The success of this mission hinged upon Adam's obedience as God's covenantal son and his faithfulness to carry out the obligations of his office of royal priesthood. Ultimately, his failure marred the image of God in humankind and revoked his priestly access to the presence of God when exiled from Eden. But Adam's role and his status as a priestly ruler continued to find expression in various covenantal figures in redemptive history (i.e. Noah, Abraham, Melchizedek, Moses, Israel, David), reaching its climactic fulfilment in Jesus Christ. Unlike Adam, Jesus is the obedient Son of God who faithfully carries out the obligations of his office. Jesus exemplifies his obedient sonship by establishing God's reign (as king) through his covenant self-sacrifice and covenant mediation from God's heavenly tabernacle (as priest) (Luke 22:20; Heb. 1:5–13; 8:1–2; 9:11–17). He obtained the right to remake a new class of priest-kings with authority to extend God's kingdom throughout the world (cf. Matt. 28:18–20; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10).

The union of priesthood and kingship in individuals (or a corporate people) is, therefore, fundamental to the covenantal storyline of Scripture. God's 'creation project' and later 'redemption project' must come to pass through a son of God who perfectly fulfils the job description of the royal priest.<sup>21</sup> Adam's priestly rule in Genesis 1 – 2 sets the trajectory for the purpose of royal priesthood in redemptive history. This book will argue that the union of priesthood and kingship in Psalm 110 fits perfectly into this larger storyline.

As an exercise in biblical theology, there are two ways to look at the purpose of this investigation. First, from a hermeneutical perspective, the objective is to demonstrate that a canonical interpretation of Psalm 110 fits with the metanarrative of Scripture. In other words, the goal is to prove that the psalm's conception of the Melchizedekian priest is part of a developing and unified story across the canon that would have been accessible and recognizable to David during his lifetime. Second, from the perspective of the storyline itself, the aim is to arrive at a clear understanding of exactly what part the Melchizedekian priesthood of Psalm 110 plays in the story of the Bible. Though these two purposes are related,

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<sup>21</sup> The phrase 'creation project' is taken from Alexander 2009: 76–97. I borrow this phrase from Alexander at several points in this book.



we could say that the difference between them boils down to the nature of their respective tasks. In the former, the task is methodological. In the latter, it is descriptive. For this project, my argument focuses on the descriptive task. The chapters that follow will make the case not for *why* we should read Psalm 110 canonically but *how* we should read Psalm 110 canonically. While I hope to demonstrate that the text itself confirms my presuppositions, I have defined my argument in terms of the descriptive outcome. This approach tightly fits the second and third objectives of the NSBT series, which are to articulate the structure of thought of a particular biblical writer and to articulate a biblical theme across the biblical corpora.

## Surveying the landscape

To survey the literature on Psalm 110 would require a book-length treatment of the subject. Indeed, whole books have been written on the history of interpretation of this particular psalm.<sup>22</sup> The voluminous literature on Psalm 110 exists not only because the psalm occupies a pivotal role in New Testament Christology but also because the psalm in its Old Testament context has produced more interpretative conjectures and hypotheses than any other psalm. A summary of the enormous literature is not necessary for the purpose of this study. Instead, this section will survey the modern literature to summarize how scholars have handled the psalm's explicit union of the offices of king and priest in one figure. By canvassing the literature, my goal is not to affirm or deny the validity of each proposal. Instead, this survey should reveal how the nature of the investigation – historical or canonical – has controlled the interpretative task and shaped the interpretative results.<sup>23</sup> The fruit of such a survey will demonstrate the need for an investigation into Psalm 110 that situates it in a biblical-theological and canonical context.

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<sup>22</sup> See e.g. Hay 1973.

<sup>23</sup> Waltke offers a helpful summary of modern scholarship's interpretative approach to Ps. 110: 'Modern scholarship . . . does not give primacy . . . to its predictions as understood in the New Testament. Rather, these scholars give primacy to its inferential historical use as part of the coronation ritual for David's non-supernatural sons or for a post-exilic priest. For most scholars . . . the New Testament re-interprets the original intention of the psalm. According to them, an exclusively human son of David during Israel's pre-exilic monarchy is the lord and priest-king celebrated in the psalm, and it uses courtly hyperbole, not necessarily substantial prophecy. Most deny Davidic authorship, and some deny the psalm's unity' (Waltke 2008: 63).

## Royal priesthood: historical reconstructions of Israelite kingship

Bernard Duhm argued in his book *Die Psalmen: Erklärt* (1899) that Psalm 110 is the product of the Maccabean era (141 BC). According to Duhm, Psalm 110:1–4 is an acrostic on the name ‘Simon’, referring to Simon Maccabeus, the Hasmonean ruler of priestly descent.<sup>24</sup> The Hasmoneans’ leadership skills and success on the field of battle made them king-like in their rise to power. For Duhm and others, Psalm 110 is part of a Maccabean agenda supporting the legitimacy of Hasmonean priest-kings.

In his essay ‘Melchizedek and Zadok (Gen 14 and Ps 110)’ (1950), H. H. Rowley argued that Psalm 110 was written to legitimize the Zadokite priesthood in Jerusalem. He proposed that the story of Melchizedek in Genesis 14 was redacted during the Davidic age in order to link the ancestor of Israel, Abraham, to the priesthood of Melchizedek, ‘whose successor in the Jebusite priesthood Zadok was’.<sup>25</sup> According to Rowley:

It is understandable that in the age of David, if the Israelite Ark were brought into Zadok’s shrine until an Israelite shrine could be built, Zadok’s position should be legitimated for Israel by an etiological story in which the authority of the example of the first father of Israel, Abraham, was invoked.<sup>26</sup>

Rowley maintained a strict separation between kingship and priesthood. David should not be thought of as a priest-king; nor, for that matter, should Melchizedek. The combined result of these assumptions led Rowley to assign two different authors to Psalm 110: ‘In the first three verses the king is addressed by Zadok; in the fourth Zadok is addressed by the king, who confirms Zadok in the priesthood.’<sup>27</sup>

For some scholars, the priestly function of Israel’s king is purely the result of Israel’s actions in borrowing its monarchical identity from its

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<sup>24</sup> Cited in Davidson 1900: 447–448. For a similar argument, see Treves 1965. Treves also suggests that the person addressed in Ps. 110 is not a king: ‘If our warrior had been a king, the poet would have found an opportunity to say so’ (ibid. 86). For a refutation of Treves’ article, see Bowker 1967.

<sup>25</sup> Rowley 1950: 470. For a similar argument, see Johnson 1955: 43.

<sup>26</sup> Rowley 1950: 468.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. 470.

ancient Near Eastern neighbours to solve political dilemmas.<sup>28</sup> Fundamental to this line of interpretation is the belief that the people of Israel developed a critical posture towards the monarchy. Sigmund Mowinckel, in his book *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (first translated into English in 1962), suggested that this hostility 'arose from religious motives and finally led to the kingship being regarded as contrary to Yahweh's sovereignty'.<sup>29</sup> Only a new ideal for kingship, combining royal and religious practice, would win back the support of the people. According to Mowinckel, the union of royal and priestly power was characteristic of the El Elyon kings in ancient Jerusalem (cf. Gen. 14:18). The Davidic kingship rested on Jerusalem as its foundation for power. Yahweh's promise of the 'old right' was necessary to offset the priests' threat to the ecclesiastical power of the king.<sup>30</sup> John Emerton drew a similar conclusion about the union of royal and priestly prerogatives in his essay 'The Riddle of Genesis XIV' (1971):

The Melchizedek passage in verses 18–20 was added, probably in the reign of David. It was hoped to encourage Israelites to accept the fusion of the worship of Yahweh with the cult of El Elyon, to recognize the position of Jerusalem as the religious and political capital of Israel, and to acknowledge that the status of David as king had behind it the ancient royal and priestly status of Melchizedek.<sup>31</sup>

Walter Eichrodt employed a comparable interpretative framework, relying on ancient Near Eastern custom to understand Israel's national political climate. In his *Theology of the Old Testament* (1961), Eichrodt concluded that 'royal psalms such as Pss. 2; 45; 72; 110 present features of the court-style and the king-mythology of the ancient Near East which could only have percolated into Israel from her heathen environment'.<sup>32</sup> The king's priestly quality in Psalm 110:4 was the result of 'the temptation to use cultic apotheosis to enlarge the royal power and authority to disarm popular criticism'.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> See Mowinckel 2004: 50.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* 58–59.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* 64.

<sup>31</sup> Emerton 1971: 437. For a similar interpretation, see Day 1985: 130–131.

<sup>32</sup> Eichrodt 1961: 125.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

Similarly, John Day filtered his understanding of the Davidic dynasty through Canaanite culture in his essay, ‘The Canaanite Inheritance of the Israelite Monarchy’ (1998). He suggests that Psalm 110 is the ‘clearest evidence of Canaanite . . . influence on Israel’s monarchy’.<sup>34</sup> Psalm 110:4 demonstrates, according to Day, that David’s conquest of Jerusalem led to syncretism with the Jebusite cult of Elyon. The Davidic royal priesthood in Psalm 110 thus finds its origin in the Jebusite cult of El Elyon, of which Melchizedek, the Jebusite priest-king, was a pre-Israelite prototype.

Relying heavily on form-critical assumptions, H.-J. Kraus, in his *Theology of the Psalms* (first published in German in 1979), argued that Psalm 110 was part of the liturgy of an enthronement festival that brought together Israelite traditions and the traditions of Jerusalem – the Jebusite royal city-state.<sup>35</sup> According to Kraus, ‘[t]he ruler enthroned in Jerusalem united several offices in his person and, therefore, . . . in the act of enthronement several assumptions and traditions concerning his office had to be taken into account and their authority conferred on the ruler’.<sup>36</sup> These offices included a blend of Davidic kingship traditions (2 Sam. 7; Ps. 132) and the royal-priestly traditions of Jerusalem, which found their origin in Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18; Ps. 110:4). Kraus makes explicit that the installation of the ruler as a priest after the order of Melchizedek ‘was not a genuine and primary tradition of Israel’.<sup>37</sup> Instead, it came from the cultic traditions of Jerusalem.

Lester Grabbe similarly attached a political agenda to the meaning of Psalm 110 and its description of a priestly monarch. In his book *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages: A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialists in Ancient Israel* (1995), Grabbe proposes that the development of sacral kingship in the Old Testament is due to priestly redactors ‘who would want any future monarch to be subordinate to them in cultic matters’.<sup>38</sup> Grabbe attempts to reconstruct the cultic functions of Israel’s kings. He concludes that the king was ultimately responsible for the cult.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Day 1998: 73.

<sup>35</sup> Kraus 1986: 111–116.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* 112.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* 115.

<sup>38</sup> Grabbe 1995: 39.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* 35–40.

Michael Goulder takes a more novel approach to the historical setting of Psalm 110 in his book, *The Psalms of the Return (Book V, Psalms 107–150)* (1998). Goulder argues that Psalm 110 is post-exilic and is probably the work of a poet within the community of the Asaphites, who were the only singers at the time of the return from exile (Ezra 2:41).<sup>40</sup> In this context, Zechariah 6:9–14 is the key to interpreting the psalm’s priestly messianism. According to Goulder, David’s Lord is the priest Joshua (Zech. 6:9–14). If Psalm 110 was written during the time of the return, then, as Goulder argues, David’s Lord should not primarily be thought of as a king, but first and foremost as a priest. He writes, ‘The “lord” is in fact a priest, who is being called to a special vocation as secular leader of the nation.’<sup>41</sup> Psalm 110:1, therefore, refers to Joshua who is ‘installed in an office which has all the trappings of Davidic kingship, but to which it would be impolitic to give the name of king (cf. Neh. 6.6)’.<sup>42</sup>

From another perspective, Deborah Rooke, in her essay ‘Kingship as Priesthood: The Relationship between the High Priesthood and the Monarchy’ (1998), attempts to elucidate the difference between the royal priesthood and the ‘ordinary’ priesthood.<sup>43</sup> She presupposes a priestly redactor (P) as she tries to define the nature of the priesthood and the monarchy at various points in Israel’s history. Her investigation leads her to the conclusion that the ‘monarch can fulfill priestly duties because of the nature of his kingship, but equally because of the nature of his priesthood the high priest cannot be a king, nor should he ever be confused with a messianic figure’.<sup>44</sup>

In Rooke’s later article, ‘Jesus as Royal Priest: Reflections on the Interpretation of the Melchizedek Tradition in Heb 7’ (2000), she summarizes her findings on the relationship between the king’s priesthood and the ordinary priesthood. She describes the monarch’s priesthood as ‘ontological’. In other words, the monarch’s priesthood was inherent in his identity as the son of God. She states:

The monarch had no choice as to whether or not to fulfill the priestly responsibility of mediation laid upon him; he was a priest forever . . .

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<sup>40</sup> Goulder 1998: 146.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 145.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 148.

<sup>43</sup> Rooke 1998: 187.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. 208.

because of the sonship granted to him by the deity . . . His priesthood was part of his identity as son of God; it was ‘ontological’, part of his very being.<sup>45</sup>

Her analysis gives historical credence to the view that the king could have a priestly function without actually holding the office reserved for the Levites.

Israel Knohl contends in his article ‘Melchizedek: A Model for the Union of Kingship and Priesthood in the Hebrew Bible, 11QMelchizedek, and the Epistle to the Hebrews’ (2009) that the Torah depicts a ‘total separation’ between priesthood and kingship, while in the rest of the biblical tradition the king has royal and priestly functions.<sup>46</sup> According to Knohl, Melchizedek, a non-Israelite king, is not ‘restrained by the limitations that the Torah puts on Israelite kings’ and thus serves as a model for the union of kingship and priesthood.<sup>47</sup>

Hossfeld and Zenger, in their commentary on the Psalms published in 2011, assert that the priestly role of the king (Ps. 110:4) appears to be a public relations move on behalf of a redactor. They write, ‘The priestly dimension of the kingship is meant to relativize or correct the dominant military dimension of the rest of the psalm.’<sup>48</sup> Psalm 110:4 is a redactional comment that confers a kind of dignity on the ‘new’ kingship.

Even when scholars do not adopt higher-critical assumptions, they tend to formulate their investigation into the union of kingship and priesthood in Psalm 110 primarily through a historical reconstructive lens. M. J. Paul investigated the union of priesthood and kingship in Psalm 110 in his essay ‘The Order of Melchizedek (Ps 110:4 and Heb 7:3)’ (1987). His historical enquiry led him to the conclusion that the separation of kingship and priesthood in Israel fundamentally distinguished that nation from the surrounding nations. While Israel retained the memory of Melchizedek, who was king and priest in the far past, Psalm 110 cannot address one of the kings of Israel. The psalm had to speak of a future messiah.<sup>49</sup> Finding no historical precedent for a priest-king in the life of Israel, Paul

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<sup>45</sup> Rooke 2000: 82. I find this aspect of Rooke’s argument very helpful. As I will argue later, sonship, royalty and priesthood are intimately connected in the biblical narrative.

<sup>46</sup> Knohl 2009: 258.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* 259.

<sup>48</sup> Hossfeld and Zenger 2011: 150.

<sup>49</sup> Paul 1987: 200.

concludes that David's insight into the Messiah's priesthood was a special revelation from God. He writes, 'At a moment the Lord revealed to David – how we do not know – that one of the descendants of David should be a priest.'<sup>50</sup> The implication of such a statement is that Psalm 110:4 is devoid of any biblical data or typological structures outside the Melchizedek narrative in Genesis 14.

David Anderson's work *The King-Priest of Psalm 110 in Hebrews* (2001) endeavours to settle a theological debate between dispensational and covenant theologians concerning the nature of the present ministry of Christ.<sup>51</sup> In his chapter on Psalm 110, Anderson analyses the king's priestly role. The focus of his investigation with respect to the priestly function of the king is a historical one. He concludes:

Lacking more objective evidence of an early king-priest office in the monarchy of Israel, the traditional understanding of a priesthood completely limited to the Aaronic line is preferred. The king of Israel may have been the head of the Yahweh cult, but that does not mean he had the office of a priest.<sup>52</sup>

Daniel Block makes a similar argument in his essay 'My Servant David: Ancient Israel's Vision of the Messiah' (2003), published in *Israel's Messiah in the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Block argues for a strict separation between the royal and priestly offices in Israel's history. He states, 'Although the Deuteronomic History and the chronicler recount cultic actions performed by Davidic kings, the narratives never confuse or conflate priestly and royal offices.'<sup>53</sup> Block's insistence on this point is meant to strengthen his argument that the Old Testament distinguishes the priesthood from the Messiah. Psalm 110 is no exception. According to Block, 'Psalm 110 attaches priestly prerogatives to the monarchy . . . without compromising the Aaronide-Davide distinction.'<sup>54</sup> Psalm 110 appeals to a type of kingship that existed in the time of Abraham and thus maintains the Old Testament's consistent distinction between the

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 209.

<sup>51</sup> Anderson 2001: 3.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. 57–58. I do not disagree with Anderson's historical analysis here. I am simply emphasizing the fact that a historical approach to Ps. 110 has dominated modern scholarship.

<sup>53</sup> Block 2003: 34.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. 43.

Aaronic–Zadokite priesthood and the Davidic Messiah.<sup>55</sup> What, then, is the priestly role of the king in Psalm 110:4? The priestly prerogative of the king, according to Block, is mediatorial. The king stands in the gap between God and the people – mediating God’s rule and blessing to the people of Israel.<sup>56</sup>

## Biblical-theological literature

A body of literature relevant to this study includes works of biblical theology that attempt to explain the metanarrative of Scripture or controlling themes within Scripture’s metanarrative. Some of the most notable biblical-theological studies informing the shape of my investigation are the works of Dempster,<sup>57</sup> Beale,<sup>58</sup> Alexander,<sup>59</sup> Hamilton<sup>60</sup> and Schreiner.<sup>61</sup> These books unfold Scripture’s metanarrative by highlighting major themes in the storyline, such as kingdom, covenant, temple, kingship and priesthood. They all agree that God’s mandate to Adam at creation functions as the pattern for redemption in the storyline. Adam is the Bible’s prototypical priest-king, and his assignment was to mediate the rule of heaven on earth. His pre-fall responsibility for establishing God’s rule over the earth sets the stage for the goal of redemption, which culminates in humanity’s final restoration – reigning with Christ as a kingdom and priests to God (Rev. 5:10; cf. Rev. 1:6). Interestingly, only Dempster mentions a connection between the messianic priest-king of Psalm 110 and Adam’s assignment in Genesis 1 – 2.<sup>62</sup>

Peter Gentry and Steve Wellum’s Old Testament biblical theology, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (2012), provides one of the most thorough treatments of the royal priesthood in the metanarrative of the Old Testament. Gentry and

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid. 42. In the same book, J. Daniel Hays contributes a chapter responding to Block. Hays argues that Block overstates his case when arguing that the biblical narratives never confuse or conflate the royal and priestly offices. He suggests that David’s priestly activities are not entirely different from those of the Aaronic priesthood and ‘mirror instead the old priest-king pattern of patriarchal Israel’ (Hays 2003: 66–69).

<sup>56</sup> Block appeals to Rooke’s essay ‘Kingship as Priesthood’ on this point (Block 2003: 43 n. 94).

<sup>57</sup> Dempster 2003.

<sup>58</sup> Beale 2004.

<sup>59</sup> Alexander 2009.

<sup>60</sup> Hamilton 2010.

<sup>61</sup> Schreiner 2013. I submitted this manuscript prior to the publication of Dave Schrock’s book *The Royal Priesthood and the Glory of God* (2022).

<sup>62</sup> Dempster 2003: 200.



Wellum show how the concept of royal priesthood is tied to major covenantal figures: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Israel, David and Jesus. They argue for the existence of a creation covenant, which defines the responsibilities that Adam must fulfil as a son of God, servant-king of creation and temple-priest. Adam's covenantal assignment becomes the pattern for the covenantal responsibilities given to Noah, Abraham, Israel and Jesus. Though Psalm 110 is not part of the scope of their project, they suggest that the messianic texts that combine the offices of priest and king indicate 'that the coming figure fulfills an Adamic role planned by God from the beginning for a man over his creation'.<sup>63</sup> They also link the king's priestly role to the identity of Israel, suggesting that 'the king will accomplish in his person the purpose that God had for the nation of Israel as a whole, to be a kingdom of priests'.<sup>64</sup>

Eugene Merrill's essay 'Royal Priesthood: An Old Testament Messianic Motif' (1993) represents a classic typological approach to Psalm 110. Merrill argues from 2 Samuel 6, Psalm 110 and the epistle to the Hebrews that David was the prototypical royal priest, and thus functioned as a type of Jesus' superior royal priesthood.<sup>65</sup> The reason Psalm 110:4 identifies David's Lord as a priest after the order of Melchizedek is to establish a link between the Davidic and Abrahamic covenants. Melchizedek's connection to Abraham, a pre-Mosaic patriarch (Gen. 14), substantiates the superiority of the Melchizedekian priesthood over Aaron's priesthood. 'The Melchizedek-David-Jesus priesthood is a straight-line extension that operates outside of and superior to that of Aaron and the nation of Israel.'<sup>66</sup> What, then, is the relationship between the Sinaitic and Davidic covenants? Merrill writes, 'Israel was the kingdom of priests called to mediate Yahweh's saving grace to the world, and David was the priestly king whose task was to lead them to the full accomplishment of its high and holy calling.'<sup>67</sup>

Similarly to Merrill, Robin Routledge interpreted Psalm 110 and the union of priesthood and kingship against the backdrop of the Genesis 14 narrative in his article 'Psalm 110, Melchizedek and David: Blessing (the

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<sup>63</sup> Gentry and Wellum 2012: 515.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* 422.

<sup>65</sup> Merrill argues that 'my lord' in Ps. 110:1 is an honorific title referring to David (Merrill 1993: 55–57).

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* 59.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* 61.

Descendants of) Abraham' (2009). His analysis focused on the meaning of Psalm 110:4 – 'You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek' – in the light of the prevalence of the concept of 'blessing' in Genesis 14:18–20. He concludes, 'The Davidic king functions as a priest in the way we see Melchizedek functioning as a priest in Genesis 14:18–20, that is, as a means of blessings (the descendants of) Abraham.'<sup>68</sup>

Bruce Waltke offered a canonical interpretation of Psalm 110 in his essay 'Psalm 110: An Exegetical and Canonical Approach' (2008). Waltke's reading of royal priesthood in Psalm 110 moves in a straight-line typological approach from Melchizedek to David's Lord to Jesus Christ. Thus, his interpretation of Psalm 110 traverses the canon, but he limits his analysis primarily to Melchizedek–Jesus typology.

One of the most developed canonical readings of Psalm 110 is found in Scott Hahn's *Kinship by Covenant: A Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God's Saving Promises* (2009). Hahn's primary objective in this book is to 'construct a covenantal interpretation of the Christ event as it is presented in Luke 22, Galatians 3–4 and Hebrews 1–9, the three loci of the New Testament that correlate the terminology of kinship with that of covenant'.<sup>69</sup> Hahn's work is significant for the purpose of this project because he develops the concept of royal priesthood as it relates to the issue of covenantal sonship. Concerning Psalm 110, Hahn's exegesis focuses on the content of the divine oath in Psalm 110:4. Hahn evaluates this oath in the light of Genesis 14, 2 Samuel 6 – 7, Psalm 89 and Psalm 132. He concludes that the 'content of the oath points to God's dynastic establishment of David's line through a son who is divinely adopted. The son is thereby authorized to build the Temple and rule as priest-king in Jerusalem.'<sup>70</sup> Similarly to Merrill, and Gentry and Wellum, Hahn suggests that the 'royal priestly primogeniture' of David's greater son echoes Israel's calling to be a kingdom of priests.<sup>71</sup> Hahn develops the logic of Psalm 110 in the argument of Hebrews, concluding that royal-priestly primogeniture is fundamental to the author's Christology.<sup>72</sup> Jesus' exaltation as the first-born son and royal priest was prefigured by Melchizedek and thus

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<sup>68</sup> Routledge 2009: 14.

<sup>69</sup> Hahn 2009: 22.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* 193.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* 213. Surprisingly, Hahn offers no treatment of the controversial Adamic–creation covenant. He mentions it only in passing. Adam's role as priest-king in Gen. 1 – 2 is therefore not tied to Hahn's discussion of royal-priestly primogeniture in later biblical texts.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* 278–331.

‘represents the restoration of a more perfect form of covenant mediation originally intended for Adam and Israel and practiced to some extent prior to the Sinai rebellion’.<sup>73</sup>

## Summary and observations

Within the field of biblical studies, scholars tend to take one of two trajectories when describing the union of kingship and priesthood in a single figure. They either focus on the union of priesthood and kingship in Psalm 110 from a primarily historical reconstructive perspective or they unpack the Torah’s development of Adam’s office of priest-king and its fulfilment in Jesus and the church (1 Pet. 2:9). In other words, the Melchizedek–David–Jesus typology is rarely ever harmonized with the development of royal priesthood traced through Adam, Israel, Jesus and the church.<sup>74</sup> Biblical-theological studies examine royal priesthood through the rubric of creation–fall–redemption–consummation, highlighting major points of development in Adam, Israel, Jesus and the church. Historical studies attempt to reconstruct Israelite history by searching for evidence of an Israelite sacral kingship that makes sense out of David’s depiction of the Messiah as a priest for ever. Table 1.1 captures the general methodological trend in how modern scholarship has approached the concept of regal priesthood in the Torah and Psalm 110.

**Table 1.1 Methodological approaches to royal priesthood (the priest-king)**

<i>Canonical section</i>	<i>Primary methodology employed</i>	<i>Redemptive-historical development</i>
Torah	Biblical theology	Adam, Israel, Jesus, church
Psalm 110	Historical reconstruction	Melchizedek, David (Messiah), Jesus

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. 280. I must also note Joshua G. Mathews’ (2013) work on Melchizedek, which is a thorough analysis of Gen. 14:18–20 in Genesis and the rest of the Hebrew Bible. Though I discovered Mathews’ work after completing this book, we both adopt similar lines of argumentation at various points in our respective books. Specifically, we both see Gen. 14:18–20 as original to the Genesis narrative, and we both understand Melchizedek’s importance as a function of his association with Abraham and the Abrahamic covenant.

<sup>74</sup> For two recent works that do not bifurcate these two biblical-theological trajectories, see Hahn 2009; Gentry and Wellum 2012.

The chart demonstrates how the different methodological approaches applied to the Torah and Psalm 110 have created a disconnect between the Torah's development of royal priesthood and the regal priesthood of the Messiah found in Psalm 110. Works of biblical theology tend to develop royal priesthood in the Torah and jump over the messianic texts, while historical studies attempt to explain the Messiah's priestly function (i.e. Ps. 110:4) apart from the foundation of the Torah. Critical assumptions combined with the lack of biblical-theological and canonical reflection on Psalm 110 have been so pervasive in much of modern scholarship that, for many interpreters, Melchizedek had to be a later insertion into the Genesis narrative implemented during the rise of Israel's monarchy. Psalm 110 has suffered relentless scrutiny from the historical-critical and form-critical methods of modern scholarship, and though conservative scholarship has opted for a typological and theological interpretation of Psalm 110, more work needs to be done to unpack the meaning of Psalm 110 in biblical-theological context.

This book will argue that the Torah – beyond Genesis 14 alone – provides the theological foundation for David's understanding of the Messiah in Psalm 110. My argument will build on typological and canonical approaches to Psalm 110 to demonstrate how David's messianic expectation is the outworking of earlier biblical literature.<sup>75</sup>

## Method

As an exercise in biblical theology, this book will investigate the inner-biblical logic of the union of priesthood and kingship in a single figure in Psalm 110.<sup>76</sup> A biblical-theological approach is not primarily concerned

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<sup>75</sup> Perhaps the interpretative discrepancies in biblical studies over the relationship between kingship and priesthood in Ps. 110 relate to what Jeremy Treat (2014: 28) laments as the 'oversystematization of certain doctrines, such as the states and offices of Christ' in the field of systematic theology. He writes, 'If Christ's work is divided neatly into the two categories of humiliation and exaltation, with the cross being only in the state of humiliation, it is difficult to see how it could relate to the kingdom at all. If Christ's death is interpreted only in terms of his priestly office then it will be difficult to connect the cross to the kingdom. Although the doctrines of the states and offices themselves are not to blame, they have often been used in a way that draws a thick doctrinal line between Christ's royal and Christ's atoning work.' That 'thick doctrinal line' between Christ's royal and atoning work in systematic theology is probably the cause (or result?) of the lack of biblical-theological reflection on the important place of a priest-king in the Bible's storyline (i.e. in Ps. 110).

<sup>76</sup> By 'inner-biblical logic', I mean the process by which the biblical authors interpreted and applied earlier biblical texts to their own context. In this regard, inner-biblical logic is

with defending issues of authorship or the historicity of the psalm. The final form of the text will control the interpretation. My selection of relevant passages in the Torah and other sections of the Bible will not rely on a word-study approach. The phrase ‘royal priesthood’ occurs only twice in Scripture (Exod. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9) and any attempt to find the specific titles of ‘priest-king’ or ‘royal priest’ will prove vain. Even a search for the individual words ‘king’ and ‘priest’ used in reference to the same person or entity will prove fruitless. Instead, I am using the phrases ‘royal priesthood’ and ‘priest-king’ in the sense that they thematically capture an important biblical-theological theme related to humanity’s role in God’s plan of redemption.<sup>77</sup>

## Presuppositions

I affirm the Scripture’s own testimony concerning itself as the Word of God. God moved human beings by his Spirit to author the very words of Scripture so that every word of the Bible is divinely intended and without error. Scripture’s divine origin necessitates an essential unity across the canon. Even though Scripture consists of individual books of diverse genres written by various authors, it comes to us as a unified revelation from a single divine author.<sup>78</sup> Amid Scripture’s diversity, it is possible to speak of the Bible’s own ‘meta-story’. T. D. Alexander says it this way:

The anthology itself, which abounds in intertextual references, provides most of the literary context within which its contents may be understood. There is not a book within the whole collection that can be interpreted satisfactorily in isolation from the rest. Each book contributes something special to the meta-story and, in turn, the meta-story offers a framework within which each book may be best interpreted. In this regard, the long-standing principle of

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synonymous with what Beale describes as ‘inner-biblical exegesis’. Critiquing the use of the term ‘intertextuality’ in biblical studies, Beale writes, ‘In biblical studies . . . “intertextuality” is sometimes used merely to refer to the procedure by which a later biblical text refers to an earlier text, how that earlier text enhances the meaning of the later one, and how the later one creatively develops the earlier meaning. In this respect, “intertextuality” may be seen as a procedure of inner-biblical or intrabiblical exegesis, which is crucial to doing biblical theology’ (Beale 2012: 40).

<sup>77</sup> This line of argumentation is taken from Thomas Schreiner’s rationale for how the ‘kingdom of God’ is a central message of Scripture even though the phrase itself and related words are rare in Scripture (Schreiner 2013: xiii). See also Wright 1997: 225.

<sup>78</sup> Gentry and Wellum 2012: 84.

interpreting Scripture by Scripture makes considerable practical sense.<sup>79</sup>

The numerous intertextual references within the anthology imply that the biblical authors themselves relied on earlier biblical texts as they interpreted and applied those texts to their context. Thus, my interpretation of any given passage of Scripture will be an attempt to discover the author's intended meaning in the light of the meta-story of the Bible.

Furthermore, this project will try to adopt the interpretative positions of the biblical authors themselves. While modern scholarship may deny Mosaic authorship of the Torah or Davidic authorship of Psalm 110, the New Testament indicates that Jesus, the apostles and the early church did nothing of the sort (Mark 12:35–37; Acts 2:34). The New Testament authors interpret the Old Testament texts on their own terms. Similarly, the canon of Scripture will dictate my interpretative assumptions about issues of authorship and salvation-historical setting. These hermeneutical assumptions are foundational for any biblical-theological investigation. For an interpretation to be truly biblical, it must operate on Scripture's own terms and grow out of Scripture's own world view.

## Biblical theology

In his book *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (2014), James Hamilton defines biblical theology as the attempt to understand 'the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors'.<sup>80</sup> This 'interpretive perspective', according to Hamilton, is the 'framework of assumptions and presuppositions, associations and identifications, truths and symbols that are taken for granted as an author or speaker describes the world and the events that take place in it'.<sup>81</sup> Hamilton's definition of biblical theology is most helpful because, as he notes elsewhere, '[f]ocusing biblical theology on the *interpretive perspective of the biblical authors* moors it to authorial intent'.<sup>82</sup> Following Hamilton's definition, my investigation will analyse the historical and literary features of particular texts and synthesize their relationship to the

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<sup>79</sup> Alexander 2009: 10.

<sup>80</sup> Hamilton 2014a: 15.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* For other helpful discussions on the subject of biblical theology, see Balla 2000; Rosner 2000; Scobie 2000; Klink and Lockett 2006.

<sup>82</sup> Hamilton 2014b: 26; emphasis original.

Bible's overarching narrative in order to arrive at the interpretative perspective of the biblical authors.<sup>83</sup>

This process of analysis and synthesis is what Steve Wellum identifies as a 'grammatical/linguistic-historical-canonical' methodology.<sup>84</sup> According to Wellum, '[t]he best way to read Scripture and to draw theological conclusions is to interpret a given text of Scripture in its linguistic-historical, literary, redemptive-historical, and canonical context'.<sup>85</sup> The goal of this kind of theological reading is to extract the theological intent of the biblical authors and situate their individual theology in the context of the canon. The canon of Scripture by its very nature provides the theological boundaries that control the interpretative task.<sup>86</sup> The 'canonical context' will guide my investigation of Psalm 110.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, the following chapters will operate on the assumption that the biblical authors utilized a typological framework to develop the concept of royal priesthood in Scripture. Typology posits that God intended certain persons, events and institutions in redemptive history to prefigure and correspond to their antitypical fulfilment(s). These typological structures – generally speaking – find their ultimate end in Jesus Christ.<sup>88</sup>

Lastly, the argument developed here will depend heavily on the covenantal structure of Scripture. I am indebted to Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum and their book *Kingdom through Covenant*. They demonstrate how the concept of covenant is central to the 'narrative plot structure' of the Bible.<sup>89</sup> In their words, 'We assert that the covenants form the backbone of the metanarrative of Scripture and thus it is essential to "put them together" correctly in order to discern accurately the "whole counsel of

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<sup>83</sup> This statement is also influenced by Brian Rosner's definition of biblical theology: 'Biblical theology may be defined as theological interpretation of Scripture in and for the church. It proceeds with historical and literary sensitivity and seeks to analyze and synthesize the Bible's own teaching about God and his relations to the world on its own terms, maintaining sight of the Bible's overarching narrative and Christocentric focus' (Rosner 2000: 10).

<sup>84</sup> Gentry and Wellum 2012: 100.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> See Childs 1979: 83.

<sup>87</sup> The canonical context is a given text's relationship to the entire canon of Scripture.

<sup>88</sup> Clearly, there are biblical types that do not culminate in Christ. For example, Balaam is presented as a type of false teacher in 2 Pet. 2:15, Jude 11 and Rev. 2:14. It is unnecessary here to develop the nature of biblical typology. Instead, I point the reader to Steve Wellum's excellent discussion of typology in Gentry and Wellum 2012: 101–108, 121–126. I will be adopting Wellum's understanding of typology. For other discussions of biblical typology and typological interpretations of Scripture, see Fairbairn 1852; Stek 1970; Baker 1976; Davidson 1981; Ribbens 2011.

<sup>89</sup> Gentry and Wellum 2012: 21.

God” (Acts 20:27).<sup>90</sup> By situating Psalm 110 in Scripture’s larger covenantal framework, the apparent novelty of the union of priesthood and kingship in David’s messianic expectation will prove itself to be an essential part of a unified story held together by God’s covenants in human history.

## Preview

Looking ahead, chapter 2 will analyse the development of royal priesthood in Genesis. This chapter will argue that Adam functions as Scripture’s prototypical priest-king, and demonstrate how key figures such as Noah, Melchizedek and Abraham reflect the Adamic prototype. Significant attention will be given to Melchizedek and his purpose in the Genesis narrative as he relates to Abraham and the Abrahamic covenant. Chapter 3 will consider the meaning of Israel’s calling as a royal priesthood and the need for a distinct lineage of Aaronic priests within Israel. This chapter will also address the question of how the Melchizedekian priesthood relates to the Aaronic priesthood.

Chapter 4 will investigate Psalm 110 in Old Testament context by evaluating the psalm’s immediate context, literary structure, and relationship to the Davidic and Abrahamic covenants. Chapter 5 will focus on the exegesis of each verse of Psalm 110 while keeping the canonical context in mind. An often neglected but important question is how Psalm 110 relates to other Davidic psalms in the Psalter. I will explore verbal and thematic connections between Psalm 110, Psalms 1 – 2 and Psalm 8 in order to understand how Psalm 110 fits with the Psalter’s messianic expectations.<sup>91</sup> Chapter 5 will also give attention to 1–2 Samuel to determine how the patterns of David’s own life and the content of the Davidic covenant led David to the realization that the Messiah would be a priest and king after the order of Melchizedek.

Chapter 6 will turn to the influence of Psalm 110 on the intertestamental Jewish literature. The majority of this chapter will focus on an ancient fragmentary manuscript found in the mid twentieth century at Qumran

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> This type of canonical reading of the Psalter has precedent in the NT. In 1 Cor. 15:25–28 the apostle Paul juxtaposes Ps. 110 and Ps. 8 as mutually interpretative texts concerning the resurrection of Jesus. Likewise, the author of Hebrews juxtaposes Ps. 2 and Ps. 110 to substantiate the priesthood of Jesus.



near the Dead Sea. Named by modern scholars as *11QMelchizedek* (11Q13), this document presents a saviour who brings redemption on the eschatological Day of Atonement.<sup>92</sup> He is a messianic figure who combines kingship and priesthood within a single personality.<sup>93</sup> This chapter will also examine the Enochic literature and the *Testament of Levi*.<sup>94</sup> A brief survey of the intertestamental literature should suffice to demonstrate how Psalm 110 shaped the messianic hope of the various Jewish communities associated with these writings.

Chapters 7 and 8 move into the New Testament's use of Psalm 110. Since this psalm is the most frequently quoted Old Testament passage in the New Testament, it is beyond the scope of this project to examine every use of it in the New Testament. Instead, these chapters will focus on the New Testament documents that appeal to Psalm 110 to develop both a royal and priestly Christology. In this regard, chapter 7 will consider the Gospel of Mark, while chapter 8 will turn to the epistle to the Hebrews. The author of Hebrews, more than any other New Testament author, utilized Psalm 110 to shape his Christological argument.<sup>95</sup> Chapter 9 will summarize the contents of the book and draw some theological conclusions for the church today.

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<sup>92</sup> Ancient manuscripts were discovered in eleven caves at Qumran in 1947. '11Q' is a reference to the cave number at Qumran. *11QMelchizedek* is a fragmentary manuscript dating to approximately 100 BC.

<sup>93</sup> Knohl 2009: 263.

<sup>94</sup> Levi is consecrated as a priest of El Elyon. The El Elyon reference associates Levi with the priest-king Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18; Ps. 110:4). See Collins 2010: 97.

<sup>95</sup> Ps. 110 is cited or alluded to in Heb. 1:3, 14; 5:6–9; 6:19 – 7:28; 8:1 – 10:13; 12:3.

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