

SOLIDARITY IN SUFFERING AND GLORY: THE UNIFYING ROLE OF PSALM 34 IN 1 PETER 3:10–12

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I. INTRODUCTION

In his thorough study of the use of the OT in 1 Peter, William Schutter establishes the importance of his work for Petrine scholarship at the outset by noting that “few early Christian documents incorporate as much of its [OT] material in proportion with their size.”¹ Indeed, readers barely need to scratch the surface of the epistle before being immersed in language that is rooted in the history of Israel, with the concepts of diaspora (διασποράς, 1:1), election (ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις, 1:1), and sacrifice (θυσίαν ἁγίαν, 1:2) all established in the opening address of the letter. The experiences of “the prophets who prophesied” (1:10),² Sarah and Abraham (3:6), and Noah (3:20) are all drawn upon for instruction, and OT quotations and allusions are evident throughout, often applied so seamlessly to the elect in Christ as to invite speculation on Peter’s theological intent for the relationship between the church and Israel.

Given these distinct literary features, scholars have in some ways mirrored the actions of the prophets by “making careful search and inquiry” into use of the OT in the epistle and to proper hermeneutical approaches to its exegesis. Along these lines, many have noted the significance of 1 Pet 1:10–12 for its important salvation-historical implications, often designating it a “hermeneutical key” for the epistle.³ Others have drawn attention to the central importance of the Isaianic texts, given both their frequent occurrence and Christological importance in the letter.⁴ Yet it is to one other prominent element of 1 Peter that I turn my attention in this paper. Nearly a century has passed since Wilhelm Bornemann suggested that 1 Peter was in fact not a letter but rather a sermon dependent on Psalm 34 directed toward newly baptized believers in Christ.⁵ While the structural concept of 1 Peter as a

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¹ William L. Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition in 1 Peter* (WUNT 30; Tübingen: Mohr, 1989) 3.

² All Scripture references will be drawn from the NRSV unless otherwise noted.

³ See especially Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition* 100–109; John H. Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 37B; New York: Doubleday, 2000) 351.

⁴ See, e.g., the discussions of Elliott, *1 Peter* 348; and Sharon Clark Pearson, *The Christological and Rhetorical Properties of 1 Peter* (Studies in Bible and Early Christianity 45; Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 2001) 41.

⁵ Wilhelm Bornemann, “Der Erste Petrusbrief: eine Taufrede des Silvanus?,” *ZNW* 19 (1919) 143–65. Bornemann’s article is based primarily on linguistic parallels that he claims show a dependence on Psalm 34, although he also notes the significant thematic parallels. Both of these features will be addressed below.

baptismal homily has been largely rejected, nonetheless the role of Psalm 34⁶ in the epistle has drawn varying degrees of speculation over the years, with increased attention given to its use recently in conjunction with the resurgent focus on 1 Peter as a whole.⁷ While often rejecting many of the linguistic parallels that Bornemann claimed to find, some scholars have nonetheless noted that there does appear to be a form of dependence on the Psalm, either as a basis for the selection of other OT texts or as a structural guide to the epistle.⁸ Others have taken a far more cautious tone with regard to the influence of the Psalm, warning against the exaggeration of its significance although not denying its value as a source in the epistle.⁹

This work will endeavor to bring clarity to the conversation by building upon many of the helpful linguistic and structural analyses previously performed comparing Psalm 34 and 1 Peter, but seeking to draw conclusions as to how the various uses of the Psalm are functioning together in Peter's argument and particularly in the quotation in 3:10–12. In this paper I will seek to show that the use of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter should best be viewed through a Christological lens, as an important source text for accomplishing Peter's paraenetic intent for his beleaguered audience by drawing their experience into solidarity with the experiences of Israel and, most prominently, Jesus himself. Toward this end, I will begin with a thorough look into the quotation of Psalm 34 in 1 Pet 3:10–12, noting its specific function within the core of the body of the epistle. From there I will branch out to consider other possible references to the Psalm in the epistle, noting as well its acceptance in early Christian and Second Temple tradition, in order to more broadly assess the use of the Psalm and the reason it forms such a prominent place in Peter's ethical exhortation.

II. PREPARING THE WAY: INITIAL QUESTIONS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE PSALM QUOTATION

Even scholars who arrive at such different conclusions on the influence of the Psalm in the epistle as Bornemann and Schutter nonetheless find common

⁶ In accordance with the English Bible I will refer to the psalm under consideration in this paper as Psalm 34, even though Peter quotes from LXX Psalm 33. The quotation is from LXX Ps 33:13–17 which has the English equivalent of 34:12–16.

⁷ Here I refer especially to the years since Elliott first lamented 1 Peter as the “exegetical step-child” of NT scholarship. See John H. Elliott, “Rehabilitation of an Exegetical Step-Child: 1 Peter in Recent Research,” *JBL* 95 (1976) 243–54.

⁸ For the idea of the Psalm as a catalyst for other OT texts in 1 Peter see Klyne Snodgrass, “1 Peter 2:1–10: Its Formation and Literary Affinities,” *NTS* 24 (1977) 102–3; Bornemann, “Der Erste Petrusbrief” 147. Sue Woan differentiates her conclusions by noting the psalm not only as a guide for the selection of other texts, but also for the structure of the epistle. See her essay and recent dissertation, Susan Woan, “The Psalms in 1 Peter,” in *The Psalms in the New Testament* (ed. Steve Moyise and M. J. J. Menken; NT and the Scriptures of Israel; London: T&T Clark, 2004) 228; idem, *The Use of the Old Testament in 1 Peter, with Especial Focus on the Role of Psalm 34* (Ph.D. diss., University of Exeter, 2008) 254–55.

⁹ The most thorough is found in Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition* 44–49.

ground in recognizing the prominence of Ps 34:12–16 in 1 Pet 3:10–12.¹⁰ This prominence is particularly evident when its location in Peter's argument is considered, with the quotation placed strategically in the middle of the letter body in a way that both draws together preceding material and prepares the reader for the further instruction that follows.¹¹ For these reasons I begin this assessment by looking foremost to the quotation in 3:10–12 and its impact on its surrounding verses, specifically the way it clarifies the exhortation of 3:8–9 and prepares the way for the continuing exhortation of 3:13–17.

First Peter 3:8 begins with the all-encompassing, "Finally, all of you" (τὸ δὲ τέλος πάντες), followed by five consecutive adjectives with imperatival force, thus rendered in the NRSV with the helping verb "have" followed by the adjective list "unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind."¹² Perhaps most important to note in this section prior to any significant lexical analysis of the five adjectives, as thought-provoking as that may be in light of their rarity in the NT, is simply the broad appeal of the address relative to what has immediately preceded it (the *Haustafel* of 2:13–3:7).

Although not all of the readers of 1 Peter would be in the correct social position to identify with the *Haustafel*'s specific instruction to slaves, wives, and husbands, the exhortations of 3:8–9 show that there is nonetheless much to learn from these unique examples previously given by Peter. It is the very traits of 3:8–9, specifically applied *within* the community of believers in the case of the exhortations in 3:8 and to those *outside* the community responsible for the trials in 3:9, which are also required to fulfill the instructions given throughout the *Haustafel*. These are the very traits and actions embodied perfectly in the experience of Christ. Thus the conclusion to this particular section draws into solidarity the entirety of the Christian community, not only by signaling that these words apply to them (τὸ δὲ τέλος πάντες), but by inviting all readers to adopt the same posture as the aforementioned slaves of just and unjust masters, wives of unbelieving husbands, and especially Christ himself, in whatever particular trial they are facing. It is therefore not surprising that Peter draws upon terms that have a distinct emphasis on kinship and community, elements highly valued in the Greco-Roman society but, more importantly, essential to the outworking of the community inaugurated by Christ.¹³

¹⁰ Bornemann, "Der Erste Petrusbrief" 147; Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition* 44. Bornemann makes a case for more than fifty quotations and allusions from Psalm 34, while Schutter finds a total of nine.

¹¹ Thuren notes that this falls within the "central argumentation of the letter," key for the author's argument; see Lauri Thuren, *Argument and Theology in 1 Peter: The Origins of Christian Paraenesis* (JSNT 114; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 131.

¹² Achtemeier suggests that the adjectives in 3:8 are subordinate to the imperatives in 2:17, essentially functioning as the means of fulfilling the command of those imperatives. However, few have followed his conclusion, and it seems unlikely given the multiple changes in those addressed throughout 2:17–3:8. See Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996) 220.

¹³ See the helpful discussion from Karen Jobes, who rightly cautions against seeing these kinship terms as purely motivated by the honor/shame dynamic of the Greco-Roman culture, given the presence of "humility" as well (ταπεινότητα); Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005)

Many have noted the numerous similarities between the paraenetic material in 1 Pet 3:8–9 and that in Rom 12:10–17, drawing the conclusion that the common elements are likely a reflection of an early Christian tradition.¹⁴ This evidence is supported by the dual presence of the word φιλάδελφος (1 Pet 3:8, Rom 12:10), similar exhortations to like-mindedness (ὁμόφρων in 1 Pet 3:8, τὸ αὐτὸ ... φρονέω in Rom 12:16), an affirmation of the virtue of humility (ταπεινόφρων in 1 Pet 3:8, τοῖς ταπεινοῖς συναπαγόμενοι in Rom 12:16), and especially the imperatives against retaliation and toward blessing for those in the midst of trials (compare 1 Pet 3:9a and Rom 12:14, 17).¹⁵ The presence of the traditional Christian paraenesis raises an initial question relative to the quotation of Psalm 34 that follows shortly thereafter, namely, how does the Psalm supplement or support this traditional ethical material?

Two other primary questions regarding Peter's usage of the Psalm also quickly emerge in the clauses that follow the exhortation to bless rather than retaliate:

Figure 1: Structure of 1 Peter 3:9

<p>1 Pet 3:9 μὴ ἀποδιδόντες κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἢ λοιδορίαν ἀντὶ λοιδορίας, τοῦναντίον δὲ εὐλογοῦντες ὅτι εἰς τοῦτο ἐκλήθητε ἵνα εὐλογίαν κληρονομήσητε.</p>	<p>1 Pet 3:9 (NRSV) Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is <i>for this</i> that you were called— that you <i>might</i> inherit a blessing.</p>
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Here the NRSV highlights well the primary exegetical difficulty in the passage: What does “for this” (εἰς τοῦτο) refer to? Two answers with exegetical merit can conceivably be given based on examples elsewhere in 1 Peter. First, it could refer to what immediately precedes. Such a reading would take into consideration the imperatival adjectives of verse 8, as well as the response to trial in verse 9a, to yield a translation such as, “do not repay evil for evil, or abuse for abuse, but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. Because you have been called to act in this manner, *so that* you may inherit a blessing” (translation and emphasis mine). This is the conclusion to John Piper’s primary question in his article “Hope as the Motivation of Love: I Peter 3:9–12,” and most scholars since have followed his conclusion.¹⁶ Yet

214–15. Although in light of the reference to Christ as the Suffering Servant in 2:21–25 it is also worth considering how Christ has reconfigured humility into an honorable trait for the Christian.

¹⁴ See especially John Piper, “Hope as the Motivation of Love: 1 Peter 3:9–12,” *NTS* 26 (1980) 219–23; see also Elliott, *1 Peter* 602.

¹⁵ See for example, Piper, “Hope” 219; Elliott, *1 Peter* 602; J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter* (WBC 49; Waco, TX: Word, 1988) 175; Leonhard Goppelt, *A Commentary on 1 Peter* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) 230–31; Jobes, *1 Peter* 214; Achtemeier, *1 Peter* 221. Their argument in support of the Christian tradition as opposed to literary dependence on Romans is based on the variations of language and order in the presentation of the common material.

¹⁶ Piper, “Hope” 228; Michaels, *1 Peter* 178; Achtemeier, *1 Peter* 224; Mark Dubis, *1 Peter: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (BHGNT; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010) 99; Jobes, *1 Peter* 220; Elliott, *1 Peter* 609–610; Ernest Best, *1 Peter* (New Century Bible; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 130. The NLT has most clearly adopted this reading by saying “that is what God has called you to do, and he will bless you for it.”

this raises what some have noted to be a difficult theological question of how to reconcile this conclusion, which appears to make the inherited blessing conditional on certain ethics and love of enemy, with the reality of new life in Christ and an “imperishable, undefiled, and unfading” inheritance (1 Pet 1:4). An alternative translation can remove this theological tension by seeing the εἰς τοῦτο as modifying that which immediately follows, yielding a reading along the lines of “do not repay evil for evil, or abuse for abuse, but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. Because you have been called for this, *namely*, for you to inherit a blessing” (translation and emphasis mine).¹⁷ Thus we look to the Psalm quotation for clarity in the decision, with the answer to this question revealing much about the motivation for the prescribed response of the Christian readers. The third question is intimately related to the second: How does the concept of “inheriting a blessing,” as reinforced by the Psalm, function relative to the ethical exhortation? Is Peter’s exhortation grounded solely on a future hope?

Thus, to summarize, the analysis of 1 Pet 3:8–9 has revealed three primary questions that I will seek to clarify through the analysis of the use of Psalm 34 in 3:10–12. (1) How does the quotation supplement, support, or clarify the ethical exhortation for the Christians under trial? (2) Can the quotation clarify whether εἰς τοῦτο refers to that which precedes it or that which follows? (3) How does the quotation relate the inheritance to ethical exhortation? Should it just be viewed as an exhortation to action in light of future reward? In order to address each of these questions adequately while looking into the psalm quotation, I am going to proceed in the reverse order from the sequence just presented (3, 2, 1), following the chiasmic structure of the text.

III. THE STRUCTURE AND LANGUAGE OF THE QUOTATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

The primary content of Psalm 34 gives little detail of the events in the foreground that inspired its writing; however, the note in the superscription does give a clear historical referent. It is a psalm “of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.”¹⁸ Although remarkable in many ways, the story itself in 1 Sam 21:10–15 is a brief one, and thus it is not surprising that Psalm 34 does not share or expound upon many of the details of the text.¹⁹ To do so would be secondary to the focus of the Psalm in any case, as it

¹⁷ Goppelt, *Commentary on I Peter* 234.

¹⁸ The superscription clearly lists the name of the king as Abimelech in both the MT and the LXX (אֲבִימֶלֶךְ, Αβιμελεχ), although in the story itself in 1 Sam 21:10 the king is named Achish (אֲכִישׁ). This has led some to conclude that the reference in Psalm 34 is to a title pertaining to kingship rather than a personal name. See the discussion in Allen P. Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011) 1.743 n. 1.

¹⁹ Although see Ross’s discussion on potential linguistic parallels between the text of 1 Samuel and the Psalm (ibid. 1.746). In particular the language of “face” is prevalent in both (1 Sam 21:11, 13 in the MT and LXX, Ps 34:6, 17 MT and LXX and in the superscription) and ironic in light of the dramatic story. In 1 Samuel, David changes his face because of his fear before the face of the king. In Psalm 34, David notes regarding those who fear YHWH, that their “faces shall never be ashamed” (v. 5), ultimate-

functions clearly as a call to praise in light of the faithfulness of the Lord to deliver (the results of the event of the superscription), and clarifies the kind of behavior that should then characterize those who fear him. Aware that his readers also have experienced a deliverance through the faithfulness of the Lord, Peter draws upon the didactic portion of Psalm 34 to enhance the paraenetic instruction previously given, quoting from the LXX. A comparison of the quotation in 1 Peter 3:10–12 with the corresponding text in Psalm 34:12–16, reveals minor changes of note. A few brief comments on the changes will be sufficient before a more substantive treatment of how the quotation addresses our three initial questions.

Figure 2: Structural Comparison between 1 Pet 3:10–12 and Ps 34:12–16

	1 Pet 3:10–12		Ps 34:12–16 (LXX 33:13–17)
3:10	ὁ γὰρ θέλων ζωὴν ἀγαπᾶν καὶ ἰδεῖν ἡμέρας ἀγαθᾶς	33:13	τίς ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ὁ θέλων ζωὴν ἀγαπᾶν ἡμέρας ἰδεῖν ἀγαθᾶς
	παυσάτω τὴν γλῶσσαν ἀπὸ κακοῦ	33:14	παύσον τὴν γλῶσσάν σου ἀπὸ κακοῦ
	καὶ χεῖλη τοῦ μὴ λαλήσαι δόλον,	33:14	καὶ χεῖλη σου τοῦ μὴ λαλήσαι δόλον
3:11	ἐκκλινάτω δὲ ἀπὸ κακοῦ	33:15	ἐκκλινον ἀπὸ κακοῦ
	καὶ ποιήσάτω ἀγαθόν,	33:15	καὶ ποιήσον ἀγαθόν
	ζητήσάτω εἰρήνην καὶ διωξάτω αὐτήν	33:15	ζητήσον εἰρήνην καὶ δίωξον αὐτήν
3:12	ὅτι ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου ἐπὶ δικαίους	33:16	ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου ἐπὶ δικαίους
	καὶ ὅσα αὐτοῦ εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν,	33:16	καὶ ὅσα αὐτοῦ εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν
	πρόσωπον δὲ κυρίου ἐπὶ ποιούντας κακά.	33:17	πρόσωπον δὲ κυρίου ἐπὶ ποιούντας κακὰ

*Bold print denotes changes in the Petrine text or minuses from the original psalm.

Three primary changes stand out in what is otherwise a fairly verbatim quotation from the LXX. First, rather than continue with the psalm’s hypothetical statement in the third person (τίς ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος), followed by a transition into the second-person imperatives in the next two verses, Peter eliminates the opening clause and maintains third-person verbs throughout. It is difficult to see this adaptation, as well as the subsequent loss of the second-person personal pronouns from LXX Ps 33:14, as more than stylistic changes for the flow of the text apart from evidence of another form of the Greek text.²⁰ A similar explanation may account for the change from the participle in the LXX (ἀγαπῶν), to the infinitive form (ἀγαπᾶν) in 1 Peter, which results in the verb modifying “life” rather than “good

ly because “the face of the LORD is against evildoers” (v. 17). The language of “taste,” key to the prayer in Ps 34:8, is also present in 1 Sam 21:14 in the MT.

²⁰ Here Piper’s claim that the change is based on the author’s intent not to command in vv. 10–12 but rather to argue for the content of v. 9 is not fully convincing to account for the changes, even if correct in noting the connection with v. 9. See Piper, “Hope” 226. In contrast, see the discussions of Elliott, *1 Peter* 612; Michaels, *1 Peter* 179; Achtemeier, *1 Peter* 225, all of whom find the subtle changes to be for the smoothness of the text.

days” as in the LXX. A third change, perhaps the most subtle, is the simple addition of the causal indicator ὅτι at the start of 3:12, adding theological emphasis to all of the preceding exhortations.²¹

The similarity in content between the traditional paraenetic material in 3:8–9 and the quotation of Psalm 34 in 3:10–12 is striking and can best be shown illustratively. Richard Bauckham has suggested a chiasmic pattern formed by the quotation of the psalm, particularly between verses 8–9, which is well-noted and worth highlighting.²² The following presents the general outline of the chiasmic structure as indicated by Bauckham, with my summary titles added to help clarify the flow of the argument:

- A: 3:8 Exhortation toward peaceful living
- B: 3:9a Manner of living, turning from evil
- C: 3:9b Manner of living, blessing with speech
- D: 3:9c Theological motivation, inheriting the blessing
- D': 3:10a Theological motivation, “to love life and see good days”
- C': 3:10b Manner of living, not retaliating with speech
- B': 3:11a Manner of living, turning from evil
- A': 3:11b Exhortation toward peaceful living

Verse 12, with the added emphasis given through the ὅτι insertion, then summarizes the entirety of the argument with the reminder that the risen Lord is an ever-present advocate of the righteous, but likewise an opponent to those who do not heed the exhortations that preceded (Christian and non-Christian alike).

The chiasmic structure of 3:8–11 and the theological supplement in verse 12 provide a strong picture of why Psalm 34 was a logical choice to supplement the paraenetic text. Yet returning to our three primary questions, this structural comparison draws together a question of eschatology that must be addressed. Regardless of whether one takes the εἰς τοῦτο in 3:9 to refer to that which precedes it, or to the clause that follows, there can be little doubt that the concept of the inherited blessing in 3:9 carries with it a future orientation.²³ Thus the prospect of the glori-

²¹ It is worth noting that the imprecatory clause of Ps 34:16b is omitted in 1 Pet 3:12, drawing some to conclude that this is on the basis of Peter’s redemptive concern for unbelievers, see, e.g., Gene L. Green, “The Use of the Old Testament for Christian Ethics in 1 Peter,” *TynBul* 41 (1990) 279. While this may be true, Peter also may have simply wanted to hold off on the clause in the midst of a charge centered on *non-retaliation*, recasting the idea of judgment, notably with the Lord as the arbiter, in the following verses (see 3:16).

²² Richard Bauckham, “James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude,” in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars* (ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 312–13.

²³ Of the eighteen times the verb form of κληρονομέω occurs in the NT, it nearly always carries with it the concept of a future inheritance, most often speaking of “eternal life” or the “kingdom of God.” An exception appears to be the temporal reference to the birthright of Esau in the reference to the Jacob and Esau story in Heb 12:17. Also the cognate noun κληρονομία generally is used for a future inheritance when it is not in the context of a parable or reflection on the life of Abraham, most notably

ous inheritance awaiting Christians in the future serves, in 3:9, as a source of motivation for current ethical behavior—whether viewed as the conditional goal or assured outcome for the believers to set their focus (depending on how we answer the second question). Given the strong evidence for the chiasmic structure of the quotation with the preceding material, the logical conclusion that would follow is that the opening line of the quotation of Psalm 34 should thus share a future orientation. Indeed, a majority of scholars have drawn this conclusion, seeing the reference to “love life and see good days”²⁴ as speaking specifically to the eschatological future inheritance.²⁵

The challenge with this future application of the opening clause of Ps 34:12, is that the context of the Psalm clearly speaks of “life and good days” in a present sense, establishing a *present* blessing from the Lord as the motivator for ethical behavior. Based on the structural similarity and future focus of the preceding verses, many have simply been willing to attribute to Peter an adaptation of the original sense of the Psalm. For example, continuing with his thesis that Peter’s application of OT texts exhibits a “peshet-like hermeneutic,” Schutter notes that the preceding verses impact the reading of the Psalm, “serving notice that the Psalm is to be approached from an eschatological point of view. They predispose the reader to regard the Psalm’s opening lines in particular as eschatological consolation.”²⁶ Others have similarly viewed the application of Ps 34:12 in 1 Pet 3:10 with a modified eschatological meaning, claiming a basis for the eschatological interpretation in historical rabbinic usage. In support of the rabbinical reading, the Midrash *Tanbuma* is often cited for its quotation of Ps 34:12 in its commentary on Leviticus:²⁷

Keep yourselves far away from the deceitful tongue. Then you will be acquitted in this world and in the world to come. Thus it is stated (in Ps 34:13 [12]): WHO IS THE ONE WHO DESIRES LIFE AND LOVES <MANY> DAYS <IN WHICH> TO EXPERIENCE <WHAT IS> GOOD. WHO DESIRES LIFE, concerns this world; LOVES <MANY> DAYS, refers to the world to come. (*Tanbuma* 5.5 Leviticus 14:1ff., Part V)²⁸

However, even if such rabbinic sources reveal a partial eschatological treatment of Psalm 34, it is difficult to ascribe to them a direct influence upon first-century exe-

in 1 Pet 1:4 with the inheritance “kept in heaven for you” (cf. Acts 20:32; Col 1:14, 18; Eph 5:5; Col 3:24; Heb 9:15). See also BDAG, s.v. κληρονομίω 547.

²⁴ The NRSV curiously omits the translation of the infinitive ἀγαπᾶν in 3:10, which I have added back in the translation reflected here.

²⁵ See, e.g., Elliott, *1 Peter* 612; Michaels, *1 Peter* 180; Dubis, *1 Peter* 100; Piper, “Hope” 226–27; Best, *1 Peter* 131; Norbert Brox, *Der Erste Petrusbrief* (4th ed.; EKKNT 21; Zürich: Benziger, 1993) 155. Often here a link is drawn between the use of ζωή in 3:10 and that which precedes it in 3:7, where “life” is something to be inherited. Yet this either does not fully lend credence to its original use in the Psalm, or ascribes to it a new meaning (see discussion below).

²⁶ Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition* 146.

²⁷ See especially the discussions of Piper, “Hope” 226 n. 59; and Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 131.

²⁸ Quoted from John T. Townsend, ed., *Midrash Tanbuma* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1989) 262. For similar midrashic interpretations, see William G. Braude, ed., *The Midrash on Psalms* (Yale Judaica Series 13; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959) 1.431.

genesis given the late composition of the works cited.²⁹ Evidence can also be found from the midrash texts that ascribe a *present* application of Psalm 34, where Ps 34:8 is quoted as a source showing the Lord's faithfulness to protect and deliver his people in the present.³⁰ Thus the rabbinic material itself appears inconclusive in support of an eschatological application of Psalm 34 to Peter's audience in 3:10.

In contrast, similar phrasing to that of Ps 34:12 is elsewhere applied to the present life in literature of the second temple period in the LXX (see, e.g., Sir 14:14; 41:13; and 1 Macc 10:55 referring to "good day(s)"; Sir 4:12 referring to "loving life") as well as elsewhere in the LXX (Esth 9:22).³¹ In conjunction with the challenge of dating the rabbinic material, these examples reflect in my view a greater plausibility that Peter is in fact maintaining the original sense of the Psalm with an appeal to a present blessing as a motivator for the ethics of 3:10b–11. But can this be reconciled with the forward-looking nature of the inherited blessing of verse 9 while still maintaining what appears to be a clearly chiasmic structure in 3:8–11? Stated another way, must we choose to take both phrases as pertaining to either future blessing or present blessing, or does Peter's view of the Christian life allow for a friendly co-existence between the two—serving as co-motivators for ethics in the midst of their trials?

In order to assess this question, it is worth briefly expanding beyond the immediate focus of the quotation in 3:10–12, and looking to the application of these concepts elsewhere in the epistle. In doing so, it is clearly evident that the future grace to come to believers at the return of Christ is used as a basis for motivation (see especially 1:13; 4:13; 5:4). The future blessing, however, is not the only form of motivation for the beleaguered Christians, and in a very real sense Peter exhorts them to live out their future inheritance in the present as those who have obtained new life in Christ. Key to this is the language of rebirth to a living hope, which enables present action conducted in communion with God, following the example of Christ (1:3; 1:22–23; 2:21–25). Particularly important for this study is that the concepts of new life, of following in the example of Christ, and of doing so in relationship with God (note especially 5:7) come powerfully to the forefront in the verses that immediately follow the quotation in 3:10–12. Continuing the theme of responding to trial and verbal abuse with good behavior, the Christians "are blessed" even if the response to their behavior is one of further suffering (3:14). This is a notably a *present* blessing, rooted not necessarily in the absence of suffering itself, but rather in the presence of God in the midst of it and the privilege of following in the example of Christ's suffering while waiting to share in the example of his vindi-

²⁹ Townsend, *Midrash Tanhuma* xii; Braude, *Midrash on Psalms* xi–xiii. Both works are dated to the eighth or ninth century AD for their final composition. Although some of the teaching certainly reflects older rabbinic instruction, no specific teachers are listed in the references to Psalm 34, making their relevance for 1 Peter questionable.

³⁰ Jacob Neusner, *Invitation to Midrash: The Workings of Rabbinic Bible Interpretation: A Teaching Book* (Scholars Press ed.; South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 170; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) 118.

³¹ Achtemeier, 1 Peter 226; D. A. Carson, "1 Peter," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson: Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007) 1037.

cation. C. S. Lewis's statement that "very often the only way to get a quality in reality is to start behaving as if you had it already"³² seems to reflect well the extent of Peter's exhortations here in 3:9–10. The goal for the suffering Christians is the future blessing of freedom from suffering (3:9), but they are to obtain a present blessing through obedience and a dependent trust in God by following the example of Christ in the present (3:10), essentially living out that future blessing right away. Thus in response to our third question, it appears that Peter can utilize the original sense of the present blessing of Ps 34:12, with both the future inheritance and the present blessing of new life in Christ held together, functioning as co-motivators to live out the ethics of the future blessing now.

This conclusion brings further clarity to the second question that was posed, namely how to interpret the "for this" (εἰς τοῦτο) in 3:9, because it gives credence to the chiasmic comparability of 3:8–9 and 3:10–11. The importance of this structural comparison is underscored by the fact that there is warrant for taking the "for this" to refer either to what precedes it or what follows, as both uses are applied elsewhere in 1 Peter. The example of modifying what follows comes in 4:6, where the verse is similarly introduced by the εἰς τοῦτο and followed by a ἵνα clause that functions epexegetically.³³ This instance, combined with the perceived theological difficulty of the alternative, has led some to apply a similar conclusion to 3:9.³⁴ However, in 2:21 Peter applies εἰς τοῦτο to open the verse, yet with a clear reference to the instruction that precedes it.

The quotation of Psalm 34 brings helpful clarity for the expositor seeking to rightly interpret the use of εἰς τοῦτο in 3:9. With the chiasmic structure noted previously, we can then look to the text in 3:10–11 as an expansion of the similar teaching in 3:8–9. It is at this point that those who hold to an epexegetical reading have a difficult time maintaining the argument. Kelly notes that the guaranteed prospect of the life and good days in 3:10 "should prompt them to bless rather than abuse their detractors."³⁵ Thus for Kelly, the future *guarantee* of the inheritance should result in a posture of non-retaliation and active blessing. But it is this element of guarantee that is difficult to grasp from the application of the quotation of Ps 34:12–16, even while not denying the security of the inheritance elsewhere in the letter (most prominently 1:4). The quotation begins with the goal that we have deemed to be a present blessing of living in light of the future hope, "those who desire life and desire to see good days" (3:10), and is then followed by five imperatives that form the basis for the achieving of that goal, the ethical basis for the loving life and seeing good days. It must be noted once again that in the context of the psalm this present blessing is clearly related to the ability to turn from certain behaviors. This

³² C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (50th anniversary ed.; London: Harper Collins, 2001) 188.

³³ "For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that (namely), though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does" (4:6, emphasis mine).

³⁴ See the discussion in J. N. D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and of Jude* (Black's NT Commentaries 17; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993) 137; see also Goppelt, *Commentary on I Peter* 234.

³⁵ Kelly, *Epistles of Peter and of Jude* 138.

conditionality is underscored in 1 Peter by the overarching theological statement of 3:12, casting a shadow over the entire argument of 3:8–11, with the subtle reminder that “the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil” (3:12).

In addition, the thematic and structural parallels of the use of εἰς τοῦτο in 2:21–25 also support the conclusion that the use in 3:9 is functioning in a similar manner, modifying the text that precedes it. In 2:21–25, Peter likewise first builds upon the prior ethical instruction, then includes the εἰς τοῦτο statement which clearly refers to the preceding instruction, then supports the statement with an appeal to an OT text.³⁶ This structural similarity, notably in conjunction with the fact that 2:21–25 also refers to Jesus’ paradigmatic behavior of non-retaliation in the face of trial, give a strong indication that the εἰς τοῦτο refers to what precedes it in 3:9.³⁷

The result of this, as the psalm also helps to clarify when seen in its original sense, is that the blessing must be viewed as in some way related to the behavior and love of enemies displayed by those claiming to follow the example of Christ. Essentially, if the readers want to inherit the blessing, they must give a blessing rather than return an evil (3:9), just as those “who desire to love life and see good days” must avoid evil and deceitful speech (3:10). Peter’s application need not be seen as theologically troublesome, elevating the soteriological role of works in a way that runs contrary to the evidence of Scripture. Instead, as is also evident earlier in the letter in 1:17–18, Peter “apparently sees no inconsistency between pointing the believer forward to the future of God’s judgment (1:17; cf. 3:12b) and backward in the next verse (1:18–19) to their accomplished redemption through ‘the precious blood of Christ.’”³⁸ Thus the ethics highlight the kind of behaviors that mark those who have received new life and are capable of returning a blessing for insult (1:4, 22–23), for whom the inheritance is “reserved in heaven” (1:4). Yet the connection between the ethics and inheritance should also incite an element of introspection, noting that those who reject such behavior that is characteristic of new life in Christ, thus may lack the future inheritance and present blessing that is secured by him.³⁹

Thus far our analysis of the use of Psalm 34 has yielded two important conclusions for the key passage in 1 Pet 3:10–12. By maintaining the original sense of the usage of Ps 34:12–16, we have seen that Peter’s ethical motivation is not rooted

³⁶ Or, more specifically in this case, a string of OT texts from the Servant Song of Isaiah 53.

³⁷ This has indeed become the consensus among Petrine scholars, see, e.g., Michaels, *1 Peter* 178; Piper, “Hope” 228; Achtemeier, *1 Peter* 224; Dubis, *1 Peter* 99; Jobes, *1 Peter* 220; Elliott, *1 Peter* 609–10.

³⁸ Piper, “Hope” 228. Here the exhortation recalls the link between present ethics conducted in light of future judgment/blessing in the teachings of Jesus (note, e.g., Luke 6:37) and Paul (note Phil 2:12). However, noting the present sense in the psalm quotation in 3:10, we must also note that the implications for this posture of non-retaliation extend as well into God’s blessing in present circumstances.

³⁹ In this way, the ethics function as distinguishing marks of the Christian. Thus Brox states, “in den Spuren Christi (2:21) unterscheidet sich christliches Leben durch diese Züge.” Brox, *Der Erste Petrusbrief* 155.

simply in the appeal to the glory of the future inheritance, but it is also driven by the fact that there is an element of present blessing for the righteous sufferer who lives in obedience to God. Having noted this, it also becomes clear that the goal of the future inheritance and present blessing is intimately linked to the ethics that Peter prescribes. They are not simply guarantees of glory that should be lived in light of, but they are also goals whose outcomes are dispensed by God and which should cause the reader to inquire within as to whether their behavior indeed reflects new life in Christ. The significance of this OT quotation, the longest of those appearing in 1 Peter, is underscored as well by noting that the quotation does not merely serve to complete a particular section⁴⁰ but rather goes beyond in its influence by continuing to shape the instruction that follows.⁴¹ This is evidenced by the καί connector at the outset of 3:13, which draws an inference from the theological motivation of 3:12, as well as the common thematic material of a good response and present blessing in the face of opposition that characterizes the text of 3:13–17. This ongoing influence of the quotation in 3:10–12 draws us back to the initial question that was raised, namely, how does the quotation supplement, support, or clarify the ethical exhortation for the Christians under trial? While some initial conclusions to this have already been drawn, the question can nevertheless be answered more thoroughly by looking at the breadth of the influence of Psalm 34 elsewhere in the epistle and in its use in Second Temple and Christian tradition.

IV. FINDING SOLIDARITY: THE BROADER INFLUENCE OF PSALM 34 IN 1 PETER AND TRADITION

Among the elements that have led to speculation about the level of correlation between Psalm 34 and 1 Peter are the numerous thematic parallels between the two works. In addition to the clear parallel of the call to good behavior and non-retaliation, which parallel is drawn upon by Peter in the quotation in 3:10–12, further thematic similarities include the afflictions of the righteous (Ps 34:6, 17–19; 1 Pet 1:6; 2:21; 3:16–17; 4:1, 12–19), the exaltation of the Lord as a past redeemer (Ps 34:4–7; 1 Pet 1:18), the Lord as an ongoing and future redeemer (Ps 34:15–22; 1 Pet 1:4, 13; 3:12–13), the unashamed character of those who trust him (Ps 34:5; 1 Pet 2:6), and the exhortation to fear the Lord (Ps 34:9–11; 1 Pet 1:17). The language of 1 Peter also reflects a number of similarities with Psalm 34 and has certainly contributed to the speculation of a guiding influence from the psalm on the composition of the letter. However, in order to avoid circularity of reasoning, since a degree of verbal affinity should be presumed between two works with overlapping themes, we must strive for clarity in looking for further influence from Psalm 34 on the epistle. In my mind, this greater clarity can be found not in concluding a

⁴⁰ As is common elsewhere in 1 Peter; note, e.g., 1:16; 1:24–25; 4:18; 5:5.

⁴¹ This is the dynamic that Woan has labeled the “Janus Factor.” While she notes some elements of this elsewhere in 1 Peter in the quotations of 2:3 and 2:10, it is especially prominent in the Psalm 34 quotation in 3:10–12; see Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 227–28. The extent of how significant the quotation looks back and forward in the letter will be considered below.

direct influence of the psalm on the composition of 1 Peter but rather in looking at what similarities other quotations and allusions might have with the primary quotation in 3:10–12 and how they influence Peter's exhortation.

The specific exercise of searching for quotations, allusions, and echoes of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter has been previously conducted by multiple scholars, often with different conclusions.⁴² Given these extensive prior studies, attempting to add another full-scale treatment of possible Psalm 34 references seems like an exercise lacking great value and one that certainly extends beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, my goal will be to look at some of the overlapping conclusions that have been drawn in terms of references and language, and then see what similarities they have and how they impact the quotation in 3:10–12. If, in fact, "Psalm 33 [34] in its entirety is in Peter's mind,"⁴³ this begs the important question of why this is the case. What does Peter gain from an extensive correlation between the psalm and his reader? I begin my treatment with the most explicit reference in 1 Peter⁴⁴ outside of the quotation in 3:10–12, and will work through other possibilities in order of the strength of the reference and agreement among the previous scholars.

Beyond the explicit quotation in 3:10–12, the clearest additional reference to Psalm 34 in 1 Peter comes in 2:3. As a point of transition between the discussion of the teaching that has enabled the new life of the reader (1:22–25), and the statements of identity of the people of God (2:9–10), Peter implores his readers to turn from their previous behavior and to long for God's sustaining grace.⁴⁵ The theological basis for this active reliance is grounded in the text of verse 3, "if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good" (εἰ ἐγέυσασθε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος). The statement bears a strong resemblance to Ps 34:8, which reads, γεύσασθε καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος.⁴⁶ The theological basis for what has preceded is given by the introductory εἰ, introducing a first-class conditional statement bearing the effect of "since or because." The change that follows is significant. Whereas David exhorted others to "taste and see that the Lord is good," Peter instead forms the basis for his instruction by noting that his readers already *have* tasted that the Lord is good, using the aorist indicative rather than the imperative of the psalm. Here the use of the

⁴² See especially Bornemann, "Der Erste Petrusbrief" 147–51; Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition* 44–49; Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 211–12. On a smaller scale given the shorter format of her article, see also Karen H. Jobes, "Got Milk? Septuagint Psalm 33 and the Interpretation of 1 Peter 2:1–3," *WTJ* 64 (2002) 10–12.

⁴³ Jobes, "Got Milk? Septuagint Psalm 33 and the Interpretation of 1 Peter 2:1–3" 9.

⁴⁴ For the purposes of this paper I will adopt Schutter's terminology of explicit and implicit quotations and refer to the strength of an allusion according to varying degrees (level 1–4), as both he and Woan highlight four levels of allusions. See Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition* 35–36; Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 127–30. The differences in method for determining allusions and echoes in particular highlight, to some degree, the subjectivity in the exercise, especially in cases where parallels involve a single word.

⁴⁵ See especially Karen Jobes's helpful article on this section, "Got Milk? Septuagint Psalm 33 and the Interpretation of 1 Peter 2:1–3."

⁴⁶ Schutter labels this an "explicit allusion" (level-1) due to the lack of an introductory formula. Woan labels it an "implicit quotation" because of the strength of the common words in the same order; see Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition* 37; Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 166.

psalm beckons the reader to see their experience of Jesus as Redeemer to be a kind of God's faithful deliverance of which David spoke.

Related to the clear reference to Ps 34:8 in 1 Pet 2:3, two other phrases in near proximity have been noted as potential allusions to the psalm. The first is the text that immediately follows in 2:4, "Come to him" (πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι), which has been compared to "Look to him" (προσέλθατε πρὸς αὐτόν) in Ps 34:5 on the basis of the same verb and the proximity to the preceding Psalm 34 reference.⁴⁷ Similarly, based on proximity to 2:3, some scholars have noted a potential allusion in 2:1 to Ps 34:13 because both contain prescriptions to turn from language and action characterized by "evil/malice" (κακία in 1 Peter, κακός in the LXX) and "guile" (δόλος in both 1 Peter and LXX).⁴⁸ While this connection is certainly more tenuous, it is noteworthy that the concept of "guile" in particular appears only twice elsewhere in the epistle, both in quotations of the OT (2:22 and 3:10), with one referring to the behavior that Jesus exemplified as the suffering servant, and the other a call for the reader to follow his behavior. Thus in the three strongest cases for allusions to Psalm 34 elsewhere in the epistle, we find a theological reflection based on the redemption enabled by Jesus (2:3), an exhortation to continue to look to him in the future (2:4), and a virtue list that employs words common to the Psalm and to the life of Jesus in an effort to shape the current behavior of the reader (2:1).

Searches for additional links between 1 Peter and Psalm 34 become significantly more difficult. It cannot be denied that a number of parallels in language exist between the two works,⁴⁹ which is the basis for the aforementioned quote from Karen Jobes that the Psalm was likely in the thought of Peter as he composed the work. However, Sue Woan notes well that "many of the proposed echoes to Psalm 34 have very little verbal resemblance and similar concepts abound in the OT."⁵⁰ Thus, where Schutter finds evidence of subtle allusions (3:7, 9, 13, 17; 4:1, 19) based on Psalm 34,⁵¹ Woan and others generally do not. Likewise, where some see potential allusions based on common thematic language with respect to the fear of the Lord, blessing to God, language of hope, and the afflictions of the righteous,⁵² Schutter does not. Even the reference to παροικίας ὁμῶν in 1:17 ("your exile"), a phrase that is key to the identity of Peter's readers (see especially 2:11) and one that also appears in an adaptation in the LXX from the MT of Ps 34:4 (from

⁴⁷ Schutter sees this as a stronger reference, labeling it a level-2 allusion, whereas Woan sees it as a weaker reference (echo); Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition* 38; Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 270; Bornemann, "Der Erste Petrusbrief" 147.

⁴⁸ Woan especially has highlighted this significance by labeling it a level-2 allusion; however, other scholars have been more reticent to ascribe a reference to Psalm 34 here due to the common nature of "evil" and "guile" elsewhere in Scripture. Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 195; Snodgrass, "1 Peter 2:1–10" 102; for a contrary perspective see Michaels, *1 Peter* 85–86.

⁴⁹ Jobes, *1 Peter* 137–38, 221–23; Carson, "1 Peter" 1037.

⁵⁰ Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 210.

⁵¹ Schutter sees these as potential weak allusions (level-4), essentially paraphrasing elements of the Psalm; see Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition* 48.

⁵² Jobes, *1 Peter* 221–23; Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 212; Green, "Use of the Old Testament for Christian Ethics in 1 Peter" 281.

מגורותי “my fears” in the MT to παροικτιῶν μου “my sojournings” in the LXX), cannot be solely attributed to Psalm 34 since Peter’s usage of its cognate in 2:11 appears to have in mind Gen 23:4 or Ps 39:12.⁵³ This highlights once again the challenge of determining the level of influence of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter—the thematic parallels are there, and similar language is evident, but to what extent can we attribute these relatively common themes exclusively to Psalm 34? And again more particularly, referring to our original question, what does this reveal to us about why Peter chose to quote Psalm 34 in what is perhaps the core paraenetic section of the epistle?

In order to help address this question, it appears necessary to broaden the scope beyond linguistic comparisons. To her credit, this is the basis for Woan’s in-depth structural look at the epistle and of all its uses of the OT, as she seeks to expand “the circle of investigation”⁵⁴ of the use of Psalm 34 beyond the linguistic comparisons begun by Bornemann. Her conclusions are often helpful and balanced, and the depth of the research is beneficial. Yet she ultimately arrives at the conclusion that the “Janus Factor” exhibited by the quotation in 3:10–12 extends throughout the entirety of the epistle in a broadly chiasmic manner, with the themes of the letter following those within the quotation, and key words also following their appearance in the quotation.⁵⁵ This forms the basis for her conclusion that Psalm 34 formed the catalyst for the selection of other texts in the letter.⁵⁶ The challenge with this view of the structure of 1 Peter is that it requires a purely forward-looking reading of “to love life and see good days” (3:10) in order to match the eschatological section of 4:7–11.⁵⁷ But as we have already seen this does not appear to lend full credence to the historical use of the language of “loving life” and “good days,” which may include the future but begins in the present. Likewise, it is difficult to see such a far-reaching influence on the selection of other OT texts from Psalm 34 based on this proposal, given that many of the quotations in 1 Peter do not appear to be linked by keyword to the psalm itself.⁵⁸

Whether or not the impact of Psalm 34 and its quotation in 3:10–12 extends as far as Woan’s structural analysis indicates, the significance of the quotation for Peter’s paraenetic intent is without doubt. However, in my view, a more productive way of assessing the impact of the quotation and, more broadly, the use of the psalm in 1 Peter is to note its function in the immediate history preceding the com-

⁵³ The pair of descriptive “diaspora” nouns (παροικτικός and παρεπίδημος) in 2:11 also uniquely appear together in Gen 23:4 and 39:12.

⁵⁴ Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 172–73; Woan, “Psalms in 1 Peter” 228.

⁵⁵ See esp. Woan, *Use of the Old Testament* 228–34. As an example of her key word argument, she equates the word ζῶην (3:10) with the key words (ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν) in 1:3, and ἰδεῖν (3:10) with ἰδόντες (1:8), with links progressing throughout the epistle.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 248.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 233.

⁵⁸ E.g. 1:16 from Lev 19:2; 1:24–25 from Isa 40:6–8; 2:6–8 from Ps 118:22, Isa 8:14; 4:8 from Prov 10:12; 4:18 from Prov 11:31; and 5:5 from Prov 3:34. A possible exception includes the verbal link with κατασχύνω in 1 Pet 2:6, Isa 28:16, and Ps 34:5; however, κατασχύνω is also a frequent word in the LXX (61 occurrences) and especially the Psalms (21 occurrences). Also the aforementioned link with δόλος in 1 Pet 2:22 with Ps 34:13 and Isa 53:9.

position of 1 Peter and among the early Christian community. Before commenting on this tradition it may be helpful to recall that beyond the quotation in 3:10–12, we have seen Psalm 34 clearly applied in 2:3 in order to draw the readers' focus to their deliverance already accomplished by Jesus, a likely reference in 2:4 exhorting them to continued trust in Jesus, and a possible verbal link in 2:1 to the attributes of a righteous sufferer—attributes also exemplified by Jesus as the Suffering Servant in 2:22.

The importance of these applications becomes clearer as the use of Psalm 34 is analyzed in tradition and in Scripture outside of 1 Peter. The quotation of Ps 34:19 in 4 Macc 18:15 shows that the Psalm was applied in situations of affliction and suffering, as a reminder from the history of Israel of the blessing of obedience in the midst of trial. Given this trajectory through Israel's history, it is not surprising that Psalm 34 also emerged as a key *testimonium* for the church in describing Jesus as the Servant of the Lord and paradigmatic righteous sufferer.⁵⁹ In addition to this traditional application of the psalm, Lindars also notes the frequent role of wisdom literature in Scripture for moral instruction, thus presenting the “nice problem whether the quotations from Ps. 34 in I Peter 2.3, 3.10–12 are simply drawn from this tradition of ethical usage, or have a real connection with the Passion apologetic.”⁶⁰

What Lindars deems the “problem” of the interpretation of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter, I instead view as the most effective solution for why the psalm takes such a prominent position in the epistle, and in particular the paraenetic instruction of 3:8–17. For Peter, and indeed his readers then and now, the determination of how to respond rightly in difficult situations is not merely a question of knowing the right ethical prescriptions, but of understanding the theological basis and empowering for such decisions. Thus as Green notes, “our author drew out the correspondences between God's saving history, past and present, and where such analogies did exist he adopted the teaching of the Old Testament to give moral instruction to his readers.”⁶¹ Recall again the above discussion with regard to the phrase εἰς τοῦτο in verse 9, in which we noted the structural and thematic similarities of 3:9–12 with 2:21–25. These similarities are striking in light of the statement in 2:21, which indicates that Jesus' behavior in his vicarious passive obedience also was “leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.” Thus, returning to our original question, how does the quotation of Psalm 34 impact the ethical instruction? It does so by taking a psalm that originated with a historical scene of deliverance from suffering, which was known to be viewed in light of the passion of Jesus and his paradigmatic behavior as the righteous sufferer, and then draws the reader into

⁵⁹ C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952) 98–99; Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961) 97. *Testimonia* is Dodd's term for the key collections of texts used as testimonies of the NT authors, evidenced by multiple citations of a particular text. Key for Dodd in this determination are the multiple quotations in 1 Peter (2:3; 3:10–12) as well as the likely reference to Ps 34:20 in John's passion narrative in John 19:36.

⁶⁰ Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* 275.

⁶¹ Green, “Use of the Old Testament for Christian Ethics in 1 Peter” 284.

solidarity with the examples of David and especially Jesus in order to shape their paraenetic response to suffering.

Simply by the use of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter, Christian readers are invited to see their accomplished redemption through the kindness of the Lord (2:3), and to come to him both as an accessible and active supporter in the present and a vindicator in the future (2:4; 3:9–12) and as a perfect model for the proper ethical response to their afflictions (3:8–9, 11, connecting with 2:21–25). The psalm thus functions well to bring the Christian reader into solidarity with the experience of Israel through the lens of David, and with the experience and example of Christ as the ultimate righteous sufferer, encouraging a present response of obedience while awaiting the ultimate blessing of vindication.⁶²

V. CONCLUSION

The discussion of the influence and role of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter has largely expanded in the nearly a century since Bornemann first drew attention to its significance. As an additional note to the discussion, within the important twentieth-century discovery of the Bodmer Codex (P⁷²), which yielded some of the oldest manuscripts of the Catholic Epistles (1 Peter included), a copy of LXX Psalm 33 was found in the relatively small group of writings.⁶³ While it is difficult to construct the specific liturgical uses of these texts in the early church, my analysis of the role of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter shows that, if indeed the two texts were often viewed together, perhaps there is much that we can learn from the practice. In an effort to support his paraenetic instruction and encourage a faithful response from his beleaguered Christian audience, Peter draws them into the experience of David, and the experience of Jesus—bringing solidarity in the midst of the suffering. His use of the Psalm reminds them that God’s faithfulness ensures the blessed inheritance in the future, but that it is possible to “love life and see good days” through obedience to God even in the midst of suffering in the present. Yet it also casts a strong warning and invites introspection by noting that the ethic of non-retaliation and active blessing is so essential as a characteristic of new life in Christ, that those who do not follow such ethics must call into question their possession of this new identity.

The use of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter also shows the often intertwined nature of theology and ethics, and thus yields a necessary reminder that broad characterizations of the use of certain OT books as primarily Christological (e.g. Isaiah in 1 Peter) and some as primarily ethical (e.g. the Wisdom literature) should be resisted. Do the similarities of language and theme imply that Peter had Psalm 34 in view as he composed the letter, or as he selected other texts? Perhaps. But in my view, fo-

⁶² For a description of how the themes of Israel, Jesus, and the church are brought into solidarity (specifically election, suffering, faithful response, and vindication), see the recent study of Abson Prédés-tin Joseph, *A Narratological Reading of 1 Peter* (LNTS 440; New York: T&T Clark, 2012).

⁶³ See David G. Horrell, “The Themes of 1 Peter: Insights from the Earliest Manuscripts,” in *Becoming Christian: Essays on 1 Peter and the Making of Christian Identity* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013) 59–86.

cusing on how Psalm 34 functions to unite the reader into privileged solidarity with David and with Jesus is the most effective comparison to be drawn, and one clearly intended to motivate the right response of his readers. In this sense, I concur with Bornemann that Psalm 34 “stands in an entirely special relationship to 1 Peter.”⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Bornemann, “Der Erste Petrusbrief” 146 (author’s translation).