



## **Salvation in 1 Peter**

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**This thesis is presented as a partial fulfilment to the requirements for the Master of Research**

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**10 / 10/ 2016**

## ***SALVATION IN 1 PETER***

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## Abstract

*This thesis examines the idea of soteriology in 1 Peter from a historical perspective. This thesis questions the notion that Peter and his community appropriated soteriological ideas from the Jews or Israel. Rather, I argue that they saw themselves as legitimate heirs to the covenant at Sinai, and therefore as part of Israel. Because the first century knows of no authoritative Judaism, they have as good a claim to this as any other Judaic system, though we do not know if they regarded themselves as exclusive heirs. I will argue that Peter understands the covenant they regard themselves to be a part of to provide salvation for the community, and probably involves election, atonement, obedience, faith, reward, and punishment. If they obey the terms of this covenant faithfully, they will be rewarded at the eschaton, which Peter believed was soon approaching. Following this, I will briefly examine further how Peter may have acquired his soteriological ideas historically, specifically examining whether Peter may be deceptive in his soteriological statements.*

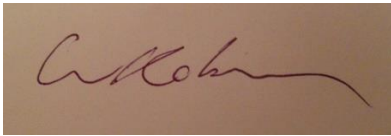
**Statement of Candidate**

I certify that the work in this thesis entitled "Salvation in 1 Peter" has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University.

I also certify that the thesis is an original piece of research and it has been written by me Will Robinson. Any help and assistance that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself have been appropriately acknowledged.

In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

**Signature:**



Will Robinson 43338461

10/10/2016

## *Acknowledgements*

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Christopher Forbes, as well as Nat Smith, and Dr. Al Robinson for their helpful suggestions and comments on this thesis. I have been very lucky to have many kind people help me!

*Abbreviations*

Journals relating to Biblical Studies and Christian and Jewish sources are abbreviated according to *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines* (2nd ed., ed. B. J. Collins, Patrick H. Alexander John F. Kutsko James D. Ernest Shirley Decker-Lucke David L. Petersen Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014). Journals relating to Classical Studies and Classical sources are abbreviated according to *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, edited by Simon Hornblower, Antony Spawforth, Esther Edinow, (Oxford University Press, 2012).



## INTRODUCTION: CULTURAL APPROPRIATION IN 1 PETER

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“... the formulation of matters that presently prevails, which sees Christianity as separate from Judaism and not as a Judaism but an alien and new thing, must give way... Christianity did not understand itself as anything other than the natural continuation of the Judaism represented by the Hebrew Scriptures of ancient Israel”- [Jacob Neusner](#)<sup>1</sup>

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The following thesis explores Peter’s conception of salvation.<sup>2</sup> I argue that the theme of “covenant” pervades the text, and is integral for Peter’s soteriology. In this respect, I will argue that this covenant involves election, atonement, obedience, faith and judgement. I will discuss Peter’s understanding of each of these themes.

Before I do so, it will be useful to ascertain which covenant Peter has in mind. I will argue that Peter believes the recipients are the natural continuation of the Sinai Covenant. Moreover, I will discuss the parts that make up this covenant from a historical standpoint. With this focus in mind, I ask the question, how did Peter come to his model of salvation? *One way to answer that is to postulate that he appropriated concepts and titles from Israel or Jews.*

Indeed, a major point of agreement shared between various scholars working on 1 Peter is that Peter appropriated language and ideas from Israel, and applied them to the Christian church. This has been argued to differing degrees. Sometimes this is alleged to be at the expense of Israel,

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<sup>1</sup> Jacob Neusner, and Bruce Chilton, *Judaism of the New Testament: Practices and Beliefs*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pxvii-xviii

<sup>2</sup> This essay supposes 1 Peter to be a pseudepigraphical text. The name “Peter” is conventional. Greek text used, unless specified otherwise, is Eberhard Nestle, H KAINH ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ. Text with Critical Apparatus. (British and Foreign Bible Society, 1904). English text used, unless specified otherwise, is *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Permanent Text Edition®* (2016). Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. NT refers to New Testament and HB refers to Hebrew Bible.

which “has been rejected...”, and a “...new, universal Church of the Messiah has taken its place.”<sup>3</sup> According to others, Peter is supposed to have generally appropriated from Israel:

- “...the language and hence the reality of Israel pass without remainder into the language and hence the reality of the new people of God.”<sup>4</sup>
- “...the declaration of Christian identity in 1 Pet.2.9-10 not only draws on the Jewish scriptures but, more than this, appropriates what are arguably the key identity designations of Israel.”<sup>5</sup>
- “...represents a conscious attempt... to appropriate the Ehrentitel Israels for the new people of God”.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, some writers attribute to Peter a rather malicious intent, as an author who “participates in the appropriation/ plundering of the cultural treasures/ resources of another group...”<sup>7</sup> Whatever the case, these scholars appear to have reached some kind of consensus: “...it is beyond dispute that the letter, like many other early Christian documents, applies to the Church Jewish labels and identity-markers, thus appropriating Israel’s scriptures as its own.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Edward Gordon Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, (London: Macmillan and Co Ltd. 1969), p117

<sup>4</sup> Paul Achtemeier, *1 Peter: a Commentary on First Peter*, (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1996), p69

<sup>5</sup> David G. Horrell, *Becoming Christian: Essays on 1 Peter and the Making of Christian Identity* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), p153

<sup>6</sup> Peter Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church* (SNTSMS 10: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p172-173; see also Williams for the argument that the titles that previously “describe ancient Israel as the elect people of God are now applied to the Christians of Asia Minor” (sic). Martin Williams, *The Doctrine of Salvation in the First Letter of Peter (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series)*, (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p61

<sup>7</sup> Betsy Bauman- Martin, ‘Speaking Jewish: Postcolonial Aliens and Strangers in First Peter’, in *Reading First Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of First Peter*, LNTS, (New York: T & T Clark International, 2007), p156

<sup>8</sup> David Horrell, *1 Peter (New Testament Guides)*, (London & New York: T & T Clark International 2008), p104, see also Ben Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1-2 Peter*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP 2008), p31; for a more recent advocate of this view, see Philip Richardson, ‘What are the Spiritual Sacrifices of 1 Peter 2:5? Some Light from Philo of Alexandria,’ *Evangelical Quarterly*. 87, 1. 2015, p5. For a different perspective, Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude: An Exegetical and Theological Salvation in 1 Peter*

This thesis questions this commonly-held assumption, setting the letter historically instead *within* the boundaries of a first century Judaism, and not as appropriation from “another group.” Accordingly, I will firstly need to make this case in some detail.

## I. WHO WAS PETER WRITING TO?

If the recipients were ethnically Jewish, as Eusebius (H.E.3.1.2) and other Church Fathers assumed, perhaps we would not be having this discussion.<sup>9</sup> The text has pervasive references to the Hebrew Bible and characters within it, and so some in more modern times have postulated a Jewish audience.<sup>10</sup> Others suppose it was written to God-fearers (Ant.14.110), who, potentially, feature prominently in Acts,<sup>11</sup> and the idea has a certain plausibility to it. Some believe that God-fearers were gentiles who had not undergone circumcision, and did not keep Kosher, but

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*Exposition of Holy Scripture*, The New American Commentary, (Nashville, TN: B &H, Publishing Group, 2003), p115; J.H. Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless: a Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy*, (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1981), p127. My argument is compatible with the idea that all Judaic groups appropriated such ideas.

<sup>9</sup> “With few exceptions, the Fathers believed that this letter was written by the apostle Peter and sent to Jewish Christians in the Diaspora” Gerald L. Bray and Thomas C. Oden, *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament XI: James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), p65; For a modern proponent of this view cf. Ben Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians: a Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1-2 Peter*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP 2008), p28f.

<sup>10</sup> In the reformation period, see John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Epistle of Peter*, (trans. John Owen, Baker Books, 1974) p25; For modern authors see A.S. Sykes, The Function of Peter in 1 Peter, *ScrB* 27 (1997); Karen Jobes has argued that the recipients of the letter are Jews that have been expelled from Rome, Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), p64-64

<sup>11</sup> M. Wilcox, “The “Godfearers” in Acts. A Reconsideration’, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 13(1981), p102-22 argues that Luke’s various terminology is inconsistent.

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nevertheless subscribed to the Noachic commands.<sup>12</sup> When one examines the writings of Paul, one sees two issues (1) circumcision (Rom.2.25-29; 4.9-12; 1 Cor.7.18; Gal. 2.3) and 2) controversies surrounding diet (Rom.14.2-23; 1 Cor.10.18; Gal.2.12) rise to the fore in many arguments. Perhaps many of the earliest Gentile converts to Christianity had originally been God-fearers? Perhaps after some decades all of these controversies were eventually forgotten? This could have been a more straight-forward route than from Paganism to Christianity, and this may have been where the first (Jewish) leaders of Christianity got their ideas as to how to interact with Gentile Christians.<sup>13</sup> The trouble is that this view does not have explicit textual support in 1 Peter.<sup>14</sup>

The evidence, as most scholars agree, actually points to the recipients being “converted heathen”, that is, they were formerly pagans.<sup>15</sup> Peter speaks of the recipient’s former ways of life (1.14), how they were once not a people of God (2.10), how they have given up idolatry (4.3-4; 1 Cor. 10.14; Gal.5.20; Col. 3.5), and drinking (4.3; Eph.5.18; 1 Cor.5.11; cf.Philo Mos.2.185; Spec. Leg. 4.91; Tob.4.15; Sir.31.30 ). They may have been “god-fearers” prior to being Christians, but we cannot be sure.

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<sup>12</sup> John Gager, Jews, Gentiles, and Synagogues in the Book of Acts. *The Harvard Theological Review* 79.1/3 (1986): 91–99; against postulating a precise category of such persons, see Ross S. Kraemer, “Giving Up the Godfearers,” *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 5 (2014)

<sup>13</sup> W.C. Van Unnik, ‘Christianity According to 1 Peter’, ExpT 68 (1956– 57); Janse Van Rensburg, ‘Constructing the economic–historic context of 1 Peter: Exploring a Methodology’, *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 67(1), Art. #939, 11, 2011. Dale Allison has suggested the possibility that Peter could be using the idea of a letter written in the guise of being addressed to Jews, that is, the letter was meant for Christians. Examples of this kind, he says, are Gk. Apoc. Ez; Vision of Ez, 4 Ez.1-2. We don’t have any examples (leaving aside Peter) of Christians in the first two centuries being referred to as a diaspora: Dale C. Allison Jr. *James: a Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), p131

<sup>14</sup> Torrey Seland, ‘πάρουκος καὶ παρεπίδημος: Proselyte Characterizations in 1 Peter?’, *Bulletin for Biblical Research*. 11, 2, p242

<sup>15</sup> Martin Luther, *Commentary on Peter and Jude*, (Trans. John Nichols Lenker) (Kregel Classics, 1990), p10.

**This essay will use “gentile” in two ways that the NT does. The recipients are “gentile” in that they are not ethnically Jewish. They are not “gentile” in the sense that they worship pagan gods.**

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So, should we conclude that Peter has appropriated scripture for a distinct culture?

## I.I. THE PARTINGS OF THE WAYS

If so, it is curious that we are not aware of pronounced splits between “Jews” and “Christians” until (at least) the second century.<sup>16</sup> It is true that by the second century we see anti-Jewish rhetoric from Christians (Barn.3.6; Justin. Dial. 47.4. Ignatius, for example, believed Judaism (cf. 2 Macc. 2.21; 8.1; 14.38; 2.2)<sup>17</sup> to be graceless (Mag. 8), and absurd (Mag.10)). It’s also possible that we see anti-Christian rhetoric from Jewish people (t.Shab. 13(14).5; t.Hull. 2.20-21),<sup>18</sup> as well as later attacks against Jesus.<sup>19</sup> Still earlier, the Gospel of John launches frequent attacks on “the Jews”, though the designation is not consistent, and the bulk of the attacks are directed toward Jewish leadership (5.10, 15, 16, 18; 7.1, 13; 8.48, 52, 57(?); 9.18, 22; 10.31, 33)<sup>20</sup> and not the general population (7.12, 20, 31-32, 40, 43).<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the attitude towards Judaism in

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<sup>16</sup> Even if we suppose that Christians fundamentally distinct theological views, this still does not mean they separated themselves from others socially. Thus, “although some communities probably displayed stronger sectarian tendencies than others, many early Christians regarded themselves as an integral part of the larger Jewish society and did not attempt to create a distinct social system” Eyal Regev, ‘Were the Early Christians Sectarians?’, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 130, No. 4 (Winter, 2011), p792

<sup>17</sup> Y. Amir, ‘The Term Ioudaismos: A Study in Jewish-Hellenistic Self-Identification’, *Immanuel* 14 (1982): 34-41

<sup>18</sup> E. P. Sanders, ‘Jewish Association with Gentiles and Galatians ii. 11-14’, in *Studies in Paul and John*, ed. R. T. Fortna and B. R. Gaventa, J. L. Martyn FS, Nashville: Abingdon 1990, p170

<sup>19</sup> Daniel J. Lasker, Introduction to 2006 Reprint Edition, in Robert Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, (Jersey City, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, 2007), pxx

<sup>20</sup> James D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways*, Hymns Ancient & Modern Ltd; 2nd edition (January 28, 2006) p208; “In a sense, the rhetoric of Qumran in this respect is similar to that of the Fourth Gospel, but just as the latter does not constitute a heresiology, neither does the former.”- Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: the Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), p52

<sup>21</sup> For “Jews” in John, cf. 2.13, 18, 20, 5.51; 5.10, 15, 16, 18; 6.41; 7.1, 11, 13, 15, 35; 8.22, 31, 48, 52, 57; 9.18, 22; 10.19,24, 33; 11.8, 31, 45, 54; 12.11; 13.33;18.12,31,36,38, 19.7,12, 14, 20, 31; 19.37, 38, 40; 20. 19.

the gospel is mixed.<sup>22</sup> Still, this language may well have planted seeds that grew in the second century.

Peter is older than 1 Clement, though it post-dates the writings of Paul, whose letters Peter may have been in possession of.<sup>23</sup> The text was originally a letter, and probably comes from the end of the first century CE.<sup>24</sup> It was likely pseudepigraphical,<sup>25</sup> and written from Rome.<sup>26</sup> The letter

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<sup>22</sup> The understanding of Judaism in the gospel is not merely polemical. John believes that Moses and the prophets spoke about Jesus's arrival (1.45). Nathanael refers to Jesus as the "king of Israel" (1.49) and Ἰσραὴλ can be referred to using positive language ((1.50; 3.10; 12.13). When Jesus is furious in the temple scene the real target of his ire appears to be not Judaism per se but the impact the activity has on his father's house (2.16). The HB is used to point towards Jesus (2.17, 22; 3.14, 7.38, 10.34; 12.15,34, 38, 40, 15.25; 19.24, 28; 20.9). Jesus teaches in synagogues (18.20), and during Passover (Pesahim 10.1.3), the crowd announces as one that Jesus is the king of Israel (12.3).

<sup>23</sup> Bigg, Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St Peter and Jude*, The International Critical Commentary, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1901) *Peter*, p15. Scholars have long recognized that Peter and Paul must have had more in common than not, cf. G.M Harmon, 'Peter: the Man and the Epistle', *Journal of Biblical Literature Vol. 17, No. 1* (1898), p34

<sup>24</sup> Wolfgang Schrage, *Die "Katholischen" Briefe: die Briefe des Jakobus, Petrus, Johannes und Judas*, (6<sup>th</sup> ed.; NTD 10; Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953), p67; some have argued it pre-dates the fall of the temple e.g. W. C. Van Unnik, 'De Verlossing 1 Petrus i. 18-19 en het Probleem van de Eersten Petrusbrief', in *Mededelingen der Nederlandsche Akademie van Wetenschappen, afd. Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks, deel 5, no. 1* (Amsterdam, 1942); I am sympathetic to the idea that 1 Peter is a "diaspora letter", but am not sure is the argument is more than a possibility, contrast the more confident Lutz Doering, 'First Peter as Early Christian Diaspora Letter', in *The Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition*, edited by Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert W. Wall (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2009), p215-236

<sup>25</sup> For those who hold a traditional authorship, see Fenton John Anthony Hort, *The First Epistle of St Peter, 1.1.-11.16: the Greek Text with Introductory Lecture, Commentary and Additional Notes* (London: Macmillan, 1898). For a more recent author, E. Randolph Richards, 'Silvanus was not Peter's Secretary: Theological Bias in interpreting διὰ Σιλουανοῦ... ἔγραψα in 1 Peter 5:12', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. 43, 3, (Sept. 2000), p 417-432

<sup>26</sup> Calvin denied that it was written from Rome, believing Peter was literally writing from Babylon, cf. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Epistle of Peter*, (trans. John Owen, Baker Books), p23; so Bernhard Weiss, *a Manual of Introduction to the New Testament*, trans. A.J.K. Davidson, 2 vols., Foreign Biblical Library (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1889). For those who think Peter utilized Silvanus in some way, Theodore Zahn, *Grundriss der Salvation in 1 Peter*

has some similarities with the speeches of Peter in Acts (Acts.2.23-24; 3.15-16, 17; 4.11), but nothing sufficient to demand Apostolic authorship, as most agree. It is notable that many scholars who have worked in this particular area conclude that, at the point the letter was written, Christianity and Judaism, in the main, had not yet parted ways:

- “Until the end of the fourth century, if we consider all of their varieties and not just the nascent "orthodox" ones-Judaism and Christianity were phenomenologically indistinguishable as entities ...”<sup>27</sup>
- “...a clear cut or final parting of the ways at 70 CE is distinctly premature”.<sup>28</sup>
- “Recent debate has largely failed to achieve a consensus as to how, when, and why Christianity separated from Judaism.”<sup>29</sup>
- “...there is little firm evidence for Jews formally excluding from their social life Christians, or at least Christian Jews who may have expected to belong, and still less for the Jewish persecution of Christians, while actual Christian exclusion of Jews self-evidently belongs to a time after the Christianization of the Empire.”<sup>30</sup>

The divide was not fixed in all groups. We still see that after the first century certain Christians copied Jewish texts (LXX, Ascension of Isaiah, Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs),<sup>31</sup> some still consciously followed Jewish laws (Origen, *Contra Celsum* 5.61), some even were circumcised

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*Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons: Eine Ergänzung zu der Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 2 ed. (Leipzig A. Diechert [Georg Bohme], 1904

<sup>27</sup> Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: the Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), p89

<sup>28</sup> James D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity*, (Hymns Ancient & Modern, 2006), p311

<sup>29</sup> Judith Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p305

<sup>30</sup> Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World*, p308

<sup>31</sup> “They even read and valued Jewish apocalypses written during and after the New Testament period (such as 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, 3 Baruch, and the Apocalypse of Abraham). In fact, of course, almost all pre-rabbinic Jewish literature which we know, apart from the Dead Sea Scrolls, we know only because Christians preserved it.” Richard Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish & Christian Apocalypses*, (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p82

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until the fourth century,<sup>32</sup> and attended synagogue.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, 1 Peter was utilized by the letter of James, which is most likely a text written to ethnic Jews.<sup>34</sup> Large movements tend not to break off immediately and cleanly- between the groups we see “strong indications of persistent, intimate interactions.”<sup>35</sup> How can it be, then, that 1 Peter takes resources from “another group” if it is very probably anachronistic to speak of “two groups” at this time?

The letter of Peter is written by an educated Jew, who assumes a detailed knowledge of the LXX on the part of his audience, who were gentiles.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, it has been suggested that much of the letter would not make sense to an audience without such knowledge.<sup>37</sup> How might one account for such deep learning? This fact suggests that these gentiles must have had protracted instruction from Jews.

If they were in close contact with Jews, and then subsequently broke with them completely, eventually coming to believe that they had superseded them, or rendered them irrelevant, it seems to me that we would encounter *some* sort of polemic preceding the period of tranquility. We can quite easily observe examples of this kind of split in other, later, pertinent texts, but not in 1

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<sup>32</sup> R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, (Nabu Press, 2010), p191-192

<sup>33</sup> W.A. Meeks and R.L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era*, (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press 1978)

<sup>34</sup> Dale C. Allison Jr. *James: a Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, ICC, (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), p96; 1.1/Jas.1.1 1.6-7/Jas.1.2-3; 1.23/Jas.1.18-22 etc. “James represents Christian Jews who did not define themselves over against Judaism. That is, our book emerged from a Christ-oriented Judaism, from a group that still attended synagogue and wished to maintain irenic relations with those who did not share their belief that Jesus was the Messiah. In such a context the Epistle of James makes good sense.”, p43

<sup>35</sup> Paula Fredriksen, ‘What Parting of the Ways? Jews, Gentiles, and the Ancient Mediterranean City’, in *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Edited by Adam H. Becker, Annette Yoshiko Reed, (Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 2003), p61

<sup>36</sup> W.L. Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition in 1 Peter*, WUNT 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989), 35-43; Andrew Chester, Ralph P. Martin, *The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p88

<sup>37</sup> “For its size, has the highest density of explicit references to the Scriptures of Israel out of all the books of the New Testament.” Benjamin Sargent, *Written To Serve: The Use of Scripture in 1 Peter*, (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2015), p1



Peter. Peter does describe his audience as Χριστιανός (4.16),<sup>38</sup> but this word seems compatible with being a Jew (Acts 11.26, 13.43, Rev.2.9), and it could be that Jesus's original disciples did not immediately dispense with keeping the law.<sup>39</sup>

## II. NO SINGULAR JUDAISM

How does one resolve such tensions? The letter applies terminology originally used of Israel to the Christian community.<sup>40</sup> At the same time, however, it makes little sense to talk about “Judaism” and “Christianity” of the period as though they were separate religions.<sup>41</sup>

My suggestion is that the author believed that the community he was writing to was indeed part of Judaism. I do not see how we can deny this to him- there was no universal, authoritative Judaism in the first century. We see many sects, but no monolithic group (Ant. 18.11-25; Acts 24.5).<sup>42</sup> We must be wary of committing the No True Scotsman fallacy with respect to Judaism. If Philo, the communities at Elephantine and at Qumran, can be accepted as Judaisms, why should the Christians not be? It is important to be consistent. Michaels argued that “no one will seriously argue that the Gentile Christians to whom 1 Peter was written were actual proselytes

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<sup>38</sup> David G Horrell, ‘The Label Χριστιανός: 1 Peter 4:16 and the Formation of Christian Identity’, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126(2, 2007): 361–81

<sup>39</sup> Paula Fredriksen, ‘Why Should a “Law-Free” Mission Mean a “Law-Free” Apostle?’, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 2015, Vol.134(3), pp.637–650, for a slightly nuanced view, that there is only one way of salvation in the NT (i.e. through Jesus), Dale C. Allison Jr., ‘Jesus and the Covenant: a Response to E.P. Sanders’, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 29 (1987), p74

<sup>40</sup> G. Harvey, *The True Israel: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), p221

<sup>41</sup> At any rate, the modern concept of “religion” cannot be found in the ancient world, cf. Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: a History of a Modern Concept*, (Yale University Press, 2013); Truex, in contrast, argues that the recipients of the letter replace Israel in their conversion to “Christianity”, which is contrasted to “Judaism”. Jerry Truex, ‘God's spiritual house: a study of 1 Peter 2:4–5’, *Direction*. 33, 2 Sept. 2004, p189-190

<sup>42</sup> Josephus apparently uses the terms “philosophy” (*War* 2. 119) and sect interchangeably (*War* 2.137).

to Judaism”, but what alternative do we have?<sup>43</sup> What other belief system could they have plausibly considered themselves to be a part of?

Similarly, if Peter was appropriating language, who was he appropriating from? Who owns and regulates the Judaisms?<sup>44</sup> If a community is worshipping YHWH (1.3),<sup>45</sup> believes it is part of Israel (2.9), and believes it follows the Torah (1.10)<sup>46</sup>, in what respect can we deny that they are a Judaic system?<sup>47</sup> Doering claimed that despite taking on the “status, role and function of Israel, the addressees *do not become Israel...*”<sup>48</sup> I see the recipients clearly being portrayed as a part of Israel- a designation which makes sense. The fourth and seventh centuries CE certainly saw the militaristic ascent of other monotheistic competitors, and this in turn solidifies a normative Judaism (Rabbinic)- but this notion is absent from the first century.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter* (WBC 49; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1988), lii. Michaels then wonders what Peter would have made of “real Jews” and “whether these Gentile Christians were offering new religion to Jews as well.”

Michaels, *Peter*, pliv

<sup>44</sup> Thus, “I cannot point to a single issue critical to Christian writers on which Mishnah's sages laid down a central and definitive doctrine.” Jacob Neusner, *Judaism and its Social Metaphors: Israel in the History of Jewish Thought*, (Cambridge University Press, 1989), p33

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Matthew 5.16; 2 Cor. 6.18; Eph.18; Jas. 3.9

<sup>46</sup> Contra Selwyn, *Peter*, p135 who has argued that the prophets here refer to figures in the NT period. Even though Peter's use of the Hebrew Bible can be inexact or “fluid” as Koch says (concerning 2.6), he still treats it authoritatively. Dietrich-Alex Koch, ‘The quotations of Isaiah 8, 14 and 28, 16 in Romans 9,33 and 1Peter 2,6.8 as test case for Old Testament quotations in the New Testament’, *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*. 101, 2, (2010), p229; I completely agree with Seland's view that the Torah is the “basis” of Peter's “ideology”, Torrey Seland, ‘The ‘Common Priesthood’ of Philo and 1 Peter: A Philonic Reading of 1 Peter 2.5,9’, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*. 57, (Mar. 1995), p119

<sup>47</sup> For Torah as symbolic of Judaism, Jacob Neusner, *An Introduction to Judaism: A Textbook and Reader*, (Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1991), p389

<sup>48</sup> Lutz Doering, ‘You are a Chosen Stock...’: the use of Israel Epithets for the Addressees in First Peter’, in *Jewish and Christian Communal Identities in the Roman World*, edited Yair Furstenberg, (Leiden: Brill, 2016), p272. Doering ultimately concludes that the letter is “ambiguous” as to its position in “Christian Jewish dialogue” (p276).

<sup>49</sup> Jacob Neusner, *Judaism: the Basics*, (Routledge, 2006), p129; Jacob Neusner, *Social Metaphors*, p101 Here I disagree with G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Three Centuries of the Christian Era* (3 vols.; Cambridge: Harvard University, 1927-30).

It may be that the community to whom Peter is writing modeled their behavior on the commands made to Israel in texts like Exod.19, but this would be similar to the way the Qumran community did: "...the ideal of becoming a kingdom of priests and a holy people (Ex 19:6) was pursued at Qumran."<sup>50</sup> Members of the Qumran community believed that they, and not others, were the true Israel (1QS 3.25; cf. Ps.Sol.14.2). Few people, however, would claim that the Essenes plundered the cultural resources of Israel. Interpreting scriptures to suit the purposes of one's own group is common within Second Temple Judaism.<sup>51</sup> We should not hold the Christians to different standards.

### III. COVENANT THEOLOGY

*"Every Judaism starts with the definition of its 'Israel'..."<sup>52</sup>*

So, the community seems to have been a legitimate Judaism. It conceived of itself as an Israel (cf.Mk.15.2). Indeed, the idea of Israel runs through the whole letter- Achtemeier calls it the "controlling metaphor", and Feldmeier seems to agree.<sup>53</sup> I think this is right.

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<sup>50</sup> O. Betz, 'Jesus and the Temple Scroll', in *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, (Doubleday, 1992), p94; cf. 1 Cor.3.10; 2. Andrew Mutua Mbuvi, *Temple, Exile and Identity in 1 Peter*, (London& New York: T & T Clark International, 2007), p2

Cor.6.16; Eph.2.20; 1 Pet.2.6 for Jesus as the new Temple.

<sup>51</sup> Marcus K.M. Tso, *Ethics in the Qumran Community: An Interdisciplinary Investigation*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 292, 2010)p78; Aharon Shemesh, *Halakhah in the Making: The Development of Jewish Law from Qumran to the Rabbis*, (University of California Press, 2009)

has proposed that the Qumran community regarded all other Jews as gentiles: DD 5:18-6:2: "And the earth became desolate because they spoke lies about the commandments of God through Moses and the anointed ones of the Holiness, and they prophesied lies to turn Israel away from God". By the second century, Sadducees would be classified by some as outside of Israel and heretics (Niddah 4.2). For other parallels between the Scrolls literature and 1 Peter, Benjamin Sargent, *Written To Serve: The Use of Scripture in 1 Peter*, (London & New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2015), p5; for information on how Peter uses scripture "to fit the exigencies of his own day", see D.G McCartney, 1989, *The Use of the Old Testament in the First Epistle of Peter*, (Westminster Theological Seminary, 1989), p56

<sup>52</sup> Chilton, Neusner, *Judaism of the New Testament*, xix

<sup>53</sup> Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, p69

Specifically, I suggest that the metaphor is more precisely of Israel receiving the Sinai Covenant (Ex.19-24). This story is essential for understanding 1 Peter. The covenant model was “at the core of Judaism in the New Testament period.”<sup>54</sup>

#### IV. 1 PETER AND THE SINAI COVENANT

There are a number of parallels in our text to the Sinai Covenant.<sup>55</sup> The community are called to be holy (Ex.19.6, 23) as are Peter’s (2b). Moses sprinkles blood on the people (Ex.24.8) and Peter’s have the blood of Jesus sprinkled on them (2c).<sup>56</sup> Then we note the language in 1 Pet. 2.9 “kingdom of priests, holy people.” Clearly, “la phrase s’inspire manifestement d’un passage du livre de l’Exode”<sup>57</sup> (“kingdom of priests”, “holy people” cf. Isa.43.). They are chosen, as distinguished from other nations, “out of all nations” (Ex. 19.6, 23, 33), or from “gentiles” (1 Pet.2.12), and described as foreigners (1 Pet.2.11; Ex.21.1, 23.9). These people are to be purified (1.Pet.1.22, Ex.19.10, 20.8 LXX ἀγνίζω), they are warned against murder and theft (1 Pet.4.15; Ex.20.12, 5), and idolatry (1 Pet.4.3; Ex.20.4). This covenant is ultimately dependent upon God’s mercy (1 Pet.1.3; Ex.20.6 LXX).

Therefore, crucial to Peter’s understanding of salvation will be this background of covenant.<sup>58</sup> The word “covenant” does not appear in our text, but the concept is taught clearly enough to be

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<sup>54</sup> John Barton, *Ethics in Ancient Israel*, (Oxford University Press, 2014), p137

<sup>55</sup> As William P. Brown, ‘The Character of Covenant in the Old Testament: A Theocentric Probe’, *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 16 (1996), p293 has argued that each covenant points to Sinai, and that there’s no “systematic accounting” of the different mentioned covenants.

<sup>56</sup> There may be a possible reference here at Qumran (1 QS 3.6-8).

<sup>57</sup> Stanislas Hałas, ‘Sens dynamique de l’expression λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν en 1 P 2,9’, *Biblica*, Vol. 65, No. 2 (1984), p254

<sup>58</sup> “The rich soteriological and ethical significance of the Exodus event makes it a paradigm for salvation...” K.K., Lai *The Holy Spirit in 1 Peter: A study of Petrine Pneumatology in Light of the Isaianic New Exodus*, (PhD. Diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2009), p150

confident that Peter has this in mind. This is the primary relationship between God and God's people.<sup>59</sup> What, historically, might this signify?

One of the major components of being Israel is being a part of God's covenant (Deut. 32.8-9; Jub. 1.4-5; CD 1.15-18; Pss.Sol. 10.4; B. Berakhot 48b), and being separate from the gentiles (Lev. 20.24-26; Joel 3.17; Ezra 10.11), and separation from Gentiles is claimed in 1 Peter (2.12).

<sup>60</sup> Crucial elements of a covenant often involve a suzerain, a vassal, stipulations, blessings, and curses.<sup>61</sup> Does the covenant include women? <sup>62</sup> This is a question that was asked by some Jews

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<sup>59</sup> "The words of 19:1-6 are among the most significant in the Bible for understanding the identity of the people of Israel as God intended" E.W., Zeller, *Intertextuality in 1 Peter 2:9-12: Peter's Biblical-theological Summary of the Mission of God's People*, (PhD Diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2013), p27

<sup>60</sup> It is important to stress the wide agreement that the image of covenant is present in 1 Peter. The argument flows from this point. Donald Senior, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008), p60-61; Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Baker Academic, 2005), p47; M. Eugene Boring, *1 Peter*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), p206; Wayne A. Grudem, *The First Epistle of Peter: an Introduction and Commentary*, The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), p38; John Paul Heil, *1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude: Worship Matters*, (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013), p142; Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, (Nashville TN: B &H, Publishing Group, 2003), p56; Greg Forbes, *Exegetical Guide to the New Testament: 1 Peter*, (Nashville, TN: B & H, Publishing Group, 2014), p102; Kelly D. Liebengood, *The Eschatology of 1 Peter: Considering the Influence of Zechariah 9-14*, SNTSMS 157, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p210, Andrew Mutua Mbuvi, *Temple, Exile and Identity in 1 Peter*, LNTS, (London: T & T Clark, 2007), p32; Daniel Keating, *First and Second Peter, Jude*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture, (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2011), p29; Scot McKnight, *First Peter*, NIV Application Commentary, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), p54; Joel B. Green, *1 Peter*, Two Horizons New Testament Commentary, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), p217; Earl Richard, *Reading 1 Peter, Jude, and 2 Peter*, Reading the New Testament, (Macon, Georgia: Smyth and Helwys Publishing, 2000), esp. p84; Harrison Picirilli, *James, 1, 2 Peter, Jude*, The Randall House Bible Commentary, (Nashville, TN: Randall House Publications, 1992), p144.

<sup>61</sup> William Sanford LaSor, David Allan Hubbard, Frederic William Bush, Leslie C. Allen *Old Testament Survey: the Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996), p75; Wiseman, D. J., 'The Vassal-treaties of Esarhaddon', *Iraq* 20.1 (1958), 23f.

<sup>62</sup> J.D. Cohen, 'Your covenant that you have sealed in our flesh': Women, Covenant, and Circumcision', in *Studies in Josephus and the Varieties of Ancient Judaism*, edited by Shaye J.D. Cohen and Joshua J. Schwartz, (Leiden: Salvation in 1 Peter

(Sifra Behuqotai pereg 8 112c.).<sup>63</sup> It probably initially did not originally (Ez.2.2; Ex.20.14, 15), though the phrase *bene berit* can be used later to apply to women (B. Berakhot 16b). It seems possible, then, that in the first century the covenant included women, and this may be why Peter addresses wives in his letter.

I will therefore argue that a coherent covenant can be inferred in 1 Peter. The suzerain is God, the vassal are his elect (Ez.9), the stipulations involve obedience (1.2, 14, 22; cf. Lev.26.15; Deut.31.16),<sup>64</sup> atonement (1.18; 2.24; 3.18)<sup>65</sup>, faith (1 Pet.1.5, 7, 9, 21; 5.9),<sup>66</sup> and the blessings and curses are reward (5.4) and punishment.<sup>67</sup> This is the judgement.<sup>68</sup> There is no explicit

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<sup>63</sup> Cohen, *Covenant*, p37

<sup>64</sup> For more on the themes of obedience in 1 Peter, Jennifer G. Bird, *Abuse, Power and Fearful Obedience: Reconsidering 1 Peter's Commands to Wives*, LNTS 442, (London: T & T Clark, 2011); "Obedience sits at the heart of 1 Peter's theology" Lewis R. Donelson, *I and II Peter and Jude: a Commentary*, New Testament Library, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), p27; for obedience as covenantal see the discussion in Benjamin Sargent, *Written to Serve: the Use of Scripture in 1 Peter*, LNTS 547, (London: T & T Clark, 2015), p107- 8

<sup>65</sup> 1.2 Sprinkling of the αἷμα; 1.19 "ἀλλὰ τιμῶ αἷματι ὡς ἀμνοῦ ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου Χριστοῦ"; 3.18 "ὅτι καὶ Χριστὸς ἅπας περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν ἀπέθανεν/ἐπαθεν δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων, ἵνα ὑμᾶς προσαγάγῃ τῷ Θεῷ, θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκὶ ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ πνεύματι" cf. Heb. 9.28. For the text critical problems with this verse see Metzger, who notes the "bewildering diversity of readings" involved. Bruce Metzger (ed.), *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, (second edition), (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/ German Bible Society, Stuttgart, 1994), p622

<sup>66</sup> Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p344; cf. 1.7 "ἵνα τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως πολυτιμότερον χρυσοῦ"; 1.9 "κομιζόμενοι τὸ τέλος τῆς πίστεως σωτηρίαν ψυχῶν"; 2.6 "ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνθῇ"

<sup>67</sup> 1.17 "καὶ εἰ πατέρα ἐπικαλεῖσθε τὸν ἀπροσωπολήμπτως κρίνοντα κατὰ τὸ ἐκάστου ἔργον"; 3.9 "μὴ ἀποδιδόντες κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἢ λοιδορίαν ἀντὶ λοιδορίας, τούναντίον δὲ εὐλογοῦντες"; 3.19 spirits went to a φυλακή; 4.5 "οἱ ἀποδώσουσιν λόγον τῷ ἐτοίμως ἔχοντι κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς"; 4.17 "ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ Θεοῦ"; 5.4 "καὶ φανερωθέντος τοῦ Ἀρχιποίμενος κομιεῖσθε τὸν ἁμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον." The Christians, then, would apparently have a share of the world to come according to the Mishnah (M. Sanhedrin 10:1.) For punishment as breaching the covenant, see Mary Douglas, 'Atonement in Leviticus', *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 1.2 (1993), p126

<sup>68</sup> Matt.16.7; John 5.28 Rom.2.6-11; Rev.20.11-15; Matt. 6.1-6; 2 Tim. 4.8; James D.G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, (Grand Rapids, Mi: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), p76

suggestion in the text that this covenant was “new” or was entered into through baptism, but this is historically possible.<sup>69</sup> The concept of a “διαθήκη” that is “καινός” (Jer. 38.31 LXX, CD 9.28, 37) can be used by Jews,<sup>70</sup> and it is reflected in the writings of Jewish-Christians (Heb.8.13). This is not a controversial point- most scholars see the Sinai covenant referred to in 1 Peter, but less agree that our author views himself and the community *as a legitimate continuation of that covenant*.<sup>71</sup>

This community had not taken over from a separate or failed Israel, which had an eternal covenant (Jub.15.14), but rather they saw themselves as legitimate heirs to God’s promises. It’s true that this specific community were probably mostly made up of ethnic gentiles (*in the sense of Gal.2.12, not 1 Pet. 2.12*), but this should not entirely surprise us: “the earliest gentile mission was a movement to secure proselytes to the Jewish covenant...”<sup>72</sup> The Hebrew Bible speaks of a time when, at the end of days, gentiles will give up their idols and follow YHWH alongside ethnic Jews (Zech. 8: 23; Isa. 25: 6; Isa. 2: 2-4; cf. 1 Enoch 91: 14; Ps. Sol. 7: 31-41).<sup>73</sup> *If they did not practice circumcision, then this was a Judaism that did not require circumcision for ethnic gentile adherents*. As Stenschke has noted, there is no indication that salvation in 1 Peter is only meant for “Heidenchristen”.<sup>74</sup> Thus, Peter believes his community are part of the fulfilment of

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<sup>69</sup> I am not personally convinced the text teaches a “new covenant”, but for an affirmative view, D.A. Carson, ‘1 Peter’, in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. G. K. Beale, D. A. Carson) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007) p1017; James D.G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: a Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in relation to Pentecostalism Today*, (London: SCM Press, 1970), p220; Williams, *Salvation*, p60

<sup>70</sup> Cf. John Allegro, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: a Reappraisal* (Middlesex: Penguin 1978), p110

<sup>71</sup> Thus, Sargent stresses the contrast Peter makes with Israel rather than the continuity “there is an important element of historical *discontinuity* within the narrative substructure of 1 Peter...” Benjamin Sargent, ‘The Narrative Substructure of 1 Peter’, *The Expository Times*. 124, 10, (July 2013), p486, emphasis original.

<sup>72</sup> Joshua Garraway, *Engendering Judaism: Paul, Baptism, and Circumcision*, in, *Paul the Jew: Rereading the Apostle as a Figure of Second Temple Judaism*, (edited by Gabriele Boccaccini, Carlos A. Segovia) (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016) ,p234

<sup>73</sup> In the Rabbinic period this becomes a chief characteristic of salvation cf. Bavli Tractate Abodah Zarah 1:1 1.2/2a-b.

<sup>74</sup> Christoph Stenschke, “...das Auserwählte Geschlecht, die Königliche Priesterschaft, das heilige Volk’ (1 Petr 2.9): Funktion und Bedeutung der Ehrenbezeichnungen Israels im 1. Petrusbrief”, *Neotestamentica*, vol. 42, no. 1 Salvation in 1 Peter

the scriptures of Israel: "...the first disciples must have been living already in the world of eschatological hope if they so readily countenanced the Gentile mission."<sup>75</sup>

So, Peter believes that the Christian community are elect, must be faithful, obedient, and their sins must be atoned for. In short, they are Israel, God's covenant community. How are they saved?

## V. SALVATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

"...in *all* congregations Jesus Christ was worshipped as the bringer of salvation."-  
*Rudolf Bultmann*<sup>76</sup>

Salvation is often a future event in the Christian writings (Matt.10.22; 24.13; Mk.13.13; 16.16 Lk.3.6; Lk.8.50; Lk.13.23; John 3.17; 5.34; 10.9; Acts 2.21; 13.47; 15.11; 16.17; Rom.5.9; 9.27; 10.1; 10.9; 10.13; 11.26; Rom.13.11; 1 Cor.5.5; 10.33; 1 Thess.5.9; 2 Thess.13; 1 Tim. 2.4,15 Tim.2.10; 1 Pet.1.5,9; 2.2).<sup>77</sup> There is also a present aspect that features in the texts (Acts 2.47; 1 Cor.1.18; 15.2; 2 Cor.2.15; 1 Clem.58.2), and sometimes salvation is presented as though it has occurred already (Lk.7.50; Lk.18.42; Eph.2.5; 2 Tim.1.9; Tit.3.5; Pol.Phil.1.3).<sup>78</sup> In extra-biblical literature salvation is often tied to deeds (Ps.Philo 13.10) can have a present emphasis (*Odes* 1.5), and can involve the patriarchs as an example (PrJos). Baptism is often tied to ideas

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(2008), p142. I agree with Stenschke that the people of God have simply been expanded in 1 Peter. A marker of this thesis has asked whether I believe that the author of First Peter believed himself and the community to be one Judaism among many. I believe, sociologically, this is the easiest system in which to place our author, and it seems to me quite possible that our author would have viewed, Qumran, for example, as another legitimate Judaic system. It also is possible, but in my personal opinion less likely, that he viewed other Judaic systems as illegitimate. Ultimately, I am agnostic about this particular question.

<sup>75</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, p95

<sup>76</sup> Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament: Volume Two*, (London: SCM Press, 1955), p155, emphasis original.

<sup>77</sup> Bultmann, *Theology*, p158

<sup>78</sup> Bultmann, *Theology*, p159



of salvation (Eph.2.5. cf.5.26; Tit.3.5; 1 Pet.3.21; Barn.11.11; Herm.vis.II 3.5). <sup>79</sup> I argue in this thesis that salvation in the NT is primarily about getting to heaven, as it is in 1 Peter.<sup>80</sup>

Early Christian figures like Jesus,<sup>81</sup> Paul,<sup>82</sup> Peter,<sup>83</sup> and the other apostles<sup>84</sup> believed that the world would end at any moment. It seems that in our case “nothing is clearer than that the author of 1 Peter advised his readers on the basis of a firm belief in the imminent end of all things.”<sup>85</sup> Christians believed that, at this time, mankind would be divided into two groups:<sup>86</sup> some would be tortured for eternity, and some would go to eternal paradise.<sup>87</sup> So, then, they performed good

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<sup>79</sup> Bultmann, *Theology*, p160

<sup>80</sup> “The NT speaks of salvation as deliverance from physical danger such as sickness, deformity, demon possession, death, or the “evil one”, as well as deliverance from sin...*but its major focus is more spiritual in nature. Salvation means entry into the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven.*” Gary W. Light, ‘Salvation’, in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 2000), p1154 (emphasis mine).

“NT σωτηρία does not refer to earthly relationships. Its content is not, as in the Greek understanding, well-being, health of body and soul. Nor is it the earthly liberation of the people of God from the heathen yoke, as in Judaism. It does not relate to any circumstances as such. It denotes neither healing in a religious sense, nor life, nor liberation from satanic or demonic power...the event of the historical coming, suffering and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth brings salvation from God’s wrath...” Werner Foerster, σῶζω, in ‘*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*’ (Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1971), p1002 (Ed. Gerhard Friedrich, Trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley), emphasis mine. For similar sentiments, M.J. Harris, ‘Salvation’, in ‘*New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*’, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000), p766; Alan Richardson, ‘Salvation’, in ‘*Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*’, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962), p180; G.O Collins ‘Salvation’, in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary Vol. 5* (New York: Doubleday, 1992); Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude: an Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, (Nashville, TN: B& H Publishing group), p64

<sup>81</sup> Matt. 24.34-36; Mk.13.30-32; Lk.21.32-33. James D.G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, Vol.1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 2003), p479; E.P. Sanders, *Historical Figure of Jesus*, (London: Penguin Books, 1996), p. 180

<sup>82</sup> 1 Thess.5.2. Will Deming, *Paul on Marriage and Celibacy: the Hellenistic Background of 1 Corinthians 7*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2004), p174

<sup>83</sup> “David Horrell, *1 Peter* (New Testament Guides), (London: T & T Clark, 2008), p62

<sup>84</sup> D.A Hayes, ‘A Study of a Pauline Apocalypse. I Thess. 4:13-18’, *The Biblical World* 37.3 (1911), p175; cf. 1 Jn.2.18; Gos.Pet. 7.25; Jas.5.8-11.

<sup>85</sup> A. R. C. Leaney, ‘1 Peter and the Passover: An Interpretation’, *New Testament Studies* 10 (1963-64), p251

<sup>86</sup> Dale Allison, *Resurrection Jesus: the Earliest Christian Tradition and its Interpreters* (New York: T & T Clark, 2005), p78

<sup>87</sup> 1 Tim.2.15; 2 Tim. 3.15; 1 Pet.1.5; Heb.10.25; Jas. 5.5.; Acts 2.21; Rev. 12.10. Jos. Contra Ap. 2.31

deeds in the hope of receiving eschatological reward,<sup>88</sup> and avoided bad deeds in the hope of avoiding eschatological judgement.<sup>89</sup> Another way to put this, is to ask the question: what were Christians hoping to be saved *from and to*? The NT answer is from Hell and to Heaven.<sup>90</sup> In saying this, I make no comment on *where* heaven is, whether it is a reconstituted earth,<sup>91</sup> or a different place.<sup>92</sup> I also don't deny that the process of eschatology was believed to have begun already, and this included miraculous events like healings.<sup>93</sup> The primary goal of this, however, was to get man and earth to the point of a New Creation, which, indeed, is also a divine goal (2 Pet.3.9).

Some writers, like Wright, have minimized the eschatological elements of the NT, who writes of "hope of Israel *already realized* in the present"<sup>94</sup> and so, as Fredriksen has summarised, "long story short: Jewish apocalyptic language is actually metaphorical and, understood properly, refers to political events in history."<sup>95</sup> It is unlikely the language of salvation is primarily referring to deliverance from Rome. What advantage would deliverance from sickness, from Rome, or from demons be if one still was scheduled to be tortured for eternity?<sup>96</sup> Indeed, the NT writers' primary hope was to be rescued from such judgement, and to be delivered to their city, the New Creation,

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<sup>88</sup> John Piper, 'Hope as the Motivation for Love', *New Testament Studies* 26 (1980), p221; Travis B. Williams, *Good Works in 1 Peter : Negotiating Social Conflict and Christian Identity in the Greco-Roman World*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), p251

<sup>89</sup> 2 En. 44.5; 1 En. 41.1; Apoc.Zeph. 8.5.

<sup>90</sup> Argued further below, 7.3, 7.4

<sup>91</sup> Rev.11.15

<sup>92</sup> Mk.13.31; 2 Pet.3.7

<sup>93</sup> Matt. 12.28; "εἰ δὲ ἐν δακτύλῳ Θεοῦ ἐγὼ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, ἄρα ἐφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ", Lk. 11.20

<sup>94</sup> N.T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, (2 Vols.: Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 1049

<sup>95</sup> Paula Fredriksen, 'N.T. Wright, Paul and the Faithfulness of God,' *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 77, no. 2 (2015),p388

<sup>96</sup> For Paul reacting against Rome, Gordon Zerbe, 'The Politics of Paul: His Supposed Social Conservatism and the Impact of Postcolonial Readings', in *The Colonized Apostle*, (ed. Christopher D. Stanley), (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011) p62f; for the opposite view James M. Hamilton Jr, *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgement: a Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2010) ,p436

or Heaven, through the savior Christ (Phil.3.20).<sup>97</sup> My thesis develops the specific approach to salvation found in 1 Peter, which is, as Feldmeier notes, "...central for 1 Peter..."<sup>98</sup>

My understanding of salvation in 1 Peter fits within the general apocalyptic trend and is closely linked to the idea of covenant. I will be, following Miller, talking about the idea of salvation in 1 Peter, not merely how Peter uses the word σωτηρία.<sup>99</sup>

## VI. THE CORPORATE NATURE OF 1 PETER

This thesis also argues that 1 Peter is fundamentally corporate in nature: its emphasis is not mainly individual. The addressees are "exiles" (1.1), "children" (1.14), a "house", a "priesthood" (2.5), a "people", a "race", a "nation" (2.9), "aliens" (2.11), and "servants" (2.16).<sup>100</sup> So, when Peter talks about election, or stumbling, it is more probable that he is talking about a *group* that has or has not been chosen by God, on the basis of their disbelief, as opposed to individual predestination as Williams and others have argued.<sup>101</sup>

### Summation

It is my contention, then, that we should not speak of Cultural Appropriation with respect to 1 Peter. If my position is wrong, it would need to be shown that a singular Judaism existed in the first century, which Peter, or his audience, cannot have been a part of, and from which Peter appropriated his concepts.

Contradistinctively, I suppose that 1 Peter is a legitimate expression of a Judaism, and though modern Christians have often engaged in Appropriation and Colonialization, we should not read modern Christian Cultural Appropriation and Colonialization into this ancient Judaic text. Peter

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<sup>97</sup> Brenda B. Colijn, *Images of Salvation in the New Testament*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010), p291

<sup>98</sup> Feldmeier, *Peter*, p91

<sup>99</sup> Donald G. Miller, 'Deliverance and Destiny: Salvation in First Peter', *Interpretation*, October 1955: 413-25

<sup>100</sup> A similar argument, and list, is found in John H. Elliott, 'Elders as leaders in 1 Peter and the early Church', *Hervormde Theologische Studies*. 64, 2, 681-695, (2008), p683

<sup>101</sup> Martin Williams, *The Doctrine of Salvation in the First Letter of Peter (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series)*, (Cambridge University Press, 2011), p60. Against Williams' view is Armin J Panning, *Exegetical Brief: What Has Been Determined (ἐτέθησαν) in 1 Peter 2:8*, Wisconsin Lutheran Journal 98.1 (2001) Salvation in 1 Peter

believes that this community are legitimate heirs to the covenant and Torah of God. They have been chosen, and respond with obedience and faith through the atoning work of Jesus. If they stay in the covenant, they will be saved.

To posit Cultural Appropriation one would probably need to envision a situation whereby the Petrine community had broken with all Judaism, had worked through the inevitable period of vitriol and polemic that we can observe in later documents, and had made it to a state whereby these Jews do not even figure in their writings or thoughts anymore. Moreover, all of this would had to have transpired by around the end of the first century. This is possible, but does not seem to me to be the simplest solution to our problem. The relatively early date of 1 Peter, and the total lack of animosity in the letter make Cultural Appropriation improbable.

This argument, then, supposes that Peter's concept of salvation is that it was devised by God long ago, and that the Christians are a legitimate and planned part of God's covenant community. I will discuss issues of atonement, election, faith, obedience, covenant, and judgement. Briefly, I will then discuss the question of *where* Peter may have got his ideas from. Because the paradigm of appropriation has operated so widely in works on 1 Peter, it has influenced many author's understanding of the letter's soteriology. This thesis offers a different sort of approach. Firstly, I will turn my attention to some scholars who have previously addressed these questions, and then the question of method.

Scholars of 1 Peter have long recognized how integral salvation is for the author.<sup>102</sup> Here I discuss some of their results, and note issues I disagree with, or would like to build upon.

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<sup>102</sup> "References to salvation are central to the epistle" - J.M, Langford, *"Signs" of Hope in the Midst of Suffering: A Semiotic Investigation of the use of Isaiah in 1 Peter*, (PhD. Diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), p123; see also David Abernathy. "Exegetical Considerations in 1 Peter 2:7-9." Notes 15 (2001); Armin J Panning, 'Exegetical Brief: What Has Been Determined (ἐτέθησαν) in 1 Peter 2:8', *Wisconsin Lutheran Journal* 98.1 (2001); W.D. Kennard, 'Petrine Redemption: Its Meaning and Extent'. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 30 1987

1.4 "εἰς κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον, τετηρημένην ἐν οὐρανοῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς;" 1.5. "τοὺς ἐν δυνάμει Θεοῦ φρουρουμένους διὰ πίστεως εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐτοίμην ἀποκαλυφθῆναι ἐν καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ."; 1.9 "κομιζόμενοι τὸ τέλος τῆς πίστεως σωτηρίαν ψυχῶν."; 1.10 "περὶ ἧς σωτηρίας ἐξεζήτησαν καὶ ἐξηραύνησαν προφηταὶ οἱ περὶ τῆς εἰς ὑμᾶς χάριτος προφητεύσαντες,"; 3.1 "ὁμοίως γυναῖκες, ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις  
Salvation in 1 Peter

Methodologically, discussed in chapter two, I take a grammatical-historical approach to the text, focusing on authorial intent and endeavoring to locate *how* the author may have historically come to hold his beliefs.<sup>103</sup> Although it is true that that scholarly discussions of 1 Peter have often left out treatments of his soteriology,<sup>104</sup> I will now survey how some major commenters have treated soteriology in 1 Peter.

## 1. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Most of the detailed analysis on soteriology comes to us in commentaries on the letter, but there are some smaller studies that deal with relevant topics. The largest study on the matter is by Williams, discussed below, and as such will be my main dialogue partner. Here I wish to highlight some important works, what they have said on the matter, and react to their thoughts.

### 1.1. Selwyn

Selwyn (1969) located three separate, but interrelated, concepts that he grouped around eschatology in the letter: revelation, salvation, and glory. Revelation is the “wisdom and counsel of redemption” that was hidden for “untold ages” but is revealed in Jesus.<sup>105</sup> Selwyn argues that Peter is at pains to stress the dual nature of salvation: it has both present and future aspects, but Peter has a stronger emphasis on the present. It is in this context that he assigns Peter’s belief in the salvific effect of baptism (3.21): this is one way Christians can “work out” their salvation.<sup>106</sup>

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ἀνδράσιν, ἵνα καὶ εἴ τινες ἀπειθοῦσιν τῷ λόγῳ, διὰ τῆς τῶν γυναικῶν ἀναστροφῆς ἄνευ λόγου κερδηθήσονται.”

<sup>103</sup> I take a classical definition of grammatical exegesis - 1) view the sentence as a whole 2) ascertain the signification of terms 3) understand the words in their relation to each other 4) translation into English. From William Arnold Stevens, ‘Grammatical Exegesis’, *The Old and New Testament Student*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Oct., 1889), p198; I suppose that we can most easily explain the theology of 1 Peter with reference to the world of Second Temple Judaism, and do not place high value on Hellenistic or “Oriental” parallels, as opposed to the religionsgeschichtliche Schule of, for example, Johannes Weiss, *Paul and Jesus*, trans. H.J. Chaytor (London and New York: Harper & Brothers, 1909), p14.

<sup>104</sup> “Die soteriologie in 1 Petrus is tot ’n groot mate verwaarloos in bestaande navorsing,” F.J. Janse Van Rensburg, ‘Die identifisering van soteriologiese metafore in 1 Petrus’, *In die Skriflig*, Sep 2005, Vol.39(3), p594

<sup>105</sup> Selwyn, *Peter*, p251

<sup>106</sup> Edward Gordon Selwyn, *The First Epistle of Peter*, (London: Macmillan and Co, 1969), p252

Glory will await the believer at Christ's second coming, where they will be rewarded and compensated for their suffering.<sup>107</sup> Selwyn does not discuss any historical precedents for where these beliefs may have come from, which is unfortunate because he believes the letter was written by the Apostle Peter's amanuensis, which I dispute.<sup>108</sup> Nevertheless, this argument, if true, would have substantial impact on *where* Peter may have received his soteriology.

## 1.2 Davids

For Davids (1990), the resurrection is foundational for hope, as it demonstrates regeneration. This regeneration was accomplished by the blood of Jesus, an atonement which has a sacrificial precedent in Passover and Isaiah 53. I would argue that the Passover is not a strong reference for Peter's arguments.<sup>109</sup> Salvation, ultimately, is a future event: 'to say "I am saved" would not have made sense to Peter', because salvation's fullness is revealed at the end,' though he does allow that one does receive a "foretaste" of salvation in the present.<sup>110</sup> Perhaps, though, this is slightly too strong. If we allow that Peter believed the world was, or would soon be ending, we can imagine him saying "I am *being* saved", which clearly has a culmination at heaven. What's more, it would be interesting to add to David's discussion about the historical process between Isaiah 53 being written, and subsequently read, up to the belief that Jesus is the only sacrifice the Christians need, and consider what might have been the ideological steps in between those two points in history.

## 1.3 Achtemeier

For Achtemeier (1996), salvation in 1 Peter primarily refers to deliverance at the final judgement (a judgement that will fall on all people).<sup>111</sup> Election is a covenantal term (Isa.43.20f.),<sup>112</sup> so the Christians are now of a new covenant which demands obedience and sacrifice.<sup>113</sup> Sprinkling of

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<sup>107</sup> Selwyn, *Peter*, p258

<sup>108</sup> Selwyn, *Peter*, p10. Discussed below, chapter eight.

<sup>109</sup> Discussed below, chapter 4.2.

<sup>110</sup> Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B.Eerdmans, 1990), p20

<sup>111</sup> Paul Achtemeier, *1 Peter: a Commentary on First Peter*, Hermeneia: a Critical & Historical Commentary on the Bible, (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1996), p67

<sup>112</sup> Achtemeier, *Peter*, p89

<sup>113</sup> Achtemeier, *Peter*, p89

blood has a foundation in the OT covenant (Ex. 24.3-8), whereby people pledge to be obedient and a sacrifice is made, which is eventually sprinkled on the people.<sup>114</sup> This is further consolidated when Christians are said to be a kingdom of priests, which is again covenantal language.<sup>115</sup> Faith, for Achtemeier, in 1.21 should be translated “trust in” and it refers to Christians putting their trust in God because he has proved himself trustworthy.<sup>116</sup> For Achtemeier, faith and hope are often teaching saying the same concept in 1 Peter.<sup>117</sup> Obedience is a theme that is repeated in the letter, and refers to works. On the eschatological blessing in 3.9, this comes from the sayings of “Jesus himself”,<sup>118</sup> and the thrust concerns not earning particular blessings, but rather not losing them. I argue instead in this thesis that the text teaches earning blessings.<sup>119</sup> One dispute I have with Achtemeier involves the concept of appropriation, but I agree that the covenant looms large in the letter.

#### 1.4 Elliott

Elliott’s commentary (2000) is very comprehensive, and was once described by Davids as “the latest and greatest work in the field.”<sup>120</sup> Elliott has extensive discussions of salvation, but the argument boils down to the following: election, sanctification, rebirth, and reward through the resurrection of Jesus.<sup>121</sup> I think his argument and method are correct, though I would probably

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<sup>114</sup> Feldmeier, *Peter*, p59 argues that this image signifies a new covenant (i.e. Lk.22.20). I argue that we need to remain agnostic as to that question.

<sup>115</sup> Achtemeier, *Peter*, p89

<sup>116</sup> Achtemeier, *Peter*, p132

<sup>117</sup> Achtemeier, *Peter*, p133

<sup>118</sup> Achtemeier, *Peter*, p224

<sup>119</sup> Below, chapter 5.1

<sup>120</sup> Peter H. Davids, Review: 1 Peter: a New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, (AB 37B) by John H. Elliott, *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 4, (October 2001), p741

<sup>121</sup> “The letter’s soteriological language and imagery are likewise rich and varied. God has elected a people (1:1; 2:4-10; 5:13) and sanctified its members through the Spirit (1:2, 15-16, 22; 2:5, 9); rebirthed them through the imperishable word (1:3, 23: 2:2); and made them alive (2:5, 24c; cf. 4:6). God has given them a lasting inheritance (1:4; 3:7, 9), the prospect of salvation (1:5, 9, 10 2:2; 3:21; 4:18) and glorification (1:7; 4:13: 5:1; 4, 10) and a cause for hope...redeemed them by Christ’s holy blood (1:2, 18)...in the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1:3,21; 3:18, 21), in which believers now share through faith and baptism (1:21; 2:4-5; 3:21)”. J.H. Elliott, *1 Peter: a New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible, (New York: Doubleday, 2000), p111

emphasize the role of obedience more strongly. My main deviation with Elliott concerns the historical background to Peter's soteriology, whereby he postulates a Petrine group made up of Peter's disciples, an argument about which I do not believe we have enough evidence, indeed I suppose that the evidence contradicts this idea.<sup>122</sup>

### 1.5 Van Rensburg

Van Rensburg's approach (2005) specifically analyses metaphors of salvation. His definition of salvation concerns how one goes from being lost to being rescued.<sup>123</sup> The soteriology of 1 Peter stems from the belief of rebirth (1.3-12), and follows from it is personal growth, one's attitude towards outsiders, and behavior within the church.<sup>124</sup> Van Rensburg argues that the metaphor of temple and heir within 1 Peter are not properly soteriological,<sup>125</sup> but those of family (father, birth, newborn, milk, children),<sup>126</sup> and slavery and redemption are.<sup>127</sup> Also discussed is the image of shepherd going after lost sheep. Here the point is that initiative lies with the shepherd, and not the sheep.<sup>128</sup> Last, he discusses the metaphor of sin as a wound which Christ has the power to heal.<sup>129</sup> His conclusion is that the metaphors of salvation in 1 Peter mostly cohere around the idea of family.<sup>130</sup> This is a helpful and cautious approach that very closely follows the letter. My

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<sup>122</sup> Elliott, *Peter*, p130; J.H. Elliott, 'Peter, Silvanus and Mark in 1 Peter and Acts: Sociological- Exegetical Perspectives on a Petrine Group in Rome,' in *Wort in der Zeit: Festschrift für K. Rengstorf*. Eds. W. Haubeck and M. Bachmann. (Leiden: Brill), 1980; this thesis has also been defended more recently by C.A. Barbarick, *The Pattern and the Power: The Example of Christ in 1 Peter*, (PhD Diss., Baylor University, 2011), p167. This idea is discussed in chapter eight, below.

<sup>123</sup> "Die punt vanwaar oorgegaan word van 'n toestand van verlore wees na 'n toestand van gered wees." Van Rensburg, *1 Petrus*, p594

<sup>124</sup> Van Rensburg, *1 Petrus*, p601-2

<sup>125</sup> Van Rensburg, *1 Petrus*, p603

<sup>126</sup> Van Rensburg, *1 Petrus*, p605; for more on father imagery in the NT, see McCasland who argues that the language is "characteristic of the language of prayer", S. Vernon McCasland, Abba, Father, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 72, No. 2 (Jun., 1953), p84-5;

<sup>127</sup> Van Rensburg, *1 Petrus*, p606

<sup>128</sup> Van Rensburg, *1 Petrus*, p609

<sup>129</sup> Van Rensburg, *1 Petrus*, p610

<sup>130</sup> "Dit is duidelik dat in 1 Petrus, vanuit 'n metaforiese hoek bekyk, die soteriologie hoofsaaklik met behulp van die gesin-beeldgroep ontwikkel word" Van Rensburg, *1 Petrus*, p610



understanding, though, is that the dominant picture is not necessarily of family, though this is clearly taught, but of the community as Israel. Indeed, we can push the idea of family further historically and theologically. Why would Peter advance this idea of family? My response is that 1 Peter uses language of family, people, and nation as ways of teaching that the Christians are God's people. This makes the most sense historically in the context of a covenant relationship.

## 1.6 Feldmeier

Feldmeier (2009) has an explicit aim to situate Peter's concept of salvation within "the context of the Hellenistic world."<sup>131</sup> His study focuses primarily on the 1) salvation of the soul<sup>132</sup>, 2) rebirth<sup>133</sup> and 3) the community as the people of God. As regards 1) Feldmeier draws on Hellenistic Jews such as Philo who suppose the existence of a soul, and concludes that Peter has much the same dualistic conception: a soul which is juxtaposed with the flesh.<sup>134</sup> So, salvation is about "an everlasting life that transcends the vain *conditio humana*".<sup>135</sup> For 2), Feldmeier again draws on parallels from Philo (*QE* 2.46), and pagan writers, but ultimately rejects them as convincing parallels. Instead, rebirth is a way that Peter can speak about the distinctive qualities of the eschatological age in which the recipients live.<sup>136</sup> As regards 3) this alludes to Ex.24.7, whereby this "community is rooted in the traditions of the old covenant".<sup>137</sup> It is questionable whether Peter has in mind a *new* covenant, however, or merely a continuation of that at Sinai.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Reinhard Feldmeier, *Salvation and Anthropology in First Peter*, in *The Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition*, edited by Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert W. Wall (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009), p203

<sup>132</sup> Feldmeier, *Salvation*, p203-206

<sup>133</sup> Feldmeier, *Salvation*, p206-211

<sup>134</sup> Feldmeier, *Salvation*, p204-205

<sup>135</sup> Feldmeier, *Salvation*, p206

<sup>136</sup> Feldmeier, *Salvation*, p208-209

<sup>137</sup> Feldmeier, *Salvation*, p212-213

<sup>138</sup> Some scholars argue that such a new covenant has a special focus on grace, i.e. Daniel Keating, *First and Second Peter, Jude*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), p29

## 1.7. Williams

The work of Martin Williams (2011)<sup>139</sup> is very recent, extremely thorough, and well-researched. It is the biggest work on this exact issue yet, and as such will be discussed in more detail. The study has a particular deep interest in locating Peter's soteriology within the world of Second Temple Judaism.

Williams's study adopts a theological -critical exegesis, which is defined as "...to hear the word of God, and to behold the glory of God in Scripture and to be transformed by it..."<sup>140</sup> He writes that the "ultimate goal of biblical interpretation is beholding the glory of God in Scripture",<sup>141</sup> and a "proper reading of Scripture is that which attends to the whole of Scripture as canon". Further, "...all theological interpretation is to be submitted to the biblical text....as the ultimate authority", "a theological interpretation may occur in the Spirit", and "theological interpretation of scripture will ideally be practiced in community".<sup>142</sup>

The reason Williams does not subscribe to Spinoza's purely historical approach is because scripture is "ultimately the word (logos) of God and about God".<sup>143</sup> Williams has also argued "we cannot avoid reading Scripture from within our own theological/ecclesial traditions and within our own theological/ecclesial traditions and with our own agendas and philosophical presuppositions."<sup>144</sup>

Granted, we all have our own philosophical presuppositions, and it is true that "our location in life informs our ideology" but I think it is unhelpful to move from that fact to suggest then that

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<sup>139</sup> Martin Williams, *The Doctrine of Salvation in the First Letter of Peter*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, (Cambridge University Press, 2011). Williams's discussion has a focus on election, atonement, rebirth, and eschatology.

<sup>140</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p11

<sup>141</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p12

<sup>142</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p12; the method seems similar to that of Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1952) 1:1-2, 16

<sup>143</sup> A secular approach: Baruch Spinoza, *Chief Works*, 1:8, see further in chapter two. This criticism has often been levelled at grammatical-historical exegesis throughout history, e.g. 'The Outcome of the Higher Criticism', *The Old Testament Student*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Dec., 1885) (Editorial Notes), p182

<sup>144</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p19

we are all therefore doing theology.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, it seems to *add* needless presuppositions (1 Peter is the word of God, is inspired by the Spirit, is part of a Canon), because none of us are completely objective thinkers. It is one thing to soberly recognize our biases, it is a non sequitur to add on more. Working through a text, verse by verse, and examining the issues *it itself raises*, may not be a perfect solution to excavating original meaning, but I suppose may get us further than “theological critical exegesis”.

As for Williams’s exegesis, he adopts a “literal sense approach”.<sup>146</sup> This comes down to “authorial intention and authorial convention”, I think this is a sound strategy. However, soon Martin employs “intercanonical conversation”. Fowl wrote that authorial intention cannot help us with “Christological readings of various OT texts. A single meaning determined by authorial intention will either force Christians into rather implausible arguments about the communicative intention of Isaiah, for example, or lead them to reduce the Christological aspect of those passages into a subsidiary or parasitic role.”<sup>147</sup> I think this is the right premise with the wrong conclusion. We should reduce the Christological aspect of the passages *if that is what the text requires*. Williams imports the concept of canonical criticism, defined as, what is the “theological role that book plays within the completed canon of Scripture”.<sup>148</sup>

Williams argues that the text supports election to “salvation” (1.1-2; 2.4-10) and election to damnation (2.8). Instead, my argument is that the election is into the covenant- to be elect is to be God’s representatives on earth, and no mention is made of election to salvation or damnation.<sup>149</sup> He also argues that salvation rests on two elements – Christ’s atonement and Christ’s resurrection, though I argue this minimizes the role that works play in 1 Peter.<sup>150</sup> As for the historical background to Peter, he sometimes explains via the miraculous: “in the same way we can say that Isaiah intended to prophesy of Christ’s death and resurrection (as 1 Pet. 1:10–12

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<sup>145</sup> Quote from Jennifer G. Bird, ‘Reading the Readers Ideologically: Prolegomena to a Study of 1 Peter’, *The Bible & Critical Theory*. 2, 3, (Oct. 2006), p12

<sup>146</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p28

<sup>147</sup> Quoted in Williams, *Salvation*, p31

<sup>148</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p31

<sup>149</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p3

<sup>150</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p277

indicates) even though his comprehension of these events was greatly limited.”<sup>151</sup> One of the main areas I would differ from Williams is that, in place of a discussion of modern religious movements, I ask where Peter might have got his ideas from, what are the historical precedents for some of his soteriological concepts (chapter eight, below).

So, while I do greatly admire the thorough work Williams has done, and I have learned much from his pioneering study, it is perhaps his stated method that I disagree with principally. It is on this basis that I offer a different kind of approach to the soteriology of 1 Peter. What do I suggest in its place?

## 2. METHOD

If a reader does not suppose 1 Peter is the word of God, that it claims to be scripture, that one necessarily wishes to be transformed by it, or that the canon necessarily has an internal consistency, Williams’s approach will undoubtedly pose a problem. This approach, then, unfortunately excludes many students from different religious backgrounds. So, inevitably we need an *inclusive* system that has as few needless presuppositions as possible for getting at the original meaning of the text.

1 Peter is a text that has been read for over 2000 years, typically within a religious context. One might naturally wonder why a study of salvation might not be more appropriate in a Religious Studies thesis, and not a historical one. The Bible has been subjected to a variety of interpretative approaches through the years. The Medieval period (c.5<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century CE) saw some interest in allegorical interpretations,<sup>152</sup> and later the Protestant Reformation was characterized partly by an increased effort to understand the literal meaning of the words,<sup>153</sup> though from a context of

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<sup>151</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p33

<sup>152</sup> Wilam Baird, *History of New Testament Research: From Deism to Tübingen*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1992), xv

<sup>153</sup> E.g. Huldrych Zwingli, ‘True and False Religion’, in *The Protestant Reformation* (ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand) (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1968), p113; Kathleen M. Crowther, *Adam and Eve in the Protestant Reformation*, (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p102; John H. Hayes, *Interpreting Ancient Israelite History, Prophecy, and Law*, edited and introduced by Brad E. Kelle, (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013), p39; Morrow calls this “Salvation in 1 Peter

religious belief.<sup>154</sup> Around the time of Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) we see more thinkers endeavoring to study the Bible as though it were any other text from the ancient world.<sup>155</sup> The goal, then, was not to understand what the text means for us (them) today, but *primarily* to understand what the text meant within the context in which it was written.<sup>156</sup> This gives rise to the Historical-Critical method, a context within which I place my study.<sup>157</sup>

## 2.1. Grammatical-Historical Exegesis

Some key components of this method include Grammatical-Historical exegesis (interpreting the text starting from an analysis of its own language and then locating it within its historical context),<sup>158</sup> and a willingness to recognize that the text may not be unique, or without error.<sup>159</sup> It

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supposed literal interpretation”, Jeffrey L. Morrow, *Three Skeptics and the Bible: La Peyrere, Hobbes, Spinoza, and the Reception of Modern Biblical Criticism*, (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2016), p147

<sup>154</sup> Werner Georg Kummel, *The New Testament: the History of the Investigation of its Problems*, (London: SCM Press, 1970), p22

<sup>155</sup> Travis L. Frampton, *Spinoza and the Rise of Historical Criticism of the Bible*, (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), p4; Nancy K. Levene, *Spinoza’s Revelation: Religion, Democracy, and Reason*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004), p93; Steven Nadler, *Spinoza: A Life*, (Cambridge University Press, 1999), p324

<sup>156</sup> Jon Douglas Levenson, *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism: Jews and Christians in Biblical Studies*, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), p93

<sup>157</sup> Usefully defined as “...the critical study of the Bible with an eye to the historical questions raised by the text and employing a cluster of historical techniques to address these questions.” David R. Law, *The Historical-Critical Method: A Guide for the Perplexed*, (London: T & T Clark, 2012), p7

<sup>158</sup> William Arnold Stevens, ‘Grammatical Exegesis’, *The Old and New Testament Student*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Oct., 1889), p198

<sup>159</sup> Louis Dupre, *The Enlightenment and the Intellectual Foundations of Modern Culture*, (Yale University Press, 2004), p240; I am using the phrase Grammatical-Historical exegesis as a part of the Historical-Critical method, because it is a means of analytically criticizing the text. Historically, some have seen these as two opposing positions, see the discussion in David E. Aune, ‘Historical Criticism’, in *The Blackwell Companion to The New Testament*, edited by David E. Aune (Malden, Ma, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2010), p102 . I do not believe this is an essential dichotomy.

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is within this approach broadly that I place Rhetorical Criticism, which seeks to understand original meaning with specific respect to literary techniques.<sup>160</sup>

## 2.2 History of Religions School

Even within the confines of scholars who are committed to excavating meaning from the text from within a purely historical framework, there is some division. My understanding of our specific situation is that Peter has an intimate understanding of the Jewish Bible, specifically the Septuagint. Indeed, 1 Peter has a very high concentration of references to the LXX relative to its size.<sup>161</sup> The easiest way to explain that fact, in my judgement, is to conclude that our author is a Diaspora Jew- someone for whom the LXX was the scripture they knew most intimately. If this is true, we can imagine that he was significantly influenced by a Jewish upbringing, by knowledge of Jewish texts, and customs. So, my supposition is that our priority in our search for historical explanations and causes to Peter's ideas, should primarily, though not exclusively, focus on the world of Second Temple Judaism. The simplest explanation is that he was influenced by that close environment first and foremost.

Only after one has done so, should we focus on texts that do not appear to have any explicit influence on Second Temple Judaism- though it is a useful endeavor. The approach of the History of Religions School, then, though appropriately interested in Higher Critical questions was too heavily focused on external influences, where simpler explanations could readily be found.<sup>162</sup> These are the Jewish influences.

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<sup>160</sup> Stanley E. Porter and Dennis L. Stamps, 'Introduction: Rhetorical Criticism and the Florence Conference', in *Rhetorical Criticism and the Bible: Essays from the 1998 Florence Conference*, (Eds. Stanley E. Porter and Dennis L. Stamps, Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), p17

<sup>161</sup> J.H. Elliott, *1 Peter*, (New York, NY: Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries: Doubleday, 2000), p12

<sup>162</sup> Wayne A. Meeks, 'The History of Religions School', in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: Volume 4, From 1750 to the Present*, (edited by Richard Marsden, John Riches, E. Ann Matter, James Carleton Paget, (Cambridge University Press, 2015), p137; Thomas Albert Howard, *Protestant Theology and the Making of the Modern German University*, (Oxford University Press, 2006), p390; Daniel R. Langton, *The Apostle Paul in the Jewish Imagination: A Study in Modern Jewish-Christian Relations*, (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p13

Since at least the publication of Sanders' *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* in 1977<sup>163</sup> (this was perhaps the most famous example, not in any way the first),<sup>164</sup> NT scholars have been careful to emphasize the Jewish background that likely undergird the Biblical text, and where possible, avoid caricature and generalisation. Jesus and the Disciples were, after all, Jews. This is not without controversy, however. There have been criticisms levelled at New Testament scholars that they have a) utilized texts that are too late to have influenced the Bible in any degree<sup>165</sup> and b) that they have asked questions of these texts that they themselves do not wish to answer.<sup>166</sup> These are fair criticisms, and it is a good reminder to focus on texts that supply us with concepts that could reasonably have influenced the thought-world of Peter. The point, however, seems to have stuck. We must analyse the text from such a perspective. But we can be still more fastidious.

### 2.3. Apocalyptic Judaism

The major event that dominated the thinking of the first Christians is the end of the world, a key component of Second Temple apocalyptic Jewish theology.<sup>167</sup> It is here that I historically situate Peter's theology.<sup>168</sup> I suppose Peter's ideas of salvation should fit within that particular

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<sup>163</sup> E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977)

<sup>164</sup> E.g. Krister Stendahl, 'The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West', *The Harvard Theological Review* Vol. 56, No. 3 (Jul., 1963), p199-215; W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology*, (London, SPCK: 1948); George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era: the Age of the Tannaim*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927)

<sup>165</sup> See discussion in William Horbury, 'The New Testament and Rabbinic Study: an Historical Sketch', in *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature* (Reimund Bieringer, Florentino García Martínez, Didier Pollefeyt & Peter J. Tomson eds.) (Leiden: Brill, 2010), p36

<sup>166</sup> Jacob Neusner, Sanders' "Paul and the Jewish People", *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, New Series, Vol. 74, No. 4 (Apr., 1984.), p416

<sup>167</sup> M. Eugene Boring, *An Introduction to the New Testament: History, Literature, Theology*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2012), p106

<sup>168</sup> Davids, *Peter*, p15-17; The characterization of Peter apocalyptic theology (not that the letter is itself an "apocalyptic book") stems from Peter's overriding belief in the end of the world and the dualities he uses. It seems to me that apocalyptic theology is clearly built upon the foundation of, and is compatible with (according to its authors) the Hebrew Bible. Apocalyptic is merely a style of religion based ultimately off the Hebrew Bible. Therefore, the dichotomy that Liebengood makes between the two seems to be unwarranted: Liebengood, *Eschatology*, p124.

movement, and we should look to other contexts to explain his ideas only if this approach proves insufficient. Characteristic of apocalyptic Judaic theology is the idea of dualities- Heaven and Hell, angels and demons.<sup>169</sup> Also vital was the impression that the present world was about to end at any moment. God's wrath would be poured out on sinful people, and only the righteous would be spared.<sup>170</sup> This is why the notion of salvation was so pressing for our author. Christians were to be saved from eternal torment and be delivered to eternal salvation. Finally, I do not see it to be appropriate to distinguish between two "religions" at this point in time: Christianity and Judaism. This is the lens through which I interpret the text, and I will give hermeneutical priority to texts which share this viewpoint (as opposed to texts produced by distant cultures).

## 2.4. Covenant Theology

Throughout the thesis, I have tried to push individual concepts as far back as possible historically and ideologically as one can. So, I agree that Peter refers to obedience, and faith, and atonement, but I suggest that this is only part of an answer. The second stage is to try and understand *why* Peter uses such concepts. Why, in addition to these concepts, for example, does Peter refer to the Christians as nation? What, if any, is the foundational thought, or thread, that ties these concepts together? My conclusion has been that Peter is supposing a covenant relationship between God and the Christians. A covenant relationship makes the most sense of the data, and provides us with a clear and simple model of salvation. Though the word is not mentioned, I suppose the concept to be clearly taught.

What are the specific components that add up to Peter's idea of salvation? We will discuss them here.

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<sup>169</sup> Dale C. Allison Jr., *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), p32

<sup>170</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p260



### 3. ELECTION IN 1 PETER

#### 3.1. Historical Background to Election

One of the key stories told by many ancient Jews is that their people had been specially chosen by YHWH. This election marks them out as God's representative people on earth.<sup>171</sup> We can see this evidenced in many Biblical (Deut.7.6; 14.2; 2 Chron.6.6; Ps.33.12; 105.43)<sup>172</sup> and extra-Biblical texts (Sir.51.12; 2 Esdr. 5.23-25; 6.54; 2 Bar. 75. 6; Odes 8.12). In the NT we also observe "chosen" language (Matt.22.14; Lk.18.7; Jn.13.18; 15.19; Acts 10.41; Rom.11.5; Col.3.12; 1 Thess.1.4; Jas.2.5; Rev.17.14), and discussion of predestination (Rom.8.29, 30). During the Rabbinic period, this notion became central as an argument by which one could challenge Christianity.<sup>173</sup>

Peter too speaks about election "rooted in the memory of God's election of and covenant with the house of Jacob at Mt. Sinai."<sup>174</sup> The community have been chosen and destined (1.2), rejected by men but chosen by God (2.4), and they were to put their faith in Jesus who is a chosen cornerstone (2.6). These Christians are perceived to be a chosen race (2.9), and this includes other Christians, for example the church at Babylon (5.13).<sup>175</sup> In this section I argue that the election Peter has in mind is covenantal, as many agree,<sup>176</sup> but more exactly, it signifies that the Christians *in general* are part of God's chosen people. The nomenclature, then, tends to be

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<sup>171</sup> J.M. Powis Smith, 'The Chosen People', *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Jan., 1929), p73

<sup>172</sup> The phrase signifies God's deliberate action, as opposed to predestination: Deut. 31.11; Neh. 1.9; Ps. 134.4 LXX; 1QS 8.6; 11.16: Witherington, *Letters*, p68

<sup>173</sup> B.W. Helfgott, *The Doctrine of Election in Tannaitic Literature*, (New York: Kings Crown Press, 1954), p135

<sup>174</sup> Elliott, *Peter*, p315; B. J. Oropeza, *Churches under Siege of Persecution and Assimilation: The General Epistles and Revelation*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2012), p115 sees election language from Isaiah (11.2 etc.) as the more probable background.

<sup>175</sup> As opposed to 5.13 being a reference to a particular woman, as J.K., Applegate, 'The Co-Elect Woman of 1 Peter', *New Testament Studies*, 38(4), (2009), p587-604.

<sup>176</sup> Schreiner, *Peter*, p53

corporate as opposed to individual, and relates to the notion that “following in the covenant tradition, 1 Peter sees the community as a ‘holy nation’...”<sup>177</sup>

### 3.2. Election and Predestination

The term is fundamentally geared to the present, as opposed to Calvin’s conclusion of election to eschatological salvation.<sup>178</sup> This is analogous to the usage we observe at Qumran. Here, the community refer to themselves as the chosen (1QS11.7), and both groups of people (chosen and not) are deemed to have been designed thusly by God (1QS 3.13-14, 1). The primary point here is to stress that these designations, grand as they are, are not *necessarily* representative of one’s final status, as Vermes writes, “though not deprived of their birthright, the unfaithful are viewed as burdened with guilt and as such excluded, provisionally at least, from the congregation of the children of God.”<sup>179</sup> The same logic, I contend, probably applies to 1 Peter.

Some interpreters of 1 Peter have assumed that the references to election have “predestination” in mind.<sup>180</sup> Whether this is predestination to heaven or hell, these writers conclude that Peter is referring to God’s sovereign choice to select certain individuals for certain eschatological ends, namely, salvation. This is perhaps true in other contemporary texts, but I argue here that election is principally communal, covenantal, and present- not specifically individual and eschatological.<sup>181</sup> Here I agree more with Didymus the Blind, (*Commentary on 1 Peter*, pg. 39.1755) and (Origen, *Catena*, 42), as opposed to Augustine (*On the Trinity*, 13.15).<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Thomas Wingate Mann, *Deuteronomy*, Westminster Bible Companion, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), p68; Seock-Tae Sohn, *The Divine Election of Israel*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1991), p258 sees an inexact parallel to this notion in Hos.1.10.

<sup>178</sup> Calvin, *1 Peter*, p24

<sup>179</sup> Géza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Scrolls in English*, Penguin Classics, (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p73; the same argument is made in Robert Davidson, ‘Covenant Ideology in Ancient Israel’, in *The World of Ancient Israel: Sociological, Anthropological and Political Perspectives*, ed. Ronald Clements (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p232

<sup>180</sup> So Thomas Schreiner, *Peter*, p113; John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Epistle of Peter*, (trans. John Owen, Baker Books), p24. For predestination in the NT, see Acts 4.28; Rom.8.29, 30.

<sup>181</sup> I agree here with Stephen N. Williams, *The Election of Grace: A Riddle without a Resolution?*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2015), p75

<sup>182</sup> Bray, *Commentary*, p65-127  
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It may be argued that these concepts are actually just two sides of the same coin, or are at least compatible with one another. Does not predestination to salvation logically imply predestination to hell for others? Does not God's sovereignty imply that those he has chosen now will remain Christians? This may be true, but is not necessarily so. Many in the first century were less concerned with systematic consistency than modern academics are. Josephus reminds us that the Pharisees believed in providence *and* in free will, thus-“they attribute everything to Fate and to God; they hold that to act rightly or otherwise rests, indeed, for the most part with men, but that in each action Fate cooperates ( *War*.2.162f.)” So the situation seems to be more as follows:

*“Since the Middle Ages, many people have regarded predestination and free will as alternatives; to most of us, their combination appears to be logically impossible. In the ancient world, however, few people saw the matter in this way, and many happily combined them. We see this, for example, in the Dead Sea Scrolls- which are not Pharisaic.”<sup>183</sup>*

At any rate, it is important to remind oneself that 1 Peter is not a philosophical treatise, but a letter.<sup>184</sup> Therefore, because the point of election in 1 Peter seems to be that God chooses a people to be his, I argue that individual predestination to salvation is not particularly important to Peter.<sup>185</sup> Thus, it seems to me that some commentators have over-emphasised the sovereign role that God plays in salvation in 1 Peter, to the point that they deny the part that humans play.<sup>186</sup>

### 3.3. Textual Analysis

We now discuss the relevant arguments. 1 Pet.1.2 has been argued to teach that an individual Christian is chosen to become more Christ-like,<sup>187</sup> or that it is referring to conversion.<sup>188</sup> Williams's argument is that the election in 1.2 is paralleled to an election in 2.8, and “... the force

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<sup>183</sup> Sanders, *Life*, p52; Cf. Rom.9.23/ Rom.10.13-17

<sup>184</sup> “...ad hoc pastoral document, and even the theological discussions present serve as the undergirding for the ethics, values, virtues, practices being inculcated...”: Benjamin Witherington III, *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1-2 Peter*, Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians (Vol. II), (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007), p23. For similar sentiment, Feldmeier, *Commentary*, p23

<sup>185</sup> So Feldmeier, *Peter*, p57

<sup>186</sup> Miller, D. G., ‘Deliverance and Destiny. Salvation in First *Peter*’, *Interp* 9 (1955), p416

<sup>187</sup> Grudem, *Peter*, p5

<sup>188</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p56

of this text, then, is that those who stumble over Christ the stone because of their disobedience to the word were indeed appointed by God to such.”<sup>189</sup> So, on this interpretation, there are two groups in 1 Peter: those *chosen for salvation* (1.2), and those who are not (2.8). Conversely, Elliott has argued that “...it is the *result* of disobedience that is foreordained, not the decision itself.”<sup>190</sup> Here he argues that the context (2.12, 3.1) assumes Peter believes in free will. Perhaps this is simply a contradiction in Peter’s argument? The context, though, provides the key to understanding the whole thought. Immediately following 2.8, in 2.9, Peter contrasts the unbelievers with the Christians who are presented as an ἔθνος, and the historical reference is clearly to Israel.<sup>191</sup> In other words, the focus of Peter’s thought is corporate. The Israelites were chosen by God, but could still break the covenant (Deut.28; Ps.78.10; Jer.34.18; 2 Esdr.2.5), or indeed extricate themselves from it (Deut.13.6-9; 1 En.93.9). By symmetrical logic, an outsider, though once disobedient, can subsequently join and keep the covenant (Acts 2.10; 6.5). God has ordained the existence of both groups, but one can freely move from one to the other if one fails to behave properly (cf. Kiddushin 61c).<sup>192</sup> This seems to be the logic that Peter has in mind. Why?

The main point of this text is that one group has been chosen by God as representative, and this inexorably leads to the corollary: that another is not God’s special people. Any eschatological significance, however, is absent (ἀποτίθημι in 2.1 is aorist, οἰκοδομεῖσθε in v5 is a present tense verb, ἐγεύσασθε in v.3 is aorist), or secondary. Salvation at this point of the letter is a present process.<sup>193</sup> Chapter two is full of present ethical admonitions- the putting away of malice (2.1; cf.

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<sup>189</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p72

<sup>190</sup> Elliott, *Peter*, p434

<sup>191</sup> For a contrary view, see Vlach who argues that the Christians are not part of Israel, but rather Peter possibly argues for a “typological connection between Israel and the church”. Michael J. Vlach, *Has the Church Replaced Israel? : a Theological Evaluation*, (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2010), p150

<sup>192</sup> Géza Vermes, *Searching for the Real Jesus: Jesus, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Religious Themes*, (London: SCM Press, 2009), p151

<sup>193</sup> Koester seems to disagree slightly on this point, arguing that the election of the community as a “new Israel” signals a “new age”: Helmut Koester, *History and Literature of Early Christianity: Volume Two*, (Walter De Gruyter & Co., Berlin, 2000), p298

Col.3.8), longing for milk<sup>194</sup> (2.2; cf. 1 Cor.3.2; Hebrews 5.12), submission to authority (2.13-25), and most significantly, converting those who are *presently* outside God's people (3.1) (i.e. those who very recently were described as those *destined* to stumble (1 Pet.2.8)). Unless Peter is entirely inconsistent, these designations are clearly not intended to be eternal, and Peter is quick to remind even the readers about "the risk of losing faith and salvation" for themselves (1 Pet.5.8-11).<sup>195</sup> The immediate context here does not appear to be eschatological, but is rather an abstract ideal. Williams responds that election to a "covenant relationship...can hardly be said of an abstract entity", and so the text presupposes individual election.<sup>196</sup> However, we have a clear analogy to such an abstract election in the people of Israel: chosen but free to leave the covenant (along with their descendants), and it seems apparent that this is the dominant reference Peter has in mind.

Disobedient people, in 1 Peter, are probably not deemed to be outside all hope of future salvation, though it is plain to the reader that their present situation is supervised in some way by God. In the same fashion, we will note (chapter six) that elect people are part of God's representative group, but could be swayed by the devil. So, when Williams states "those who do not finally come to faith (i.e., before they die) are not elect"<sup>197</sup>, I think his emphasis is mistaken on two fronts 1) election is present in 1 Peter, mainly referring to the representative status of the community as part of God's Israel on earth, and 2) Peter does not discuss the *final* state of unbelievers with respect to election, only that this is their *present* state. He anticipates some will convert. Those that do not have faith at the eschaton may have been elect at some point. Thus, *pace* Kennard and Williams, I find that Peter does not teach any guaranteed salvation or

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<sup>194</sup> A possible reference to the eucharist, cf. Troy W. Martin, 'Tasting the Eucharistic Lord as Usable (1 Peter 2:3)', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, July 2016; 78(3), p525, or to "living according to the behaviours that will keep up the new life they have entered as babies" more generally- Marietjie Du Toit, 'The expression λογικόν ἄδολον γάλα as the key to 1 Peter 2:1-3', *Hervormde Teologiese Studies*. 63, 1, (Mar. 2007), p227

<sup>195</sup> Quote from D.G. Horrell, & B. Arnold & T.B Williams, "Visuality, Vivid Description, and the Message of 1 Peter: The Significance of the Roaring Lion (1 Peter 5:8)." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132.3 (2013), p716

<sup>196</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p246

<sup>197</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p249

predestination.<sup>198</sup> Again, we see that the notion of the community as a covenant people is the key to understanding Peter's thought concerning election.

#### 4. ATONEMENT IN 1 PETER

Peter believes that it is necessary to atone for one's sins- a belief common to many within Jewish writings (4Q508 Fr.2; 11Q13 Frs.1-4; Rom.3.25; Heb.2.17; Sir.3.3,30; 5.5; 35.3; 45.16; 2 Macc.12.45). Atonement typically involves animals, but it has also been argued that the suicide at Masada (73 CE, Jos. BJ. 7.8) was believed to have provided atonement for their sin (BJ. 7.332-333).<sup>199</sup> Atonement is closely linked to the idea of covenant (Num.25.13/ Ex.32.30).<sup>200</sup>

A central theme in 1 Peter is the death of Jesus. Indeed, one scholar has calculated twenty-two references to Jesus's death in 1 Peter.<sup>201</sup> Christ's suffering "brings us to God" (3.18), he is said to have "bore our sins" and his wounds have the ability to heal (2.24).<sup>202</sup> Here one wonders, does Peter have a view of atonement that exactly matches what one (may) find in a book like Leviticus 16 or Exodus 12, has it been modified slightly, or is the reference somewhere else completely? Was Christ's sacrifice believed to have been effective for future sins, or only those in the past (Heb. 6.6; *Mand.* 4.3.3)? Peter does not address this question, instead the thrust of the message is only that one must soon stop sinning (2.24). The modern mind has myriad questions about the atonement. Does God need an outlet for his anger, and it was suitably satiated in Jesus? Or is the logic closer to a ransom (Ignatius, *Trallians*, 8.55)? Again, Peter's answer does not explain why or how Jesus's atonement works, except for the fact that it is effective in forgiving the sins

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<sup>198</sup> Kennard, *Petrine Redemption*, p405

<sup>199</sup> David Flusser (trans. Azzan Yadin), *Judaism of the Second Temple Period: Sages and Literature*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 2009), p98-99

<sup>200</sup> Dennis Olson, *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching- Numbers*, (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1996), p154; E.P. Sanders, 'Covenantal Nomism Revisited,' *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 16.1 (2009), p35

<sup>201</sup> Darian Lockett, *An Introduction to the Catholic Epistles*, T & T Clark Approaches to Biblical Studies, (London: T & T Clark International, 2012), p69

<sup>202</sup> Against this is Schertz who implausibly argues that the text does not teach sacrifice here, "Jesus is not, in this view, a substitute; he is not a sacrifice," but actually teaches non-violence. Mary H. Schertz, 'Radical trust in the just judge: the Easter texts of 1 Peter', *Word & World*. 24, 4, (Sept. 2004), p432

of Christians. Thus, as Van Rensburg argues, *the chief argument* in 1 Peter concerning atonement is that through God's redemption the Christians have achieved liberty.<sup>203</sup>

#### 4.1. Textual Analysis

1 Pet.3.12 draws from the well of Ps.34 to explain that righteous persons must still experience harm within this liberty (κακόω, 3.13) and suffering (πάσχω, 3.14).<sup>204</sup> Though the pain is presently with the Petrine community, it will soon achieve good ends, as did the suffering of Jesus.<sup>205</sup> The innocence of Jesus is stressed (he is δίκαιος, 3.18): this allows Peter to advocate that the community practice good works despite potential mistreatment, and encourages them to be good citizens in the meantime.<sup>206</sup> 1 Pet.2.24 reflects a belief that Jesus's death provides effective atonement for one's sins, a condition from which Jesus was free (1.19).<sup>207</sup> The community is now not free of sin, but "love" (4.8) and suffering (4.1) will aid them with this affliction.<sup>208</sup>

1 Pet.3.18 shares this theme, and in context arises from Peter's concern to comfort his readers through their suffering. Suffering is a major theme in many Second Temple writings, especially in the context of eschatology (Matt.24.21; Mk.13.19; 13.24; cf. Zech 11.5), but is also common

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<sup>203</sup> "Die gelowiges was voorheen as slawe die eiendom van een of ander magtige persoon, wat nie in die metafoor genoem word nie. God het hulle egter vrygekoop en nou is hulle vry!" Van Rensburg, *1 Petrus*, p607. For such suffering in the NT, see Mk. 9.12; Lk.9.22; Acts 3.18; Phil.1.29; 1 Thess.2.14

<sup>204</sup> See the discussion in Sue Woan, 'The Psalms in 1 Peter', in *The Psalms in the New Testament*, edited by Steve Moyise, Maarten J.J. Menken, (London: T & T Clark International, 2004), p221

<sup>205</sup> Similar logic is found in Gen.50.20

<sup>206</sup> As Williams has argued, these good works cannot realistically mean civic benefaction (contra Bruce W. Winter, 'The public Honouring of Christian benefactors: Romans 13:3-4 and 1 Peter 2:14-15', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 34, (Oct. 1988), p87-103, esp.94-95. Travis B. Williams, 'Benefiting the Community through Good Works? : the Economic Feasibility of Civic Benefaction in 1 Peter', *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism*, 9, (2013), p147-195. For Jesus's innocence elsewhere in the NT, see Matt.27.24; Lk.23.47.

<sup>207</sup> For a thorough analysis of this reference, see Craig A. Evans, 'Isaiah 53 in the Letters of Peter, Paul, Hebrews and John', in *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53: Encountering the Suffering Servant in Jewish and Christian Theology*, Edited by Darrell L. Bock, Mitch Glaser, (Kregel Publications, 2012), p157-159

<sup>208</sup> I concur with the majority of early interpreters that the love here refers not primarily to God's love, but the love the community shows to other people. Evidence of this tradition is found in David J. Downs, 'Love Covers a Multitude of Sins': Redemptive Almsgiving in I Peter 4:8 and its Early Christian Reception', *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 65, 2, (Oct. 2014), p489-514

for the Christian (Rom.8.17; 12.12; 2 Cor.1.6, 7; Eph.3.13; Phil.1.17; 1 Thess.2.2; Jas.5.10).<sup>209</sup> The righteous in *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah* are described as wearing a σάκκος and lamenting, (2.10),<sup>210</sup> and Solomon is described as benefiting from the pain the Lord inflicts on him (“ἔνυξέν με ὡς κέντρον ἵππου ἐπὶ τὴν γρηγόρησιν αὐτοῦ”, Ps.Sol. 16.4).<sup>211</sup> Less common is the idea that suffering is the result of one’s own sin (2 Macc.7.32).<sup>212</sup>

Why does Peter say “ὁ παθὼν σαρκὶ πέπαιται ἀμαρτίας” (4.1)? Does this refer to self-atonement, or might the meaning be similar to Rom. 6.7 (“ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας”)? I agree with Elliott that the verse points to God disciplining his children so as to live without sin (4.17; cf. Heb.12.7-11).<sup>213</sup> The logic here is that “learning comes from suffering”,<sup>214</sup> and this enables the Christians to refrain from the vices in 4.3. So this text does not refer to self-atonement.

## 4.2. Historical Background to Atonement Language

Historically, where did the idea of atonement in 1 Peter come from?<sup>215</sup> Some scholars have postulated a background in the Scapegoat ritual (cf. Heb.9.12, 13; 10.4; 11.37), others have suggested Passover as a probable background, and it has also been argued that Isaiah 53 is the model for atonement in 1 Peter.<sup>216</sup> There is some precedent in Wis.Sol. (2.19-22) “θανάτω

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<sup>209</sup> Indeed, sometimes suffering is desirable in the literature (T.Jud.25.4), Flusser, *Judaism*, p251

<sup>210</sup> Bailey, Hengel, *Effective*, p132; text from Rev. Dr. R. D. Anderson, *The Life of the Prophet Isaiah: The Martyrdom of Isaiah*, p5-6. Online Text, <http://anderson.modelcrafts.eu/pdfs/Greek/Life%20of%20Isaiah.pdf>, accessed, 9/3/2016

<sup>211</sup> Text from <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/sep/pss.htm> , accessed 9/3/2016.

<sup>212</sup> Seeley disagrees that this verse supposes links sin and suffering, David Seeley, *The Noble Death: Graeco-Roman Martyrology and Paul's Concept of Salvation*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), p87

<sup>213</sup> Elliott, *1 Peter*, p714-718

<sup>214</sup> Elliott, *Peter*, p717

<sup>215</sup> Discussed further, 4.1, 2,3

<sup>216</sup> For an excellent discussion of the relationship between Isaiah and 1 Peter: Robert John Dixon, *An Examination of the Allusions to Isaiah 52:13-53:12 in the New Testament*, (ProQuest, UMI Dissertation Publishing, 2008), p134



ἀσχήμονι καταδικάσωμεν αὐτόν.”<sup>217</sup> Psalm 23 (ἐὰν γὰρ καὶ πορευθῶ ἐν μέσῳ σκιᾶς θανάτου, Ps.22LXX) of course speaks of David’s humiliation and derision. Daniel 9.25 (LXX) uses *Christos* (being destroyed) and so may have further relevance.<sup>218</sup>

Also relevant here is the Judeo-Christian attitude to martyrdom (e.g. Jn.11.50).<sup>219</sup> Paul certainly did not fear death (Phil.1.21), but was in two minds about whether he *wanted* to die.<sup>220</sup> By the time of Tertullian, however, we read that “it’s quite true that it is our desire to suffer, but it is in the way that the soldier longs for war.”<sup>221</sup> Can we say that 1 Peter offers us a halfway point? I do not believe so- the teaching about suffering is too general to be confident of such a position. The text notes that Christians share in Christ’s suffering, particularly referencing a “fiery trial” (4.12). Nero is said to have burnt Christians (Tac. *Ann.* 15.38; Suet. *Nero* 16).<sup>222</sup> Might not Peter refer to this event?<sup>223</sup> If this is so, it may be that the letter was designed to appear to have come from

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<sup>217</sup> Though this probably draws from Isaiah 53, cf. Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 40-66: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, The New American Commentary, (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2009), p470

<sup>218</sup> Peter clearly believes Jesus to be the Christ, cf. 1.1, 2, 3, 7, 11, 13, 19; 2.5, 18, 21; 3.15, 16, 18, 21; 4.1, 11, 13, 14; 5.1, 10, 14.

<sup>219</sup> “In the first two centuries C.E. there was a living pagan tradition of self-sacrifice for a cause, a preparedness if necessary to defy an unjust ruler, that existed alongside the developing Christian concept of martyrdom inherited from Judaism” W.H.C. Frend, ‘Martyrdom and Political Oppression’, in *The Early Christian World*, vol. 2, ed. Philip Esler (2000), p 818

<sup>220</sup> Death is important for Paul. Paul believed that in some kind of sense, the Christian has died already (Rom.6.7, 8; 7.4; 1 Cor. 15. 31; Gal.2.19 cf. Col. 2.20, 3.3; 2 Tim.2.11).

<sup>221</sup> Tert. *Apology*, 50.1, Tertullian, *Apology*, 50.12-14, trans. By Rev. S. Thellwall, [http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/anf03-05.htm#P478\\_246152](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/anf03-05.htm#P478_246152) . Verified 9/1/ 2016

<sup>222</sup> Discussed in detail in John Granger Cook, *Roman Attitudes Toward the Christians: From Claudius to Hadrian*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010),p42

<sup>223</sup> For the view that the letter is to be read as two letters for different congregations C.F.D. Moule, ‘Nature and purpose of 1 Peter’, *New Testament Studies*. 3, 1, (Nov. 1956): 1-11; for the view that the text was written during the reign of Nero, B. Reicke, *The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude* (“The Anchor Bible”, No. 37; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1964); Aída Besançon Spencer, ‘Peter’s Pedagogical Method in 1 Peter 3:6’, *Bulletin for Biblical Research*. 10, 1, (2000), p110

this period in time where Peter is believed to have died (1 Clem.5.1-7).<sup>224</sup> Church tradition does hold that Peter was killed under Nero (Tert. *Scorpiace* 15), and the author does write as though he is a Christian in Rome (5.13).<sup>225</sup> The trouble with this view is that the Christians in Rome were burnt, and Peter writes to Christians in Asia Minor. So, I take the fire to be eschatological in the same sense as Mal.3.2-3LXX (διότι αὐτός εισπορεύεται ὡς πῦρ χωνευτηρίου), or Did.16.5. (πύρωσιν τῆς δοκιμασίας).<sup>226</sup>

Let's now examine further some of the historical backgrounds scholars have advanced as to Peter's theory of atonement.

### 4.3 THE SCAPEGOAT RITUAL

Some scholars see a reference in 1 Peter to the Scapegoat ritual (Lev.17.1-9; *De Plantatione* 14.61 Cf. Heb.10.4; Shebuoth 1.6). Schelkle is a prominent advocate of this idea, but the absence of any explicit reference to a goat in 1 Peter has left many deeming this to be improbable.<sup>227</sup> Deissmann achieved a plausible reference by claiming that Jesus takes away sins (as the Goat took the Israelite's sins away) up to the cross, rather than bearing them on it.<sup>228</sup> But the ἐπὶ (2.24) here should be translated not "up to", but "on" or "upon" (so NRSV, ESV), as this makes Christ the fulfilment of the terms of Isa.53, which is more likely to be Peter's aim. Some less confidently

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<sup>224</sup> For a precise conclusion as to the year of Peter's death ("A.D. 68"), see Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Peter and Jude*, (Ada, MI: Baker Book House, 1987), p217

<sup>225</sup> For Peter's death, see Markus Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter in Ancient Reception and Modern Debate*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament, (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), p114-130.

<sup>226</sup> Aaron Milavec, 'The Saving Efficacy of the Burning Process in Did. 16.5', in *The Didache in Context: Essays on Its Text, History, and Transmission*, (ed. Clayton N. Jefford) (Leiden: Brill, 1995), p147

<sup>227</sup> K.H. Schelkle, *Die Petrusbriefe, der Judasbrief* (Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 13/2; Freiburg, Basel, Vienna, 1961); against this is L. Goppelt, *Der Erste Petrusbrief* (edited by Ferdinand Hahn; Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament 12/1; Göttingen, 1978), p210n.71

<sup>228</sup> G.A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies: Contributions Chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions to the History of the Language, the Literature, and the Religion of Hellenistic Judaism and Primitive Christianity*, (Translated by A. Grieve) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), p89

find a link: “1 Pet 2:24 *may* have behind it the language of the scapegoat ritual”,<sup>229</sup> “...generally, the thought resembles certain aspects of the scapegoat ritual...”<sup>230</sup> I tend to agree: the Scapegoat has probably not directly influenced the thought Peter here, but it may be indirect in some more general cultural sense, perhaps having influenced the author of Deutero-Isaiah.

#### 4.4 THE PASSOVER

Next, other scholars locate a reference in 1 Peter (1.18-19) to the Passover ritual (Jub.49; Jos.Ant.3.10.5; 1 Esdr. 7.10-15).<sup>231</sup> F.L. Cross has argued that the phrase “lamb without blemish (Ex.12.5)” refers to the Passover.<sup>232</sup> Possible similar references can be alleged in 1 Cor.5.7 Rev.5.6, T.Benj.38 (Arm.), and especially the portrayal of Jesus in John 19.<sup>233</sup> Elliott has suggested that the “...Christological tradition...” of Christ as “our Passover Lamb” is present in Peter (and references 1.19a).<sup>234</sup> However, the Passover is not explicated,<sup>235</sup> the text is about suffering, and therefore *πάσχω* is a natural word to choose.<sup>236</sup> Indeed, this sort of language is found all over the NT (Matt. 16.21; Acts 1.3 etc.), as well as in 1 Pet.4.12-5.11.

For our purposes, then, the Passover is apparently not *directly* relevant to Peter’s understanding of atonement, most significantly because the Paschal Lamb is not typically thought to expiate for sins.<sup>237</sup> John’s gospel does indeed give the Lamb that function, but it is questionable whether John influenced 1 Peter, or whether this idea was already common to the geographical context

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<sup>229</sup>N.H. Young, *The impact of the Jewish Day of Atonement upon the thought of the New Testament* (Doctoral Dissertation). Manchester, England: University of Manchester Dissertations (1973), p356

<sup>230</sup> Elliott, Peter, p532

<sup>231</sup> Richard E. DeMaris, *The New Testament in Its Ritual World*, (NY: Routledge, 2008), p96

<sup>232</sup> F.L. Cross, *1 Peter: a Paschal Liturgy*, (London: Mowbray, 1954)

<sup>233</sup> Stanley E. Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus: In Pursuit of the Johannine Voice*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2015), p199-200

<sup>234</sup> Elliott, 1 Peter, p373

<sup>235</sup> Argument from T.C.G Thornton, “I Peter, A Paschal Liturgy?” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 12.1 (1961), p16

<sup>236</sup> Thornton, *Paschal*, p17

<sup>237</sup> Ben Ezra, *Yom Kippur*, p177

in general. Later writers, such as Melito of Sardis (*Peri Pascha*) may have taken up 1 Peter for his Paschal Homily, but the idea is not found in 1 Peter.<sup>238</sup>

## 4.5 ISAIAH 53

A simpler solution appears to be that Peter's understanding of atonement here derives from Isaiah 53, which Peter seems to reflect upon, and which probably was also understood of in (*potential*) Pre-Christian writings as referring to the atoning work of an individual (Test.Benj.3.8; Sir. 29.15; 4 Macc.6.28; 17.21).<sup>239</sup> Indeed, Boyarin has argued that "we now know that many Jewish authorities, maybe even most, until nearly the modern period have read Isaiah 53 as being about the Messiah; until the last few centuries, the allegorical reading was a minority one."<sup>240</sup> Some are less convinced,<sup>241</sup> but for our purposes it is enough to demonstrate that a sizable percentage of Jews took the passage to be Messianic, as Targum Jonathan, Sanhedrin 98b, and Ruth Rabbah allude to.<sup>242</sup> Whatever the case, the claim of Biggs (about Jesus) that "the pre-existence of the Messiah as the lamb of sacrifice in the foreknowledge of God is new to the Messianic idea" now seems unlikely.<sup>243</sup> Moreover, we know that roughly contemporary texts teach the idea of vicarious

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<sup>238</sup> Elliott, Peter, p145; Lutz Doering, 'You are a Chosen Stock...': the use of Israel Epithets for the Addressees in First Peter', in *Jewish and Christian Communal Identities in the Roman World*, (edited Yair Furstenberg) (Leiden: Brill, 2016), p273n.138

<sup>239</sup> Martin Hengel, Daniel P. Bailey, 'The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period', in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher (eds), (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 2004), p138.

<sup>240</sup> Daniel Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels: the Story of the Jewish Christ*, (New York: The New Press, 2012), p152; Similarly, "the prophecy in Isaiah 53 looks exclusively to a future figure" emphasis original. W.E. Glenny, *The Hermeneutics of the use of the Old Testament in 1 Peter*, (PhD Diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1987), p128

<sup>241</sup> Douglas W. Kennard, *Messiah Jesus: Christology in His Day and Ours*, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2008), p302

<sup>242</sup> Argument from Michael L. Brown, 'Jewish Interpretations of Isaiah 53', in *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53: Encountering the Suffering Servant in Jewish and Christian Theology*, Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser (eds.), (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2012), p62

<sup>243</sup> Charles Augustus Briggs, *The Messiah of the Apostles* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), p48

atonement in general (1QS 5.6; 4 Macc.6.28; 17.21). Applying this idea to the Messiah from here would have been a close step.

So it is conceivable, then, that Peter predominantly refers to Isaiah 53 here “in a non-sequential manner”,<sup>244</sup> as many scholars have argued,<sup>245</sup> but why should we judge it probable? Peter alludes to Isaiah 53 (2.22/53.9; 2.23/53.6; 1.21/52.13)<sup>246</sup> and quotes directly from the LXX as follows: Isa. 53.9b is quoted in 2.22, 2.23b is a reference to 53.24 and 53.5 is quoted in 2.24 (trans. L.C.L. Brenton).<sup>247</sup> Therefore, Isaiah 53 provides the main source for Peter’s understanding of atonement. How and why does Peter use this text? The idea of a righteous sufferer is found in Jewish tradition (Ps.18.21)<sup>248</sup>. The notion that Jesus died for “us”, as a means of healing us, is found in early Christian tradition (1.Cor.15.3-5). Thus, early Christians began to refer to Isa.53 widely (Matt.8.17, Rom.15.21; Jn.12.38; Rom.10.16; Acts 8.32; Lk.2.37).<sup>249</sup> The sacrifice of Jesus was then thought to be sufficient to cleanse the Christians of their sin.

It is possible that Isaiah 53 did not *originally* predict a Messiah. Is Peter, then, just appropriating the words of Isaiah “with no intention of referring to the original literary or historical contexts?”<sup>250</sup> Why would Peter have identified Jesus with the suffering servant, if Jesus made no such claim? Historically, the attribution of Jesus’s death as atoning is widespread in the earlier literature (1 Cor. 15.3; Mk.10.45), and Peter’s claim is consistent with it, so I judge it probable to have come

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<sup>244</sup> Sharon Clark Pearson, *The Christological and Rhetorical Properties of 1 Peter*, (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), p134

<sup>245</sup> Joel B. Green, *1 Peter*, p85

<sup>246</sup> Elliott, *1 Peter*, 12-14

<sup>247</sup> L.C.L Brenton, *Septuagint Version of the Old Testament with English Version*, Delphi Classics; 1 edition (May 1, 2016)

<sup>248</sup> For further, Edward Schillebeeckx, ‘The Divine Plan of Salvation: Salvation History Scheme’, in *The Collected Works of Edward Schillebeeckx: Volume 6: Jesus: An Experiment* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2014), p258

<sup>249</sup> Michael J. Wilkins, ‘Isaiah 53 and the Message of Salvation in the Gospels’, in *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53: Encountering the Suffering Servant in Jewish and Christian Theology* (Darrell Bock, Mitch Glaser eds.) (Kregel Academic, 2012), p113

<sup>250</sup> Quote from Eric James Gréaux, ‘The Lord delivers us: an examination of the function of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter’, *Review & Expositor*. 106, 4, (2009), p607, who argues that Peter’s use of the HB does fit the theme that the original author is trying to convey.

from someone very early within the tradition.<sup>251</sup> During the centuries preceding the letter we see speculation about the suffering of the righteous, the rise of respecting martyrs,<sup>252</sup> and then later detailed comments about the Messiah (2 Bar.29.3-8).<sup>253</sup> We can imagine how these elements melded together to eventually form the teaching about Jesus in 1 Peter. The early Christians drew on these elements in their portrait of Jesus after his crucifixion, and Peter is in line with this tendency. So, the covenant relationship with God requires an atonement, which is provided in Peter's estimation by the death of Jesus. Are there any actions the community themselves must take in order to stay in relationship with God?

## 5. OBEDIENCE IN 1 PETER

*"The Terms of the Covenant... require obedience" – E.P. Sanders<sup>254</sup>*

### 5.1. Background to Obedience Language

Similarly covenantal is the notion of obedience.<sup>255</sup> Peter speaks regularly about obedience (1.2, 14, 22; cf. Romans 5.19; 2 Cor.7.15, 19; 2 Cor.10.5; Gal.5.7; Eph.6.1, 6.5; Col.3.20; 2 Thess.1.8; 3.14; Heb.5.9; 13.17; 1 Jn.2.3; 3.22; 3.24; 5.2,3). We will discuss more than mere occurrences of ὑπακοή: Peter has more to say beyond that, but that will be our starting point. Obedience is often used in the NT of Christians submitting to correct behavior and thoughts (2 Cor.10.5),

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<sup>251</sup> Green has even claimed that 1 Pet.2.23 "makes passing references to Jesus' trial before Pilate..." Joel B. Green, *The Death of Jesus: Tradition and Interpretation in the Passion Narrative*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), p161

<sup>252</sup> J. W. Van Henten, *The Maccabean Martyrs as Saviours of the Jewish People: A Study of 2 and 4 Maccabees*, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, (Leiden: Brill, 1997), p4

<sup>253</sup> Andrew Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation: Jewish Messianic and Visionary Traditions and New Testament Christology*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, (Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2007), p409

<sup>254</sup> E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, p297

<sup>255</sup> 'I treat "obedient to Christ" and "sprinkled with his blood" as one expression because they recall a single act of covenant making" : Fred B. Craddock, *First and Second Peter and Jude*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), p21

and can be used of Jesus (Heb.5.8).<sup>256</sup> In contemporary texts, the term often has the idea of fulfilling one's obligation to the law (4 Macc.5.16; 9.2; 15.9).<sup>257</sup> One purpose of Peter's letter is "to provide a sense of identity that is sufficient to encourage them to live according to their distinctive values and teachings (e.g. monotheism) despite the social pressures they face as a result of not participating in some of the activities of those around them".<sup>258</sup> So, the suffering they receive should not dissuade them from moral rectitude. Obedience is an integral part of the covenant (Deut.4.1), and at Qumran the wicked were described as those that rebel against it (1QH 12.34-7).<sup>259</sup> The term, then, describes God's people's relational responsibilities, as John Barton argues "Yahweh has *legitimate* claims on Israel's obedience because of the contract he has made with them."<sup>260</sup> Indeed, "...the covenant idea is a kind of *rationalization* of an obedience ethic."<sup>261</sup>

## 5.2. Textual Analysis

The addressees in 1 Peter are to be obedient to Jesus (1.2),<sup>262</sup> they are to turn from former desires (Rom. 1.24; Gal.5.24; Eph.2.3; 2 Tim.3.6; Tit.3.3; 1 Pet.4.2; 4.3; 2 Pet.2.18 ) to obedience (1.14), and they are to be obedient to truth (1.22). So, the term "obedience" as Page concludes,

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<sup>256</sup> Agnew has argued something similar to this in his translation of 1.2c ("because of the obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ"), Francis H. Agnew, '1 Peter 1:2—An Alternative Translation,' *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 45.1 (1983), p69-70

<sup>257</sup> Heikki Raisanen, *Paul and the Law (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2010), p71-71; for a discussion concerning the difficulties of precisely dating 4 Macc., see Jarvis J. Williams, *Maccabean Martyr Traditions in Paul's Theology of Atonement: Did Martyr Theology Shape Paul's Conception of Jesus' Death?*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), pp.29 -33

<sup>258</sup> Keir E. Hammer, *Disambiguating Rebirth: A Socio-Rhetorical Exploration of Rebirth Language in 1 Peter*, (PhD Dissertation, University of Toronto, 2011), p261

<sup>259</sup> Dunn, *New Perspective*, p73

<sup>260</sup> John Barton, *Ethics in Ancient Israel*, (Oxford University Press, 2014), p136. Emphasis original.

<sup>261</sup> Barton, *Ethics*, p135. Emphasis original.

<sup>262</sup> For a contrary translation, "because of the obedience...", see Elliott, *Peter*, p319. I have followed the NRSV and the ESV, but the point is not essential for this argument.

refers to “the response of human beings to the gospel”.<sup>263</sup> What is Peter’s understanding of the works a Christian must perform?

According to Sanders’s Covenantal Nomism, obedience is a response to God’s grace- “Israel’s grateful response to God’s gracious election was to live faithfully according to the covenant’s commands.”<sup>264</sup> I agree with some commentators that this is not a model that is effective for *all* Judaism in the period contemporary to 1 Peter.<sup>265</sup> Regardless, can we see this sort of pattern evinced in 1 Peter? Once we supplement the command to have faith in Jesus, I argue that this is a mostly sufficient model for evaluating salvation in the letter. Peter stresses the sovereignty of God over their rebirth (1.3)<sup>266</sup>, calls for them to live obedient lives (1.14), and teaches that judgement will be through works (1.17). So we see a mixture of emphasis on mercy and works, which is predicated on the gracious rebirth one receives from God.

Grudem has argued that the judgement in 1.17 is not eschatological, but rather God’s present judgment on man, disciplining Christians.<sup>267</sup> Might this be another text in 1 Peter teaching present obedience? The alternative to this option could perhaps be that God judges a person (presently), and then *sentences* them to punishment on the last day, or it just could be that the context is purely eschatological. The only other use of κρίνοντα in the NT, however, reads as follows: “ὁ ἀθετῶν ἐμὲ καὶ μὴ λαμβάνων τὰ ῥήματά μου ἔχει τὸν κρίνοντα αὐτόν· ὁ λόγος ὃν ἐλάλησα, ἐκεῖνος κρινεῖ αὐτόν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.” (Jn.12.48). The NRSV translates the text as ... “the one who rejects me and does not receive my word has a judge; on the last day the

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<sup>263</sup> Sydney H.T. Page, ‘Obedience and Blood-Sprinkling In 1 Peter 1:2’, *The Westminster Theological Journal* 72.2 (2010), p294

<sup>264</sup> Paula Fredriksen, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, the Ten Commandments, and Pagan “Justification by Faith”, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133, no. 4 (2014):p802n.3

<sup>265</sup> This seems to be the dominant criticism in the work of *Justification and Variegated Nomism: The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament. 2. Reihe. 140) (ed. D.A. Carson, Peter O’Brien, Mark A. Seifrid) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001)

<sup>266</sup> We can see similar language in the NT- John 3; Tit. 3.5.

<sup>267</sup> Wayne Grudem, *The First Epistle of Peter*, p81; against this, see David M. Hay, ‘Paul’s Indifference to Authority’, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 88, No. 1 (Mar., 1969), p41n.23



word that I have spoken will serve as judge...”<sup>268</sup> Here it is clearly apparent that an eschatological focus is in mind.<sup>269</sup> Peter does not use judgment language in this instance to refer to present discipline by God- the language is actually eschatological. How *does* he talk about present obedience?

1 Pet.1.14 continues the family metaphor found elsewhere in the letter (1.3; 1.14; 2.17), and advocates a revolution from ignorance to obedience (1.14). This ignorance results in ἐπιθυμία (1.14; 2.11; 4.2,3), a term used frequently to describe sinful longings (Rom.1.24; 6.12; 7.7; Gal.5.16; Eph.2.3; Col.3.5; 1 Thess.4.5; 1 Tim.6.9; Tit.2.12; Jas.1.14; 1 John 2.16, 17; Jud.1.16,18; Rev.18.14; Sir.5.2). It is typically presented as the opposite of self-control (4 Macc.1.32). If one supposes Peter to have a dualistic understanding of man (flesh and soul, argued below) then we might understand this concept more easily. The passions are caused by the flesh (σαρκικός) which is contrasted with one’s soul (ψυχή, 2.11). The idea that the cause of some sin is ignorance is found in other NT writings (the death of Jesus, Acts 3.17; the time before Jesus, Acts 17.30), but the closest parallel for our purposes is probably Eph.4.18, whereby

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<sup>268</sup> *New Revised Standard Version Bible*, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>269</sup> How similar should we say this is to 1 Peter 1.17? We keep in mind that Grudem’s argument is that this text functions like Hebrews 12.5f, that the judgment is something akin to discipline. However, the noun in Hebrews 12 is παιδεία, which literally means discipline, or correction and is absent from our text. Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (3rd ed., p. 748). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Next, Grudem suggests Matthew 6.12 as a parallel passage. Grudem, Peter, p81. This seems too farfetched. Grudem also questions why our author would mention “fear” if our text concerned future judgement, as Christians have no need to fear judgement. But, Paul admonishes Christians to continue to “work out their salvation with fear and trembling”, implying the necessity of reverential fear (Philippians 2.12), coupled with the fact that salvation is not yet guaranteed. I personally do not see an incoherence in having a reverential fear for the one who is thought to judge you in the future according to your deeds (and perhaps sentences you according to them).

the Gentiles' alienation is put down to their ignorance.<sup>270</sup> This leaves our author comfortably within the thought-world of Second Temple Judaism: "in Jewish thought... ignorance, sin and unbelief are closely linked (*T Gad* 5.7; 1QH 1.22; 4.7; *Wisd.* 14.22; 1 Th. 4.5) and ignorance is also linked to idolatry (Philo, *Decal* 8; *Spec Leg* 1.15)."<sup>271</sup> A fundamental part of the covenant the Christians have with God is obedience, "...like the Sinai Covenant, the author's thought articulates the demand inherent in the declaration of salvation."<sup>272</sup> Obedience in 1 Peter, therefore, comes from knowledge, and is a crucial part of God's covenant.

### 5.3 ETHICS

Now, I ask more specifically, what sort of ethical life did Peter expect his readers to live? Historically, how were these principles decided? Is it merely the Torah, with certain elements added or deleted (circumcision perhaps? Cf. *Gal.* 5.1; cf. *Rom.* 2.28; 1 *Cor.* 7.18; *Eph.* 2.11; *Phil.* 3.3)?<sup>273</sup> Or, might it have instead been that a new concoction of demands were created to meet the needs of the nascent Christianity community (possibly drawn from the strictures of the Greco-Roman world, or a new law instantiated in the Messianic era cf. 11QT<sup>Temple</sup>)?<sup>274</sup> This community does not appear to recognize, being "born in" to the group as many other Jews did (contrast 1 *Cor.* 7.14). Rather, one has to practice good conduct.<sup>275</sup>

Feldmeier has contended that the Petrine community had moved on from the debates about law prevalent in earlier years.<sup>276</sup> This is arguably an *argumentum ex silentio*, but certainly makes

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<sup>270</sup> Rudolf Bultmann, 'ἄγνοια', in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume*, Edited by Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), p18

<sup>271</sup> Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, ICC, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), p420

<sup>272</sup> Brooks, *Clue*, p2

<sup>273</sup> W.C. Van Unnik, 'Christianity According to 1 Peter', *Expository Times* 68 (1956), p83

<sup>274</sup> Feldmeier believes "the question of the law, and of the mission to the gentiles (appear to) no longer play a role here..." Feldmeier, *Peter*, p35

<sup>275</sup> Argument, from David G. Horrell, 'Ethnicisation, Marriage and Early Christian Identity: Critical Reflections on 1 Corinthians 7, 1 Peter 3 and Modern New Testament Scholarship', *New Testament Studies*, (Cambridge University Press, 2016), p457

<sup>276</sup> Reinhard Feldmeier, *Peter*, p35

some sense. In the earlier letters of Paul we observe controversies over circumcision and diet. Perhaps because Peter's addressees were Gentiles living in a later period this discussion was deemed not to be relevant? Against this, we note that these controversies continued long after 1 Peter, and we see debates in Paul's churches that do not concern Jewish "ethnic markers", such as the resurrection (1 Cor.15.13; cf. 2 Tim.2.18). The lack of specific attention to named controversies may simply be due to the catholic nature of the letter, and it may simply have also been that most of the communities had no questions about circumcision. Regardless, it would be plausible that many non-Jewish Christian communities in the first century did not practice circumcision or keep Kosher, and he may have addressed this in other letters. The main focus of Peter's argument here is not internal disputes within the community, but potential disputes with outsiders.<sup>277</sup> Thus, we are left agnostic as to the question of Peter's *precise* ethics, but we can quite profitably rule out false answers. At the very least, it should be clear that our author does not intentionally set out to contradict the Torah. He writes against idolatry (4.3/ Ex.20.4), murder, and theft (4.15/ Ex.13, 15), and of the necessity of atonement (1 Pet.3.18/Lev.16), and faith in God (1 Peter 1.5/Deut.32.51). Here Peter is in line with many Second Temple texts.<sup>278</sup>

The instruction not to be meddlesome ("mischief-maker", RSV; "sich in fremde Dinge mischt", Schlacter)<sup>279</sup> is more mysterious (cf. Prov.26.17; Sir.3.23). The noun ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος is rare, though found also in Pseudo-Dionysius,<sup>280</sup> and has "...the sense of meddling in another person's affairs."<sup>281</sup> Calvin suggested the term refers to coveting,<sup>282</sup> Brown postulated that "the Greco-Roman idea of meddling or interfering in other people's affairs was an activity that caused serious

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<sup>277</sup> Paul A. Holloway, *Coping with Prejudice: 1 Peter in Social-Psychological Perspective*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), p16

<sup>278</sup> The instruction to be sober-minded is common in NT writings (2 Tim. 4.5; 1 Thess.5.6; 1 Pet.4.7; 1 Pet.5.8).

<sup>279</sup> Bibeltext der Schlacter Copyright © 2000 Genfer Bibelgesellschaft

<sup>280</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita. *De Coelesti Hierarchia, De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia, De Mystica Theologia, Epistulae* (edited by Günter Heil, Adolf M. Ritter), (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2012), p178

<sup>281</sup> Greg Forbes, *1 Peter*, p158

<sup>282</sup> John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, Translated and edited by the Rev. John Owen, (Edinburgh, 1855), p137

opposition and may have even evoked revolutionary overtones”.<sup>283</sup> This would add support to the contention, maintained by some (below, 5.2, 5.3), that Peter’s social ideas concerning women and slaves were designed to appease the surrounding dominant Greco-Roman culture.

Nevertheless, assuming Peter’s priority in writing was only, or mostly, to ensure adherence to Greek or Roman law, the warnings against idolatry and drinking make little sense.<sup>284</sup> If Feldmeier is right, and these Christians have foregone circumcision and Kosher restrictions, the community may be living in an ideal similar, though not identical, to that advanced by James in Acts 15.19-21. In this instance, the gentiles were advised abstention from idolatry, sexual immorality, and “from what has been strangled, and from blood.” This could provide a good parallel to our text. This is not to intimate that Peter’s ethical instructions *only* come from an effort to fulfill the requirements of the Torah- Peter’s instruction to “honor the emperor” (2.17, cf. 2.13, 14; Rom.13.1) is almost certainly designed to keep the peace as religious minorities in a difficult situation: “he was helping them find a way to survive within the system...”.<sup>285</sup> The prevailing political structure is to be respected.

Having said that, it is crucial to keep the argument in proper perspective. The *only* religious text Peter teaches from, the only text Peter claims that Christians are a fulfilment of, and advises readers to emulate characters from, is the Hebrew Bible, and from nothing else.<sup>286</sup> This is his ethical compass. The instruction to honor the emperor (“sans favoriser le culte”)<sup>287</sup>, for example,

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<sup>283</sup> Jeannine K. Brown J., ‘Just a Busybody? A Look at the Greco-Roman Topos of Meddling for Defining Hebrew in 1 Peter 4:15’, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 125.3 (2006), p549

<sup>284</sup> These are, rather, supposed to represent “Gentile behavior” as Richard says. Earl J. Richard, ‘Honorable conduct among the Gentiles: a Study of the Social Thought of 1 Peter’, *Word & World*. 24, 4, (Sept. 2004), p419

<sup>285</sup> Quote from Jennifer G. Bird, *Abuse, Power and Fearful Obedience: Reconsidering 1 Peter's Commands to Wives*, LNTS, (T & T Clark International, 2011), p83; Edgar Johnson Goodspeed, *New Chapters in New Testament Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937) argues that Peter aims to lessen anti-imperial sentiment. Van Unnik argued that Peter’s thought here is independent of Paul’s, and actually comes from “Greek popular philosophy” (p201), W.C. Van Unnik, ‘Classical parallel to 1 Peter 2:14 and 20’, *New Testament Studies*. 2, 3, (Feb. 1956): 198-202

<sup>286</sup> For the idea that Peter quotes from Jesus see chapter eight.

<sup>287</sup> S. Légasse, *La Soumission aux Autorités d'après 1 Pierre 2.13-17: Version Spécifique d'une Parénèse Traditionnelle*, *New Testament Studies* / Volume 34 / Issue 03 / July 1988, p392; calling the emperor a created being

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seems more to arise out of a willingness for stability and peace: to some extent it's true that "l'intérêt de la communauté guide la parénèse."<sup>288</sup> This may be because Christianity was a new and therefore suspicious sect, and it may additionally have been regarded as "illegal", as has been suggested by Sleeper.<sup>289</sup>

The early Christian community believed the eschaton was rapidly approaching (1 Pet.4.7), and likely did not feel the urge to promulgate a complete legal system, or perhaps believed that the Torah and the teachings of Jesus were all that they required. One thing we can be confident of, as Vanni has argued, is that Peter did not feel the urge to overthrow the present imperial system.<sup>290</sup> Peter is a figure closer to a Seneca than a Cicero in this respect. At this point I do not advocate something like Schweitzer's interim ethic,<sup>291</sup> rather, I lean to Fredrickson's idea that gentiles were advised to remain gentiles, even into the eschaton.<sup>292</sup> The idea of their righteous life, then, still seems to have been mainly inspired from the Torah, and the inclusion of the gentiles into Israel is a part of this argument. From Peter's perspective, this is all compatible with obedience to Rome.

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is, as Williams has argued, a subtle critique aimed at distinguishing him from God, Travis B. Williams, 'The Divinity and Humanity of Caesar in 1Peter 2,3: Early Christian Resistance to the Emperor and his Cult', *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Alteren Kirche*, 105, 1, (2014), p145

<sup>288</sup> S. Légasse, *La Soumission*, p388; for the view that the Christology of Christianity was subversive here, David Horrell and Wei Hsien Wan, Christology, Eschatology and the Politics of Time in 1 Peter, *Journal for the Study of New Testament* 38, (2016), p272

<sup>289</sup>C. Freeman Sleeper, *Political Responsibility According to I Peter*, *Novum Testamentum*, Vol. 10, Fasc. 4 (Oct., 1968), p284

<sup>290</sup> "La vittoria spetterà ai cristiani, ma non si attuerà schiacciando i loro antagonisti attuali."- Ugo Vanni, 'La Promozione del Regno come Responsabilità Sacerdotale dei Cristiani Secondo l'Apocalisse e la Prima Lettera di Pietro', *Gregorianum*, Vol. 68, No. 1/2 (1987),p55; also "...at no point is it the goal of 1 Peter to overthrow the social system of the first-century world." Jeannine K. Brown, 'Silent Wives, Verbal Believers: Ethical Considerations in 1 Peter 3:1-6 and its Context', *Word & World* Volume 24, Number 4, (Fall 2004), p402

<sup>291</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *Geschichte de Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (München und Hamburg: Siebenstern Taschenbuch, 1966), 2:628

<sup>292</sup> Paula Fredriksen, Judaism, the Circumcision of Gentiles, and Apocalyptic Hope: Another Look at Galatians 1 and 2', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 42 (1991)

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Why did Peter propose they lived this sort of life: was it for reward, was it from fear of punishment, or did it come from somewhere else? <sup>293</sup> The primary motivator Peter offers his readers is that of reward. So, the readers are instructed to bless those who do evil to them “ἵνα εὐλογίαν κληρονομήσητε” (3.9), they are to endure sufferings to receive the spirit of δόξα (4.14), and their sufferings will result in ageless glory in Christ (5.10).

In opposition to this view is Van Unnik who claims that “... it is nowhere stated that good works count as righteousness with God, that they bring atonement or special reward.”<sup>294</sup> Rather, he argues, the text advocates that “doing of good works as an expression of Christian holiness follows from God's calling (ii. 21; iii. 9), because the Lord himself is holy (i. 16; ii. 5, 9).”<sup>295</sup> This is all correct, but it is incomplete. Verse 1.16 is immediately followed by the teaching of judgement according to works (1.17), and 2.21 flows to 2.24 whereby following Jesus results in the forgiveness of one's sins. So, Piper is correct to say that Van Unnik has denied too much.<sup>296</sup> As discussed above, judgement is often according to works which leads to reward in Second Temple Judaism (Ps.61.13 LXX), and 1 Peter is no exception.<sup>297</sup> This includes present blessings: Grudem argues that the blessing of 3.9 is present rather than eschatological.<sup>298</sup> This is a fair point, and Peter soon qualifies the statement with “ἡμέρας ἀγαθὰς”, which does not seem eschatological, but either way the motivation for the good deeds in the covenant is still reward, in this life or at the eschaton.

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<sup>293</sup> “The good are made better in their lifetime by the hope of a reward after death, and the passions of the wicked are restrained by the fear that, even though they escape detection while alive, they will undergo never-ending punishment after their decease” Josephus, *J.W.* 2.1527

<sup>294</sup> W. C. Van Unnik (1954), ‘The Teaching of Good Works in I Peter’, *New Testament Studies*, 1, (1954), p108

<sup>295</sup> Van Unnik, *Works*, p108

<sup>296</sup> Piper, *Hope as the Motivation of Love: 1 Peter 3.9-12*

<sup>297</sup> Kyoung-Shik Kim, *God will Judge Each One According to Works: Judgement According to Works and Psalm 62 in Early Judaism and the New Testament*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), p212; Travis B. Williams, *Good Works in 1 Peter: Negotiating Social Conflict and Christian Identity in the Greco-Roman World*, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), p252

<sup>298</sup> Grudem, *Peter*, p148

## 5.4 WIVES

*Of the world's major religions, only Buddhism made a complete break with tradition at its birth: Christianity made no such claim. It could meet the traditionalist culture of pagan contemporaries on equal terms- Robin Lane Fox<sup>299</sup>*

Peter also has instructions for women and slaves, a grouping (with the addition of children) commonly found in Jewish texts (Pseu.Phoc. 175-227; Col.3.18-4.1; Eph.5.22-6.9; cf. M.Ber.7.2; *Hilkhoth Qeri' at Shema'*, 4,1, Orig. Contra Cels. 3.59).<sup>300</sup> The directives given to wives in 1 Peter 3.1 (and 3.3, cf. 1 Tim.2.9) have importance for saving their husbands (cf. 1 Cor.7.16; 2.5).<sup>301</sup> Some have argued the language is subversive,<sup>302</sup> and some have argued that it is not.<sup>303</sup> Jobes has a middle view on the Balch-Elliott debate, noting that they both “reduce the complexity” of the letter.<sup>304</sup> Let's discuss some historical background to this text.

## 5.5. To What Extent Were Women Silenced in the Ancient World?

Women seem to have been numerous among the early Christians,<sup>305</sup> despite the fact that within the system “the patriarchal order of marriage was to be preserved,”<sup>306</sup> (cf. Eph.5:22; Col.3:18; Tit

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<sup>299</sup> Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans & Christians* (New York: HarperCollins, 1986), p331

<sup>300</sup> Abraham Melamed, Maimonides on Women: Formless Matter or Potential Prophet, in *Perspectives on Jewish Thought and Mysticism*, (ed. Alfred L. Ivry, Elliot R. Wolfson, Allan Arkush) (Amsterdam, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1998), p120

<sup>301</sup> Argument from Christoph Stenschke, ‘Married Women and the Spread of Early Christianity’, *Neotestamentica*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (2009), p175

<sup>302</sup> Elliott, *Peter*, p84. See also Warren Carter, ‘The First Letter of Peter. (Book review)’, *Interpretation*, (Jan, 2011), Vol.65(1), p99

<sup>303</sup> David L. Balch, *Let Wives be Submissive: the Domestic Code in 1 Peter* (Chico, CA. Scholars Press, Society of Biblical Literature, 1981)

<sup>304</sup> Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, (Baker Academic, 2005), p4; see also Steven Richard Bechtler, *Following in His Steps: Suffering, Community, and Christology in 1 Peter*, (Atlanta, Scholars Press), 1998

<sup>305</sup> Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History*, (Princeton University Press, 1996), p95

<sup>306</sup> Quote from Averil Cameron, ‘Neither Male nor Female’, *Greece & Rome* / Volume 27 / Issue 01 / April 1980, p64

2:5). In 1 Peter, women are advised to witness to their husbands without a word (3.1). Why might this be? It may be that women's testimony in the ancient world was not to be trusted (Ps.Phi.Lab. 9.10; 42.1-5; Lev. Rab. 10.5 cf. Jos. *Ant.* 2.219 "are unacceptable because of the 'levity and temerity of their sex'.")<sup>307</sup> It is sometimes stated that "Jewish women could not testify in court..."<sup>308</sup>, but this does not seem to have broad support, as we will see (cf. John 4.39). In the Mishnah there are exceptional legal cases where women are heavily involved, such as in the case of disputed virginity, a woman as the only witness to a death, and those involving property.<sup>309</sup> Women are not entirely excluded from testifying in the Mishnah "the sages acknowledge both a woman's mental competence and the reliance to be placed on her oath or testimony."<sup>310</sup> The Talmud at points dismisses women's testimony (*Rosh Hashana* 1.8c), but still does not consistently exclude women from witnessing.<sup>311</sup> At the same time, these sources are late for our purposes, Peter is probably describing non-Jewish women, and there is no indication in the text that they were involved in a legal trial.<sup>312</sup> Still, our sources are limited, and the Greco-Roman

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<sup>307</sup> From Richard Bauckham's careful evaluation, *The Women at the Tomb: The Credibility of their Story* ©

Richard Bauckham The Laing Lecture at London Bible College, accessed 8/8/16

<http://richardbauckham.co.uk/uploads/Accessible/The%20Women%20&%20the%20Resurrection.pdf>, esp. p14

<sup>308</sup> Robert Gordon Maccini, *Her Testimony is True: Women as Witnesses According to John*, (Sheffield Academic, 1996), p80

<sup>309</sup> Judith Romney Wegner, *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p120,21

<sup>310</sup> Judith Wegner, *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah*, (Oxford University Press, 1988), p120

<sup>311</sup> "Wherever the Torah accepts the testimony of one witness, it follows the majority of persons, so that two women against one man is identical with two men against one man. But there are some who declare that wherever a competent witness came first, even a hundred women are regarded as equal to one witness ... but when it is a woman who came first, then two women against one man is like half-and half." (Talmud, b. Mas. Sotah 31b) quoted in Timothy McGrew and Lydia McGrew, 'The Argument from Miracles: a Cumulative Case for the Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth', in *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*, edited by William Lane Craig, J. P. Moreland, (UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2012), p608; Richard Carrier, *Not the Impossible Faith: Why Christianity Didn't Need a Miracle to Succeed*, (Lulu, 2009), p307

<sup>312</sup> Thus "the letter does not say in so many words that the fiery trial has involved court appearances" Gerald F. Downing, 'Pliny's prosecutions of Christians: Revelation and 1 Peter', *Journal For The Study Of The New Testament* (October 1988); 34, p115



legal system may well be one of the *fullest* insights we have in to the acceptability of women's voices in the ancient Mediterranean world.

Roman society "did not like women's involvement in politics", even though we see Cicero call female witnesses (*Cael.*20.49), and there is even a chapter in Val.Max called "women who pleaded before magistrates for themselves and others" (this pertains to witnessing in a defense capacity).<sup>313</sup> However, ordinary Roman women generally were required not to speak.<sup>314</sup> The *complete* ban seems to have been on women practicing as lawyers: many Romans would have been perfectly willing to accept their testimony. Still, the patriarchy was preserved. Roman culture reliably presented the man as reasonable and in control of his faculties relative to women, who were presented as inferior by contrast (Gai. *Inst.* 144).<sup>315</sup> Indeed, even the very word "virtue" comes from the Latin *vir*, meaning "man". The *mos maiorum* was deeply imbedded in Rome, where families were run by the *paterfamilias*.<sup>316</sup> By the first century, we note that more elite Roman women were (somewhat controversially) receiving an education (Juv.*Sat.* 7.434–456; Sen. *Helv* 17).<sup>317</sup>

The evidence from 1 Peter is a little different. Peter does not suggest his female readers offer any sort of testimony to their husbands, even in a defensive capacity- in fact he advises them to preach through their actions. Why would that be? We have not seen good evidence that women were considered generally wholly untrustworthy within many ancient texts. Women's actions in 1

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<sup>313</sup> Richard A. Bauman, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2003), p10

<sup>314</sup> Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities*, (Grand Rapids. MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003), p176

Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins: a Study of Rome's Vestal Priestesses in the Late Republic and Early Empire*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), p69

<sup>315</sup> Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, p206

<sup>316</sup> For the argument that the community in 1 Peter are said to have entered into the "*pater familias*" of God, see Philip L. Tite, 'Nurslings, milk and moral development in the Greco-Roman context: a reappraisal of the paraenetic utilization of metaphor 1 Peter 2.1-3', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*. 31, 4, 371-400, (June 2009). p390. Italics original.

<sup>317</sup> Emily A. Hemelrijk, 'The Education of Women in Ancient Rome', in *A Companion to Ancient Education*, edited by W. Martin Bloomer, (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2015), p298

Peter to have some kind of salvific relevance, though: they will win their husbands over (3.1).<sup>318</sup> Is the aim, as Manton once preached, to reduce prejudices against the Christians?<sup>319</sup> Achtemeier has reasoned that this text says “nothing about the subordination of women”, whereas Kathleen Corley supposes it perpetuates female victimhood.<sup>320</sup> Marshall opined on the basis of this text that, for a woman “...it is surely still the case that a quiet spirit is preferable to a raucous, unmannerly character.”<sup>321</sup> So, Peter encourages female submission in order to win non-believing husbands to Christianity. Given the missionary nature of the Christian way of life, and the fact that the practice was fairly new, we can suppose this scenario to be common.

Why is this silent submission advocated?<sup>322</sup> The answer appears to not come from Jewish or Roman legal sources, but instead that Peter aims to make Christianity gel within the prevailing Greco-Roman household codes. Ancient Greek culture clearly presents us with ideas as to how women should behave, which is patriarchal (Arist. *Pol.* 1.1259b.1; *Gen. an.* 2.3; *Soph. Ant.* 578).<sup>323</sup> Women could not inherit property (Dem. *Eub.* 57.41), but could often seek a divorce (Diod. *Sic. Library* 12.18).<sup>324</sup> Peter too advocates the submission of women. Peter hopes

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<sup>318</sup> Catherine Clark Kroeger, ‘Toward a Pastoral Understanding of 1 Peter 3.1-6 and Related Texts’, in *A Feminist Companion to the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews*, edited by Amy-Jill Levine, Maria Mayo Robins, (London & New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), p82 denies this text is repressive. The text, however, seems to be mainly concerned with women’s obedience to their husbands in order to meet “household ideals” – Margaret Y. Macdonald, ‘Early Christian Women Married to Unbelievers’, in *Feminist Companion to Paul: Deutero-Pauline Writings*, edited by Amy-Jill Levine, (London & New York: T & T Clark, 2003), p20

<sup>319</sup> Thomas Manton, ‘Sermon upon Psalm LXXXIV’, in *The Works of Thomas Manton Vol.18 of 22*, (Sovereign Grace, 2002), p323

<sup>320</sup> Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, p207-208; Kathleen Corley, ‘1 Peter’, in Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza (ed.), *Searching the Scriptures. II. A Feminist Commentary*, (New York: Crossroad, 1994), p349

<sup>321</sup> I. Howard Marshall, *1 Peter*, edited by Grant R. Osborne, D. Stuart Briscoe, Haddon Robinson, InterVarsity Press New Testament Commentary, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), p104

<sup>322</sup> Betsy J. Bauman-Martin, ‘Women on the Edge: New Perspectives on Women in the Petrine Haustafel’, *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol. 123, No. 2 (Summer, 2004), p275 argued it is “not a liberating text.”

<sup>323</sup> See further, Deborah F. Sawyer, *Women and Religion in the First Christian Centuries*, (London: Routledge, 1996), p113

<sup>324</sup> Emily Wilson, *The Greatest Empire: a Life of Seneca*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p33

that their submission will bring the husbands to Christianity. What, then, might the logic be here?

Perhaps the most well-known study on this subject has been completed by Balch. Balch points us to Musonius, *Must One Obey One's Parents under All Circumstances?* (Or. XVI). This text concerns a son who has been instructed not to study philosophy by his father. It is thought that “the conduct of his son will win him over if his son is truly putting his philosophy into practice. For as a student of philosophy he will certainly be...most well behaved and gentle he will control his tongue... and he will stand fast in the face of danger.”<sup>325</sup> This does seem to be a fitting analogy: the question becomes, why does Peter single out these groups (women, slaves) as being potential threats to the continued success of Christianity? In Balch's estimation, the specific household code prominent in Peter comes from a desire to conform to the “Aristotelian Topos concerning household management.”<sup>326</sup> Christianity at the time was probably a “despised religion” and people in positions of power were predictably worried.<sup>327</sup> A letter such as Hebrews apparently takes persecution as natural (10.32 etc.), but it is still apparently a surprise for Peter.

The main point of the household code, for Balch, is apologetic (3. 15). The Christians need to defend their way of life against pagan insult. If women were not submissive, their Christianity would be to blame. In sum, Balch contends that the code's promulgation is due to the threat of criticism.<sup>328</sup> In so doing wives were thought to have potentially been able to convert their unbelieving husbands.<sup>329</sup>

## 5.6. Textual Analysis

Let's now consider how this idea works with regard to verses in question. 1 Pet.3.1 instructs women to submit to their husbands so “ἄνευ λόγου κερδηθήσονται.” Schreiner argued that “the spoken words of wives had not had an effect...”<sup>330</sup> But the text does not claim such a thing, and

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<sup>325</sup> Balch, *Wives*, p100

<sup>326</sup> Balch, *Wives*, p109

<sup>327</sup> Balch, *Wives*, p109

<sup>328</sup> Balch, *Wives*, p109

<sup>329</sup> I take the wives in 3.7 to also be understood as Christians, contra Carl D. Gross, ‘Are the wives of 1 Peter 3:7 Christians’, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*. 35, (Feb. 1989), 89-96

<sup>330</sup> Schreiner, *Peter*, p150

in any case, Peter writes to a vast area: can we imagine not one husband listened to his wife over such a distance?<sup>331</sup> It is improbable. So what is the meaning of this unique approach to conversion?

Jews in general were apparently not involved in missionary activity to the same fervent degree that many Christians specifically were in the first century (Matt. 28.19; Acts 9.15; Rom.15.19).<sup>332</sup> The Christians seem to have been a unique Judaism in this regard. Because of this, missionary behavior was probably in its infancy and not systematically planned. However, we see that κερδαίνω is common in the NT period as a way to describe converting, or re-converting, someone (Matt.18.15; 1 Cor.9.19-22) or attaining salvation for oneself (Phil.3.8 cf. 3 Cor.2.35), and the equivalent thought was being used for missionary activity by the later Rabbinic period.<sup>333</sup> The theme is also common in early Christian (Jas.5.20) literature. The concept of women being silent is apparent in other writings (1 Cor.14. 34-35; 1 Tim. 2.11-15), as is the idea of regulating their behavior (Tert. *Women* 2.4).<sup>334</sup>

Dowd has suggested that the women were already in a precarious position by neglecting the family gods, and so Peter was at pains to attempt to avoid the Christians appearing as potentially further undermining social order.<sup>335</sup> Peter's attempt to justify such submission scripturally is, as Donelson notes "curious."<sup>336</sup> Peter advocates women calling their husbands κύριος (3.6) as Sarah did to Abraham. It is true that Sarah does so in Gen.18.12 LXX, but somewhat sarcastically.<sup>337</sup>

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<sup>331</sup> Likewise, the argument that "...most of the wives in Peter's audience were probably married to Christian men..." is unfounded. J.R. Slaughter, *The Dynamics of Marriage in 1 Peter 3:1-7*, (PhD Diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1992), p161

<sup>332</sup> Martin Goodman, 'Jewish Proselytizing in the First Century', in *The Jews Among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire*, Editors, Judith Lieu, John North, (Oxon: Routledge, 1992), p57

<sup>333</sup> David Daube, 'κερδαίνω as a Missionary Term,' *The Harvard Theological Review* 40.2 (1947): 109-20

<sup>334</sup> See also 1 Tim.2.9. 1 Pet.3.3; Eph.5.23.

<sup>335</sup> Sharyn Dowd, '1 Peter', in *Women's Bible Commentary*, edited by Carol Ann Newsom, Sharon H. Ringe, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), p462

<sup>336</sup> Lewis R. Donelson, *I and II Peter and Jude: a Commentary*, The New Testament Library, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), p92; Kiley sees a background here in Gen.12; 20, arguing that the point is that Sarah was also a stranger in a new country, but still did as her husband told her. Mark Kiley, Like Sara: The Tale of Terror behind 1 Peter 3:6, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 106, No. 4 (Dec., 1987), p692

<sup>337</sup> Note the laughter in v12 which she denies in v15.

Perhaps Peter advocates this sort of ironic submission,<sup>338</sup> or it may simply be a rather clumsy proof-text that advocates for a more conservative position than that of Genesis,<sup>339</sup> which actually records God instructing Abraham to follow Sarah (e.g. 16.2).<sup>340</sup> Jobes sees in this a subversion in that “Greek moral philosophers are now to be replaced with the writings of Yahweh’s prophets.”<sup>341</sup> In fact, the reverse is true- the content of the Hebrew writings is altered by Peter to bring it in line with Greek virtues. It is difficult to know if this instruction in general, however, would have left Christian women in a worse position than before, but it does make the text more patriarchal. Whatever the case, I agree with those who have argued that Peter here advocates women to submit to Hellenistic household norms.<sup>342</sup> Worship of the gods of one’s husband is integral under this rubric, so that a wife upon “entering her husband’s household, assumed responsibility for what were for her new ancestors and new gods.”<sup>343</sup>

In an attempt to enervate potential or current misery, Peter advocates that the community to refrain from (in his judgement) needlessly drawing attention to themselves by dishonoring their husbands,<sup>344</sup> and/ or by destabilizing local norms and customs.<sup>345</sup> This appears to be a kind of utilitarian argument- Peter advocates adherence to Greco-Roman mores about the natural order

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<sup>338</sup> Donelson, *Peter*, p92

<sup>339</sup> Jeremy Punt, ‘Subverting Sarah in the New Testament: Galatians 4 and 1 Peter 3’, in *Early Christian Literature and Intertextuality: Volume 2: Exegetical Studies*, LNTS, (edited by Craig A. Evans, H. Daniel Zacharias) (London: T & T Clark, 2009), p167

<sup>340</sup> Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, ‘1 Peter’, in *Women’s Bible Commentary*, edited by Carol Ann Newsom, Sharon H. Ringe, Jacqueline E. Lapsley, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), p618

<sup>341</sup> Jobes, *1 Peter*, p206

<sup>342</sup> Dorothy I. Sly, ‘1 Peter 3:6b in the Light of Philo and Josephus’, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 110 (1991)

<sup>343</sup> Paula Fredriksen, ‘If it Looks like a Duck, and it Quacks like a Duck...: on *Not Giving Up the Godfearers*’, in *A Most Reliable Witness: Essays in Honor OF Ross Shepard Kraemer*, Edited by Susan Ashbrook, Harvey Nathaniel P. DesRosiers, Shira L. Lander, Jacqueline Z. Pastis, Daniel Ullucci, *Society of Biblical Literature*, 2015, p26

<sup>344</sup> As Batten says, “in this text, the honour/shame dimension of a woman’s appearance is particularly important...” Alicia J. Batten, ‘Neither Gold nor Braided Hair (1 Timothy 2.9; 1 Peter 3.3): Adornment, Gender and Honour in Antiquity’, *New Testament Studies*, 55 4, (2009), p500

<sup>345</sup> Williams argues that the wives here are “commanded” by Peter to perform such behavior, Travis B. Williams, ‘Reconsidering the imperatival principle in 1 Peter’, *The Westminster Theological Journal*. 73, 1, (2011), p77  
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of social hierarchies in an attempt to safeguard the Christian community from the surrounding informal cultural invigilators and their “radically conformist society”.<sup>346</sup>

## 5.7 SLAVES

The instructions for slaves may also have some soteriological relevance. This is part of a discussion whereby Peter advocates honorable conduct (2.12) in order that the gentiles will “glorify God on the day of visitation” (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς cf. Lk.19.44; Sir.18.20; ἐπισκοπῇ ψυχῶν, Wis. 3.13). This part of the letter in general operates as a “lived rebuttal of the slanders of their critics.”<sup>347</sup> Regarding slaves, it has also been argued that the language of redemption may have some soteriological relevance to slaves who could be confident that “Jesus has paid their ransom price.”<sup>348</sup> Let’s discuss the historical background to this thought.

## 5.8. Historical Background to Slavery

Slavery was a common practice in the Hebrew Bible (Ex.21.2-6; Lev.25.45-46). Slaves were commonly thought little of in Greece (Arist, *Pol.* 1.5) and Rome (Gai, *Inst.* 1.52), and treated very badly (Plut. *Mor.* 267). Slaves are mentioned frequently in early Christian texts (1 Cor. 7.21, 12.13; Gal.3.28; Barn.19.7; Did.4.11). There is no indication in the NT that the Christians attempted to abolish it.<sup>349</sup> Philo (Every Good Man is Free 12.79, but cf. CD.11.12, 12.10) writes that the Essenes were opposed to the practice, and Josephus corroborates the notion (*Ant.*18.21),

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<sup>346</sup> Williams disputes that Peter’s advice is based on an “intended outcome” Travis B. Williams, ‘*Contextualizing Conflict: The Persecutions of 1 Peter in Their Anatolian Setting*’, (PhD. Diss. University of Exeter, 2010), p253. Quote comes from Paul J. Achtemeier, 1 Peter 1:13-21. *Interpretation.* 60, 3, (July 2006), p306

<sup>347</sup> David Starling, ‘She who is in Babylon: 1 Peter and the Hermeneutics of Empire’, in *Reactions to Empire: Sacred Texts in their Socio-Political Contexts*, ed. A.J. Dunne and D. Batovici (WUNT II; Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 2014), p123

<sup>348</sup> PHEME PERKINS, *First and Second Peter, James, and Jude*, Interpretation (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1995), p26. This is possible, but I find the argument of Senior more persuasive, that it refers to the “biblical tradition that portrayed God as one who ransomed and liberated Israel from slavery and sin” : Donald Senior, *1 Peter*, p4

<sup>349</sup> Keith R. Bradley, ‘Slavery’, in, *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, edited by Simon Hornblower, Antony Spawforth, Esther Edinow, (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p1376

though we have no sources written by Jewish slaves themselves.<sup>350</sup> The Hebrew Bible has fairly detailed instructions on how to treat Israelite/ foreign slaves (Lev.25.44-46). The situation improves slightly as time progresses, and by the time of Hadrian and Antonine in Rome one was not allowed to kill their slave.<sup>351</sup> Peter's conservative attitude is perhaps influenced by his belief in the approaching end times, but we cannot be sure. As far as I am aware, Peter here encourages slaves to continue obeying their masters.

### 5.9. Textual Analysis

What exactly does Peter require of slaves? Davids translates 2.20 as "for what glory is there in enduring patiently when one has done wrong and received a beating for it?"<sup>352</sup> This implies that Peter admonishes his readers who are slaves to endure unjust beatings. Indeed, this text was used by North American slave masters to justify their actions.<sup>353</sup> The point of the text is that the "debt-slave's suffering takes on a different value in the present as it is reframed in view of Jesus' suffering, resurrection, and future glory."<sup>354</sup> Once more, what might appear to a modern reader to be unethical is here advocated because it fits the accepted customs of Peter's world, but it is important to keep this in context.

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<sup>350</sup> Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity*, (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p13; Lena Cansdale, *Qumran and the Essenes: A Re-evaluation of the Evidence*, Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), p64

<sup>351</sup> Ebenezer Cobham Brewer, *A Guide to Roman History from the Earliest Period to the Close of the Western Empire*, (C.S. Francis & Co., 1859), p422; T. Baarda, *The Sentences of Syriac Menander*, in, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Vol. 2* (Ed. James H. Charlesworth) (Yale University Press, 1983), p585

<sup>352</sup> Davids, *Peter*, p10; the thought may have a Greek parallel in Plato's Socrates: "I should wish neither, for my own part; but if it were necessary either to do wrong or to suffer it, I should choose to suffer rather than do it." (Plat. Gorg. 469) W.R.M. Lamb, *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vol. 3 translated by W.R.M. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1967, internet text, <http://perseus.uchicago.edu/perseus/cgi/citequery3.pl?dbname=GreekFeb2011&getid=1&query=Pl.%20Grg.%20469b> verified 9/13/2016

<sup>353</sup> Philip G. Asante, *The Truth about Racism: Its Origins, Legacy, and How God Wants Us to Deal with It*, (Westbow Press, 2014), p45

<sup>354</sup> Bonnie Howe, *Because You Bear This Name: Conceptual Metaphor and the Moral Meaning of 1 Peter*, (Leiden: Brill, 2006), p204

Peter's main goal at this juncture is for gentiles to praise God, and so he aims to lessen any disagreements he deems inessential to that end. Does this behavior have a link with conversion, and therefore soteriology? He does apparently have this in view, in light of his remarks relating to the gentiles glorifying God (2.12), which is paralleled in 3.1 with the winning over of husbands. The text (2.12) notes this will take place ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς. Sir.18.20-21 links the time of judgement with God's forgiveness for those who humble themselves (1 Pet.5.5 cf. Ahiq. 2.150). Moreover, the overwhelming weight of occurrences of δοξάζω in the NT take place in the context of believers glorifying God (Rom.15.6; 1 Cor.6.20; 2 Cor.9.13; 1 Pet.4.11).<sup>355</sup> Indeed, the Christian in 1 Peter is described as one who glorifies God (1 Pet.4.16). Therefore, it seems likely that the mention of glorification of God by these gentiles in 2.12 has some link to conversion. Peter probably believed that slaves have the power, through their right behavior, to change the hearts of gentiles.

## 6. FAITH IN 1 PETER

Peter believes that Christians must have "faith" (4 Ez.9.8; Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah 3.18). This must be genuine and demonstrated through suffering, which is verified at the apocalypse (1.7),<sup>356</sup> but ultimately faith produces salvation (1.9). Christians are encapsulated by faith, so much so that they are referred to as those who believe (1.8). Those who don't believe, conversely, will stumble (2.8). Thus, faithfulness keeps one strong through the attacks from their suffering and the constant threat of the devil (5.8, 9).<sup>357</sup> Silvanus is offered as an example of one who is faithful (5.12). Faith, then plays a prominent role in the letter. Some have even argued

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<sup>355</sup> For an opposing conclusion (that it is a "reference to the accusers' ultimate confession of their error at the day of God's final judgement", see Travis B. Williams, *Persecution in 1 Peter: Differentiating and Contextualizing Early Christian Suffering*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 145, (Leiden: Brill, 2012), p268n.79

<sup>356</sup> For the apocalypse in 1 Pet.1.7, cf. Christopher Rowland, in C. C. Rowland, Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones, 'Christ Present and Absent, Hidden and Revealed', in *The Mystery of God: Early Jewish Mysticism and the New Testament*, edited by Pieter Willem van der Horst and Peter J. Tomson (Leiden: Brill, 2009), p177; 2.Cor.8.8 provides a helpful parallel here, as argued by Edouard des Places, *La Première Epître De Saint Pierre*, (Biblical Institute Press, 1971), p13

<sup>357</sup> For the threat of the devil here, Karl Georg Kuhn, 'Πειρασμός — ἀμαρτία — σάρξ Im Neuen Testament Und Die Damit Zusammenhängenden Vorstellungen', *Zeitschrift Für Theologie Und Kirche* 49.2 (1952), p203



that entrance into the Christian community here is via faith.<sup>358</sup> Let's consider the historical background to this easily misunderstood term. How might we understand it?

The concept is host to a myriad of fascinating questions. Why did the early Christians start to use the language of "faith" so rapidly and universally? Is faith opposed to works (Jas.2.19),<sup>359</sup> opposed to wisdom (1 Cor.2.4-5), or does it have a relation to the belief in the looming eschaton (Lk.18.8)? Or might faith somehow be related to the covenant, that is, faithfulness to God's covenant (Sir.44.20)?<sup>360</sup>

### 6.1. Historical Background to Faith Language

In the Second Temple Period, the word faith tends refer to relational fidelity, whereas faith in the Roman context is often used in legal discussions.<sup>361</sup> A salad of studies are available to us. Fredrickson has suggested the English words "steadfast adherence".<sup>362</sup> Fraenkel said that trust isn't the best translation, but rather guarantee or loyalty are more suitable.<sup>363</sup> Buber's contention was that faith in Christianity and Judaism had two different meanings: Christian faith is propositional, Jewish is related to trust.<sup>364</sup> Of course, this is a false dichotomy and a generalisation. There have been more recent studies that are also very instructive.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> John H. Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless: a Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1981), p127

<sup>359</sup> Morgan, *Faith*, p470

<sup>360</sup> Dunn, *New Perspective*, p223. Faith language is prominent in Sirach e.g. 1:14; 4:16; 44:20.

<sup>361</sup> Martin Josef Schermaier, 'Bona Fides in Roman Contract Law', in *Good Faith in European Contract Law*, Edited By Simon Whittaker, Reinhard Zimmermann, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p78

<sup>362</sup> Fredrickson, *Faith*, p808; "Obedience maintains one's position in the covenant, but it does not earn God's grace as such" -Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, p420

<sup>363</sup> Eduard Fraenkel, Zur Geschichte des Wortes Fides, *Reinisches Museum für Philologie* 7, (1916), "Nach der verbreiteten Auffassung bedeutet *fides* hier "Glauben, Vertrauen", p187

<sup>364</sup> "The faith of Judaism and the faith of Christendom are by nature different in kind", Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith: a Study of the Interpenetration of Judaism and Christianity*, (New York: Macmillan Company, 1951), p173. See also especially page 43-44.

<sup>365</sup> Colijn suggests faith "means fidelity in relationships." Brenda B. Colijn, *Images of Salvation in the New Testament*, p93. This is the sense in which I would place 1 Pet.1.5, 7,9,21. The readers must commit to their relationship with God. In rarer uses it can be used in opposition to "works", or "wisdom". For Campbell faith is a Salvation in 1 Peter

Philo refers to faith as an “offering” (*Cher.* 25.85) and includes faithlessness in his list of vices (*Sacr.* 5.32). Faith indicates sincerity (*Plant.* 17.70) and proper worship (*Ebr.* 10.40). Philo speaks of faith as a reward from God (*Praem.* 4.27). Faith makes the mind incorruptible (*Migr.* 24.132) and is the most perfect of the virtues (*Her.* 18.91; or queen of the virtues *Abr.* 46.270). Philo uses faith primarily as a “proof or piece of evidence”, though he also utilizes the meanings of pledge, fidelity (*Leg.* 1.32.102; 2.17.67; 3.33.103), and trust (*Det.* 19.65; *Post.* 50.173; *Conf.* 9.31).<sup>366</sup>

I do not suppose that Philo or Josephus has had a direct impact on Peter, but nevertheless, the usage of faith relating to “proof” certainly carries through (1 Pet. 1.9). We can observe that these writers are part of a larger culture (Hellenistic Diaspora Judaism) that utilizes the language regularly, with more emphasis than one typically sees in the LXX.<sup>367</sup> Philo, however, is relevant

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relational term requiring two parties, one who is characterized as faithful, and the other who responds by trusting this figure. Douglas Campbell, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, LNTS, (London & New York: T & T Clark 2005), p179 Campbell suggests we adopt a cautious approach to translating this concept as “faith”, even going so far to suggest possibly abandoning it. Campbell, *Quest*, p189. Whatever the case, by the Second Temple period “faith” was recognized as an important virtue. Faith was, for example, considered by Philo to be a supreme ἀρετή, which incorporates right belief, trust, and a long-term relationship. This example of faith is also used by Philo in his discussions on the faith of Abraham. Campbell, *Quest*, p180; *Philo.Heres.* 91,94,95; *Abr.* 268,270,273; *Praem.* 31. Intellectual belief usually is signified with the verb πιστεύω. Campbell, *Quest*, p179 Josephus uses faith as pledge (*J. BJ* 3.29), fidelity (most commonly, *J. AJ* 1.312) and trust (*J. Vit.* 304; *Ant.* 1.19.10). Campbell, *Quest*, p181.

<sup>366</sup> For more discussion, Campbell, *Quest*, p181

<sup>367</sup> “*Pistis* language is not the dominant concept in Jewish thinking that it already is when we first encounter Christian thought”, Morgan, *Faith*, p177. In the LXX the term commonly means trustworthiness, and loyalty, Campbell, *Quest*, p181, and obedience: Dennis Lindsay, *Josephus and Faith*, (Leiden: Brill, 1993), p5.3. Morgan suggests the two main uses, though this theme is not particularly large in the LXX, 1) it relates to the forging of a new relationship and 2) it relates to “divine commitment to human beings and vice versa.” Morgan, *Faith*, p210. There is a link between the concept and covenant (Isaiah. 55.1.-3, Deut. 7.9; 32.4) Morgan, *Faith*, p197. This is emphasized in some texts more than others: “the psalms, it seems, understand God’s *pistis* variously as a function of his covenant (with Israel or particularly with David) and as an intrinsic and universally applied quality of his divinity.” Morgan, *Faith*, p197 Later writers link faith with correct observance (*mMak* 3.14), which decreased after the temple was destroyed (*mSot* 9.12).

as an indication of the prominence that the concept enjoyed in the first century. This Diaspora culture seems to have heavily influenced Peter.

## 6.2. Faith in the NT

I now examine the word more particularly in the NT context. Faith has a special prominence in the NT, occurring in, perhaps, 250 places.<sup>368</sup> Sometimes the word is related to the covenant, which seems to be the meaning in Jude 3.<sup>369</sup> This could have some bearing with regard to 1 Pet.4.19, because the faithfulness of God in the Hebrew Bible is often tied to his keeping the covenant (Deut.7.9; Ps.25.10; Isa.61.8; cf. Abraham in Sir. 44.20). In John, a book brimming with faith language, faith has a propositional quality to it (3.15, 16, 18; 3.36; 4.21; 5.24; 6.47; 8.24; John 11.25) – the Johannine community are admonished to believe certain things about Jesus.<sup>370</sup> Faith can be contrasted with disobedience (Jn.3.36).<sup>371</sup> In Paul we encounter the radical notion that circumcision is of no value, because the righteous live by faith (Rom.1.17).<sup>372</sup> It has been suggested that Paul disagrees with circumcision because descent from Abraham is now, not physical, but spiritual, so those who are Abraham's sons have no real need for a physical symbol.<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>368</sup>James M. Robinson, New Testament Faith Today, *Journal of Bible and Religion*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Jul., 1959), p234

<sup>369</sup> Morgan, *Faith*, p197

<sup>370</sup> Colijn, *Images*, p93. For “belief” in John, see 1.12, 50; 2.11,22, 23; 3.12,15,16, 18, 36; 4.21, 4.39, 41, 42, 48, 53; 5.24, 38, 44, 46, 47; 6.29, 30, 36, 40, 47, 64, 69; 7.5, 31, 38, 39, 48; 8.24, 30, 31, 45, 46; 9.18, 35, 36, 38; 10.25, 26, 37, 38, 42; 11.15, 25, 26, 27, 40, 42, 45, 48; 12.36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 44, 46; 13.19; 14.1; 10, 11, 12, 29; 16. 9, 27, 30, 31; 17.8, 20, 21; 19.35; 20.8, 25, 27, 29, 31; 21.23

<sup>371</sup> Colijn, *Images*, p94

<sup>372</sup> Faith language is essential to the thought of Paul, e.g. Rom.1.5, 8, 12,16,17, 31; 3.3,21, 22,25,26, 27, 28, 30, 31; 4. 5,9,11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 22; 5.1.; 9.30, 32; 10.4, 6, 8, 17; 11.20; 12.3, 6; 14.1, 22, 23; 16.26; 1 Cor. 2.5; 4.17, 10.13, 12.9; 13.2; 13.13; 15.14; 15.17; 16.13; 2 Cor. 1.18; 2 Cor. 1.24; 5.7; 8.7; 10.15; 13.5; Gal. 2.16, 20 ; 3.2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26; 5.5, 6, 22; 6.10; 1 Thess. 1.3, 8; 3.2.5,6,7, 10; 58, 24; Phlm. 1.5,6.

<sup>373</sup> Desta Heliso, *Pistis and the Righteous One: A Study of Romans 1:17 against the Background of Scripture and Second Temple Jewish Literature* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament) (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), p253. As for *why* the early Christians began to use the language of faith, Morgan's study concludes that the answer is opaque. However: “What we can say with confidence is that for the Greek-speaking communities within which and for which the texts of the New Testament were written, the idea of *pistis* proved to be so rich, and so adaptable to developing understandings of the relationship between God, Christ, and humanity, together with Salvation in 1 Peter

The intensity of Paul's faith argumentation is due to his belief in the end time, and is not only individualistic, but is also communal.<sup>374</sup>

### 6.3. Textual Analysis

Relevant literature often links faith with suffering, which is relevant for 1 Peter 1.7 (Ecclus.21; Jn16.33; 4 Macc.6.30; 1 En. 108.10), but how inevitable does our author believe it will be? The suffering is not probably not necessary as the εἰ δέον (1.6) indicate uncertainty (contrast the δεῖ in Matt.24.6; Mk.8.31; Lk 9.22, 17.25, 24.26; Acts.17.3),<sup>375</sup> and fits the context of 3.17.<sup>376</sup> Later writers place high premium on suffering (Thom.58; *Letter of Peter*, 138.18; Ep.Barn.2.2), but that emphasis does not yet appear to be in view. Nevertheless, suffering is to be prepared for, and even has a somewhat positive function. Primarily, it proves the genuineness of one's faith (1.7), and this is the logic of other NT verses (Jas.1.12; Rom.5.4; 2 Cor.8.2).<sup>377</sup> Peter never stresses one *desire* suffering from faith, as a Cynic might, and as is seen in later Christian writings,<sup>378</sup> but rather Peter counsels that it is to be expected, and has good ends.

Faith in 1 Peter has a *practical* outworking. So, for Bigg, faith in Peter has a similar usage to that of James, and Hebrews 11 and is defined as the "steadfast will to follow God through all the trials

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understandings of human life and activity within that relationship that *pistis* is everywhere involved with the early evolution of those understandings." Morgan, *Faith*, 502-503

<sup>374</sup> Morgan, *Faith*, p260

<sup>375</sup> Eleanor Dickey, *An Introduction to the Composition and Analysis of Greek Prose*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p73

<sup>376</sup> For the opposite view, Jobes, *1 Peter*, p95

<sup>377</sup> As argued by, Patrick J. Hartin, 'Call to Be Perfect through Suffering (James 1.2-4). The Concept of Perfection in the Epistle of James and the Sermon on the Mount', *Biblica*, Vol. 77, No. 4 (1996), p477. This is also found in some Stoic writings, e.g. Sen.*Prov.*4.10.

<sup>378</sup> Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*, (Stanford University Press, 1999), p89

of life.”<sup>379</sup> This demonstrates “loyalty”<sup>380</sup> and “active commitment”.<sup>381</sup> Faith is, in this way, necessarily linked to *physical* suffering (1.7; cf. Prov.27.21),<sup>382</sup> particularly as it is tied to Christ, who himself experienced physical beating (2.21-25 cf. Jas.1.3).<sup>383</sup> Peter seems also to believe in a connection between “spiritual healing” and “bodily suffering”.<sup>384</sup> There is a relationship in many Jewish texts between holiness and suffering, and that probably is in the background of Peter’s thought, as noted, but the distinctive emphasis here in 1 Peter is on Christ’s suffering being a model for the Christian.<sup>385</sup> What is that link?

The noun πίστεως in 1.7 (and 1.5, 9) refers to being “steadfast” and signals back to the plural πειρασμοῖς of 1.6.<sup>386</sup> The latter word is typically translated as either trial or temptation in English (Matt.6.13; Ac.Pl.Cor.2.1).<sup>387</sup> One might wonder what these trials might have been, whether official imperial persecutions (Tac.Ann.15.44, Pliny, *Letters*, 10.96, 7) or local hostility. For our purposes, it is principally important to attempt to locate the link between suffering and faith which finally leads to salvation (1.9). Suffering in 1 Peter is presented as a way for God to test one’s faith, and as a means of discipline. Is this physical suffering?

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<sup>379</sup> Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St Peter and Jude*, (Bloomsbury, 1901), p38

<sup>380</sup> Elliott, *1 Peter*, p340

<sup>381</sup> J. de Waal Dryden, *Theology and Ethics in 1 Peter: Paraenetic Strategies for Christian Character Formation*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), p76

<sup>382</sup> Boring, *1 Peter*, p64

<sup>383</sup> Joel B. Green, *1 Peter*, p226

<sup>384</sup> Maureen W. Yeung, *Faith in Jesus & Paul: A Comparison With Special Reference to 'Faith That Can Remove Mountains' and 'Your Faith Has Healed / Saved You'* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament II, 147) (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), p130

<sup>385</sup> PHEME PERKINS, ‘Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles’, in *The New Testament Today*, edited by Mark Allan Powell, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), p126

<sup>386</sup> I take “faith” here to be referring to the faith of the believers, and not the “faithfulness of God” (a tentative suggestion by David Horrell), David Horrell, Whose faith (fullness) is it in 1 Peter 1:5?, *The Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (April 1997), p110. Verse seven clearly indicates that Peter is referring to the tested faith of the Christians, which links back to verse five.

<sup>387</sup> There is a similar thought in Paul in 1 Cor.10.13, also Sir.2.5. Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed., p. 327).

1 Peter 1.6-7 is very close in thought and words to Rom.5.3-5, wherein Paul describes the access to God through faith, which allows one to rejoice in their sufferings.<sup>388</sup> Crucially, this verse also does not appear to mention official persecution.<sup>389</sup> This conclusion is consolidated when we note the similar wording of the opening of James (1.2-4), wherein the author invokes faith as a means of withstanding trials. As Allison has shown, this potentially indicates that these passages about faith through suffering were part of a store of early Christian tradition, and do not *necessarily* reflect a situation of an author being deeply familiar with the sufferings of the church(es) he writes to, provided they existed.<sup>390</sup> Indeed, Paul does not seem to be intimately familiar with the church at Rome,<sup>391</sup> and Peter and James are addressed to very large areas. It would therefore be possible that the advice to keep faithful during a time of suffering may well be general admonitions pulled from common Christian tradition, inspired by texts such as Jdt.8.25; 2 Macc.6.30, as well as the crucifixion of Jesus, and not relating to any precise persecution.<sup>392</sup> 1 Peter and James both have high concentrations of tradition written about suffering (Jas.1. 2; 12-15; 5.7-13).<sup>393</sup> This would make sense if the readers were known to *actually* be presently experiencing physical suffering, but may also reflect a clever author who knew that these themes would likely always be present, and likely intensified, thus creating a truly relevant and lasting catholic letter.

Most Christians who studied the letter, whatever the situation, would have been able to identify with the general character of the suffering discussed, and use it to model their lives on Christ. Are there any aspects of spiritual suffering relating to faith in the letter?

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<sup>388</sup> For the possibility that these words could reflect tradition from Jesus, see Ben Witherington III, *The Indelible Image: the Theological and Ethical Thought World of the New Testament: Volume Two- the Collective Witness*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), p503

<sup>389</sup> For the argument that sufferings here does in fact reflect persecution under the Romans, see Colin G. Kruse, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2012), p229

<sup>390</sup> Allison, *James*, p141

<sup>391</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *The Epistle to the Romans: a Commentary on the Greek Text*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2016), p5

<sup>392</sup> Argument from Allison, *James*, p141

<sup>393</sup> Talbert, *Learning through Suffering*, p31

The reference to the devil in 5.8 (Heb. לָשׁוֹן, cf. Job 1.6) as a lion (a simile),<sup>394</sup> helps to solidify Peter's theology in the style of Jewish apocalyptic.<sup>395</sup> Here is a text that was used in the Anglo-Saxon world to teach that the devil was behind temptation, and it is easy to see why.<sup>396</sup> Kelly argued that the function of the devil here is to make "accusations against them in the Court of Divine Law, urging punishments against those who falter in the trials and tribulations that Devil himself has organized against them" (sic).<sup>397</sup> According to Kelly, Peter advocates "corporate resistance, which together will defeat him."<sup>398</sup> The idea of a divine court has been rejected by Michaels,<sup>399</sup> but is defended by Thuren, who notes the judicial images used throughout the letter (2.23; 2.13-14; 2.20; 4.17-18; 3.16).<sup>400</sup> The trouble is that the devil is not presented as making a case here, as is the situation in other texts (Job.1.6-12), but rather as hunting for someone to devour/swallow (καταπίνω, cf. John.2.1, for the link to Satan, see 2 Cor.7-11). *Faith is presented as preventing this*, as it is in Rev.2.10.<sup>401</sup>

Peter here potentially makes a similar argument against resisting the devil to those of other Christian writings (Eph.6.11, 16; Jas.4.7-8; Herm.*Mand.*12.5.2),<sup>402</sup> before it is ultimately

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<sup>394</sup> Lauri Thuren, '1 Peter and the Lion', in *Evil and the Devil*, Library of New Testament Studies, (ed. Ida Fröhlich, Erkki Koskeniemi) (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), p144; I take the devil here to refer to the supernatural being only, as opposed to a literal lion controlled by this Devil, contrast Boris A. Paschke, 'The Roman Ad Bestias Execution as a Possible Historical Background for 1 Peter 5.8', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*. 28, 4, (June 2006), 489-500

<sup>395</sup> Paolo Saachi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and Its History*, trans. William J. Short (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), p230

<sup>396</sup> Peter Dendle, *Satan Unbound: The Devil in Old English Narrative Literature*, (University of Toronto Press, 2001), p33

<sup>397</sup> Henry Ansgar Kelly, *Satan: a Biography*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p135

<sup>398</sup> Kelly, *Satan*, p135

<sup>399</sup> Michaels, *1 Peter*, p298

<sup>400</sup> Thuren, *Lion*, p151

<sup>401</sup> For the similarities between Revelation and 1 Peter see the helpful, Thomas Slater, *Christ and Community: A Socio-Historical Study of the Christology of Revelation*, LNTS (Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), p20-22

<sup>402</sup> Dan G. McCartney, *James*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), p22

defeated.<sup>403</sup> Thus, an important part of the Christian's covenant with God is faith in him and his promises. Peter also makes special mention of "baptism" and the salvation of one's soul- both ideas that are somewhat controversial. I turn to them now.

## 6.4 SALVATION BY BAPTISM?

Baptism was important for the early Christians (Ephesians 4.5; Matt.3.7; Mark 1.4; Lk.3.3; Acts 10.37 Ode 24.7). Some stressed it as necessary (Tert. *Bap.* 8), others did not,<sup>404</sup> or practiced waterless baptism (Bap.1.3),<sup>405</sup> or spoke of the sanctifying benefits of water in general (Sibylline Oracles 3.591-93). The Qumran community practiced baptism (4Q414) that sanctifies, and is necessary for true submission (1QS III, 6-9; CD X 10-13).

The idea of baptism in 1 Peter has been a topic of much discussion. After Peter refers to Noah, he brings the discussion back to Jesus, like Noah he is a "father of a new humanity."<sup>406</sup> Perdelwitz suggested 1.3-4.11 were originally part of a baptismal homily.<sup>407</sup> This view was also defended by Preisker and more recently Brooks.<sup>408</sup> My own view is that the text as a whole was originally a

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<sup>403</sup> Derek R. Brown, 'The God of Peace will Shortly Crush Satan Under your Feet': Paul's Eschatological Reminder in Romans 16: 20a', *Neotestamentica*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (2010), p9

<sup>404</sup> Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009), p337

<sup>405</sup> Robin M. Jensen, *Baptismal Imagery in Early Christianity: Ritual, Visual, and Theological Dimensions*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), p100

<sup>406</sup> Larry J. Kreitzer, 'On Board the Eschatological Ark of God: Noah-Deucalion and the "Phrygian Connection" in 1 Peter 3.19-22', in *Baptism, the New Testament and the Church: Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O White*, edited by Stanley E. Porter, Anthony R. Cross, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), p239

<sup>407</sup> Richard Perdelwitz, *Die Mysterienreligion und das Problem des Ersten Petrusbriefes* (Giessen, 1911)

<sup>408</sup> Herbert Preisker, 'Anhang zum ersten Petrusbrief', in Hans Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, (HNT 15; Tübingen: Mohr, 1951); Oscar S. Brooks, '1 Peter 3:21: The Clue to the Literary Structure of the Epistle', *Novum Testamentum*, Vol. 16, Fasc. 4 (Oct., 1974), p290-305; see also the more tentative John Coutts, 'Ephesians 1:3-14 and 1 Peter 1:3-12', *New Testament Studies*. 3, 2, (Jan. 1957), p115-127 who suggests liturgical traditions relating to baptism can be inferred in the letter. It has also been argued that Peter uses a liturgy (from tractate Gerim) as a "model", David H. Tripp, 'Eperōtēma (1 Peter 3:21) a Liturgist's Note'. *The Expository Times*. 92, 9 (June 1981), p269



letter, though perhaps one without a real audience.<sup>409</sup> At any rate, the letter does say some things about baptism that appear elevated and unique. Baptism may also be in mind in 1.22.<sup>410</sup> What is its function? For Dunn, baptism in 1 Peter is an “expression of faith and repentance”,<sup>411</sup> and many have advocated that the practice symbolizes purification,<sup>412</sup> or that baptism was used as initiation.<sup>413</sup>

Peter is clear that baptism is “οὐ σαρκὸς ἀπόθεσις ῥύπου” (3.21b), that is, the practice is more spiritual than a mere washing of the body. Kelly has argued that the text refers to circumcision as ἀπόθεσις and ῥύπος are used to signify the removal of the unclean foreskin, which has also been the topic of some discussion in Jas.1.21.<sup>414</sup> Philo taught that the purpose of circumcision was sanitary (*Leg.*1.5, cf. Lev 19.21 LXX), so this makes some sense. I conclude with most interpreters, though, that this is probably not what Peter has in mind: the evidence in support is too vague, and there are simpler solutions available to us.<sup>415</sup> Peter’s logic is that baptism is not merely about washing one’s body. It is about pledging one’s devotion to God (ἐπερώτημα).<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>409</sup> The theory that the text has some relation to baptismal liturgies is rebutted by David G. Horrell, ‘The Themes of 1 Peter: Insights from the Earliest Manuscripts (the Crosby-Schøyen Codex ms 193 and the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex containing P72)\*’, *New Testament Studies*, 55(4), (2009), p519-521

<sup>410</sup> James D.G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching: a Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in relation to Pentacostalism today*, (London: SCM Press, 1970), p220

<sup>411</sup> Dunn, *Baptism*, p223

<sup>412</sup> Andrew Chester, ‘Salvation in Christian Thought’, in *The Biblical World (Vol.2)*, (ed. John Barton) (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), p326

<sup>413</sup> Chad T. Pierce, *Spirits and the Proclamation of Christ: 1 Peter 3:18-22 in Light of Sin and Punishment Traditions in Early Jewish and Christian Literature*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament II (Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 2011), p232

<sup>414</sup> J.N.D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, HTNC, (New York Harper & Row, 1969); 161; W.J. Dalton, *Christ’s Proclamation to the Spirits*, (Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico-Roma, 1989) p205 Allison, *James*, p308; Elliott, *Peter*, p678

<sup>415</sup> E.g. Schreiner, *1 Peter*, p195

<sup>416</sup> J.E. Colwell, ‘Baptism, Conscience, and the Resurrection: a Reappraisal of 1 Peter 3.21’, in *Baptism the New Testament and the Church*, ed. S.E. Porter and A.R. Cross, JSNTSup 171 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 224 argues that prayer and promise are in the background here.

Peter's concluding words is that this opportunity is possible through the resurrection of Jesus (as v18).

Does Peter here claim that Jesus's resurrection provides the opportunity for one to be saved, which is actually through their baptism? Or, to phrase it more negatively, if one dismisses the opportunity to be baptized (an opportunity afforded to them by the resurrection) will they fail to be saved? If so, this would perhaps be unique among NT writings (the closest argument would be Acts 2.38; 22.16, or Mk.16.16- a likely interpolation).<sup>417</sup> However, it is difficult for the reader to avoid such a conclusion. In my view, many interpreters have not given the weight to this clause that it deserves. Thus, Schreiner flatly denies "...any sense that the physical act of baptism saves..."<sup>418</sup> It is true that baptism, for Peter, is not about the washing, but is rather about a "pledge". However, if one is not baptized, then one similarly does not have the ability to perform such a pledge. If the pledge can be performed without baptism, then what would be the point of baptism? It would be redundant. Mcknight responds that all Christians at this time would have been baptized, and so the text actually teaches that all believers are saved, but this is speculative and improbable.<sup>419</sup>

So Peter does apparently elevate the importance of this act. I am not persuaded we have as of yet reached a completely satisfying explanation for this verse. Because the phrase is apparently so unique at this point in the first century, it may be prudent to follow the principle "hard cases make bad laws" and not put too much soteriological weight on it.<sup>420</sup> Still, it is difficult to be confident that Peter here does not teach the necessity of baptism for salvation. This may have been the catalyst for some later teachings concerning the necessity of baptism (i.e. Tert. Bap.

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<sup>417</sup> For baptism as not necessary for salvation in Mark, see Kirsten Marie Hartvigsen, 'Matthew 28:9-20 and Mark 16:9-20: Differing Ways of Relating Baptism to the Joint Mission of God, John the Baptist, Jesus, and their Adherents', in *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism: Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity*, Edited by David Hellholm, Tor Vegge, Øyvind Norderval, Christer Hellholm, (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2011), p703

<sup>418</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, p195; also Jobes, *1 Peter*, p253; Witherington, *Letters*, p192

<sup>419</sup> Mcknight, *Peter*, p215n.8

<sup>420</sup> 'Hodgens v. Hodgens (1837)', quoted in Fred Shapiro, *The Yale Book of Quotations* (Yale University Press, 2006), p614

12.1). Luther's words (about v.19-22), that it is "a more obscure passage perhaps than any other in the New Testament..." seem appropriate.<sup>421</sup>

## 6.5 SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS

1 Peter has some references to the soul (1.9, 22; 2.11; 2.25; 3.18).<sup>422</sup> Feldmeier has argued that the phrase "σωτηρίαν ψυχῶν" (cf. Jas.5.20; Contra Celsum 2.50) in 1.9 is Hellenistic in origin.<sup>423</sup> On this reading, Peter conceives of a dualistic understanding of man- a being composed of both soul and flesh, as opposed to some other scholars who have advocated translating soul as one's totality.<sup>424</sup>

Many in the Second Temple Period believed in the separate nature of the soul to the body, as demonstrated by Josephus (*Ant.* 18.14) and others (1 En.9.3, Jub.23.31, Wis.9.15; TJob 20.3, 4 Macc.13.13 perhaps most significantly Philo *Ebr.*111).<sup>425</sup> This dualistic conception is the likely meaning of NT texts like Matt.10.28<sup>426</sup>; 1 Thess.5.23; 3 John 1.2. On the other hand, Peter does indeed speak of "ὁκτὼ ψυχῶν" (3.20) who are saved from the flood. This is referring to physical persons: at this point the meaning is certainly not dualistic. So should we conclude Peter uses the word in different ways in the same letter? How might we judge the more probable reading for 1.9? Feldmeier does so by juxtaposing the soul language with that of "flesh" (1.24; 3.18; 4.1, 6).<sup>427</sup> Perhaps this would rule out the flesh being saved. However, Peter himself juxtaposes flesh, not with soul, but with spirit (3.18).<sup>428</sup> Why would this be the case on Feldmeier's reading? One answer could be that spirit and soul have roughly the same meaning to our author. It seems to me that both readings are plausible, but I would agree that Feldmeier is probably correct. Given

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<sup>421</sup> Martin Luther, *Peter and Jude*, p166

<sup>422</sup> For soul in the NT, Matt.10.28; 11.29; Mk.12.30; Lk.1.46; Lk.10.27; 12.20; Jn.12.27; Acts 2.27, 41, 43; 3.23; 7.14; 1 Thess.5.23; Heb.4.12, 6.19; 10. 38, 39; 13.17; Jas. 1.21; 5.20; 3 Jn. 1.2; Rev. 6.9; 18.13, 14; 20.4.

<sup>423</sup> Feldmeier, *Peter*, p88

<sup>424</sup> As argued by G. Dautzenberg, 'Sótéria Psychōn (1 Petr 1,9)', *BZ.NF*8 (1964); Green, *Peter*, p263

<sup>425</sup> Robert L. Calvin, *New Existence and Righteous Living: Colossians and 1 Peter in Conversation with 4QInstruction and the Hodayot*, BZNW: (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2013), p58

<sup>426</sup> W.D. Davies, Dale C. Allison Jr, *Matthew 8-18*, (London & New York: T & T Clark, 1991), p206

<sup>427</sup> Feldmeier, *Peter*, p91

<sup>428</sup> For the view that 3.18 is not dualistic, see Robert J. Karris, *A Symphony of New Testament Hymns*, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), p149

that our author is most likely a Hellenistic Jew, and given that these phrases have such consistent and close parallels in Hellenistic Judaism that speak to dualism it seems to be a safe bet.

Whatever the situation may be, the author makes one thing clear: the point of faith is to make sure one achieves salvation. Faith is not chiefly intellectual assent, or the opposite of reason, but rather steadfast hope in God's promise to save the Christians from his judgement, whether on this earth or in the eschaton, a point to which I now turn.

## 7. JUDGEMENT IN 1 PETER

### 7.1. Historical Background to Judgement Language

The idea of after-life was common in the ancient world: “der ganzen alten welt ist die Vorstellung geläufig, daß die Toten in bestimmten Räumen des Kosmos, vor allem in einer Unterwelt, weiterexistieren.”<sup>429</sup> After a person dies, from the perspective of many within Second Temple Judaism, they will face the judgement (1 Pet. Rom. 2.6; 2 Cor. 5.10) of God (though not always immediately).<sup>430</sup> Some believed this would come at the arrival of the Messiah (4. Ez. 12.32).<sup>431</sup> Righteous persons commonly will go to heaven, and unrighteous persons will go to hell (Isa.66.24; Matt.3.12; 18.18), or be annihilated (1QS4.12-14; cf. 2 Thess.1.9).<sup>432</sup> This judgement is typically pictured as being on the basis of the works one has performed (Matt.25.31-46;

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<sup>429</sup> Goppelt, *Petrusbrief*, p251

<sup>430</sup> This belief appears to have arose in the Second Temple period (i.e. alien to the Israelites), and not held before the sixth century, Richard Bauckham, *The Jewish World Around the New Testament*, WUNT, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), p245. For more on judgement in the NT, see Jn.5.22, 30; 8.50; 12.47, 48; 16.11; Acts 7.7; 10.42; 17.31; Rom.2.12, 16; 3.6; 1 Cor.4.4; 5.13; 6.2, 3; 1 Cor.11.32; 2 Tim.4.1; 4.8; Heb.10.30; 13.4; Jas.2.12; 4.12; Rev.6.10; 11.18.

<sup>431</sup> Markus Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity*, WUNT II (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1990), p140

<sup>432</sup> Philip R. Davies, ‘Death, Resurrection, and Life after Death in the Qumran Scrolls’, in *Judaism in Late Antiquity 4. Death, Life-After-Death, Resurrection and The World-to-Come in the Judaisms of Antiquity*, Edited by Alan J. Avery-Peck and Jacob Neusner, (Leiden: Brill, 1999), p199. The noun in 2 Thessalonians is ὄλεθρος, which is often translated as destruction, cf. 1 Cor.5.5; 1 Thess.5.3; 1 Tim.6.9. I am agnostic as to the author's use of the term.

Rom.2.6; 1 Pet.1.17; Rev.18.6; Wis.4.20; Sir.16.12; 2 Esdr. 7.35; 8.33;14.35), and can sometimes be tailored to “make the punishment fit the crime” (Sifre Num 18; Apoc.Pet [B].22).<sup>433</sup> Angels are also subject to judgement, and sometimes they are fought.<sup>434</sup> There is no clear-cut figure as to numbers of people saved versus people damned, but most NT sources appear to indicate that the latter will outnumber the former (Matt.7.14; 22.14), often describing the righteous as a remnant (Rom.11.5; cf. 2 Esdr.12.34).<sup>435</sup>

There is some divergence as to when, exactly, these punishments and rewards will be meted out.<sup>436</sup> Some sources say it will happen immediately after one dies, and some sources indicate that it will be sometime in the future. The dualistic pattern, though, is fairly widespread. I argue that Peter fits within this general pattern. On Peter’s view, those who remain in God’s covenant will be saved. Where does he fit specifically on this rather broad spectrum concerning judgement? Peter mostly conceives of salvation as a future event, to be revealed at the “last time” (1.6),<sup>437</sup> when Jesus will be revealed (1.13), but it is a process that is also being presently received (1.9).

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<sup>433</sup> Quote from, Paul Foster, ‘The Open Hell: a Study of the Apocalypse of Peter’, in *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, edited by Kevin Sullivan, Jonathan Knight, (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016), p89

<sup>434</sup> “The mythical representation of Christ’s redemption as a victorious battle over hostile evil spirits is central to New Testament, ‘W.J Dalton, Interpretation and Tradition: An Example from 1 Peter’, *Gregorianum*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (1968), p36

<sup>435</sup> Cf. Dale C. Allison Jr., *The Sermon on the Mount: Inspiring the Moral Imagination*, (New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999), p164 “... such a view would not have been foreign to the first century; see, e.g., 4 Ezra 7:47-51; 2 Bar. 48:43; Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 97b.”

<sup>436</sup> Richard Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish & Christian Apocalypses*, (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p34; for rewards in the NT, Matt.5.12; 6.1, 2, 4; 6.16,18; 10.41; Mk.9.41; Lk.6.23, 35; Col. 3.24; Heb.11.6; 2 Jn.1.8 for punishment, see Matt.5.22, 29, 30; 10.28; 18.9; 23.33; Mk. 9. 43, 45, 47; Lk.12.5; 2 Pet. 2.4.

<sup>437</sup> Martin examines ἀγαλλιᾶσθε (Present, Indicative, Middle), in 1.6 and 1.8, delineating three options for translation 1) the present meaning: “you are rejoicing” 2) future meaning “you will rejoice”, and 3) imperatival meaning: rejoice! Calvin suggested the first, Pseudo-Oecumenius the second and Augustine the third. (p307) Martin then translates v6 as “at which end time you will rejoice...”, and v8 as “...you will rejoice with joy unspeakable.” (p312) .Troy Martin, ‘The Present Indicative in the Eschatological Statements of 1 Peter 1:6, 8’, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 111, No. 2 (Summer, 1992)

So, there is a present and a future aspect to salvation in 1 Peter.<sup>438</sup> Jesus's coming at the end time is often in Christian literature (Rev.19.11), and may reflect an influence from the notion of a Son of Man.

God will be the judge, and at that momentous occasion even the gentiles will glorify him (2.12). The portrayal of God as judge is common in apocalyptic literature of the era (Apoc.Pet.[B].2).<sup>439</sup> At this time, gentiles are often spoken of as turning away from their idols. Sometimes God rejects them, and other times some are accepted as righteous by God, but the notion of God's covenant community being separate from gentiles in general is fairly consistent. At the time of judgement, all will have to give an account to God- the living and the dead (4.5). We see the notion of weighing of deeds in some texts at this point (T.Ab.1.12). Judgement in 1.17 is on the basis of ones work (ἔργον). This is distinctly different to the sense in 4 Ez.8.33 whereby righteous persons have no need of grace, and merely earn their rewards.<sup>440</sup> Peter mixes the ideas of grace (1.23) and works, similar to a formulation we see in 1QS 2.2-8, which leads to eternal life (1QS 4.7).<sup>441</sup> Peter emphasizes both grace and works, and perhaps it would be wise to not attempt to reconcile the two thoughts, even though it may appear unusual to us. When will these events take place?

## 7.2. Judgement Language in 1 Peter

Peter's answer is that this end-time is "near" (4.7), and even that a kind of judgement already "has come" (4.17).<sup>442</sup> The end-time has been argued by some scholars to have been mostly

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<sup>438</sup> Described by Himes as "already-not-yet" P.A., Himes, *A foreknown Destiny for the Socially Destitute: An Examination of 1 Peter's Concept of Foreknowledge in the Establishment of Social-Spiritual Identity*, (PhD Diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013), p211

<sup>439</sup> Greg Carey, 'Early Christian Apocalyptic Rhetoric', in *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p229  
edited by John J. Collins p229

<sup>440</sup> Barry D. Smith, *The Tension Between God as Righteous Judge and as Merciful in Early Judaism*, (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America), p65

<sup>441</sup> Matthew J. Goff, *4QInstruction*, (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), p114

<sup>442</sup> Concerning scarcely saved in 4.19 Calvin said this only refers to "arduous difficulties" at present, not at the future judgement. Calvin, *Commentaries*, p141

metaphorical for NT writers, but for Peter the eschaton was imminent.<sup>443</sup> From the time of the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD (Mk.13.2) to at least the time of Bar Kochba, Jewish apocalyptic thought was increasingly popular.<sup>444</sup> Many believed these tumultuous events would bring about the end of the world. When we place Peter within this context, which makes a good deal of sense historically, much of his language becomes intelligible. Indeed, as Barclay has written, “from beginning to end of the letter the Second Coming is in the forefront of the writer’s mind.”<sup>445</sup>

What is the judgement that “has come” on the Petrine community (4.17)? This is perhaps related to a “final judgement.”<sup>446</sup> Some have suggested that present suffering means that the righteous will avoid suffering in the future (1 Cor. 11.32, cf. Sifré to Deuteronomy XLIII.III.7–8):<sup>447</sup>

*“The general Jewish view of the fate of individuals was that being in the covenant and atoning for sins guaranteed a life in the world to come. Since punishment (that is, suffering) and death atone, and since all people suffer and die, then all Jews who accept the covenant and remain in it will enter the world to come....”*<sup>448</sup>

What, specifically, is such suffering that 1 Peter is “permeated” by?<sup>449</sup> Most interpreters have argued that the suffering does not amount to official persecution, but some have argued contrariwise.<sup>450</sup> It has been suggested that the suffering imparted to the Christians, by non-

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<sup>443</sup> N.T. Wright, *Paul*, 1049

<sup>444</sup> Gerbern S. Oegema, *Apocalyptic Interpretation of the Bible: Apocalypticism and Biblical Interpretation in Early Judaism, the Apostle Paul, the Historical Jesus, and their Reception History*, (London & New York: T & T Clark International, 2012), p133

<sup>445</sup> William Barclay, *At the Last Trumpet: Jesus Christ and the End of Time*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), p69

<sup>446</sup> Michaels argued, for example, that 1 Pet3.7 is similar in logic to 2 Macc.6.14 (p399), in that “those who suffer for the sake of righteousness will fare ‘better’ in the last judgement than those who suffer for their evil deeds” (p395). J Ramsey Michaels, ‘Eschatology in 1 Peter 3:17’, *New Testament Studies*. 13, 4, (July 1967), 394-401

<sup>447</sup> κρινόμενοι δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου παιδευόμεθα, ἵνα μὴ σὺν τῷ κόσμῳ κατακριθῶμεν (1 Cor.11.32)

<sup>448</sup> E.P Sanders, *Paul: the Apostle’s Life, Letters, and Thought*, (Fortress, 2015),p46

<sup>449</sup> Charles H. Talbert, *Learning through Suffering: The Educational Value of Suffering in the New Testament and its Milieu*, (The Liturgical Press, 1991), p56

<sup>450</sup> David Horrell, ‘Review: Reinhard Feldmeier, *The First Letter of Peter* (trans. Peter H. Davids; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008’, *The Expository Times*, 2009, Vol.120(10), pp.512; It has been argued that the letter Salvation in 1 Peter

Christians,<sup>451</sup> was possibly financial,<sup>452</sup> and emotional (in the historical context being rejected by one's family had devastating consequences).<sup>453</sup> I have argued that the suffering (above, chapter six) is general, taken from a common store of Christian tradition. Whatever the case, much of the problems with non-Christians stems from the fact that they are ignorant (1.14; 2.15), because Christ is invisible. Even the term "Christian" seems at first to have been employed in a derogatory manner.<sup>454</sup> However, as Wright notes, when they suffer for being "Christians", Jesus is still revered, because they are "...giving him his royal title".<sup>455</sup> The Christians former desires are a results of their "ignorance", and the devil (synonymous with Satan), will endeavor to stop their faith.<sup>456</sup> Thus, this specific "judgement" in 4.17 probably stems from hostile outsiders and is not mainly related to the final judgement.

### 7.3. Rewards

Peter says that the righteous are to inherit life (3.7; cf. 1 Cor.15.52; 1 Cor.9.25),<sup>457</sup> and if they live ethically they will receive a blessing (3.9; cf. Rom.12.17) and a crown that never fades (5.4, cf. 1 Cor.9.25; Jas.1.12; Rev.2.10; 1QS 4.6; Ode 20.8; T.Benj. 4.1; T.Jud. 8.1; see also b.

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was written under the persecutions of Domitian cf. Joachim Molthagen, "Die Lage Der Christen Im Römischen Reich Nach Dem 1. Petrusbrief: Zum Problem Einer Domitianischen Verfolgung". *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 44.4 (1995), p422–458. Suffering is a central theme in 1 Peter, cf. Andrew Chester, Ralph P. Martin, *The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p89, indeed "Auf den ersten Petrusbrief konzentriert sich mehr als ein Viertel der πᾶσχω- und πάθημα-Belege des Neuen Testaments", Karl-Heinrich Ostmeyer, 'Das Verständnis des Leidens bei Philo und im ersten Petrustbrief', in *Philo und das Neue Testament*, edited by Karl Wilhelm Niebuhr and Roland Deines, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), p265

<sup>451</sup> Paul A. Holloway, *Coping with Prejudice: 1 Peter in Social-Psychological Perspective*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), p16

<sup>452</sup> David F. Watson, 'Spiritual Sobriety in 1 Peter', *The Expository Times* 122(11), p540

<sup>453</sup> Watson, *Spiritual*, p540

<sup>454</sup> Watson, *Spiritual*, p541; Paul Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), p556

<sup>455</sup> N.T. Wright, *The Early Christian Letters for Everyone: James, Peter, John, and Judah*, (London: SPCK, 2011), p88

<sup>456</sup> Watson, *Spiritual*, p541; Lauri Thuren, '1 Peter and the Lion', in *Evil and the Devil*, ed. Erkki Koskenniemi, Ida Fröhlich (Bloomsbury, 2013) p142

<sup>457</sup> The language of inheritance also brings to mind Israel, particularly their inheritance of the land (Deut.12.9)

Salvation in 1 Peter



Berakhot 17a).<sup>458</sup> Probably a dominant reference here, as many have suggested, is that of an athlete at an event who first received palm fronds,<sup>459</sup> and subsequently a crown made from pale leaves.<sup>460</sup> Here, then, unlike these organic, fading leaves Peter teaches that the Christians will receive an “unfading crown.” The idea is certainly future and eschatological (“when the chief shepherd appears”), and aligns the readers with angels, who were often described as wearing crowns (Apoc.Zeph.A; 3 En. 17.8, or three crowns in T.Ab.10.9), as do the obedient in the future (with a throne in Apoc.El.1.8; 2 Bar.15.9).<sup>461</sup>

What does Peter argue when he writes that the gospel was proclaimed to the “dead” and is this related to eschatological judgement (4:6) (cf. 1 Cor.15.29)?<sup>462</sup> Various solutions have been offered. It may be that the thought is a continuation of the argument of 3.18–20, or a new thought entirely. If it’s the latter, does the text refer to the spiritually dead (Clement of Alexandria),<sup>463</sup> does it refer to a post-mortem salvation (Estius, cf. Shep.Herm.Sim.9.16),<sup>464</sup> or is it referring to

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<sup>458</sup> The NT emphasis on eschatological crowns is distinctive in the Greco-Roman world. Argument from J.R. Harrison, ‘The Fading Crown: Divine Honour and the Early Christians’, *The Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (October, 2003), p505

<sup>459</sup> David Potter, *The Victors Crown: A History of Ancient Sport from Homer to Byzantium*, (Oxford University Press, 2012), p66

<sup>460</sup> Judith Swaddling, *The Ancient Olympic Games*, (University of Texas Press Austin, 1999), p90; Elliott, *1 Peter*, p834

<sup>461</sup> For more on crowns as rewards, Daniel M. Gurtner, ‘Eschatological Rewards for the Righteous in 2 Baruch’, in *Interpreting 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: International Studies*, edited by Gabriele Boccaccini, Jason M. Zurawski, (London & New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2015), p110-111

<sup>462</sup> Incredibly helpful on this point is Taylor, arguing that there was an “early Christian conviction that salvation could be bestowed after death”. N.H Taylor, Baptism for the Dead (1 Cor 15:29)?, *Neotestamentica*, Vol. 36, No. 1/2, *Word, Sacrament, and Community: Festschrift for Professor J N Suggit* (2002), p115

<sup>463</sup> Quoted in Dalton, *Proclamation*, p62

<sup>464</sup> Quoted in Henri Decaisne, Pierre-Paul Prud'hon, Domenichino, *The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; First Published by the English College at Rheims, A.D. 1582. Translated from the Latin Vulgate: Diligently Compared With the Original Text, and other Editions in Divers Languages, with Useful Notes, Critical, Historical, Controversial, and Explanatory. Selected from the Most Eminent Commentators, and the Most Able and Judicious Critics*, (Dublin, London and Edinburgh: A. Fullerton and Co., 1852), p823

Christians who have died (Dalton).<sup>465</sup> Horrell is probably right when he argues that the dead are actually those who have died without hearing the gospel. The other solutions, as Horrell notes, don't make a good deal of contextual sense.<sup>466</sup>

Peter's thought on judgement has been influenced by apocalyptic theology, particularly the text of 1 Enoch (cf. 1 En.10.13).<sup>467</sup> Here we see the belief that unrighteous angels are being kept in a prison, presumably awaiting judgement. Jesus visits them after his death and preaches at them

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<sup>465</sup> William Joseph Dalton, *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits: A Study of 1 Peter 3*, (Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico—Roma 1989), p63

<sup>466</sup> For example, there is no "anxiety" about the fate of those who have died, like we see in 1 Thessalonians, and we may see something of a parallel text in John 5.25, Horrell, *Becoming*, p97,

<sup>467</sup> Indeed, it has been suggested that the text originally contained the word "Enoch" J.A. Cramer, '6 Exegetica et Critica, II. Het glossematisch Karakter van I. P. 3: 19-2 en 4:6,' *NieuweB* 7 (1891); for the older idea of a descent into the dead G. F.C. Frömmüller, *The Epistles General of Peter with the Epistle of Jude*, translated by J. Isidor Mombert, edited by John Peter Lange and Philip Schaff (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007), p64; one of the most detailed presentations linking 1 Peter an Enoch can be found in Bo Reicke, *The Disobedient Spirits and Christian Baptism: A Study of 1 Peter 3:19 and its Context*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005), p59-68

(3.19-20),<sup>468</sup> or potentially in an effort to save them.<sup>469</sup> This is a similar story to the one in 2 Pet.2.4, an author who, in turn, knew 1 Peter (2 Pet.3.1). Some are not persuaded by this approach, typically because they claim the references are too vague to be plausible for a reader to catch.<sup>470</sup> However, what seems vague to us may not be so in the first century, for people who interact with such texts and ideas regularly and passionately.<sup>471</sup> Moreover, this curious passage makes a great deal of sense when we look at it through the prism of 1 Enoch, so the argument has good explanatory power.

### 7.4. Punishments

Peter is not explicit about what happens to unrighteous humans after they die, though it of course may simply be the case that a sharp dichotomy between angels and dead humans is unwarranted (Matt.18.10; Acts 12.13-17: “ in first century Judaism it was commonly held that the righteous

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468 Argument fully expounded by, Dalton, *Proclamation*, p179. Some have argued Jesus is here preaching to those under the “Old Covenant” Sherman E. Johnson, ‘The Preaching to the Dead’, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (Mar., 1960), p51; Granbery, John Cowper, ‘Christological Peculiarities in the First Epistle of Peter’, *The American Journal of Theology* 14.1 (1910), p80

The most plausible alternative is Grudem -Wayne Grudem, ‘He Did not Descend into Hell: a Plea for Following Scripture Instead of the Apostle’s Creed’, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 34/1 March, 1991, Grudem’s main problems with this interpretation is that he thinks it’s reading too much into the text, expecting the readers/ hearers to be able to “read between the lines”, calling this “farfetched”, (p109-10).

Also, the context does seem to suggest that it is hostile people that are the target of Peter’s address (v.14, 16). Grudem’s thesis, instead, argues that thesis of Augustine (Christ, in spirit, was really there in the time of Noah, and preached through him) Grudem also notes that this seems to make the most sense contextually:

Noah	Peter’s Readers
Righteous Minority	Righteous Minority
Surrounded by Hostile Unbelievers	Surrounded by Hostile Unbelievers
God’s Judgement was Near	God’s Judgement is Near
Noah Witnessed Boldly	They Should Witness Boldly
Noah Was Finally Saved	They Will Finally Be Saved

Grudem, *Peter*, p231

<sup>469</sup> Hermann Gunkel, *Der Erste Brief des Petrus*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1917), p284

<sup>470</sup> Stephen Jonathan, *Grace beyond the Grave: Is Salvation Possible in the Afterlife? A Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Evaluation*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014) ,p58

<sup>471</sup> For powerful criticism of Grudem’s approach, see Pierce, *Spirits*, p14

would at the resurrection either become angels or equal to them 1 En51.4...").<sup>472</sup> So, if this is applicable, perhaps the story of angels in the φυλακή (3.19) relates to humans as well.<sup>473</sup> There is some divergence in the literature. Typically apocalyptic literature envisions the unrighteous in hell. Sometimes the righteous pray for the sinners to be forgiven, as in the Apocalypse of Zephaniah (11.1-6),<sup>474</sup> this may indicate that, before the Day of Judgement, there is some hope for forgiveness, and this could be a reasonable background for 1 Pet.4.6. This is somewhat rare in apocalyptic thought.<sup>475</sup> An interesting example is the Vision of Ezra where Ezra talks to God about the justice of sending people to Hell.<sup>476</sup> Typically, though, the unrighteous are punished eternally (T. Benj. 7.5).<sup>477</sup> Thus, one could reasonably suppose that the situation in Peter's understanding is similar, but we cannot know for certain. It is clear, though, that those outside the covenant will be judged by God.

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<sup>472</sup> A.R. C. Leaney, 'I Peter and the *Passover*: An Interpretation', *New Testament Studies* 10 (1963-64), p249; quote from Darrell D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity*, (J.C.B. Mohr, Tübingen, 1999), p126

<sup>473</sup> Anthony T. Hanson, Salvation proclaimed, pt 1: 1 Peter 3:18-22. *The Expository Times*. 93, 4, (Jan. 1982), p102 argued that Jesus visits fallen angels and men in prison.

<sup>474</sup> O. S. Wintermute, 'Apocalypse of Zephaniah,' in Charlesworth ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. I, (Hendrickson, 2009), 497-515; Richard Bauckham, *Apocalypses*, in *Justification and Variegated Nomism. Volume I: the Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, edited by D. A. Carson, Peter Thomas O'Brien, Mark A. Seifrid, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), p159

<sup>475</sup> R. Bauckham, 'The Conflict of Justice and Mercy: Attitudes to the Damned in Apocalyptic Literature,' *Apocrypha* I (1990), p 181-196

<sup>476</sup> J. R. Mueller and G. A. Robbins, 'Vision of Ezra,' in Charlesworth ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), p 581-590

<sup>477</sup> Later on, seers will go on an ascent to the heavens to see the place where the dead will be kept (2 Enoch 8-10) Bauckham, *Fate*, p33. In the Testament of Isaac he does see people actually being punished (TIsaac 5). Punishment is often described as eternal in the NT, i.e. Matt.18.8; 25.41, 46; 2 Thess 1.9; Jude 1.6, 7.

## 8. MEMORY AND DECEPTION IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

*So obscure are the greatest events, as some take for granted any hearsay, whatever its source, others turn truth into falsehood, and both errors find encouragement with posterity-* Tacitus, *Annals*, 3.18-22<sup>478</sup>

### 8.1. How did Peter acquire his Soteriological Teaching?

Williams's work offers a discussion, following the examination of the relevant verses, detailing how his results work within modern theological discussions.<sup>479</sup> Instead, I have endeavored to ask throughout this essay, and now more particularly, how Peter came to his soteriological conclusions from a *historical* point of view? In this respect, it may be, as some have supposed, that the work is the product of eye-witness testimony (Peter/Cephas),<sup>480</sup> a Petrine Circle,<sup>481</sup> the work of Silvanus<sup>482</sup>, or even Mark.<sup>483</sup> Here, perhaps, we could draw on the increasing literature scholars are producing on the reliability, or otherwise, of the human memory to retain precise data over extended periods. The Criteria of Authenticity have come under increasing scrutiny particularly through these studies, and some scholars are reevaluating their understandings of the historical Jesus in response.<sup>484</sup> Perhaps this is necessary in 1 Peter.

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<sup>478</sup> Tacitus, *The Annals*, Translated by Alfred John Church and William Jackson Brodribb, (Dover, 2006), p112

<sup>479</sup> Williams, *Salvation*, p229- 272

<sup>480</sup> I agree with Allison that Peter and Cephas are the same person Dale C. Allison Jr, 'Peter and Cephas: one and the same', *Journal Of Biblical Literature* (September 1992);111(3):489-495

<sup>481</sup> Patrick Chatelion Counet 'Pseudepigraphy and the Petrine school: spirit and tradition in 1 and 2 Peter and Jude', *Hervormde Teologiese Studies*, 62(2), (2006), p403-424

<sup>482</sup> W. Bornemann, 'Der erste Petrusbrief — eine Taufrede des Silvanus?', *ZNW*19 (1919/20); Metzger suggests a collaboration between Silvanus and Peter in Bruce M. Metzger, *Apostolic Letters of Faith, Hope, and Love: Galatians, 1 Peter, and 1 John*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006), p42

<sup>483</sup> Jongyoon Moon, *Mark as Contributive Amanuensis of 1 Peter?* (Lit Verlag, 2009), p127

<sup>484</sup> For example, Chris Keith, Anthony Le Donne (eds.), *Jesus, Criteria, and the Demise of Authenticity*, (London: T & T Clark International, 2012)

If the writer(s) of the text had specific instruction from the Apostle Peter, or Jesus, we might judge the reliability of the soteriological tradition to be higher than it would be otherwise.<sup>485</sup> Other scholars talk about 1 Peter being dependent on, or influencing other Christian traditions,<sup>486</sup> and some reference 1 Peter as part of early Christian catechism.<sup>487</sup> This is a worthy question, though I do not see that we have enough evidence at present to make any exact pronouncements about what this might look like. It seems likely that 1 Peter does reflect early tradition that was widespread, and included baptismal teaching, and teaching about end-time reward.<sup>488</sup> Peter also shares many exegetical practices with other NT writers.<sup>489</sup> Beyond that, we may never have enough data to extrapolate further about what these earlier catechisms looked like.

I do not have the space here to explore the idea fully (the idea should be researched further in greater detail) but it seems to me that one other way to explain the soteriological thought of

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<sup>485</sup> Argued by Gundry, i.e. “only Petrine authorship of the epistle and authenticity of the gospel-passages adequately account for the Petrine pattern of the verba Christi.” Robert H. Gundry, ‘Verba Christi in 1 Peter: their implications concerning the authorship of 1 Peter and the authenticity of the gospel tradition’, *New Testament Studies*. 13, 4, (July 1967), p350

<sup>486</sup> Clarke, W. K. Lowther, ‘The First Epistle of St Peter and the Odes of Solomon’, *The Journal of Theological Studies* 15.57 (1913) argues that 1 Peter influenced the Odes of Solomon; Duane F. Watson, *Early Jesus Tradition in 1 Peter 3.18-22, James, 1 & 2 Peter, and Early Jesus Traditions*, edited by Alicia J. Batten, John S. Kloppenborg, (Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), p151; Rainer Metzner, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums im 1. Petrusbrief: Studien zum traditionsgeschichtlichen und theologischen Einfluß des 1. Evangeliums auf den 1. Petrusbrief*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), p33; Ramsay has suggested that Peter (2.25) is dependent on Mark’s gospel (Mk.14.27) J. Ramsey Michaels, St. Peter’s Passion: the Passion Narrative in 1 Peter. *Word & World*. 24, 4, (Sept. 2004), p393

<sup>487</sup> Philip Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Catechism: A Study in the Epistles*, (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press 1940), 28; Horrell acknowledges the links between 1 Peter and the Pauline corpus, as well as gospel traditions, and agrees that it is something of “... a mosaic of other texts...” David G. Horrell, *Becoming Christian: Essays on 1 Peter and the Making of Christian Identity* (London & New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), p28

<sup>488</sup> Argued by J.H. Elliott, ‘Ministry and Church Order in the NT: a Traditio-Historical Analysis (1 Pt 5,1- 5 & plls)’, *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (July 1970), p390

<sup>489</sup> Fika J van Rensburg, and Steve Moyise, ‘Isaiah in 1 Peter 3:13-17: Applying Intertextuality to the study of the Old Testament in the New’, *Scriptura* 80 (2002), p277

Peter, that is often overlooked, is to probe whether or not he is deceptive.<sup>490</sup> In Allison's major work on Jesus and memory<sup>491</sup> he raises the possibility of deliberate fiction as a way of explaining early Christian data but does not press the matter further, saying "I do not wish to explore any of those issues, interesting and important as they are."<sup>492</sup> Miller's treatment of the trustworthiness of Peter is similarly brusque.<sup>493</sup> It seems to me that if we are to evaluate the historical value of the soteriological data, this is one of the areas we must necessarily press further.

Peter claims to be an eyewitness to the events of Jesus's death (5.1).<sup>494</sup> Perhaps that is true, and perhaps it is not. It certainly seems likely that much of the material in Peter (and in James) was believed to have come from Jesus, and the idea seems plausible.<sup>495</sup> For example, Watson has argued that 1 Peter incorporates the Jesus tradition "love your enemies". There also may have been a shared tradition with Matthew (or a dependence)<sup>496</sup> but no relation to Q is seen.<sup>497</sup>

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<sup>490</sup> This topic has been thoroughly explored by others in the area of classics, e.g. Christopher Gill and T. P. Wiseman (eds.), *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1993), but is less common in Biblical Studies.

Another possible explanation may be that the early Christians took the whole story of Jesus as a parable, and not necessarily true (cf. *b.B. Bat.* 15a), but there is no explicit evidence to suggest this is plausible.

<sup>491</sup> Dale C. Allison Jr. *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination and History*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010)

<sup>492</sup> Allison, *Constructing*, p456. It is perhaps relevant to note that Dibelius believed that 1 Peter was not a real letter: Martin Dibelius, *a Fresh approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature*, International Library of Christian Knowledge (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936)

<sup>493</sup> In fact, he rules out *any* possible "malice"; Donald G. Miller, *On This Rock: a Commentary on First Peter*, (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 1993), p9

<sup>494</sup> Against this interpretation, see Elliott, *Peter*, p818-820.

<sup>495</sup> James D.G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, p183; Duane F. Watson, *Early Jesus Tradition in 1 Peter 3.18-22, James, 1 & 2 Peter, and Early Jesus Traditions*, edited by Alicia J. Batten, John S. Kloppenborg, (London & New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015) discusses Jesus's words of loving one's enemies in 1 Peter, p151

<sup>496</sup> As argued by Rainer Metzner, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums, im 1. Petrusbrief. Studien zum traditionsgeschichtlichen und theologischen Einfluss des 1. Evangeliums auf den 1. Petrusbrief*, WUNT 2 74, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995). This thesis has not proved convincing- see Peter H. Davids' review in *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (April 1997), p388

<sup>497</sup> Duane F. Watson, 'Early Jesus Tradition in 1 Peter 3.18-22', in *James, 1 & 2 Peter, and Early Jesus Traditions*, edited by Alicia J. Batten, John S. Kloppenborg, (London & New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015)

If modern studies of memory have greatly influenced our understanding of Christian traditions, why should we not draw on modern psychological studies of deception, in addition to studies of ancient historiography?<sup>498</sup> Before we can make a judgement as to whether or not one might be *able* to remember some tradition(s), as of course we should, it might be worth pursuing whether one might be *willing* to do so. Perhaps we will uncover that it was not as important in the ancient world as it is today?<sup>499</sup>

## 8.2. Truth in the Ancient World

The notion of truth had a high premium in Ancient Greece (Od. 14.192-359; Aeschin. 2 8; Hes. Th. 207; Xen. Cyrop. 1.6.23). Here we might delineate some different kinds of truth- tales, oracles, and historical sources. Many Greeks had clear ways of presenting stories so that their listeners understood them to be an *ἀίτιος* (Hesiod, Works and Days 18).<sup>500</sup> Miraculous oracles, such as that at Delphi, seem to have often been understood as reliably accurate (Hyp. *Defence of Euxenippus*, 4 24; Arist. Rh. 2.23. 12). Thucydides' summation of his historical method was to say that "my practice has been to make the speakers say what in my opinion was demanded of them by the various occasions—or what in my opinion they had to say on the various occasions—of course adhering as closely as possible to the general sense of what was really said,"

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<sup>498</sup> In addition to Allison, for example, Anthony Le Donne, *The Historiographical Jesus: Memory, Typology, and the Son of David*, (Waco, Tex: Baylor University Press, 2009); Rafael Rodriguez, *Structuring Early Christian Memory: Jesus in Tradition, Performance and Text*, (London: T & T Clark, 2010); a more popular approach is Bart D. Ehrman, *Jesus before the Gospels: How the Early Christians Remembered, Changed, and Invented Their Stories of the Savior*, (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2016).

<sup>499</sup> I.e. "Modern Western concepts of writing and interpretation tend to stress authorial intent, locating the primary locus of a text's meaning in the aims of its author. " – Annette Yoshiko Reed, 'Pseudepigraphy, Authorship, and 'the Bible' in Late Antiquity', in *The Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity: Proceedings of the Montreal Colloquium in Honour of Charles Kannengieser: 11-13 October 2006*, edited by Lorenzo DiTommaso, Lucian Turcescu, (Leiden: Brill, 2008), p474; Similarly: "by 1<sup>st</sup> century standards, it wouldn't feel fictional, even if the letter is pseudonymous". B.G.T, Howe, *Metaphor and meaning in Christian Moral Discourse: The Role of conceptual Metaphor in the Creation of Meaning in Christian moral discourse, with 1 Peter as Exemplar*, (PhD Diss., Graduate Theological Union, 2003), p212n.30

<sup>500</sup> E.L Bowie, 'Lies, Fiction and Slander in Early Greek Poetry', in Christopher Gill and T. P. Wiseman (eds.), *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1993), p3



(*Hist.*1.22.1).<sup>501</sup> Polybius endeavored to change the general trend of exaggeration in writers, but it is not clear how much effect this had.<sup>502</sup> In Rome, Seneca famously decried the lies of historians.<sup>503</sup> Grant's summation of the matter is that ancient writers "sometimes blur (as we still do today) the barrier between fact and fiction".<sup>504</sup>

The people of Israel, and many Jews, had clear written standards on lying (Ex.20.16; Ode 20.6; Ps.Phi.44.7; Ps.Phoc.7). Some thought the penalty should be death (Ahiqar 134), some advised a lashing (mMak 1:3) and Jesus intensified the command not to swear falsely (Matt.5.33-37; cf. Lev.19.12).<sup>505</sup>

### 8.3. Psychological Research on Deception

What does modern research on the matter have to teach us? Lying extends into the animal kingdom, as the trait is found in Gorillas.<sup>506</sup> Infants are thought to be able to lie to some degree,<sup>507</sup> and in a single interaction with a romantic partner the average adult human lies three times.<sup>508</sup> One psychologist has recorded that in a ten minute conversation between unacquainted individual respondents also lied an average of three times.<sup>509</sup> Other studies conclude that people

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<sup>501</sup> Quoted in Frank W. Walbank, *Selected Papers: Studies in Greek and Roman History and Historiography*, (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p244

<sup>502</sup> John Marincola 'Polybius, Phylarchus, and "tragic history"', in *Polybius and His World: Essays in Memory of F.W. Walbank*, Edited by Bruce Gibson, Thomas Harrison, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p77

<sup>503</sup> Quoted in Loveday Alexander, *Acts in its Ancient Literary Context*, (London: T & T Clark, 2007), p142 See a full discussion in Samuel Byrskog, *Story as History - History as Story: The Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient Oral History*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), p201

<sup>504</sup> Michael Grant, *Greek & Roman Historians: Information and Misinformation*, (New York: Routledge, 1995), p3

<sup>505</sup> Charles H. Talbert, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount: Character Formation and Decision Making in Matthew 5-7*, (South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), p84

<sup>506</sup> H. Lyn Miles, *How Can I Tell a Lie? Apes, Language, and the Problem of Deception*, in, *Deception: Perspectives on Human and Nonhuman Deceit*, (ed. Robert W. Mitchell, Nicholas S. Thompson) (State University of New York Press, 1986), p250

<sup>507</sup> Suzanne Hala, *The Development of Social Cognition*, (East Sussex: Psychology Press, 1997), p10

<sup>508</sup> Pamela Meyer, *Liespotting: Proven Techniques to Detect Deception*, (New York, NY: St. Martins Press, 2010), p32

<sup>509</sup> Robert Feldman, *Liar: The Truth About Lying*, (New York, NY: Virgin Books, 2009), p14

tell “...one lie in every five of their social interactions,”<sup>510</sup> or that 44 % of past employment information on resumes is deceptive.<sup>511</sup> Importantly, some research has linked religious belief among “fourth and fifth year secondary school pupils” positively with “Lie scale scores” (sic).<sup>512</sup> It is consensus in the psychological literature that most humans lie regularly, but many NT scholars do not discuss this as a serious *possible* explanation for data. *A priori* one can easily imagine why taking the name and authority of a senior figure such as Peter would be a tempting lie. Given the plethora of documents attributed to “Peter” in the ancient world, we can see this temptation sometimes proved to be too strong.<sup>513</sup>

#### 8.4. Deception in the Early Christian World

If the NT has dozens of different books and many different authors, it would therefore be quite alarming if it did not contain *any* lies whatsoever. If it does, however, this may well significantly impact the quality of the soteriological tradition we have. As an example, it seems that the story of Jesus in 3.18-20 (integral to Peter’s argument on baptism) makes its first appearance in the tradition there. Could it be invented? There certainly could not have been any eyewitnesses to this event. It cannot have been remembered by anyone. Moreover, the story presents Jesus in a very authoritative and attractive light. One could legitimately posit a psychological or religious explanation- a divine intervention perhaps (a claim Peter does not himself make), but this is probably not the simplest historical solution. Should we conclude that it is a lie? It is at least a serious and often overlooked possibility. Perhaps it would be fruitful to examine how Christians viewed their own writings, lest we become guilty of imposing modern standards on to these ancient writers.

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<sup>510</sup> D.E. Anderson, M.E. Ansfield, & B.M. DePaulo, *Deception in Relationships*, in, *The Social Context of Nonverbal Behavior*, Edited by Pierre Philippot, Robert S. Feldman, Erik J. Coats, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p378

<sup>511</sup> B. Weiss and R.S. Feldman, ‘Looking Good and Lying to Do It: Deception as an Impression Management Strategy in Job Interviews’, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 36, (2006), p1072

<sup>512</sup> Leslie J. Francis, Paul R. Pearson, and William Kay, ‘Are Religious Children Bigger Liars?’, *Psychological Reports* 52 (1983), p551-552

<sup>513</sup> On this point, see V. Saxer, ‘Peter’, in *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, Translated and Edited by Angelo Di Berardino, Vol.2, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p675-677

Some early Christians thought the gospels were based on eyewitness testimony (Justin, *Dial.*106) and some recognised that the Gospels did not necessarily agree with one another (Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.2), or even that the Bible might be allegorical (Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, 12.31) but they nevertheless accepted them to be true. The early Christian community seem unanimous in their intolerance of lies (Gos.Thom.6; Ep. Diog.4.3), and the NT writers certainly distinguished their own writings from lies (Matt.28.11-15, Luke 24.11; Gal.1.20; 2 Pet.1.16 1 Jn.1.6; Tit.1.2; 2 Pet.1.16). Forgeries were known to the Christians (2 Thess.2.2; *Apol.ad.Const.*19-21) and some letters emphasize their own legitimate authorship strongly (Col.4.18).<sup>514</sup> 1 Peter, similarly, seems to be offered to us as though it is an authentic letter of Peter.

### 8.5. Authorship and Deception

Peter wrote towards the end of the first century, where the average life expectancy in the first century was 25 (owing to deaths in infancy), but it was relatively rare for adults to live beyond their sixties.<sup>515</sup> Where does that leave us? The likelihood that a contemporary of Jesus (born circa 5 B.CE),<sup>516</sup> survived the revolt against Rome (70 CE), and was alive at the time 1 Peter was written seems slim<sup>517</sup> (in addition to the elevated Greek that seems out of place had Peter written it, cf. Acts 4.13).<sup>518</sup> Bar Ilan has argued that the literacy rate in Israel was (at most) 3 percent: to

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<sup>514</sup> Bart D. Ehrman, *Forgery and Counter-Forgery: The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemics*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p75

<sup>515</sup> John M.G. Barclay, *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews*, WUNT, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), p259; see also

T.G. Parkin, *Demography and Roman Society*, (Baltimore, John Hopkins, 1992), p144

<sup>516</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, 'The Chronology of Jesus', in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, Edited by Stanley E. Porter, Tom Holmén, Vol.1 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p2328

<sup>517</sup> Against this view, see W.M. Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire: Before A.D. 170*, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1893)

<sup>518</sup> Jobes disputes this, claiming that the "syntax of 1 Peter indicates an author whose first language was not Greek." Karen H. Jobes, 'The Syntax of 1 Peter: Just How Good is the Greek?', *Bulletin for Biblical Research*. 13, 2, (2003), p172. However, Peter can have been imitating a Semitic style, or may be part of a community who speak more than just Greek, influencing his style. At any rate, the position is only that it's simpler to suppose that Jesus's disciple Peter probably did not write the letter, not that he definitively cannot have. Moreover, as Best says "unusual verbal reminiscences of the existing Greek text of the Gospels would suggest dependence of the author Salvation in 1 Peter

imagine Peter composed the letter himself is improbable.<sup>519</sup> Josephus, even, acknowledges that he has trouble writing Greek, and needs assistance (*Against Apion*, 1.9).<sup>520</sup> Do we have grounds to imagine the work is based on eye-witness testimony? My supposition is that Peter is likely not being truthful when he claims to be an eyewitness (5.1).<sup>521</sup> I do not think we should be as confident as Beare that “there can be no possible doubt that Peter is a pseudonym”, but it is probably so.<sup>522</sup> However, I disagree that “...da der apostel begriff im ganzen brief nur in der Absenderangabe vorkommt, ist eine genaue Aussage uber den sinn dieser selbstbezeichnung schwierig.”<sup>523</sup> Peter claims to have witnessed the suffering of Jesus, 2 Peter treats him as authoritative (3.1),<sup>524</sup> and so did the early church (Eusebius, *E.H*3.3).

Still, much of Peter’s work is dependent on Ephesians, an author who is probably not being truthful when he claims to be Paul (who himself was not an eyewitness to the earthly Jesus).<sup>525</sup>

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on the gospel tradition rather than directly on the teaching of Jesus himself.” Ernest Best, ‘1 Peter and the Gospel Tradition’, *New Testament Studies*. 16, 2, (Jan. 1970), p95. This would have to rule out Jesus’s disciple Peter.

<sup>519</sup> M. Bar-Ilan, ‘Illiteracy in the Land of Israel in the First Centuries C.E.’, in vol. 2 of *Essays in the Social Scientific Study of Judaism and Jewish Society*, ed. S. Fishbane, S. Schoenfeld, and A. Goldschlaeger (New York: Ktav, 1992)p55; see also Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine*, Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 81, (Tübingen: Mohr Sibeck, 2001), p35

<sup>520</sup> Argument from Bart Ehrman, *Forged: Writing in the Name of God- Why the Bible’s Authors are Not Who We Think They Are*, (NY: Harper Collins, 2011), p241

<sup>521</sup> “The latter self-description, at face value, suggests an eyewitness...”: Larry R. Helyer, *The Life and Witness of Peter*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), p107

<sup>522</sup> F.W. Beare , *The First Epistle of Peter*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), p44; he goes on to argue, “it is certainly true that if the name ‘Peter’ did not stand at the head of the Epistle, it would never have occurred to anyone to suggest him as the author” (p44).

<sup>523</sup> Schrage, *Die "Katholischen" Briefe*, p67

<sup>524</sup> Bigg, *Peter*, p288; “Even though II Peter is virtually unanimously judged pseudonymous, and written possibly twenty-five years after the epistle, its author also seems to be familiar with at least parts of the Petrine tradition” B. Bauman-Martin, *Intertextuality and the Haustafel in I Peter*, (University of California, Irvine, 1997), p166. Similar sentiments are found in W.F Cleary, *Knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Pet 1:3-11 and the Canonical Relationship between 1 and 2 Peter*, (The Catholic University of America, 2011), p213-214

<sup>525</sup> Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), p36; C.L. Mitton, ‘Relationship between 1 Peter and Ephesians’, *The Journal of Theological Studies*. 1, 1, (Apr. 1950): 67-73

Thus, our hope will have to be that some authentic tradition has survived through these less than ideal sources. Some have suggested that referring to himself as Peter is “a harmless literary device”.<sup>526</sup> This is probably not true.<sup>527</sup> The reality seems more cynical, thus “the real author pens in Peter’s name as author and creates a nice impression of genuineness by having Silvanus and Mark send personal greetings at the close of the letter.”<sup>528</sup> If the author is deceptive here, we have precedent to imagine that some of the material within could also arise from deception. Therefore, my suggestion is that we should exercise some caution before declaring that Peter’s soteriological ideas came from Jesus himself. This does not indicate that they cannot have: probably many of the ideas do go back to Jesus (perhaps 3.9).<sup>529</sup> However, I do think we need to be more explicit about the serious historical problems one faces with this text.

Scholars who have worked on the frailty of memory seem right. There are questions about whether anyone could retain precisely accurate memories for decades after some teaching took place. But to have no scruples about articulating this fact alone is not sufficient: to be consistent one has to contend with the possible truth that our author has shown himself to be open to practicing deceit. This is something that could be included in further discussion of the accuracy of Peter’s soteriological tradition, and perhaps we will discover that future engagement with recent psychological studies on deception will prove to be useful, as have those on memory.

## Conclusion

1 Peter is an important text that has been read for thousands of years by innumerable students. To expect to excavate a completely novel (and reasonable) approach to its soteriology is perhaps

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<sup>526</sup> Beare, *Peter*, p4

<sup>527</sup> Edmund Clowney, *The Message of 1 Peter: the Way of the Cross*, The Bible Speaks Today, (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), p18

<sup>528</sup> Lewis R. Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1986), p50; see also pseudepigraphy as deception in Lewis R. Donelson, ‘Gathering Apostolic Voices: Who Wrote 1 and 2 Peter and Jude?’, in *Reading 1–2 Peter and Jude: A Resource for Students*, edited by Eric F. Mason, Troy W. Martin, (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), p13-17

<sup>529</sup> Horrell, ‘Jesus Remembered in 1 Peter? Early Jesus Traditions, Isaiah 53, and 1 Peter 2.21-25’, in *James, 1 & 2 Peter and Early Jesus Traditions*, p123

hubristic. This thesis has instead sought to emphasize some elements of the text more strongly, and advocate against some methodological tendencies.

Historically, I have tried to set the text within the context of a community functioning as a part of first century Judaism, rather than as a separate “Christian” religion (an anachronism). In fact, in the ancient world “for many it was entirely plausible that their understanding of being Jewish was dependent on their being Christian.”<sup>530</sup> This seems to be right for 1 Peter. Many scholars do not appear to be convinced that this is appropriate, perhaps because of the actions of later Christians, seemingly denying that Peter and his community could be a legitimate expression of a Judaism. The clear pattern of Christian Cultural Appropriation in 1 Peter, however, seems to have been instinctively read into the text by many scholars too hastily. It does not strike me that the notion of a culture of first century “Christianity” that is somehow separate from “Judaism” has been explicated coherently on the basis of our text. I hope further studies of this issue will take this into consideration. This conclusion feeds into the model of salvation I have suggested Peter has in mind- that “salvation...involves the consummation of all that God had planned for His Israel.”<sup>531</sup> A reader today might well be dubious as to Peter’s logic, exegesis, or honesty in this regard, but such an accusation could be levelled at any Judaic system of the first century, and seems to be beside the point.

I have tried to look beyond only analyzing occurrences of the noun “σωτηρία” vel sim. Rather, I pushed Peter’s varied concepts back historically and logically in an effort to discover why he adopts them. In this spirit, I have concluded that we should draw more attention to the unifying notion of covenant within the text. This permeates the thought-world of Peter, and is the catalyst and the foundation for his understanding of salvation. Specifically, Peter views the Christians as the natural recipients of the Torah and of God’s covenant at Sinai. This covenant is transplanted, and altered, to the thought-world of first century apocalyptic Judaism.

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<sup>530</sup>Elliot R. Wolfson, ‘Parting of the Ways that Never Parted: Judaism and Christianity in the Work of Jacob Neusner’, in *A Legacy of Learning Essays in Honor of Jacob Neusner*, Edited by Alan J. Avery-Peck, Bruce Chilton, William Scott Green, and Gary G. Porton, (Leiden: Brill, 2014), p300

<sup>531</sup> J.H Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy: An Exegetical Examination of 1 Peter 2:4-10 and the Phrase Basileion Hierateuma*, (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2005), p221

The covenant makes the most sense of the demands made on the Christians (faith, obedience, and atonement) and makes sense of the ideas of blessing and judgement in the text. In this regard, I have suggested that many have emphasized the individualistic elements of Peter's soteriology too heavily- "our New Testament witnesses were collectivist persons living in collectivist cultures".<sup>532</sup> If we judge Peter's soteriology to be broadly coherent (as I do), it is my belief that the soteriology coheres around the idea of covenant.

I have also endeavored to explore the background of some of those points. The elevation of faith, the identification of Jesus with the suffering servant, and the idea of Christian "obedience", and judgement were all explored in a historical framework. I concluded that our author seems at home within the thought-world of Second Temple Judaism. Specifically, I concluded that salvation language in the text is mostly, though not exclusively, eschatological rather than geared to present deliverance. Election refers to a representative people being chosen for the covenant, and it is not primarily related to individual salvation, or is primarily eschatological in 1 Peter. I suggested that Peter's description of atonement comes from Isa 53 (LXX), a text that was increasingly in use to describe righteous ones who suffer. The language of faith is at home in the world of Diaspora Judaism, and comes at a point after Philo declares it to be the queen of virtues. I also argued that 1 Peter seems to imply that baptism is a necessary part of salvation. Salvation of souls supposes a dualistic conception of man. The theme of obedience seems to indicate that the Christians believed themselves to be following the demands of the Torah, and Peter advocates submission of wives and slaves in an effort to further pagan conversion. Judgement involves two camps of people (and angels): the righteous and the unrighteous, and Peter seems to believe this is based off acceptance of Christ, *as well as* how one has lived. The tension is not reconciled, but seems to be essential for the covenant relationship Peter has in mind. Finally, I argued that, in addition to the popularity of studies utilizing cutting-edge research on memory, it is essential to also consult current psychological research on deception. This may prove worthwhile in understanding how accurately Christians retained soteriological traditions.

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<sup>532</sup> Bruce Mailna and Jerome Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), p11  
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Peter, then, probably envisions his addressees as a legitimate continuation of the covenant, specifically the Covenant instituted at Sinai. And, similar to those Israelites, “sont en voie vers une nouvelle Terre Promise, le salut.”<sup>533</sup>

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<sup>533</sup> Halas, *Sens Dynamique*, p258



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