

# THE ANOINTING OF AARON: A STUDY OF LEVITICUS 8:12 IN ITS OT AND ANE CONTEXT<sup>1</sup>

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## *Introduction*

Lev 8:12<sup>2</sup> forms an integral part of the ritual of ordination of Aaron and his sons and the consecration of the Tabernacle and is shaped after the commandment section found in Exod 29, dealing with the technical and procedural aspects of the ordination and consecration ritual.<sup>3</sup> This study first

<sup>1</sup>The present article is a revision of one originally published as 'La unción de Aaron. Un estudio de Lev 8:12 en su contexto veterotestamentario y antiguo cercano-oriental,' *Theologika* 11/1 (1996): 64-83. (*Theologika* is a biennial theological journal of Universidad Peruana Union, Lima, Peru.) The study is partly based on research undertaken for the author's D. Litt. thesis at the University of Stellenbosch. See G. A. Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual: On the Symbolism of Time, Space, and Actions in Leviticus 8," (D. Litt. diss. University of Stellenbosch, 1995). A revised version of the dissertation has been published in 1998 by Edwin Mellen Press under the title *A Comparative Study of the Ritual of Ordination as Found in Leviticus 8 and Emar 369*. The financial assistance of the South African Center for Science Development toward this research is hereby acknowledged. Furthermore, the author would like to thank the University of Stellenbosch for awarding him the Stellenbosch 2000 bursary, which constituted a substantial help in the financing of the doctoral studies.

<sup>2</sup>This study will concentrate upon Lev 8:12, which describes the anointing of Aaron only. Verse 30 of the same chapter includes a short note as to the anointing "with blood and oil" of Aaron and his sons. In a recent article, D. Fleming suggested that the existence of two anointing rites in the ordination ritual (8:12 describing the anointing of Aaron and 8:30 describing the anointing of him and his sons) indicates the existence of two distinctive customs. However, it could also be argued that the division indicates two different ritual states of the participants ("More Help from Syria: Introducing Emar to Biblical Studies," *BA* 58/3 [1995]: 143-144).

<sup>3</sup>Concerning the relationship between Exod 29 and Lev 8 one can find three main viewpoints in the literature: (1) *Lev 8 is the older document and therefore Exod 29 is dependent on Lev 8*. See B. A. Levine, "The Descriptive Ritual Texts of the Pentateuch," *JAOS* 85 (1965): 311-312; K. Elliger, *Leviticus*, HAT 4 (Tiibingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1966), 107ff.; and M. Noth, *Das dritte Buch Mose: Leviticus*, 4th ed., Am 6 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978), 56. (2) There exists an intricate interrelationship between Exod 29 and Lev 8 suggesting some kind of literary dependence, but-in line with modern communication theory-there is no benefit in separating "earlier" and "later" sources. This mediating position is held by H. Utschneider, *Das Heiligtum und das Gesetz: Studien zur Bedeutung der sinaitischen Heiligtumstexte* (Exod 25-40; Lev 8-9), OBO 77 (Fribourg: Universitätsverlag, 1988), 37; and J. E. Hartley, who assume that both Exod 29 and Lev 8 were dependent on an

investigates the meaning of the anointing rite in its context of the ordination ritual. Then follows an analysis of a new text from Emar<sup>4</sup> describing an ordination ritual of the high priestess of <sup>d</sup>IM (the god IM) with special regard to the anointing rites encountered in this text. Finally, a comparative section will deal with similarities and dissimilarities between the rites and the relevance of this comparison in the broader context of Pentateuchal studies.

*The Anointing of Aaron in Lev 8:12*

One can detect a similarity regarding the involved actions (of anointing) in the structures of Lev 8:10-11 and 8:12, although the objects and persons involved are dissimilar. Three different consecutive actions are encountered in Lev 8:10 that could be understood in terms of a staircase structure based upon content rather than literary structure.<sup>5</sup> The verbs include וַיִּקַּח ("and he took"), וַיִּמְשֹׁךְ ("and he anointed"), and וַיִּקְדָּשׁ ("and he consecrated"). All these actions have Moses as their subject and the Tent of Meeting and its utensils as their object. The first action constitutes the moving of the object that effects the final action of 8:10 (namely the consecration), while the center action ("and he anointed") describes the way and means the final action is achieved, i.e., anointing results in consecration. Therefore it appears that לָקַח (take) would function like הִנִּיחַ ("put") in the clothing act, initiating, the intended action.<sup>6</sup>

ancient Vorlage containing the ordination ritual (*Leviticus*, WBC 4 [Waco, TX: Word, 1992], 109-110). (3) *Exod 29 is the older document and thus Lev 8 is dependent upon Exod 29*. Representatives of this position include J. Milgrom, *Leviticus* 1-16, AB 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1991); idem, "The Consecration of the Priests. A Literary Comparison of Leviticus 8 and Exodus 29," in *Ernten was man sat. Festschrift für Klaus Koch zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. D. R. Daniels (Neukirchen-Vllyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991), 273-286; and G. J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 131ff. The contextual and comparative evidence (i.e., the usage of prescriptive and subsequently descriptive texts in the ANE as found in the Samsu-Iluna B inscription; see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 553) adduced by Milgrom seems to favor this interpretation. Thus as the point of departure for this study the dependence of Lev 8 on Exod 29 is assumed.

<sup>4</sup> For the bibliography of the text and commentaries on the text see below.

<sup>5</sup> See W.G.E. Watson, "A Note on Staircase Parallelism," *VT* 33/4 (1983): 510-512, on staircase parallelism in prose literature. Cf. also A. Berlin, "Parallelism," *ABD*, 5: 155-162; and W. G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques*, 2d ed., JSOT.SS 26 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 150-156. Concerning the syntactic relationship of these three verbs indicating successive action, see G. A. Klingbeil, "The Syntactic Structure of the Ritual of Ordination (Lev 8)," *Bib* 77/4 (1996): 510-512.

<sup>6</sup> This has also been suggested by H. Seebass, who has observed the fact that about three-fourths of the occurrences appear in sacrificial descriptions (or prescriptions) and in the narrative literature of the OT. He writes: "Vielmehr deutet der uberaus haufige Gebrauch des Verbs in Vorbereitung eines weiteren, den eigentlich intendierten Akt darstellenden . . . auf einen Sinn,

It is interesting to note that Lev 8:10-12 (and also elsewhere)<sup>7</sup> includes the anointing of both objects and persons. Ritual space plays an important role, since Moses appears to have taken a circular route when performing the anointing rites. In Lev 8:11 the text mentions twice **הַמִּזְבֵּחַ** "the altar," and it is feasible to argue that Moses actually sprinkled the anointing oil first on the incense altar<sup>8</sup> and the other objects in the first section of the sanctuary and then went straight to the altar of burnt offering in the courtyard.<sup>9</sup> The sequential nature of this action is expressed by the usage of the wayyiqtl forms that express succession of action.<sup>10</sup> "The suggested route stresses the differentiation between the profane and holy of the geography of the Tent of Meeting."<sup>11</sup>

The repeated usage of the anointing oil on the objects of the sanctuary and the priests and the usage of the same verbal form of **משח** ("anoint") suggests similar ritual states of both "entities." As F. Gorman writes:

This anointing with the special anointing oil serves to pass objects and persons into a similar ritual state. . . . The common anointing also serves to emphasize that these are the primary "spaces" of Aaron's cultic officiating as high priest. This is not to say that all of the anointed objects are the private domain of the high priest; rather, it is to indicate the *primary* places of his service and to mark the outer bounds of his service.<sup>12</sup>

der in erster Linie die Verantwortlichkeit des jeweiligen Subjekts für die jeweilige Handlung hervorheben will" (**שָׁחַ**, *ThWAT*; 4:589). As has been suggested by Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 188, it would appear that **שָׁחַ** as the first verbal form of Lev 8:7-9 functions both as an indicator for the beginning of the process of clothing and the point of departure for a series of increasingly more concrete acts of dressing. This phenomenon can also be found in 1 Sam 17:38-39, which-albeit not in a religious context-utilizes a sequence similar to the one found in Lev 8:7.

<sup>7</sup> See D. H. Engelhard, "Anoint, Anointing," *ISBE*, 1:129, and the references given there.

<sup>8</sup> This interpretation is not solely based upon the double occurrence of **הַמִּזְבֵּחַ** "the altar," but also on the usage of the verbal action connected with the first reference to the altar. **נָחַ** ("to sprinkle") seems to consecrate the altar (instead of purifying it as in other instances-see Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 194, and also V. P. Hamilton, **נָחַ**, *NIDOTTE*, 3:69). T. C. Vriezen has suggested that "the degree of sanctification is directly proportional to the distance of the place in which the *hizza*-rite is performed from the ark" ("The term *hizza*: Lustration and Consecration," *Oudtestamentische Studien*, ed. P. A.H. de Boer [Leiden: Brill, 1950], 215). If this suggestion is correct, it would support the interpretation that the first altar mentioned in Lev 8:11 in connection with the sprinkling rite could have been the incense altar, since it was much closer to the Holy of Holies and thus required sevenfold consecration with the anointing oil.

<sup>9</sup> See here G. A. Klingbeil, "Ritual Space in the Ordination Ritual of Leviticus 8," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 21/1 (1995): 72.

<sup>10</sup> Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 90-108.

<sup>11</sup> Klingbeil, "Ritual Space," 73.

<sup>12</sup> F. H. Gorman Jr., *The Ideology of Ritual Space, Time and Status in the Priestly Theology*,

It would, therefore, appear that the term marks a connection between ritual space or location and ritual function of the involved persons. It is significant that the anointing of the Tabernacle and its objects precedes the anointing of the High Priest. This might provide a clue for the importance of ritual space in OT ritual.<sup>13</sup>

The final verbal form in Lev 8:11, **לִקְדָּשֵׁם** ("to consecrate them"), provides an explanation of the two previous acts of sprinkling<sup>14</sup> and anointing (**מָשַׁח**). The infinitive construct **לִקְדָּשֵׁם** would be in accordance with the use of **וַיִּקְדָּשׁ** in Lev 8:10 that explained the previous ritual action on the Tabernacle.<sup>15</sup> After the objects are anointed, the ritual personnel are to be ordained. Lev 8:12 displays a structure similar to that found in 8:11, but instead of sprinkling the anointing oil, Moses pours some on Aaron's head.<sup>16</sup> **יִצַק** occurs fifty-five times in OT<sup>17</sup> and is used in the

JSOT.SS 91 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 118-119.

<sup>13</sup> Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 192.

<sup>14</sup> The verbal root used is **שָׁדַק** which appears some twenty-four times in the OT (see A. Even-Shoshan, *A New Concordance of the Old Testament* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1985), 750). On the usage of the verb see the discussion in Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 193-194, Hamilton, *NIDOTTE*, 3:69-70, and Vriezen, "hizza," 201-235.

<sup>15</sup> Concerning the meaning of **שָׁדַק** in the OT, see J. A. Naude, **שָׁדַק**, *NIDOTTE*, 3:877-887, and Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 192, and the references given there. It is interesting to note that forty-five of the seventy-five occurrences of the Piel form of **שָׁדַק** can be found in the Pentateuch, predominantly in the books of Exodus (twenty-two times) and Leviticus (fifteen times). This is in agreement with the content of these books, i.e., the construction of the sanctuary and initiation of "proper" sacrificial service. Cf. also P. P. Jenson, *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World*, JSOT .SS 106 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992).

<sup>16</sup> Anointing was not only utilized in religious rituals, but also appears in secular and legal contexts (although it is not always easy to differentiate between these categories). Concerning the anointing with oil as an expression of joy, see G. A. Anderson, *A Time to Mourn, A Time to Dance: The Expression of Grief and Joy in Israelite Religion* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991), 45-47. A. Viberg discusses the legal function of anointing in the OT context. He suggests that the "priestly anointing served to consecrate priests to their cultic service. The legal function of the act was therefore p~ of cultic law" (*Symbols of Law: A Contextual Analysis of Legal Symbolic Acts in the Old Testament*, ConBOT 34 [Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1992], 119). While one should not neglect the legal aspect of the anointing procedure (as found in other OT contexts-specifically concerning the king's anointing), it would appear that the close proximity of the priestly anointing and the anointing of the Tabernacle would suggest rather the consecratory aspect of the rite. Perhaps it is possible to combine both aspects, since by anointing both Aaron and the Tabernacle (and its objects) it was publicly stated that they were to be considered as belonging to YHWH, which certainly has legal undertones. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind the stated purpose of the procedure as found in Lev 8:10-12, where the process of **שָׁדַק** is referred to several times and thus underlines the importance of the consecratory aspect.

<sup>17</sup> Even-Shoshan, *Concordance*, 487.

context of pouring fluids in everyday situations (as, for example, in 2 Kgs 4:4; Ezek 24:3, etc.),<sup>18</sup> but occurs predominantly in cultic contexts.<sup>19</sup> Five times the verb appears together with **משח**, namely, in Exod 29:7; Lev 8:12; 1 Sam 10:1; 2 Kgs 9:3, 6. The first two references concern the ordination of priests and are clearly cultic. 1 Sam 10:1 describes the anointing of Saul by Samuel. It is significant to see a similar sequence of actions, namely, **לקח** ("take"), **יצק** ("pour"), and **משח** ("anoint"). The final **משח** contains an interpretation of the act of pouring the oil upon Saul's head by Samuel. 2 Kings 9:3 utilizes the same sequence and occurs in the context of Jehu's anointing by Elisha. While 2 Kgs 9:3 contains the prescriptive part of that procedure, v. 6 describes the actual performance. From these examples it would appear that the anointing of priests and kings was similar, the only difference being the fact that the oil to be used for the priests was **המשחה שמן** "anointing oil," whereas the references to the anointing of Saul and Jehu mention only **שמן** as the fluid agent.<sup>20</sup> The combination **המשחה שמן** "anointing oil" occurs sixteen times in the OT.<sup>21</sup> The oil used for **המשחה שמן** was a mixture of specific spices and olive oil (Exod 30:22-33).<sup>22</sup> It was used in rituals of consecration for priests (Exod 29:7, 21; Lev 8:12, 30), the Tabernacle (Exod 40:9; Lev 8: 10) and possibly also kings.<sup>23</sup> Special consideration should be given to the fact that the anointing oil was to be a mixture of specific strong-smelling spices, which should be interpreted in the context of the importance of smells in the cultural environment of

<sup>18</sup> Compare here also the discussion found in B. Johnson, **יצק**, *ThWAT*, 3:827.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 3:827-828.

<sup>20</sup> J. N. Oswalt, **משח**, *NIDOTTE*, 2: 1124, assumes that the oil utilized for both rituals of anointing was to be the same, although he does not discuss the differing terminology mentioned above.

<sup>21</sup> Namely in Exod 25:6; 29:7,21; 31:11; 35:8,15,28; 37:29; 39:38; 40:9; Lev 8:2,10,12, 30; 21:10; and Num 4:16. Another similar phrase **משחת שמן** occurs either with the apposition **קדש** (Exod 30:25 [two times] and 31) or without the apposition (Lev 10:7 and 21:12).

<sup>22</sup> See more specifically N. M. Sarna, *Exodus*, JBS Torah Commentary 2 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991), 197-198. The following ingredients were used: liquid myrrh (NRSV) [Sarna translates it as solidified myrrh], sweet-smelling cinnamon, aromatic cane, and cassia. Cf. also Y. Feliks, "The Incense of the Tabernacle," in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, ed. D. P. Wright, D. N. Freedman, and A. Hurvitz (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 125-149, concerning the nature of some of the ingredients involved. It should be noted, however, that the anointing of King Solomon described in 1 Kgs 1:39 does not explicitly mention **המשחה שמן**, but rather **מן־האהל**, "the oil from the Tent." It could thus be possible that the procedure and material used for the anointing of kings was not exactly the same procedure as the one used for the anointing of the priests and the sanctuary.

the ANE.<sup>24</sup> This applies specifically to the composition of שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה, which includes parts of cinnamon, myrrh, cane, and cassia and should be expected to give off a pleasant smell.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that the OT forbids the use of the anointing oil for cosmetic or other uses apart from the prescribed acts of ritual anointing.<sup>26</sup> It appears that by this prohibition YHWH reserves the special fragrance for himself.

By anointing "his" fragrance is transmitted to his dwelling and its inventory (Exod. xxx 26-9) and to the priests, devoted to his service (Exod. xxx 30). So YHWH's fragrance becomes attached to his house and his attendants. So they are marked by his personality [emphasis supplied]. Their exclusive belonging to YHWH is expressed for an organ of sense in a perceptible way.<sup>27</sup>

As has been noted above by Houtman, smell is an extension of one's personality, and thus the priests and the sanctuary are marked by YHWH's personality. That in turn gives them a special status in society.

The anointing of Aaron (and later in v. 30 that of his sons as well) marks a crucial point inasmuch as it puts both the location and its objects and the person(s) on a par.<sup>28</sup> Taking the parallel anointing of the Tabernacle and its objects and the High Priest into consideration, Milgrom<sup>29</sup> has argued that this practice resembles similar practices in "old portions of the Pentateuch" (such as Gen 28:18; 31:13; and 35:14) and thus would suggest an early origin of the practice of anointing the High Priest and not a later modeling of the ritual after the practice of anointing a king.

<sup>24</sup> See C. Houtman, who argues that smells/breath are often understood as the extensions of the personality of the carrier. "The breath is an extension of the personality. . . . In the light of the remarks made above about man and his emanations, it is plausible that for an Israelite odors were not only either pleasant or unpleasant, but also carriers of either life or death" ("On the Function of the Holy Incense [Exodus XXX 34-8] and the Sacred Anointing Oil [Exodus XXX 22-33]," *VT* 42/4 [1992]: 460-461). Cf. also B. Gibbons, "The Intimate Sense of Smell," *National Geographic* 170 (1986): 324-362, concerning the importance of smells in human life.

<sup>25</sup> The unique composition of the anointing oil-similar to the composition of the incense also described in Exod 30--reflects a pattern (M. Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting the Priestly School* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1978], 243), namely, that material uniqueness corresponds to "sacral-ritualistic distinctiveness." ' .

<sup>26</sup> Exod 30:32-33 emphatically states that no unqualified person should have contact with the oil, lest he should be "cut off from his people." This differentiation is also clearly indicated by the use of verbal forms. Whereas the ritual anointing is always expressed by the root מִשַּׁח cosmetic anointing is indicated by the root 110. Cf. Oswalt, *NIDOTTE*, 2:1124.

<sup>27</sup> Houtman, "Function of Holy Incense," 465.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. also Jenson, who maintains that "the holiness of the priests. . . was of the same order as that of the holy areas of the Tabernacle (*Graded Holiness*, 119).

<sup>29</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 554.

*The Anointing of the NIN.DINGIR at Emar*

Emar, or modern Tell Meskene (some 90 km east of Aleppo) in Syria, was excavated during five salvage campaigns between 1973 and 1976.<sup>30</sup> The city existed on this particular site between the fourteenth and twelfth centuries B.C.E., after which it was destroyed.<sup>31</sup> Among the numerous tablets and fragments is a section of Emar 369 that contains the description of the ritual of ordination of the NIN.DINGIR of <sup>d</sup>IM, of which there are six tablet fragments representing four manuscripts.<sup>32</sup> The relevant sections of the ritual texts are lines 3-4 and 20-21, which read as follows:<sup>33</sup>

3. i-sa-ba-tu<sub>4</sub> DUMU.MI a-i-me-e DUMU <sup>unu</sup>E-m|ar it-tar-ra-a i-na u<sub>4</sub>-mi  
sa-a-su-ma I.DU<sub>10</sub>.GA is-tu E.GAL-li
4. u is-tu E <sup>d</sup>NIN .KUR i-laq-qu-mi a-n|a SAG .DU-si i-sak-kan-nu 1  
UDU 1 <sup>du</sup>qu-u-u 1 hi-zi-bu KAS.GESTIN
20. a-na pa-ni nu-ba-at-ti I.DU<sub>10</sub>.GA sa E <sup>d</sup>NIN.KUR u[ a-n]a  
KA <sup>d</sup>IM <sup>lu</sup>HAL i-[ na SAG.DU]
21. sa NIN.DINGIR i-tab-bu-uk u LU.MES sa qi-da-si is-t[u E <sup>d</sup>IM  
E-ma a-na E a-bi-si u-se-e]r (?) -ra-bu-si

<sup>30</sup> Cf. J.-C. Margueron, "Emar," *ABD*, 2:488-490. See also idem, "Emar, Capital of Astarta in the Fourteenth Century B.C.E.," *BA* 58/3 (1995): 126-138; and J.-C. Margueron and M. Sigris, "Emar," *OEANE*, 2:236-239; and W. Pitard, "The Archaeology of Emnar," in *Emar: The History, Religion, and Culture of a Syrian Town in the Late Bronze Age*, ed. M. W. Chavalas (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1996), 13-23.

<sup>31</sup> Margueron suggests that several references to Emar found in the literature from Ebla, dating the city back to approximately 2400 B.C.E., must be understood in terms of the rebuilding of the same city on a different site due to the meandering movements of the Euphrates. "The movement of the river condemned the city to destruction; the only solution was to abandon the city and rebuild it nearby." This would also explain why the excavations suggested that Emar/Tell Meskene was a relatively newly established city ("Emar," *ABD*, 2:489). Cf. J.-C. Margueron, "La recherche sur le terrain," in *Meskene-Emar: Dix ans de travaux 1972-1982*, ed. J.-C. Margueron (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1982), 12-13. See also H. Klengel's review of D. Arnaud's *Recherches au pays d'Astarta: Emar VI; vols. 1-2: Textes sumeriens et akkadiens, Planches. vol 3: Textes sumeriens et accadiens, Texte* (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1985) in *OLI* 83 (1988): 646-651; and his summary of the allusions to Emnar /Imar found in cuneiform literature of the second millennium B.C.E. and the references given there. For more references to the history and archaeology of Emar see Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 280-281.

<sup>32</sup> See the important work of D. E. Fleming, *The Installation of Baal's High Priestess at Emar: A Window on Ancient Syrian Religion*, HSS 42 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992), 9; and Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 281-282, esp. n. 62.

<sup>33</sup> D. Arnaud, *Recherches au pays d'Astarta: Emar VI; vol 3: Textes sumeriens et akkadiens, Texte* (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1986), 326-337.

3. The daughter of any son of Emar may be identified. On that same day they will take fine oil from the palace
4. and from the temple of <sup>d</sup>NIN.KUR, and put (it) on her head. They will offer before <sup>d</sup>IM 1 sheep, 1 *qu'u-jar*, (and) 1 *hizzibu* of wine
20. Just before the evening watch, they will take fine oil of the temple of <sup>d</sup>NIN .KUR and of the palace, and at the gate of <sup>d</sup>IM the <sup>lu</sup>HAL
21. will pour (it) on the NIN.DINGIR's [head], and when the men of the *qidasu* leave the temple of <sup>d</sup>IM, they will [bring] her [into the house of her father].

The two references to the anointing act occur during the actions prescribed for the first and second days. After the initial identification of the future high priestess by means of a lot (line 2), the chosen "daughter of any son of Emar" is anointed with "fine oil" from the palace. The introductory time reference to the second occurrence *a-na pa-ni nu-ba-at-ti*, "just before the evening watch,"<sup>34</sup> refers to the second day of the ritual,<sup>35</sup> which is one of the key days of the nine-day ceremony.<sup>36</sup> It is significant to note that on each of the important days of the ritual, reference is made to the time before the beginning of the night, which seems to introduce an important part of the ritual preparing for the following day (cf. lines 20,40, and 62).

The origin of the oil is from the "palace" and from the "temple of <sup>d</sup>NIN .KUR." The act of anointing is often found in both legal and ritual contexts in Mesopotamian texts<sup>37</sup> and possibly also in connection with the

<sup>34</sup> Fleming, *Installation*, 51. M. Dietrich, "Das Einsetzungsritual der Entu von Emar (Emar VI/3, 369)," *UF* 21 (1989): 80 translates "vor Anbruch der Nacht."

<sup>35</sup> Line 7 reads "on the next day." Regarding the discussion of ritual time in the ordination ritual of the NIN .DINGIR, see Klingbeil, "Ordination and :Ritual," 322-332.

<sup>36</sup> The other important days include the second day (shaving ceremony), the third day (enthronement ceremony), and the final or ninth day (procession from house of the father of the NIN.DINGIR to the temple of <sup>d</sup>IM and ascension upon the bed). See also Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 328. Dietrich, "Einsetzungsritual," 87-89, interprets the ritual as a seven-day ritual which is based upon the recurring phrase U<sub>4</sub>.7.KAM, "for seven days" (lines 46, 48, 51, 54, 57, and 83). Fleming, *Installation*, 63, has speculated that "perhaps comparison with the week-long Israelite festival or simply the magic of the number itself produces a disposition toward the seven-day length, but various details of the text suggest the alternative scheme elaborated below [referring to the nine-day duration of the festival]." The key to this problem is the usage of the prepositional phrase *i-na* and the noun denoting "day." It appears that when a temporal phrase is introduced by *i-na*, it indicates "time when" rather than "how long." However, the inclusion of a seven-day period into the larger framework of the nine-day festival indeed underlines the importance of the seven-day unit in the ritual practice of the ANE. Cf. also G. A. Klingbeil, "Ritual Time in Leviticus 8 with Special Reference to the Seven-day Period in the Old Testament," *ZAW* 109/4 (1997): 500-513; and Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 131-139.

<sup>37</sup> *CAD*, S/1, 325-327.

anointing of high officials, although Thompson has recently argued convincingly against this interpretation in Egyptian texts.<sup>38</sup> The different places of origin of the "fine oil" seem to indicate two different aspects of the social dimension of the election of the high priestess, namely, the public and religious dimensions.<sup>39</sup> This interpretation is further supported by the use of two different verbal forms, namely *sakanu*, "pour" and *tabaku*, "pour,"<sup>40</sup> the common word used for pouring oil on the head. Alternatively, the different terms in connection with the rites of anointing could indicate differing grades of "separation," which is one of the main motifs of the first days of the ordination rites of the NIN.DINGIR.<sup>41</sup>

It is interesting to note that there is one more anointing rite in the ritual: line 35 mentions that on the third day the NIN.DINGIR anoints the top of the *sikkanu* of the goddess Hebat. The text utilizes the same verbal root as used for the description of the second-day anointing, namely, *tabaku*.<sup>42</sup> The parallel performance of anointing (first the NIN.DINGIR and then the *sikkanu* of Hebat) possibly suggests that the later rite is an imitation of the earlier one. The motivation behind the choice of the stele of Hebat for the anointing rite concerns the role Hebat apparently played in the pantheon of Emar--at least in the pantheon "visible" in the ordination ritual of the NIN.DINGIR. The close proximity to <sup>d</sup>IM: would suggest that Hebat was his

<sup>38</sup> See D. B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 368; and P. Dion, "Institutional Model and Poetic Creation: The First Song of the Servant of the Lord and Appointment Ceremonies," in *Ascribe to the Lord. Biblical and Other Studies in Memory of Peter C. Craigie*, JSOT .SS 67 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), 334. However, S. E. Thompson, after discussing the five pieces of evidence frequently cited in support of the concept that officials were anointed in Egypt (Florence Stele 1774, TT90; P. Rylands IX 8/15-18, reward scenes, and EA51:4-9), concludes that only in EA 51 an Egyptian king undoubtedly anointed a vassal--which should possibly be interpreted that the king was "engaging in a custom common among Asiatics, rather than that he was introducing an Egyptian custom into Syria-Palestine" ("The Anointing of Officials in Ancient Egypt," JNES 53/1 [1994]: 25).

<sup>39</sup> The election first has to be ratified by the palace, while the second anointing indicates the actual religious aspect of the rite.

<sup>40</sup> W. von Soden, *AHW*, 1295-1296.

<sup>41</sup> Fleming has suggested a third possibility: "When the priestess is selected anointing is the rite that first marks her as <sup>d</sup>IM'S. Perhaps the second anointing, before she returns to her father's house after the shaving day, renews this identification, since she is now effectively on loan back to her father. It is possible that the shaving itself makes necessary the repetition, if her anointed hair has been removed. Finally, the fact of two anointings further emphasizes the separation of the shaving day as a ritual event unto itself" (*Installation*, 177).

<sup>42</sup> There are other occasions involving the anointing of a stele with oil or blood, e.g., Emar 373.57-58; 373.32; and 375.14. Cf. Fleming, *Installation*, 78, esp. n. 36.

consort.<sup>43</sup> By anointing <sup>d</sup>IM's divine consort, the human consort dedicated herself to <sup>d</sup>IM for life. Furthermore, the immediate context of the third day should be taken into consideration: before the NIN DINGIR can sit upon her throne and be presented with the credentials of her office, both the human (and the divine consort have to be brought into a similar ritual state.

### *Comparison and Contrast*

The anointing rites found in Lev 8 and at Emar have both similar and dissimilar features. Obviously they involve two different sexes, although [the interchangeability of male and female ritual specialists in ANE rituals has been shown before.<sup>44</sup> While in the biblical account the necessary ritual space is prepared and consecrated before the consecration of the human participant, at Emar this order is reversed. Immediately after the election rite, the future NIN.DINGIR is to be anointed-with oil from the palace--indicating her special status and sanctioning her election. This is followed by another anointing rite at the evening of the second day with oil from the temple, which clearly carries religious connotations. Only on the third day is the stele of the consort of <sup>d</sup>IM to be anointed.

Both M. Noth<sup>45</sup> and R. de Vaux<sup>46</sup> have argued that Israelite priests were (not anointed until after the Exile.<sup>47</sup> They based their arguments upon their conception of the literary development of the Pentateuch, and more specifically, on their dating of the "Priestly Source." However, Emar 369 provides an early ANE instance of anointing a priest, while there are many known examples in the Mesopotamian material of this period describing the

<sup>43</sup> See here K. van der Toorn, "Hebat," *DDD*, 744-746.

<sup>44</sup> Against the Interpretation see K. van der Toorn, "Theology, Priests, and worship in Canaan and Ancient Israel," *CANE*, 3:2052. Cf. also W. von Soden, who indicates the presence of *en*-priests and *en*-priestesses, although he asserts that the priestesses were predominantly employed in the Sacred Marriage rite (*The Ancient Orient. An Introduction to the Study of the Ancient Near East* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994], 195). In the particular function of the office of the NIN.DINGIR at Emar see Fleming, *Installation*, 81-83, who suggests that at Emar the priestess may not have been seen primarily as the wife of the god she served, but as the head of the divine household.

<sup>45</sup> M. Noth, *The Laws in the Pentateuch and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 237-238.

<sup>46</sup> R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1961), 105 and 347.

<sup>47</sup> This is also postulated in the review article on "Salbung" in the reference work *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Kutsch writes, for example, in relation to the ANE evidence: "Salbung von Priestern bei der Amtseinsetzung ist weder für Ägypten noch für Mesopotamien und das Hethiterreich belegt." And regarding the OT: "Nach dem Exil wurde die Salbung auf den Hohenpriester übertragen (Lev 21, 10; Exod 29,7; Lev 4, 3; 8, 12)" ("Salbung," *RGG*, 5:1330-1332).

use of anointing in legal or political contexts.<sup>48</sup> Fleming writes:

The biblical testimony to anointing Israelite priests should be re-evaluated. Emar's NIN.DINGIR of <sup>d</sup>IM is a person delivered into service of a god and the Israelite record of anointing priests may derive from this ancient legal tradition applied to divine service, and may not be a late application of defunct royal tradition [sic] to post-exilic high priests [emphasis supplied].<sup>49</sup>

What is of even more importance, however, is the fact that the texts from Emar are dated to the fourteenth/thirteenth century B.C.E., thus describing a religious reality in Syria at that time. Given the problematic nature of the dating of the Pentateuch, it appears useful to utilize comparative material that can help to establish historical patterns. The state of the dating of the Pentateuch is in some degree of academic upheaval,<sup>50</sup> since old paradigms (like, for example, the JEDP sequence) are being abandoned and new models are being proposed.<sup>51</sup> The tendency to date texts late creates an interesting and

<sup>48</sup> Cf. also Fleming, *Installation*, 178-179.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. also L. Schmidt, "Zur Entstehung des Pentateuchs: Ein kritischer Literaturbericht," *Verkündigung und Forschung* 40, no. 1 (1995): 3-28. Schmidt reviews predominantly German studies (with the exception of two English works) and concedes that there indeed exists a "Pentateuchkrise" (4), regarding the different (often conflicting) models of interpretation. A similar evaluation can be found in B. Seidel, "Entwicklungslinien der neueren Pentateuchforschung im 20. Jahrhundert," *ZAW* 106 (1994): 476-485, although it appears as if Seidel concentrates predominantly on continental critical scholarship. Concerning the state of Pentateuchal research with special reference to the study of the Book of Exodus see H. Utzschneider, "Die Renaissance der altestamentlichen Literaturwissenschaft und das Buch Exodus," *ZAW* 106 (1994): 197-223. Cf. also his earlier statement: "Möglicherweise ist die 'Krise' der alten, den gesamten Penta-, 𐤁𐤍. Hexateuch übergreifenden Erklärungsmodelle, zu denen die 'Priesterschrift' gehört, tatsächlich zu schwerwiegend, wie es den Anschein hat. Gerade dann aber darf im Getummel um die Gültigkeit der alten die Möglichkeit der neuen Erklärungsmodelle das Eigengewicht der Texte nicht verloren gehen" (*Heiligtum und das Gesetz*, 2-3).

<sup>51</sup> R. Rendtorff remarks regarding the validity of the Wellhausen-paradigm: "The Wellhausen paradigm no longer functions as a commonly accepted presupposition for Old Testament exegesis" ("The Paradigm is Changing: Hopes and Fears," *Biblical Interpretation* Sample Issue (1992): 12. Cf. also D. Garrett: "The very idea of a consensus among biblical scholars on Genesis has become something of a joke. . . . With astonishing rapidity, previously held 'assured results' and seemingly invulnerable positions are being not modified but abandoned altogether. Widely practiced methods of analysis, indeed methods which are currently being taught, are falling from favor as scholars on the leading edge of research pronounce them to be presumptuous or even useless" (*Rethinking Genesis: The Sources and Authorship of the Pentateuch* [Grand Rapids, W: Baker Book House, 1991], 7). Against this, see J. Friedman, who maintains that the "documentary hypothesis has remained intact in its essentials," although there has been developments concerning (1) improved understanding of the historical circumstances and concerns. Of the authors, (2) improved understanding of the editors and the editorial processes, and (3) shift in the dating of P ("Torah [Pentateuch]," *ABD*, 5:618). On the methodological downfalls of the documentary hypothesis see R. N. Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch. A Methodological Study*, JSOT .SS 53

surprising phenomenon: it suggests a vast spectrum of religious life, beliefs, and thinking in the time before, during, and after the Exile.<sup>52</sup> But besides this tendency of "late dating" one also encounters the problematic inclination to change and reorganize the accepted scholarly consensus (which seemed to have been a mirage anyway), as can be seen in the dating and redating of the P source.<sup>53</sup> On methodological grounds, however, it is precarious to base far-reaching conclusions on a theory whose foundations have been so severely modified and altered.

Besides the methodological uncertainties, an overview of the relevant works on Israelite priesthood and the history of Israelite religion shows clearly that the actual biblical data has been abandoned in favor of models that were believed to be infallible.<sup>54</sup> Since the argument against a preexilic and even

(Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 43-131.

<sup>52</sup> It should be noted, however, that among historians this period is still fairly "misty"--at least in terms of the history of Palestine itself. See G. A. Klingbeil, "The Aramaic Epigraphical Material of Syria-Palestine during the Persian Period with Reference to the History of the Jews," M.A. Thesis (Stellenbosch, South Africa: University of Stellenbosch, 1992). Cf. also I. Eph'al, who comments that the history of Syria-Palestine in the Persian period "is extremely difficult to reconstruct, primarily because of the paucity of our information concerning the region" ("Syria-Palestine under Achaemenid Rule," *C4H*; 4:141). E. Stern comes to a similar conclusion in *The Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982), xv. Cf. also the pertinent remarks of K. Kitchen, who writes: "To attribute all, or any, of this to Hebrew 'priestly' circles living humbled in exile in Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, six or seven centuries after such usages in our data, involves belief in some kind of magical 'telepathy' across nearly 1000 miles and several centuries later! ...'P', it should be remembered, is strictly pure fiction--there is no such document extant, other than in the scholarly imagination. ...Hence scholars need to revise drastically the ragbag of inherited 19th century conceptions that 'P' contains and symbolizes. Specific entities within 'it' need to be taken out, each examined on their merits in their proper ancient context, and re-evaluated as necessary" ("The Tabernacle--A Bronze Age Artifact," *Eretz Israel* 24. *Avraham, Malamat Volume*, ed. S. Ahituv and B. A. Levine Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993), 126\*.

<sup>53</sup> Milgrom ascribes to the priestly source an eighth century B.C.E. date (Leviticus, 3-8). Milgrom is heavily indebted to A. Hurvitz, who worked on the terminological comparison between what has been designated the priestly source and the book of Ezekiel (*A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel*, CahRB 20 (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1982)). For more bibliographic data on Hurvitz' work see Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 68 and the references given there. Cf. also M. Haran, who follows Kaufmann's suggestion of the priority of P over D and dates the writing of P during the reign of Hezekiah (*Temples and Temple-Service*, 326-333).

<sup>54</sup> See the survey of the different works concerning the history of priesthood in ancient Israel in Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 48-53. The Wellhausenian evolutionary model is applied to the textual data without further investigation. The study of Lev 8 on its own terms is actually a sore sight can be seen in the reviewed works. Cf. A. H. J. Gunneweg, *Leviten und Priester*, FRLANT 89 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965); A. Cody, *A History of Old Testament Priesthood*, AnBib 35 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969); L. Sabourin, *Priesthood. A Comparative Study*, SHR25 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973); W. O. McCready, "Priests and Levites," *ISBE*, 3:965-970; M. D. Rehm, "Levites and Priests," *ABD*, 4:297-310; J. Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet.. Religious and*

Mosaic *Sitz im Leben* of the ordination ritual of Lev 8 has often utilized the lack of comparative material from the ANE (regarding the anointing of priests), the contrary argumentation should be permissible as well. Since the ordination of the NIN.DINGIR with its anointing sub-rites provides a backdrop to the ordination ritual of Aaron and his sons, the date of the Emar ritual could help to establish a date for the emergence of specific ordination rites, which, together with internal chronological data, could help to establish the date of composition of a given biblical book.<sup>55</sup> In the case of Leviticus (which according to the classic Wellhausenian definition includes predominantly strands of the Priestly source), a Mosaic date during the fourteenth century B.C.E. is thus thinkable.<sup>56</sup>

*Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, LAI (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995); and L. L. Grabbe, *Priests, Prophets, Diviners. A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialists in Ancient Israel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995).

<sup>55</sup> On the pitfalls and possibilities of the comparative method see M. Malul, *The Comparative Method in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical Legal Studies*, AOAT 227 (Neukirchen-Vlyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990); W. W. Hallo, "Compare and Contrast: The Contextual Approach to Biblical Literature," in *The Bible in the Light of Cuneiform Literature Scripture in Context III*, ed. W. W. Hallo, B. W. Jones, and G. L. Mattingly, ANETS 8 (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: Edwin Mellen, 1990); S. Talmon, "The Comparative Method in Biblical Interpretation-Principles and Problems," in *Congress Volume: Gottingen 1977*, VTS 29 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), 320-356; T. Longman III, *Fictional Akkadian Autobiography: A Generic and Comparative Study* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1991), 23-36; and most recently W. W. Hallo, "Introduction: Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Their Relevance for Biblical Exegesis," in *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 1, *Canonical Composition from the Biblical World*, ed. W. W. Hallo and K. L. Younger, Jr. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997), xxiii-xxviii. Cf. also the extensive discussion and references to the relevant publications in Klingbeil, "Ordination and Ritual," 265-277. The comparative method advocated in this study correlates itself closely with Hallo's and Talmon's position. Comparative material should belong to the same historic (time) and cultural stream. There should also be a close geographical connection. Once a contextual comparison has been undertaken, the outcome must provide for either an assumption of mutual independence or historical cultural interaction.

<sup>56</sup> After this study had been submitted for publication in *AUSS*, D. E. Fleming published a very convincing study reaching similar results ("The Biblical Tradition of Anointing Priests," *JBL* 117/3 [1998]: 401-414). Fleming focuses both upon the biblical material and the extra-biblical evidence, drawing attention to the cuneiform material from Mesopotamia and Syria (additional to the Emar evidence). His conclusion emphasizes the apparent important difference in settings between the Emar and the Israel anointing rites. While Emar's social context reflects an urban society, Israel's textual evidence testifies to a less centralized societal context.

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