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## *Begotten Anew: Divine Regeneration and Identity Construction in 1 Peter*

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Katherine Anne Girsch

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Abstract

This thesis argues that the divine regeneration metaphor in 1 Peter is fully integrated into the author's theological goal of constructing Christian identity in ethnic terms. The author grounds Christian regeneration on Christ's resurrection (Chapter 2, 1:3) and the preaching of the word, through which the imperishable seed is implanted in believers (Chapter 3, 1:23-25). Believers are then socialized into their new identity by feeding on spiritual milk like newborn babes (Chapter 4, 2:1-3) and being built into a spiritual house and corporate temple (Chapter 5, 2:4-10). All of these images contribute to Christian ethnic identity by activating different aspects of Jewish and Greco-Roman perceptions of what constituted ethnic identity.

Chapter 1 prepares the groundwork for this study by reviewing previous scholarship on Petrine regeneration, metaphor theory, and ancient and modern perceptions of ethnicity. This chapter also maps the letter's structure to provide a bird's eye view of the letter as a whole.

The following chapters then examine one Petrine metaphor in light of its Jewish and early Christian precedents. In most cases, 1 Peter is in continuity with Jewish and Christian traditions, though the author of the letter always recasts these traditions for his own purposes. Each of these metaphors link together to bring the reader into the interpretive process as an active participant. These metaphors also relativize the importance of physical familial relationships, heritage, and group belonging in favor of heightened awareness of Christian membership. People acquire ethnic identities through birth *and* by living according to the group's values. In 1 Peter, believers acquire their new identity through their divine regeneration, but this regeneration must be fostered, maintained, and developed by living holy lives dedicated to God in order to become his chosen people.

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## List of Tables

This thesis follows the abbreviations given in *The SBL Handbook of Style* (2007). The most common abbreviations are listed here.

| | |
|---|---|
| BDAG | Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 3rd edn, 2000) |
| BJS | Brown Judaic Studies |
| *CBQ* | *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* |
| DJD | Discoveries in the Judean Desert |
| GLAJJ | Stern, Menahem, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (2 vols. Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976) |
| ICC | International Critical Commentary |
| *JBL* | *Journal of Biblical Literature* |
| *JSNT* | *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* |
| JSNTSup | *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* Supplement Series |
| JSOTSup | *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* Supplement Series |
| LCL | Loeb Classical Library |
| LNTS | Library of New Testament Studies |
| LSJ | Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. *A Greek English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966) |
| *NTS* | *New Testament Studies* |
| NovTSup | Novum Testamentum Supplements |
| *RevQ* | *Revue de Qumran* |
| RSV | Revised Standard Version |
| SNTSMS | Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series |
| *TDNT* | Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley; 10 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76) |
| *TDOT* | G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (15 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979-2006) |
| TLG | Thesaurus Linguae Graecae |
| V.IRAT | Veröffentlichungen der Ideagora für Religionsgeschichte, Alterumswissenschaften & Theologie |
| WBC | Word Biblical Commentary |
| WUNT | Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament |

## Declaration

This thesis is based on research solely undertaken by the author. No part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree at Durham University or at any other university.

## Statement of Copyright

I would like to express my gratitude all those who helped me over the last three years. Special thanks go to my supervisor, Lutz Doering. Despite returning to Germany during my second year of doctoral work, his dedication to continue my supervision, read my work, and meet with me via Skype meant that there was no disruption to this project, for which I am very grateful. I am also very thankful for my secondary supervisors, Jane Heath, who perceptive insights enriched this project and to Francis Watson, who graciously stepped in at the last leg of the journey. This research was funded through a Durham Doctoral Scholarship from Durham University for which I am sincerely grateful.

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An immense debt of gratitude is owed to my Mother and Father whose support has meant the world to me. And to my fiancé, Greg, for whom the completion of this project means the beginning of a new adventure.

To my Mother and Father

# Chapter 1    Introduction: Why this new γένος?  Christian Ethnic Identity in 1 Peter

## 1 . 1        Why this new γένος?

Since I see, most excellent Diognetus, that you are extremely interested in learning about the religion of the Christians and are asking very clear and careful questions about them—specifically, what God they believe in....neither recognizing those who are considered to be gods by the Greeks nor observing the superstition of the Jews... and why this new race (καινὸν τοῦτο γένος) or way of life has come into the world we live in now and not before—I gladly welcome this interest of yours.

So begins the Epistle of Diognetus (1:1).[1]  But these words are also an appropriate way to begin this investigation: According to 1 Peter, who are these Christians, this new γένος, who are neither Jews nor Greeks?  Why has this new γένος come into the world now?  1 Peter offers clear, provocative answers to Diognetus' questions.

In this thesis, I will argue that the divine regeneration language in 1 Peter (1:3, 23) is the foundation upon which the letter's ethnic identity construction (2:9-10) rests.  Those who have been begotten anew have become a new γένος, the people of God.  The author of 1 Peter constructed a complex metaphor through a series of coherent, interlocking metaphors taken from the realms of procreation, family, cult, and ethnicity to describe this reality.[2]  This metaphor reaches its climax in 1 Peter 2:9-10 where Christians are descried as a γένος, ἔθνος, and λαός.

The ascription of ethnic labels to early Christianity was widespread in the apostolic and post-apostolic period.[3]  However, Christians are not *explicitly* described this way in the New

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[1] Translated by Michael W. Holmes in *The Apostolic Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007).

[2] Unless stated otherwise, "the author" will refer to the author of 1 Peter.  None of the arguments here rest on any theories of Petrine authorship.

[3] Such usage appears in Martyrdom of Polycarp, Hermas, Barnabas, Aristides, Bardaisan, and Clement of Alexandria.  For more, see Judith M. Lieu, "The Race of the God-fearers," in *Neither Jew nor Greek? Constructing Early Christian Identity* (London: T&T Clark, 2002),  49-68; 51-60.  Denise Kimber Buell, *Why this New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).  Judith M. Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 259-256.  Andrew McGowan, "'A Third Race' or Not: The Rhetoric of Ethnic Self-Definition in Tertullian" (paper presented at the Patristica Bostoniensia, Episcopal Divinity School, 2001), 1-11; available on the author's academia.edu page.  David G. Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People': Ethnoracial Identity Construction in 1 Pet. 2:9," in *Becoming Christian:*

Testament except in 1 Peter. [4] Paul does not describe Christians as a γένος, or a "third race," a

phrase which first appears in the late second century author Aristides.[5] Though watered with

traditions from Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity, the *explicit* description of

believers as an ethnic group sprang from the root of 1 Peter.[6] The author of 1 Peter was the first

to explicitly attribute ethnic identity to Christians, an identity that was later developed by others

such as Diognetus (as a "new race") and Aristides (as a "third race").

> As David Horrell has shown,
> This is the only New Testament text in which all three 'people' words occur together: γένος, ἔθνος, and λαός. No other text even approaches this concentration of terms, and the occurrence of all three here suggests an almost deliberate attempt to pack the verse with ethnoracial identity labels....This is the only New Testament text in which the term γένος – an influential label for the people of Israel, especially in literature near to the New Testament period – is applied to the Church.[7]

This thesis will argue that the metaphors of divine generation, childhood, and group formation

are central to understanding the full impact of the application of ethnic labels to Christians.

Chapter 2 will examine the divine regeneration in 1:3 and 23 (ἀναγεννάω). Chapter 3 will look at

the development of this metaphor in 1:23 where the author explains that believers were begotten

not with perishable but imperishable seed (οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς ἀλλὰ ἀφθάρτου, 1:23). In

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*Essays on 1 Peter and the Making of Christian Identity* (LNTS 394; London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 133-163; 145-152.

[4] For hints of Christian ethnic identity in the New Testament, see Matt 21:43; Acts 15:14; 18:10; Rom 9:25-26; 1 Cor 10:32; and Gal 3:28. Paul's arguments in Galatians and Romans function by connecting Gentiles to Abraham through faith rather than descent. By doing so, they are engaged in ethnic reasoning that negotiates the terms on which perceived common descent is reckoned. These questions are entangled in larger debates within Pauline studies, as the work of Denise Kimber Buell, Caroline Johnson Hodge, Love Sechrest, and others demonstrates. See also Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 141-145.

[5] Apol 2.I. Lieu has argued this meaning is present in *Kerygma Petri*, though this is unlikely given the use of the dative (τρίτῳ γένει). Christians are described as "'those who worship (fear) God (θεὸν σέβειν) in a new way and a third manner/way/type" (οἱ καινῶς αὐτὸν τρίτῳ γένει σεβόμενοι χριστιανοὶ: Clement, *Strom*. VI.5.41). Cf. Lieu, "The Race of the God-fearers," 55. Lieu, *Christian Identity*, 261, 264. McGowan, "'A Third Race' or Not: The Rhetoric of Ethnic Self-Definition in Tertullian," 2. Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 148-149.

[6] So Horrell, "It would be rash to propose that 1 Pet. 2.9 is somehow the direct source for all talk of Christians as a γένος. Nonetheless, whatever the extent of its direct influence, it is clearly the first application of the term to Christians, in the context of a clear and extensive description of the members of the churches as an ethno-racial group," Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 152. Horrell goes on to observe 1 Peter's description of Christians as a "γένος ἐκλεκτόν" has substantial influence over later writers. Descriptions of Christians as a "third race" are clearly developments of this tradition.

[7] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 133-163, see esp. 144.

Chapter 4, the image of the newborn infants will be studied (ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη, 2:1-3). Finally, Chapter 5 will investigate the language shift in 2:4-10 from the domains of procreation and nurture to the building up of believers as a house, temple, and priesthood. These chapters will examine these multivalent images through comparison with similar images in the Hebrew scriptures and the literature of Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity. It will be demonstrated that the Petrine regeneration metaphor is rich in its expression, internal coherence, and theological significance. These metaphors delineate the formation of Christian ethnicity, founded on the resurrection of Christ and completed in the establishment of the people of God.

In order to undertake this investigation, it will be beneficial to briefly discuss five discrete issues: Petrine regeneration in scholarship (§1.2), ethnicity ancient and modern (§ 1.3), metaphors (§ 1.4), intertextuality (§ 1.5), and the structure of 1 Peter (§ 1.6). The reader may feel an absence of continuity between these apparently disparate topics. However, each makes a necessary contribution for the following chapters. The review of scholarship maps out the limits of present research and argues that a new investigation is called for. One reason for this is that new methodologies from linguistics and social sciences have opened up new avenues of approach. Specifically, this thesis makes use of ethnic theory and cognitive linguistics. Next, this Introduction will briefly look at intertextuality in 1 Peter to lay the groundwork for using evidence from the Hebrew scriptures, Second Temple Judaism, and early Christianity. The final segment of this chapter will lay out the structure of 1 Peter, with special attention to 1:3-2:10. It will be useful to give the structure here so that this information does not need to be rehearsed in every chapter. Through their diversity, each of these segments will form a sturdy, composite foundation for a new investigation of Petrine regeneration.


## 1 . 2        Regeneration in 1 Peter: A Review of Scholarship

The complex metaphor of divine regeneration undergirds 1:3-2:10. However, until Samuel Parsons' 1989 unpublished thesis, no study had focused specifically on regeneration in 1 Peter.[8]

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[8] Samuel Parsons, "We Have Been Born Anew: The New Birth of the Christian in the First Epistle of St. Peter (I Peter 1:3, 23)" (Pontificia Studiorum Universitas A S. Thoma Aq., 1989).

In fact, it was not until Heinz Giesen's 1999 article, "Gemeinde als Liebesgemeinschaft dank göttlicher Neuzeugung," that an investigation focused on divine regeneration in 1 Peter appeared in print.[9]

Before Parsons, four articles and four unpublished theses investigated the theme of regeneration, broadly defined, in the New Testament and early church.[10] The first of the published studies was by Paul Gennrich in 1907, followed by Adolf von Harnack in 1918, O. Procksch in 1928, and Erik Sjöberg in 1950.[11] While there is much that is commendable in these studies, several patterns of weakness emerge. First, the scope of these studies means that only modest attention can be given to 1 Peter. Gennrich's work surveys the theology of regeneration up to the 19th century. Harnack covers 46 expressions divided into eight groups. For example, divine regeneration is discussed in Harnack's 5th section which is listed as: "5. Κτίζεσθαι, Καινὴ κτίσις, Παλιγγενεσία, Ἀναγεννᾶσθαι, Γεννᾶσθαι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, Υἱοὶ (Τέκνα) θεοῦ, Σπέρμα τοῦ θεοῦ."[12] Though Procksch's study is more focused, he nevertheless discusses most of the relevant New Testament texts.

Second, two related pitfalls result from these types of studies. The first is the temptation toward harmonization: themes from Paul or the Gospels are read into 1 Peter. Thus, the regeneration language in 1 Peter has often been read baptismally based on comparisons with

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[9] Heinz Giesen, "Gemeinde als Liebesgemeinschaft dank göttlicher Neuzeugung Zu 1 Petr 1,22-2,3," *SNTU.A* / 24 (1999): 135-165.

[10] The unpublished theses are: Marion Vann Murrell, "The Concept of Regeneration in the New Testament" (The University of Edinburgh, 1963). William D. Mounce, "The Origin of the New Testament Metaphor of Rebirth" (PhD Thesis. University of Aberdeen, 1981). Wolfgang Schweitzer, "Wiedergeburt und Erneuerung im Neuen Testament und in seiner Umwelt" (Eberhard-Karls-Universität, 1943). I include Schweitzer here for the sake of completeness, though I have been unable to consult it. For a modern, over-generalizing example of this approach, see Wiard Popkes, "Rebirth in the New Testament," *JEBS* 6 / 1 (2005): 5-10.

[11] Paul Gennrich, *Die Lehre von der Wiedergeburt: Die christliche Zentrallehre in dogmengeschichtlicher und religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1907). Adolf von Harnack, "Die Terminologie der Wiedergeburt und verwandter Erlebnisse in der ältesten Kirche," *TU* 42 (1918): 97-143. O. Procksch, "Wiederkehr und Wiedergeburt," in *Das Erbe Martin Luthers und die gegenwärtige theologische Forschung: Theologische Abhandlungen D. Ludwig Ihmels zum siebzigsten Geburtstag 29.6.1928* (ed. Robert Jelke and Ludwig Ihmels; Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke, 1928). Erik Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt und Neuschöpfung im palästinischen Judentum," *ST* IV / I-II (1951-2): 44-85.

[12] Harnack, "Terminologie der Wiedergeburt," 97.

John 3:5 and Tit 3:5.[13] At the extreme, some scholars postulated that 1 Peter preserved a baptismal homily or liturgy, though the letter never discusses baptism and regeneration together.[14] On the flipside, these types of studies under-emphasize the distinctiveness of Petrine theology. Because these studies focus on words or phrases, it is not within their scope to appreciate the significance that these themes play in each text. This is particularly noteworthy in 1 Peter since regeneration is a major theme in the first half of the letter, but the significance of this theme is undeveloped in scholarly studies.

Third, these studies often discuss a constellation of issues which, besides baptism mentioned above, are secondary or not relevant to 1 Peter, such as the possible influence of the Mystery cults,[15] the language of new creation/renewal,[16] and the term παλιγγενεσία (Mat 19:28; Tit 3:5).[17] This thesis will investigate these questions when they are prompted by the text of 1 Peter, but this analysis will not be driven by these issues. Another common point of discussion is the origin of regeneration/rebirth language.[18] Because of the goals of this study, questions of origin and conceptual evolution will be discussed insofar as they shed light on 1 Peter but will not drive the investigation.

Finally, these studies do not fully appreciate the gendered aspects of the Petrine imagery. The Petrine imagery of begetting is masculine, but the related imagery of a nursing infant is feminine.

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[13] Despite the fact that baptism is mentioned only in 3:21, many commentators have interpreted the letter's regeneration language baptismally. Procksch, "Wiederkehr und Wiedergeburt," 15-16.

[14] Bornemann argued that 1:3-5:11 was a *Taufrede*, a baptismal homily, W. Bornemann, "Der erste Petrusbrief - eine Taufrede des Silvanus?," *ZNW* 19 (1920): 143-165. For more on the legacy of this theory and a critique, see Herzer below and Horrell, "Themes of 1 Peter," 67-70.

[15] Though discussion of the Mystery cults appears in these works, their influence is consistently mediated or denied. Gennrich notes that nearly all the relevant sources are late, and doubts that they had any influence on Christianity, *Die Lehre*, 40. Harnack also concludes that the Mysteries did not influence early Christian teaching of regeneration, "Terminologie der Wiedergeburt," 110-112. Later scholars also discount the importance of the mysteries for interpreting 1 Peter. The most ardent of these is Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 2-5, 44. Serious comparison with the Mysteries was all but extinct until it was revived in 2011 thesis by Keir Hammer, see below.

[16] See Gennrich, *Die Lehre*, 13-27. Harnack, "Terminologie der Wiedergeburt," 106-122. Procksch, "Wiederkehr und Wiedergeburt," 1-18, esp. 17-13.

[17] A significant study on one of these issues is Joseph Dey, *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ: Ein Beitrag zur Klärung der religionsgeschichtlichen Bedeutung von Tit 3,5* (NTA Bd. XVII. Heft 5; Münster: Verlag der Aschendorffschen Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1937). See also, Gennrich, *Die Lehre*, 1-13. Harnack, "Terminologie der Wiedergeburt," 106-122.

[18] Mounce specifically articulates this at the goal of his project, Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 7-8.

This inattention to gender is exacerbated by English translations of such as "born again/anew" which obscure the gendered aspects of the metaphor.  A study with explicit attention to the gendered dynamics of the text is called for.

After Parsons, Petrine regeneration has been the subject of three significant article length studies and one unpublished thesis.[19]  In 1999, Giesen argued that the theme of communal, fraternal love in 1:22-25 and 2:1-3 is one of the letter's central ethical exhortations and is grounded on divine regeneration.  Giesen's careful textual work will be engaged further in this thesis.

Petrine regeneration was then taken up by Jens Herzer in *Petrus oder Paulus*? in 1998.[20] Herzer investigated the possibility of Pauline influence on 1 Peter.  He concluded, "Im Durchgang durch die wichtigsten formalen und inhaltlichen Bereiche konnte eine direkte Abhängigkeit weder von den Paulusbriefen noch von den deuteropaulinischen Schreiben festgestellt werden."[21]  Though this is not the place for a full evaluation of Herzer's method or results, his conclusion that baptism and rebirth in 1 Peter are different is worth repeating.[22]  The relationship between Pauline and Petrine baptismal material is only possible if rebirth and baptism are understood as one event, but this is not the case in 1 Peter where they are kept distinct.[23]

The most recent investigation, "Wiedergeburt im 1. Petrusbrief," was undertaken by Feldmeier in 2005.[24]  Feldmeier offers careful exegesis and valuable insight specifically on 1 Peter.  He reminds his readers to navigate the narrow way between over-emphasizing parallels

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[19] In his 2011 thesis, Hammer  curiously, and unconvincingly, argues for renewed attention to the significance of the mystery cults, Keir E. Hammer, "Disambiguating Rebirth: A Socio-Rhetorical Exploration of Rebirth Language in 1 Peter" (PhD Thesis. University of Toronto, 2011).

[20] Jens Herzer, *Petrus oder Paulus? Studien über das Verhältnis des Ersten Petrusbriefes zur paulinischen Tradition* (WUNT 103; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 196-226.

[21] Herzer, *Petrus oder Paulus?* , 257.

[22] Herzer, *Petrus oder Paulus?* , 215-222.  For a critical response to Herzer, see David G. Horrell, "The Product of a Petrine Circle? Challenging an Emerging Consensus? ," in *Becoming Christian: Essays on 1 Peter and the Making of Christian  Identity* (LNTS 394; London: Bloomsbury, 2013),  7-44; 12-20.

[23] Herzer, *Petrus oder Paulus?* , 216-218.

[24] Reinhard Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt im 1. Petrusbrief," in *Wiedergeburt* (ed. Reinhard Feldmeier; Biblisch-theologische Schwerpunkte 25; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005),  75-99.

(both Hellenistic and Christian) or creativity (of Christianity or 1 Peter).[25]  Regeneration was a flexible concept that could be adapted by an author for his own purpose.[26]  At the end of his chapter, Feldmeier gives ten theses on the meaning of rebirth in 1 Peter.[27]  Rather than list these here, they will be integrated into the exegesis of this study.

This brief survey has shown that there is a need for a fresh look at regeneration in 1 Peter. This topic has been under-investigated in the history of scholarship, and what scholarship there is is inadequate or limited.  Positively speaking, the fields of New Testament studies and Second Temple Judaism have made enormous progress in the decades since much of the work surveyed above was written.  It still remains to study the function of Petrine regeneration within the letter itself and to place it contextually within Jewish and early Christian tradition.

This investigation will therefore avail itself of advances in Second Temple Judaism, such as recent scholarship on the Dead Sea Scrolls, and early Christianity by employing a fresh methodology that gives due attention to the dynamics of Second Temple Judaism, to ethnicity, and to metaphor theory.  This study will depart from most of the previous work on Petrine regeneration by integrating an investigation of divine regeneration into the letter's larger structure and theological goals.  To prepare the groundwork for this study, I will now discuss how ethnicity has been understood in present and ancient times.  I will then use cognitive linguistics to clarify what I mean by metaphor and its application to 1 Peter.  Finally, I will provide an overview of the structure of 1 Peter, with a joint focus on 1 Peter 1:3-2:10 and the epistolary frame.  My attention is focused on 1:3-2:10 because the attribution of Christian identity is concentrated in this half of the text, though I will sketch some of the implications of my thesis for the rest of the letter in the Conclusion.[28]

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[25] Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt," 78-81.

[26] Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt," 79.

[27] Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt," 93-98.

[28] See §6.5, "Tend the Flock: The People of God in 2:11-5:11," 243f.

## 1 . 3    Ethnicity Ancient and Modern

### 1. 3. 1  Modern Perspectives on Ethnicity

Defining ethnicity is complex.  Part of this difficulty stems from the term's inherent flexibility
and culturally specific nature.  The best place to begin is with the six main features of ethnicity
identified by Anthony Smith in *The Ethnic Origin of Nations* (see Table 1-1, below).[29]  This list
allows us to get a sense of what makes an ethnic group distinct from other forms of social
demarcation such as class.[30]

**Table 1-1: Elements of Ethnic Identity in 1 Peter**

|   | **Smith's Six Elements of Ethnic Identity** | **Horrell's  Identification of These Elements in 1 Peter[31]** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | a *common name* | Christian claiming of the name Χριστιανός (4:16)[32] |
| 2 | a *myth of collective descent* | addressee's new birth with imperishable seed from God the father; construction of common (divine) ancestry (1:2-3, 17, 23; 2:2) |
| 3 | a *shared history* | focus on Christ's work as paradigmatic (2:21-25; cf. 1:3-12) |
| 4 | a *distinctive shared culture* | focus on a certain pattern of living (3:6) |
| 5 | an association with a *specific territory* | contrast with Diaspora and Babylon motif (1:1; 5:13)[33] |
| 6 | a sense of *solidarity* | kinship language (2:11; cf. 1:1, 17). |

As Horrell has demonstrated, each of these categories is active in 1 Peter.  However, insights
from recent scholarship on ethnicity in general and in the ancient world specifically provide a
more complex picture of ethnic identity than belies the listing of traits alone.[34]

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[29] Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 22-30.

[30] Smith, *Ethnic Origins*, 30.

[31] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 160.

[32] Cf. David G. Horrell, "The Label Χριστιανός (1 Pet. 4.16): Suffering, Conflict, and the Making of Christian Identity," in *Becoming Christian:  Essays on 1 Peter and the Making of Christian Identity* (LNTS 394; London: Bloomsbury, 2013),  164-210.

[33] This category does not map neatly onto 1 Peter as the others do.  The other five elements correspond in a direct way.  This element, however, requires more nuance.  Believers are not provided with a new territory the way they are provided with a new name.  Instead, their new theological status changes their relationship to Asia Minor.  Their location is filtered through a theological lens.  For more, see §1.6, "The Structure of 1 Peter," 37f.

[34] For more on ethnic identity in the ancient world, see for example Jonathan M. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).  Jonathan M. Hall, *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).  Benjamin Isaac, The Invention of Racism in Classical

First, as Horrell and others have rightly emphasized, ethnicities are *socially constructed and subjectively perceived*.[35] Both halves of this description are important. As Jonathan Hall has pointed out, this means that two things need to be held together.[36] On one hand, "ethnic identity is a cultural construct, perpetually renewed and renegotiated by through discourse and social praxis."[37] Ethnic groups define themselves through internal and external social interaction.[38] In 1 Peter, unbelievers serve as a foil to those who do believe; identities are forged in contradistinction to other groups. At the same time, the reality of ethnic identity should not be dismissed because of its socially constructed nature.[39] Social constructs such as ethnicity are powerful factors that structure thought and affect behavior.

It is often the presence of outsiders that challenges what it means to be an insider. For example, Greek identity during the Hellenistic period challenged Jews to think about what it meant to be Jewish.[40] The widely diverse Jewish responses to Hellenism illustrate the constructed nature of social identity: no single response was inevitable or definitive. Paul provoked dispute in his own day about Jewish identity, a dispute which is currently on-going in its own scholarly manifestation: for Paul, what does it mean to be Jewish?[41] How are gentiles

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*Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004). For further research in these and related areas, see the work of Irad Malkin, Per Bilde, Sian Jones, and Eric Gruen.

[35] Emph. original. Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 19. Cf, Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 158.

[36] With these two qualifications, Hall is steering away from either primordialist or instrumentalist views of ethnicity. Primordialism is the basic belief that ethnicity (along with race, religion, and territory) is "a basic and a natural unit of history and humanity...The instrumentalist view, on the other hand, considers that ethnic groups exploit the symbol of shared, ancestral association to mask their real purpose—the pursuit of political and/or economic interest," Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 17. The first view overlooks the constructed nature of ethnicity, the second over-emphasizes ethnicity's constructed nature and so fails to appreciate the way that insiders perceive and act on their own self-identity. Cf. Buell, *Why this New Race*, 7-8, 29, 40.

[37] Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 19.

[38] Irad Malkin, "Introduction," in *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (ed. Irad Malkin; Washington D.C.:Center for Hellenic Studies/Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 1-28; 7-15.

[39] Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 19.

[40] John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE - 117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 403. Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 69-139. Also, Erich S. Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

[41] For a few examples among many, see Denise Kimber Buell and Caroline Johnson Hodge, "The Politics of Interpretation: The Rhetoric of Race and Ethnicity in Paul," *JBL* 123 / 2 (2004): 235-251. Caroline Johnson Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs: A Study of Kinship and Ethnicity in the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Love L. Sechrest, *A Former Jew: Paul and the Dialectics of Race* (LNTS 410; London: T&T Clark, 2009).

incorporated into Israel?  In his own eyes and the eyes of others, did Paul remain Jewish?  While this thesis cannot explore these questions, it is enough to note that religious and ethnic identity is at the center of heated debates in Pauline scholarship and that these debates are far from resolved.  1 Peter, on the other hand, addresses different concerns than the Pauline epistles, but the author nevertheless appeals to Jewish tradition and conceptions of identity to make his points.

Ethnicity's social construction also has important implications for terminology.  "Race" and "ethnicity" have complicated social histories.[42]  "Race" has been associated with biological, genetic groups.[43]  In common speech, "race" is still often associated with these presuppositions. For this reason, I will avoid the baggage-laden "race" and will instead use "ethnicity," though scholars like Horrell and Buell intentionally use "race" to expose how modern prejudice still influences contemporary attitudes to these topics.[44]

Next, Smith's six elements of ethnicity should not be regarded as equally important.  Two have special priority: the connection with a special territory and the myth of common descent.[45] The author of 1 Peter does not appeal to a physical homeland, but recasts believers' theological position in terms of Diaspora existence and life as strangers and aliens (see §1.3).  Though believers are geographically dispersed, they are united by their common diaspora experience.[46]

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[42] For more on the history of these terms, see David M. Miller, "Ethnicity Comes of Age: An Overview of Twentieth-Century Terms for Ioudaios," *CBR* 10 / 2 (2012): 293-311; 295-302.

[43] Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 19-20.  Contrast, Miller, "Ethnicity Comes of Age," 15.

[44] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 157-158. Buell, *Why this New Race*, 13-21.

[45] Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 25.

[46] Hall speculates, "given the constructive nature of ethnic identity, it is not entirely impossible that an ethnic *Ursprungsland* may in fact be a mythical, utopian territory," *Ethnic Identity*, 25. 1 Peter does not create a "mythical, utopian territory" for believers, but he does engage in the process of infusing physical space with ethnically significant meaning.  Believers' new status as Christians has changed their relationship in socially and politically charged space – they are now strangers and aliens in the diaspora.  Further, Smith writes, "An *ethnie* need not be in physical possession of 'its' territory; what matters is that it has a symbolic geographical center, a sacred habitat, a 'homeland' to which it may return, even when its members are scattered across the globe and have lost their homeland centuries ago," *Ethnic Origins*, 28.  Smith observes that in the absence of control over territory or a homeland, an ethnic group can still deploy a homeland as a symbolic centre or sacred habitat.  This seems to be close to what is going on in 1 Peter.  The author does not lay claim to physical geography, but he gives believers a way of thinking about their location in theologically charged terms.

Perceived common descent, as many have noted, is perhaps the sine qua non of ethnicity.[47]

Hall writes,

> Above all else, though, it must be the myth of shared descent which ranks paramount among the features that distinguish ethnicity from other social groups, and, more often than not, it is proof of descent that will act as a defining criterion of ethnicity. This recognition, however, does not vindicate a genetic approach to ethnic identity, because the *myth* of descent is precisely that—a recognition of a *putative* shared ancestry. The genealogical reality of such claims is irrelevant; what matters is that the claim for shared descent is consensually agreed.[48]

It is *belief* in common descent and shared origins that is primary.[49] Whether or not a people group is actually descended from a common ancestor is not the issue: what matters is the social perception that such descent and origins define group membership. Putative shared ancestry and common descent take a new direction in 1 Peter. In the letter, Christian identity is not defined by physical descent but by divine regeneration. 1 Peter casts Christian identity in terms of ethnicity, and divine descent is the cornerstone on which this construction rests.

Because ethnicity is culturally created, it is fluid and malleable. Ethnic identities are constantly being adjusted and rewritten. Buell defines the necessary criterion for ethnicity as "the dynamic interplay between fixity and fluidity."[50] As Buell demonstrates, many aspects of ethnicity are perceived as "given": fixed, unchangeable, and/or acquired at birth, such as common descent and kinship. However, even these aspects are *malleable* and *fluid*.[51] Genealogies, in fact, are often highly stylized to rewrite relationships between individuals and societies.[52] The putative kinship between the Jews and the Spartans is a good example.[53] The rhetorical force of these arguments stem precisely from their perceived fixity *even as* they are

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[47] Smith says it is "[i]n many ways the *sine qua non* of ethnicity," *Ethnic Origins,* 24. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*, 110. See also the sources listed in Miller, "Ethnicity Comes of Age," 305.

[48] Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 25. Cf. Smith, *Ethnic Origins*, 24-25.

[49] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People',"  159.

[50] Buell, *Why this New Race*, 9.

[51] Buell, *Why this New Race*, 5, 7.

[52] Buell, *Why this New Race*, 70-93. In the classical world, see Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 34-106. Malkin, "Introduction," 9-12.

[53] 1 Macc 12:19-23; Jos, *Ant*. 12.226. Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 38. Erich S. Gruen, "Jewish Perspectives on Greek Culture and Ethnicity," in *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (ed. Irad Malkin; Washington D.C.:Center for Hellenic Studies/Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001),  347-373; 361-362.

being adapted for present concerns.[54]  Thus, even aspects of identity which are perceived as fixed are adaptable to fit current needs.  In 1 Peter, genealogies are rewritten to reflect the advent of God's people.  This revision is provoked in part by the animosity and ostracism faced by believers from their neighbors and fellow citizens.  It is not surprising, then, that the letter's redefinition of believers includes a counter-redefinition of those who do not believe.  Christian identity is forged in response to the hostility of unbelievers, and it must therefore account for them in its ethnographic reckoning.

Finally, Smith qualifies this list by noting that different groups will have their own self-perceptions and define themselves by emphasizing some elements rather than others.[55]  Because no universal definition will fit every ethnic group, a brief look at Jewish ethnicity during the Second Temple period will be undertaken presently.

 The following key points on ethnicity can be summarized:
1. Ethnicity is *socially constructed* and *subjectively perceived*.
2. Ethnicity is often marked with Smith's six elements of ethnic identity:
    a. A *collective name*
    b. A *common myth of descent*
    c.  A *shared history*
    d. A *distinctive shared culture*
    e. An *association with a specific territory*
    f. A *sense of solidarity*
3. *Association with a place* and *a myth of common descent* are especially important.
4. Ethnicity is a dynamic *interchange between fixity and fluidity*.
5. Ethnicity is forged through *negotiation* with and in *contradistinction* to other social groups.
6. Ethnicity is *culturally specific*.


### 1. 3. 2  Jewish Ethnicity in the Second Temple Period

The previous section discussed ethnicity in the abstract; this section will look specifically at Jewish ethnic identity in the Second Temple period with close attention to importance of membership by birth.  However, though the author of 1 Peter shapes Christian ethnic identity with Jewish models, the two are not exact counterparts.  The fundamental difference between

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[54] Buell, *Why this New Race*, 8.

[55] Smith, *Ethnic Origins*, 30-31.

Jewish and Christian ethnicity lies in the fact that Jewish ethnicity, like most ethnicities, stems from physical birth, while Christian ethnicity is ultimately grounded on divine grace through the gospel. This important characteristic colors and differentiates the way that ethnic identity is conceived in 1 Peter in contradistinction to other ethnic groups.

For example, 1 Peter not discuss many of the cultural markers of Jewish identity such as food laws, purity regulations, circumcision, or time-keeping. If the author had chosen to frame Christian identity through comparison with these behaviors, a one-to-one comparison would be more feasible. The author has chosen, on the other hand, to cast Christian identity in terms of Jewish ideology and theology which is much more difficult to pin down. In the chapters to follow, specific topics within Judaism will be discussed when they are prompted by the text of 1 Peter. Here, however, a very brief sketch of Jewish ethnic identity will be offered, with special attention to membership by birth.

Jewish identity in the Greco-Roman period engaged all six of Smith's elements of identity: Jews were recognized by collective names (Jews/Judeans, Hebrews, Israel), looked to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, shared a collective history, culture, sense of solidarity, and a connection to Judea, especially Jerusalem and its temple, and studied their traditional literature, especially the Torah.[56] This is perhaps all that can be said easily because the complexities of Jewish identity in this period resist simple generalizations.[57] Indeed, behind each of these elements lies a wealth of diversity. For example, while Jews valued the Torah, they differed strongly with one another over its interpretation.[58] The same is true for the Jerusalem Temple: some regarded it as efficacious, while other regarded it as defiled. Even these simple statements mask diversity and paint with broad strokes over ideological, chronological, and geographical differences.

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[56] For Cohen's brief rehearsal of Smith's categories and their application to ancient Judaism, see Cohen, *Beginnings of Jewishness*, 6-8. No attempt will be made to document each of these elements.

[57] Barclay, *Mediterranean Diaspora*, 399-402.

[58] For example, even this simple statement is not without problems. Nickelsburg has argued that the Enochic authors sought to present revealed Wisdom as "an alternative or rival to the Mosaic Torah." Whether Nickelsburg is correct or not, his essay witnesses to the possible diversity of Jewish views on the Torah. See George W. Nickelsburg, "Enochic Wisdom: An Alternative to Mosaic Torah?," in *Hesed ve-Emet. Studies in Honor of Ernest D. Frerichs* (BJS 320; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 123-132; 124.

The previous section argued that ethnic identities are socially constructed.[59] When the author of 1 Peter described Christian ethnic identity, he did so in a way that used Jewish terms and models. However, Judaism itself was a polymorphic phenomenon. There was no one definition of "Judaism" that the author could have applied to believers. It is therefore not only significant *that* the author applies Jewish labels and terms to believers; it is equally, and perhaps more, important to observe *which* streams of Judaism provided the author with close models of identity. For example, 1 Peter aligns closely with the holy, Jewish, national identity presented in Jubilees.[60] As will be explored below, both texts employ Exod 19:6 at key junctures and call their members to holiness. The author was selective in his application of Jewish ethnic identity to believers. He applied Israel's traditional epithets to believers, but called them to holiness, not halakah.

In the Second Temple period, there was a spectrum of opinion on the relative importance of birth for membership in Judaism. In Second Temple period, to be part of the γένος of Israel *usually* meant common ancestry and putative descent from the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.[61] Exalting Abraham as a paradigmatic figure for the Jewish people, the speaker in the *Pss. Sol.* 9 declares,

> For you chose the descendants of Abraham above all the nations,
> and you put your name on us, Lord,
> and it will not cease forever.[62]

In a later Psalm, the speaker says of God,

> Your compassionate judgments (are) over the whole world,
> and your love is for the descendants of Abraham, an Israelite.[63]
> Your discipline for us (is) as (for) a firstborn son, an only child.[64]

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[59] This statement begs the question, *who* constructs Jewish ethnic identity. The answer is complex, as Barclay writes, "Jews had (and have) a triple identity: how they viewed themselves, how they were viewed by other Jews, and how they were viewed by outsiders." Yet, he goes on to note, each of these aspects includes "many complexities." Barclay, *Mediterranean Diaspora*, 400.

[60] See §3.3.1, "Jubilees," 109f.

[61] For references to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as "our fathers," see Ezek. Trag. 105-105; *4 Bar* 4:10; 6:21; *4 Macc*. 7:13; 13:17; *Pr. Man*. 1; *T. Levi* 15:4; *T. 3 Pat*. 7:25; *Jub*. 1:7

[62] *Pss. Sol*. 9:9.

[63] Commentators have proposed numerous conjectural emendations of this text, though it is probably best to see this clause in apposition.

[64] *Pss. Sol.* 18:3-4

Abraham's status as an exemplar directed attention to his faith and obedience, God's promises, and the covenant of circumcision. To be part of the γένος of Israel was to be descended from the Patriarchs.

In the Septuagint, the majority of uses for γένος designate the people of Israel.[65] As John Barclay observes, however, the existence of conversion and apostasy in Second Temple Judaism demonstrates the permeability of Jewish identity.[66] Being Jewish, therefore, was not merely a question of descent only. However, it is also true to say that for the *majority* of people who self-identified as Jews, this would imply a combination first of birth into a Jewish family and then the maintenance of that identity with righteous conduct.

After studying the occurrences in Josephus where someone is described as a Ἰουδαῖος τὸ γένος, Shaye Cohen concludes that this phrase should be translated "Judean by birth."[67] He continues, "The difficult part of this phrase is not τὸ γένος, for whether it is translated "by birth" or "by nation," its meaning is more or less the same."[68] Barclay observes how Drimylos "is recorded as being a 'Jew by birth' (τὸ γένος Ἰουδαῖος) who 'changed his customs and abandoned his ancestral opinions' (μεταβαλὼν τὰ νόμιμα καὶ τῶν πατρίων δογμάτων ἀπηλλοτριωμένος, 3 Macc 1:3…)."[69] Daniel Schwartz makes a similar argument on the language of priestly descent in Josephus.[70] He concludes that men who were descended from Aaron were all potentially priests, but only those who practiced as priests could be called priests without qualification. A man who was born into a priestly family, but, for whatever reason, did not serve as a priest was identified by Josephus as

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[65] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 137. Horrell lists as examples Exod 1:9; 5:14; Josh. 4:14; 11:21; Isa 22:4; 42:5; 43:20; Jer 38:1, 35, 37; 1 Esd 1:32; Est 3:13; 6:13; Add Est 8:21; Pss Sol 7:8; 17:7. Cf. John H. Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary 37B* (AYB; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 435.

[66] Barclay, *Mediterranean Diaspora*, 402-405.

[67] Shaye J. D. Cohen, "ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΣ to ΓΕΝΟΣ and Related Expressions in Josephus," in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith* (ed. Fausto Parente and Joseph Sievers; Studia Post-Biblica 41; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 23-38; 36.

[68] The difficult part is ascertaining the meaing of Ἰουδαῖος. Cohen, "ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΣ to ΓΕΝΟΣ," 36.

[69] Barclay, *Mediterranean Diaspora*, 403.

[70] Daniel R. Schwartz, "Priesthood and Priestly Descent: Josephus' *Antiquities* 10:80," *JTS* 32 / 1 (1981): 129-135.

a priest by descent.[71]  To be part of a γένος means to be part of a race, ethnicity, or sub-group,

such as the priesthood, that, in the majority of cases, can only be entered by birth.  Even if this

identity was later abandoned, as with Drimylos, this aspect of a person's identity could not be

completely erased.

This is seen in a touching scene in *Testament of Job* 1:5-6, the only occurrence of the phrase

γένος ἐκλεκτόν in Jewish literature before 1 Peter 2:9, where the categories of entrance by birth

are contrasted with membership by righteous living.[72]  Job says to his children,

> I am your father Job, fully engaged in endurance.  But you are a chosen and honored race
> (ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον) from the seed of Jacob, the father of your mother.  For I am
> *from the sons of Esau*, the brother of Jacob, of whom is your mother Dinah, from whom I
> begot you.[73]

At the beginning of his testament, Job reminds his children of their lineage.  Job himself is

descended from Esau and not from Jacob, his merit comes from his patient endurance of his

suffering.  His children, on the other hand, are "a chosen and honored race" because they

descend, through their mother, who is a daughter of Jacob, as Job goes out of his way to

emphasize (ἐκ σπέρματος Ιακωβ τοῦ πατρὸς τῆς μητρὸς ὑμῶν). Through Job's wife, his children

are part of the γένος of Israel by virtue of their lineage.  Job, on the other hand, has achieved his

membership through his righteousness under suffering.  By nature of their maternal descent,

Job's children are a "chosen and honored race (ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον)."

Jewish descent was valued differently by different Jews.  Ezra, Nehemiah, and the author of

Jubilees valued it so highly that no other means of entry into the Jewish community was

possible.[74]  Ezra was so horrified that "the holy race has mixed itself with the peoples of the

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[71] *Ant*. 10.79-80.  Further, Schwartz writes, "Very frequently, Josephus indicates a person's descent (γένος) when it explicitly or implicitly conflicts with something else told of him." Schwartz then lists several examples from Josephus were Jews by birth are described as living throughout the Diaspora or as servants of Gentiles.  See Schwartz, "Priestly Descent," 131.

[72] It is possible that the exact wording of this phrase is due to Christian interpolation.  However, even if the wording of the phrase was reworked, the questions of heredity, genealogy, and ancestry control the context of this passage.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 435.

[73] Greek text, S. P. Brock, *Testamentum Iobi* (PVTG 2; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 19. Translation, R. P. Spittler, "Testament of Job" ( in Charlesworth, *OTP* vol. 1; Peabody; Hendrickson, 2009), 829-868.

[74] For more, see §3.2.4, "Holy Seed: Corporate Israel," 102f.

lands" (Ezra 9:2) that he called for divorce from the offending women.  Likewise, exogamy is anathema in Jubilees.[75]  The author even constructs genealogies for the wives of the patriarchs to demonstrate their appropriate heredity.  These texts demonstrate a clear emphasis on strict boundaries between Jews and gentiles.

On the other end of the spectrum, texts like *Joseph and Aseneth* and the writings of Philo and Josephus exhibit much more open boundaries.  *Joseph and Aseneth* explains how Joseph married the daughter of an Egyptian priest.  This text clearly allows for someone born outside Judaism to become a member, a position Ezra, Nehemiah, and the author of Jubilees would have found unacceptable.  Josephus, for his part, recounts the narrative of the conversion of the royal house of Adiabene.[76]  Ellen Birnbaum has argued that Philo distinguishes between "Israel," those who see God, and ethnic Jews, which allows for the possibility that non-Jews may have attain the highest good, vision of God.[77]

This section has sought to illustrate the variety of Jewish estimations of the importance (or relativity) of membership by birth.  Jews appraised the value of membership by birth differently.  For Ezra, Nehemiah, and the author of Jubilees, this was the *only* means of membership into the Jewish community.  Philo, Josephus, and the author of *Joseph and Aseneth* maintained much more fluid boundaries.  However, it is true to say that most Jews were Jews because they were born Jews.  Those who did not attempt to cross boundaries did not need to contest their identity. What is true for both ends of the spectrum, however, is that membership in the Jewish community had to be maintained through righteous behavior, however conceived.

The author of 1 Peter chose to construct Christian ethnic identity in a way that emphasized the importance of membership by birth.  In this regard, 1 Peter has much in common with *Jubilees*. However, along with most other Jews, the letter also emphasizes that birth alone is not sufficient. Those who believe are called to live a life of holiness. In the chapters that follow, this thesis will

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[75]  See §3.3.1, "Jubilees," 107f.

[76] *Ant*. 20.38. Cf. Barclay, *Mediterranean Diaspora*, 403.

[77] Ellen Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought: Israel, Jews, and Proselytes* (BJS 290; SPM 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996).

explore the details of how 1 Peter does this, with special attention to how the letter compares with Jewish models on these points. Before looking more closely at the structure of 1 Peter, a few words on the nature of metaphor are called for.

## 1 . 4        On Metaphors

The author of 1 Peter uses a complex metaphor to cast Christian identity in ethno-racial language. To analyze this Petrine metaphor, it will be useful to examine what a metaphor is and how it works.[78] The following metaphor theory is drawn from cognitive linguistics but will be complemented by the work of Janet Soskice.[79]

The cognitive linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson define metaphor as "*understanding one kind of thing in terms of another.*"[80] In the metaphor, ARGUMENT IS WAR the concept of WAR structures the way ARGUMENT is understood: it can be attacked, defended, demolished, or won, etc.[81]

Metaphors function by transferring meaning from a Source Domain to a Target Domain, in this example, WAR and ARGUMENTS, respectively.[82] Metaphors are analyzed by *mapping* the

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[78] Metaphor theory has been successfully applied to 1 Peter by several scholars, such as Troy Martin and Bonnie Howe . I will interact with their work where relevant, but I will also develop my own metaphor theory to fit the needs of this project. However, this project goes beyond previous studies in several ways. First, this project seeks to place Petrine metaphors in the context of Jewish and Christian traditions. Second, previous studies have not investigated in detail how divine regeneration contributes to Christian identity. See Troy W. Martin, *Metaphor and Composition in 1 Peter* (SBLDS 131; Atlanta: Scholars, 1992). Troy W. Martin, "Christians as Babes: Metaphorical Reality in 1 Peter," in *Reading 1-2 Peter and Jude* (ed. Eric F. Mason and Troy W. Martin; Resources for Biblical Study 77; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature 2014), 99-112. Bonnie Howe, *Because You Bear This Name: Conceptual Metaphor and the Moral Meaning of 1 Peter* (BIS 81; Leiden: Brill, 2006).

[79] Metaphor has a complicated history. For historical studies of metaphor as it relates to 1 Peter and theology respectively, see Howe, *Because You Bear This Name*, 11-107. Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 1-14, 67-161. Soskice herself is emphatic that metaphors are primarily linguistic and not mental events. She writes, "Metaphor is by definition a figure of speech and not an 'act', 'fusion', or 'perception'." Though Soskice herself is very critical of "psychological terminology" and the use of cognitive theories, her work on metaphor will serve as a useful complement to cognitive models of metaphor. See Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 16.

[80] Emphasis original, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 5. Howe also bases her work off Lakoff and Johnson and begins with their definition of metaphor, Howe, *Because You Bear This Name*, 60.

[81] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 4.

[82] Zoltán Kövescses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 4, 252. Howe, *Because You Bear This Name*, 66-69. Martin, "Christians as Babes," 101.

Source Domain onto the Target Domain.[83]  The Source Domain, WAR, yields a complex

association of terms that can be mapped onto the Target in an expansive way.  Usually, the

Source Domain is something more concrete and easily understood than the Target Domain, so

that the more understandable concept sheds light on the more obscure.[84]  However, Source

Domains only ever map selectively onto Target Domains.[85]  This partiality means that the hearer

has to select which features of the Target should be mapped onto the Domain.  For example,

which aspects of the Temple does the author of 1 Peter mean for his addressees to apply to

themselves?

In 1 Peter, mapping the Source Domains of Family, Temple, Priesthood, and Ethnicity shed

light on the more abstract Target Domain of Christian identity.  However, the addressees have an

active role in selecting which elements of these Targets should be mapped onto the Domain.

Thus, the recipients are an integral part of the interpretative process: the metaphor is an invitation

to participate in the construction of meaning.

Every metaphor will highlight certain features and hide others.[86]  Recognizing the limitations

of each metaphor is incumbent on the reader.  The ARGUMENT IS WAR example highlights the

competitive, adversarial aspects of an argument, but hides others.  A different metaphor, such as

ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY, would have a very different set of associations.  Multiple metaphors

are therefore necessary to describe complex concepts.  The author of 1 Peter responds to the

limitation of any single metaphor to describe Christian identity by combining multiple simple

metaphors into an extended, complex metaphor.[87]  Simple metaphors can be combined to form

complex metaphors.[88]  Therefore, each simple metaphor will be studied to appreciate its

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[83] For more on mapping, see Kövescses, *Metaphor*, 6-7, 250.  Howe, *Because You Bear This Name*, 69-70.

[84] Kövescses, *Metaphor*, 6, 252. Howe, *Because You Bear This Name*, 61.

[85] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 52-55.  Kövescses, *Metaphor*, 79-92.

[86] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 51-55, 221.  Kövescses, *Metaphor*, 84-90

[87] A simple metaphor is defined as "one that emerges from what we find important in connection with basic physical entities and events that make up the human world, such as BUILDING, FIRE, PRESSURIZED CONTAINER, WAR, JOURNEY, BODY, PLANT, MACHINE, SPORTS, etc…The mappings which constitute this meaning focus (foci) are simple metaphors," Kövescses, *Metaphor*, 252. Cf. 116-118.

[88] Kövescses, *Metaphor*, 83-84, 247.

contribution to the whole.  In the rest of this thesis, the "regeneration metaphor" will serve as a short-hand way of referring to all the parts of this complex metaphor.

While figurative, metaphors are not merely decorative add-ons to prosaic speech.  Rather, they structure the way people think, speak, and act.  Metaphors are *cognitive*.[89]  As such, they can be, and often are, *structural* and *systematic*.[90]  In ARGUMENT IS WAR, the metaphor has structured the way people speak, think, and participate in arguments.  At the same time, these linguistic expression are systematic because they are part of a coherent metaphor.  This thesis will argue that the divine regeneration metaphor in 1 Peter is also structurally coherent and functions as a cognitive system.

Good metaphors are also *expansive* and *irreducible*: they cannot be reduced to prose without a loss of meaning.[91]  In the example, "that man is a fox," the context will determine which aspect of fox is meant to be transferred to the man.  Several aspects of the fox may transfer at once.  The metaphor therefore expands the meaning by opening a wide range of semantic possibilities from which the reader gathers meaning.  The metaphor cannot be substituted for an individual non-figurative piece of language because it participates in this complex semantic network of association and meaning.[92]  The metaphor is thus an expression of a cognitively structured way of thinking which prose is unable to replace.

As Janet Soskice has emphasized, metaphors are a way of communicating meaning that could not be communicated in a non-figurative way.[93]  The expansive and irreducible nature of metaphors is one of the reasons why this is true.  The truth content of metaphors has often been

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[89] So Lakoff and Johnson, "The most important claim we have made so far is that metaphor is not just a matter of language, that is of mere words.  We shall argue that, on the contrary, human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical...Metaphors as linguistic expressions are possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person's conceptual system.  Therefore, whenever in this book we speak of metaphors, such as ARGUMENT IS WAR, it should be understood that *metaphor* means *metaphorical concept,"* Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 3-6; 6.  Martin, "Christians as Babes," 101.  Howe, *Because You Bear This Name*, 59-62.

[90] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 3-13.

[91] Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 95.

[92] In the example, "the man is a fox," 'fox' could not be reduced to 'clever' without a loss of meaning.  Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 93-96.

[93] Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 31, 44, 70.

derided as inferior to "literal truth" or "words proper."[94]  Yet, "Metaphor should be treated as fully cognitive and capable of saying that which may be said in no other way."[95]  This is especially true of theology which must often express the apophatic.

One of the reasons that there is often no other way to speak the unspeakable is that something new is being said for which the previous language is inadequate.[96]  The metaphor is thus a necessary vehicle for communicating meaning beyond the boundary of the previously known.  This is especially pertinent for religious language.  When Christians say that Jesus is the son of God, "we are here stumbling to describe something new and unique—the divinity of Jesus.  The phrases are not redescribing but describing for the first time."[97]  The same is true in 1 Peter: the author is pushing the boundaries of normal speech to describe the new reality of the people of God.  When faced with how to describe what it means to be a part of this people, the author seizes upon the language of begetting, childhood, and ethnic identity to put into words the meaning Christian corporate identity.

Soskice has stressed that metaphor is a figure of speech, that is, "a phenomenon of language use."[98]  While metaphors are cognitive, they must be instantiated in language between the speaker and the recipient.  She writes,

> Ideally, a theory of metaphor should go even further and discuss not only the speaker's intention in using the metaphor but also the hearer's reception of it, how the hearer decides that the speaker is speaking metaphorically rather than nonsensically, and so on. This would involve a consideration not only of what is said but of the context in which it is said, the beliefs held mutually by both hearer and speaker, and the patterns of inference the hearer employs in determining the speaker's meaning.[99]

Soskice helpfully draws attention to the importance of a shared language between the speaker and the hearer.[100]  This observation has special relevance for a modern biblical critic studying an

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[94] Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 67-96.  Also, Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 189-192.

[95] Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 44.

[96] Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 89.  Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 196.

[97] Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 89-90.

[98] Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 15.

[99] Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 44, cf. 41.

[100] See also Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 184, 231-232.

early Christian Greek letter steeped in Jewish tradition.  Some of the complex issues related to intertextuality will be addressed in the following section. For the present, it will suffice to say that this thesis seeks to unite metaphor theory with a robust historical-critical study of Jewish and early Christian traditions.

Over the years, various scholars have disagreed over which controlling metaphor, if there is one, unites 1 Peter.[101]  John H. Elliott argued that the "household of God" is the letter's root metaphor and organizing principle.[102]  In turn, Troy Martin has proposed "diaspora."[103] Achtemeier, however, has argued that "the people of God" is the letter's controlling metaphor.[104] He writes

> The controlling metaphor to be found in this letter is the *Christian community as the new people of God constituted by the Christ who suffered (and rose).*[105]

Achtemeier uses both the epithets of "Israel" and "the people of God" to name the controlling metaphor.  However, I think it is better to use only "the people of God" since this title appears in the letter (2:10), while "Israel" does not.  This minor issue aside, the central metaphor of the people of God should be thought of as the umbrella category under which the categories of diaspora, house of God, and the divine regeneration imagery are located.  The category of diaspora presupposes nationality.  Likewise, the theme of "strangers and aliens," as part of the diaspora language, should also be understood within the larger framework of the people of God, of which more will be said below.[106]

One final set of questions needs to be asked.  How does Christian ethnicity relate to metaphor?  Are believers' Christian ethnic identities metaphorical?  If so, are they *real*?

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[101] For a detailed overview, see Mark Dubis, "Research on 1 Peter: A Survey of Scholarly LIterature Since 1985," *CBR* 4 / 2 (2006): 199-239; 215-219.

[102] Elliott, *I Peter*, 113-114.  Cf. 1:17, 2:5, 11, 18; 3:7; 4:10, 17.

[103] Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, 144-161.

[104] Paul J. Achtemeier, "Newborn Babes and Living Stones: Literal and Figurative in 1 Peter," in *To Touch the Text: Biblical and Related Studies in Honor of Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J.* (ed. Maurya P. Horgan and Paul J. Kobelski; New York: Crossroad, 1989),  207-236.  Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 69-73.

[105] Emph.orig. Achtemeier, "Literal and Figurative," 224.

[106] Achtemeier, "Literal and Figurative," 227-228.

The dichotomy between metaphors and truth is a false one, especially in theology.  Metaphors can communicate theological truth, and are sometimes *uniquely* able to communicate theological truth.  This is especially so when something new is being said.  How metaphorical is it to say that Jesus is the Lamb of God, or for Jesus to say that "whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mat 12:50; cf. Mk 3:31-35; Lk 8:19-21)? Surely these statements are not *merely* metaphor.  They are metaphors and they are deeply true.  I do not wish to alleviate these difficulties because there is value in recognizing where the limits of language coincide with the limits of human understanding.  My only suggestion is to say that in whatever way that Jesus *is* the lamb of God, this is the way that Christians *are* a γένος, ἔθνος, and λαός.

The following conclusions summarize the relevant aspects of metaphor for this project:
1. Metaphors are *structured systems of thought in language*.
2. Metaphors are *irreducible* to prosaic speech.
3. Metaphors *expand meaning*.
4. Metaphors can *express truth which could not be expressed in non-figurative speech*.
5. Metaphors are particularly *useful for expressing what is radically new*.
5. Metaphors *rely on the shared language* of the speaker and the receiver.
6. Metaphors *invite participation and engagement*.

## 1.5    Judaism, Christianity, and the Greco-Roman World: Intertextuality in 1 Peter

The previous section argued that metaphors "rely on the shared language of the speaker and the receiver."  In his letter, the author's "shared language" draws on a large body of Jewish and Christian tradition, both oral and written.  This tradition functions as a "shared language" between the sender and the recipients.  The letter integrates traditional material throughout the text, even the epistolary prescript and postscript are infused with traditional terminology.[107]  The consistency of the letter in this regard confirms the scholarly consensus of Petrine literary unity.[108]  Though the letter incorporates a wealth of traditional material, the author appropriates this tradition creatively.

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[107] See § 1.6.1, "The Epistolary Frame," 38f.

[108] For summaries of older proposals for a composite text and the new consensus on 1 Peter's textual integrity, see  Elliott, *I Peter*, 7-11.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 58-62.  Leonhard Goppelt, *A Commentary on I Peter* (trans. John E. Alsup; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978. Translation of *Der erste Petrusbrief*. 8th. MeyerK 12/1. Göttingen:

The importance of Jewish tradition in the letter is beyond doubt. It has the highest density of quotations and allusions to the Hebrew scriptures of any New Testament text.[109] Carson writes, "If one were to extend beyond allusions (however defined) to echoes picking up OT language and themes, scarcely a verse would be exempt."[110] For example, the author assumes knowledge of the narratives of Abraham, Sarah and Noah (3:5, 20). His ascription of Israelite epithets to believers also assumes a basic level of familiarity with these titles and the history and theology that accompanies them, as do the weighted references to Diaspora and Babylon in the epistolary frame.[111] As Elliott observes, the letter's use of the Scriptures was not formed in a vacuum but was influenced by the contemporary Jewish milieu. He writes

> 1 Peter contains no explicit citation of the OT Pseudepigrapha, the writings of Qumran, or the works of Philo and Josephus. On the whole, however, the author is clearly familiar with concepts, terminology, traditions, and perspectives evident in this diverse body of literature.[112]

However, these traditions are also refracted through the lens of early Christianity. Though the precise nature of this relationship is debated, 1 Peter witnesses to various strands of early Christian material.[113] The letter incorporates early Christian teaching, but does so in a creative, constructive way.

Intertextuality is thus operating at a number of levels. When the author quotes Isa 28:16 in 1 Pet 2:6, the quotation brings with it associations from its original use in Isaiah, its reception in Second Temple Judaism (1QS 8:5-8), its appropriation in early Christianity (Mat 21:42; Mk

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Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978), 15-25. J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter* (WBC; vol. 49; Waco: Word Books, 1988), xxxviii-xl. Reinhard Feldmeier, *The First Letter of Peter: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2008), 28-30. J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude* (Black's New Testament Commentaries. London: Black, 1969), 20-21.

[109] Scholars provide different numbers based on their definitions of quotations and allusions, but these numbers are nevertheless high. Schutter and Elliott count approximately 46 quotations and allusions, Elliott, *I Peter*, 12-17. William L. Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition of I Peter* (WUNT 2/30 30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989), 35-43.

[110] 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), 1015-1045; 1015.

[111] See § 1.6.1, "The Epistolary Frame," 38f.

[112] Elliott, *I Peter*, 17-18. Cf. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 13.

[113] Horrell, "Petrine Circle?," 7-44. See also discussion of Herzer, above. Cf., Elliott, *I Peter*, 20-40. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 15-23.

12:10; Lk 20:17; Rom 5:5; 9:33; 10:11) and its contextual usage in 1 Peter.[114] On top of this, the dividing lines between Christianity and Judaism in the first and early second century were fluid. This study's investigation of 1 Peter will therefore consider evidence from Jewish and early Christian sources in an equally fluid way to reflect the interpretive milieu in which 1 Peter was written.

The goal of this study is not to trace a tradition's line of chronological evolution, though broad contours are often visible. Instead, this thesis is concerned with appreciating the interpretive milieu in which 1 Peter was penned and the author's deployment of available material. In what ways does the letter's regeneration language employ contemporary concepts and imagery? In what ways is it innovative? How does it push boundaries (and for whom)?

One final point deserves to be made on the influence of Greco-Roman culture and literature. Jewish and Christian traditions are manifestly dominant in the letter, but Greco-Roman culture is nevertheless integrated into these traditions at a fundamental level.[115] The letter is written to believers in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor, in Greek, the language of the Empire. Elliott writes that the author "appears acquainted with the language, rhetoric, diction, moral exhortation (virtues, vices, household management tradition), and literary conventions of the Greco-Roman world."[116] Just as it is inappropriate and misleading to drive a wedge between Judaism and Christianity, it is equally misleading to insist on a fast division between early Christianity (and Judaism) and the Greco-Roman world. Though this study will be primarily concerned with 1 Peter's relation to Judaism and early Christianity, occasional use of other literature will be used where relevant.

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[114] For a thorough examination of the legacy of this verse, see Jaap Dekker, *Zion's Rock-Solid Foundations: An Exegetical Study of the Zion Text in Isaiah 28:16* (OtSt 54; Leiden: Brill, 2007).

[115] 1 Peter shows evidence that the author had some level of formal Greek education, Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 4-7.

[116] Elliott, *I Peter*, 19. Cf. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 5-7.

## 1 . 6    The Structure of 1 Peter

The epistolary frame (1:1-2; 5:12-14) supplements and reinforces the theology in the letter body.[117]  For this reason, this section will examine how the letter's structure as an early Christian diaspora letter contributes to its theology of divine regeneration.[118]  Because the goal of this thesis is to study the importance of the regeneration extended metaphor, the present study will focus on 1 Peter 1:3-2:10 where this language is concentrated.

First Peter is an early Christian diaspora letter heavily influenced by the conventions of Jewish diaspora letter writing.[119]  As Doering has shown, Jewish diaspora letters are "not characterized by a consistent and distinct letter form" although some formulaic features regularly appear.[120]  Moreover, these letters were often "shaped by a number of overarching theological *topoi*."[121]  Doering names these *topoi* as:[122]

> the unity of the people of God resident at various places that is grounded in its election, God's covenant faithfulness and salvific actions, and the obligation of the people to observe and practice the Law.

Most of these elements touch on central pillars of Jewish identity and also appear in 1 Peter, where the author seeks to foster solidarity among believers as the elect people of God.  Believers are scattered across Asia Minor, but they are one people through God's salvific work.[123]  This status as God's people comes with ethical obligations, such the maintenance of holiness (1:15-16).

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[117] Elliott, *I Peter*, 9.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 60. However, Klauck has argued that the proem (1:3-12) should be included in the epistolary opening.  Likewise, he has also argued that the epistolary closing includes 5:10-14.  Hans-Josef Klauck, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament: A Guide to Context and Exegesis* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 339-341.

[118] Other examples are James, the letter in Acts 15:23-29 and perhaps 1 Clement.  For more on Christian Diaspora letters, see Lutz Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters and the Beginnings of Christian Epistolography* (WUNT 298; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 429-497.

[119] Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 429-452.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 12.

[120] Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 434.

[121] Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 433.

[122] Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 433-434.

[123] In this way, 1 Peter is not a "catholic" letter, though the letter is concerned elsewhere with all believers (1 Pet 5:9). Cf. Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 435.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 8.

First Peter is framed with an epistolary opening (1:1-2) and closing (5:12-14).[124] Orally, the use of ἀγαπητοί (2:11 and 4:12) and ἀμήν (4:11 and 5:11) signals three division points in the letter body: 1:3-2:10, 2:11-4:11, and 4:12-5:11.[125] The sharpest structural division occurs in 2:11 where the author writes, "Beloved, I exhort you as strangers and aliens…(Ἀγαπητοί, παρακαλῶ ὡς παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους)."[126] The reiteration address of believers "as strangers and aliens (ὡς παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους)" evokes their address in 1:1 as "the elect strangers in the diaspora (ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς)."[127]

However, the letter's structure must account for thematic factors as well as rhetorical and oral ones. After the division at 2:11, the author begins a new, distinct series of ethical exhortations.[128] Though a structural break occurs at 4:11, the unit 4:12-5:11 is thematically very similar to what came before.[129] For this reason, the letter is divided into two halves, 1:3-2:10 and 2:11-5:11 with a lesser division in the second half at 4:11.

### 1. 6. 1 The Epistolary Frame

The question that directs the following two sections on 1 Peter's epistolary frame is how these features contribute to the author's goal of describing regenerated believers as those who are now God's people. Inherent in the nature of Jewish diaspora letters is the desire to maintain solidarity among geographically displaced Jewish communities and to maintain boundaries with outsiders through the regulation of specific behavioral exhortations.[130] At the heart of these concerns are

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[124] All the available evidence points to the conclusion that 1 Peter was a real letter which was sent to communities of predominately Gentile believers in Asia Minor. See Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 429. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 50-51. Elliott, *I Peter*, 11. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 62. More will be said on the addressees and their social situation below.

[125] Michaels, *1 Peter*, xxxiv-xxxv. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 73.

[126] On 2:11 as "a major hinge transitional hinge," see Elliott, *1 Peter*, 81. Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 19-20. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 73, 169. Michaels, *1 Peter*, xxxiv-xxxvii, 115. Kelly, *Epistles of Peter*, 23.

[127] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 80. Michaels, *1 Peter*, xxxv.

[128] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 19.

[129] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 20.

[130] Doering distinguishes two sub-types of diaspora letters: those associated with Jeremiah (for example, Jer 29:1-23) or Baruch, and those attributed to the Judean community and its leaders (such as 2 Macc 1:1-10a; 1:10b-2:18). The latter sub-type discusses calendrical and halakhic issues. Both types, however, emphasize "the cohesion between the members of the people of God in the homeland and abroad," *Jewish Letters*, 431-433.

questions about theology, identity, ethnicity, nationality and Jewishness.  Similarly, the author of

1 Peter is concerned to strengthen group solidarity and identity and uses the conventions of

Jewish diaspora letter writing to this purpose.  In the letter body, the author will ascribe titles of

Jewish identity, nationality and ethnicity to a heterogeneous group of (mostly gentile) Christian

believers.[131]  To this extent, the letter's epistolary frame sharpens the significance of believers as

the divinely begotten people of God.

### 1. 6. 1. 1  The Prescript: 1 Peter 1:1-2

Many of the letter's key theological motifs are anticipated in the prescript: election, alienation,

sanctification and obedience.[132]  By using densely packed theological language within the

standard epistolary template, the author has reframed believers' quotidian life in Asia Minor with

the reorienting power of God.  1 Peter 1:1-2 says,

> Πέτρος ἀπόστολος Ἰσοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς Πόντου, Γαλατίας, Καππαδοκίας, Ἀσίας καὶ Βιθυνίας κατὰ πρόγνωσιν θεοῦ πατρὸς ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος εἰς ὑπακοὴν καὶ ῥαντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθείη.
>
> Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect exiles in the diaspora of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in the Holy Spirit for obedience and sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace to you and peace be multiplied.[133]

Believers are first addressed as "the elect (ἐκλεκτοῖς)."  The prescript explains that this

election is based, "on the foreknowledge of God the Father" (κατὰ πρόγνωσιν θεοῦ πατρός).  This

initial address of believers as elect is matched in the epistolary closing with the reference to "she

who is co-elect in Babylon (ἡ ἐν βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτή, 5:13)."[134]  Election thus bookends the

letter and reminds believers that their identity is vouchsafed by God.  The elect now relate to

God as their Father, as the letter will explain in the proem.[135]

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[131] For the addressees as predominately Gentile, see Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 438.  Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, 45-46.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 50-51.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, xlv.

[132] Elliott, *I Peter*, 70, 321-322.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 79-81.

[133] My translation.

[134] Elliott, *I Peter*, 315.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 70.

[135] Elliott, *I Peter*, 318.

Election is also central to the author's theological program because of its threefold appearance in 1:3-2:10 (2:4, 6, and 9).  In 2:4, Christ is rejected by the world, but chosen and precious to God (2:4, παρὰ δὲ θεῷ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον), a fact validated by Isa 28:16 (2:6, ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον). Ultimately, believers' election is based on divine foreknowledge and the prior election of Christ.[136]  Through their regeneration, believers share in Christ's worldly rejection and heavenly election.  The letter's climactic statement on election appears in 2:9 where the very first in a series of titles given to believers is "an elect stock (γένος ἐκλεκτόν, Isa 43:20b)."  Believers are members of the "elect stock," an identity statement anticipated at the very beginning of the letter in the prescript by their address as "the elect."

Believers are also addressed as "strangers (παρεπιδήμοις)."  As Feldmeier has shown, the theme of being a stranger and an alien taps into a small but steady stream of tradition which understands displacement as the counterpart to election.[137]  It is precisely because of believers' new identity as the people of God that they find themselves displaced from mainstream society.[138]  As Michaels said, "παρεπιδήμοις is the corollary of ἐκλεκτοῖς."[139]  The second half of the letter, which begins in 2:11 by reprising believers' status as "strangers and aliens," addresses some specific ways believers are to conduct their lives in this situation.[140]  The diaspora theme also plays into the motifs of election and alienation.[141]  In 1 Peter, divine regeneration precipitates believers' social ostracism thus their diaspora existence.[142]

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[136] In 1:20, the author writes that Christ was "fore-ordained (προεγνωσμένου μὲν πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου)" to ransom believers before the foundation of the world.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 318.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 81.

[137] Reinhard Feldmeier, *Die Christen als Fremde. Die Metapher der Fremde in der antiken Welt, im Urchristentum und im 1. Petrusbrief* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 39-72; Reinhard Feldmeier, "The 'Nation' of Strangers: Social Contempt and its Theological Interpretation in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity," in *Ethnicity and the Bible* (ed. Mark G. Brett; Leiden: Brill, 2002),  241-270.

[138] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 80, 82.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 7, 10-11.

[139] He continues, "The addressees are 'strangers' not by race, birth, or circumstances but because divine election

[140] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 71.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 7.

[141] Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 440.

[142] Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 440. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 82.

This Christian "diaspora" is modeled on the Jewish Diaspora experience.[143]  However, it does not merely refer to the geographical dispersion of believers, though that is its starting place. Doering writes,

> 'Diaspora' in 1 Peter does not refer to a people who have been physically and historically dispersed from their homeland, but rather to addressees who have been *turned into* a Diaspora existence by their rebirth.[144]

Believers' diaspora existence is the direct result of their regeneration.  Based on their regenerations, all of believers' familial, ethnic, and corporate relationships are reoriented.

Finally, the prescript explains that believers have been saved "for obedience and sprinkling (εἰς ὑπακοὴν καὶ ῥαντισμὸν) with the blood of Jesus Christ."[145]  In 1 Peter, sanctification and obedience are closely linked (cf. 1:14-16, 22).  In 1:22, the author writes, "having purified (ἡγνικότες) your souls by your obedience (ἐν τῇ ὑπακοῇ) to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart."  This love is linked to divine regeneration (1:23).

Finally, the language of sprinkling evokes ideas of cultic purity, holiness, and divine presence. The theme of cultic holiness will be developed later in the letter when believers, as obedient children, are called to be holy as God is holy (1:15-16) as a prerequisite to their corporate embodiment of the temple and identity as a royal priesthood (2:5, 9).   The elect are also called to obedience.  Obedience distinguishes those who believe from those who do not.  As 1:3-2:10 will make clear, a decision is incumbent upon all people who encounter Christ.  The only two responses are obedience (1:2, 14, 22; 3:6) and disobedience (2:8; 3:1, 20; 4:17).  The prescript is thus packed with theologically loaded terminology that anticipates the development in the letter body.  The author redeploys this technique in the postscript.

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[143] Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 437-438.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 8-9.

[144] Emphasis original. Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 438.

[145] The εἰς clause is best taken as denoting goal rather than cause.  Telic εἰς clauses are common in 1 Peter, especially in the proem (for example, 1:3, 4a, 5, 7, 22; 2:2, 5, 9; 3:7, 9; 4:2, 7).  Believers are called to obedience and to be sprinkled with Christ's blood.  The sprinkling here probably evokes the rituals involved in sealing a covenant (Exod 24:3-8 Cf. Heb 9:18-21).  Believers are called to obedience and are so sealed in their covenantal relationship with God by being sprinkled with the blood of Christ.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 87-89. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 11-13. Goppelt, *I Peter*, 74-75.  Against, Elliott, *I Peter*, 319.

### 1. 6. 1. 2   The Postscript: 1 Peter 5:12-14

The letter closes with a reprisal of many of the same themes.  As noted, the theme of election is reiterated through the reference "She who is in Babylon who is co-elect."  Likewise, the reference in the opening to the "diaspora" corresponds with the reference here to "Babylon."[146]  In this way, the stylization of 1 Peter as a diaspora letter from the elect to the elect encompasses the whole letter.[147]  1 Peter 5:12-14 says,

> Διὰ Σιλουανοῦ ὑμῖν τοῦ πιστοῦ ἀδελφοῦ, ὡς λογίζομαι, δι' ὀλίγων ἔγραψα παρακαλῶν καὶ ἐπιμαρτυρῶν ταύτην εἶναι ἀληθῆ χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς ἣν στῆτε. Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς ἡ ἐν βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτὴ καὶ Μᾶρκος ὁ υἱός μου. ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἀγάπης. Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ.

> By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him, I have written to you briefly exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God, stand fast in it.  She who is in Babylon who is co-elect greets you, as does Mark my son.  Greet one another with a kiss of love.  Peace to you all who are in Christ.

As Doering writes, "Along these lines, 1 Peter can therefore be understood *as a letter from a place in the Diaspora* (qualified in terms of the Babylonian exile) *to the Diaspora*."[148]  The author places himself in the diaspora even as he writes to believers in the diaspora.  This creates a sense of solidarity between the author and the recipients: their exile is based not on a geographical but on a theological reality.

### 1. 6. 2  The Structure of 1 Peter 1:3-2:10

The author begins the first half of the letter (1:3-2:10) with a proem, or epistolary eulogy (1:3-12).[149]  This eulogy has three parts: a benediction praising God for his actions of regeneration (3-5), the joy and endurance of faith through trials (6-9), and the revelation of what was hidden from the prophets, the gospel that is now preached (10-12).

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[146] Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 444-446.

[147] I say stylization because I think the imagery of exile and diaspora are the motivation for the use of "Babylon" here.  It is possible that Babylon is a code-name for the *purported* location of the addressor, but the use of the code-name is secondary to the theological, stylistic use of Babylon as part of the Diaspora motif.  For more on Babylon as a possible code-name for Rome, see Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 445-446.

[148] Emphasis original. Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 446.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 354.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 8-9.

[149] Doering, *Jewish Letters*, 449-450.  Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, 47-68.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 328-329.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 73, 90-91.

The eulogy begins, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been begotten anew…" Immediately after God is praised as Father, the author praises God for his act of spiritually rebegetting believers, an act developed in verses 4-5. Further, divine regeneration is described as happening according to "his great mercy (ὁ κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος)." Mercy bookends 1 Peter 1:3-2:10. It appears only in 1:3 and in the climax of the unit in 2:10. The author there reminds believers that those who were no people have become God's people, and "once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy" (οἱ οὐκ ἠλεημένοι, νῦν δὲ ἐλεηθέντες). The divine mercy through which believers are begotten anew reaches its fulfillment in the creation of a people from those who were no people. God's mercy defines this people. Once they had not received mercy, but now they are the people of God.

The beginning of the letter body is signaled in verse 13 with the conjunction Διὸ and the imperative, "hope (ἐλπίσατε)."[150] However, the structure of 1 Peter 1:13-25 is relatively fluid and resists a tight structure.[151] The following sections of 1:13-25 are perhaps more accurately called sense units because they are loosely organized by theme. As obedient children, believers are called to be holy as God is holy (1:13-16). In 1:17 believers are exhorted to remember that even though God is their Father he will still judge each according to his deeds. The theme of fatherhood links vs. 17 to 18-21 where the fatherhood of God is contrasted with what believers had inherited from their earthly fathers. Because believers have now been purified, they are called to love one another (1:22). The call to love is grounded on the divine regeneration of believers and the imperishable seed with which they have been begotten (1:23). Like the grass, those who are born of human parents will perish, but those who are begotten through the word will live forever.

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[150] Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, 70-71. Elliott, *I Peter*, 329. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 73, 114.

[151] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 17-18.

In 2:1-3, believers are admonished like newborn infants to crave the pure spiritual milk of the word.  The οὖν in 2:1 is consecutive, linking 2:1-3 with what precedes it.[152]  In light of the word of God, the imperishable seed, believers should now put away all wicked behavior. Building on 1:23-25, the letter develops the regeneration theme by shifting the siring language to infancy language.  An oral and semantic connection links ἀναγεννάω and ἀρτιγέννητος .[153]  The use of ἀρτιγέννητος, as a compound noun literally meaning "one now begotten or born" is an implicit reference to believers' new birth.  The author may be using the inherent gendered ambiguity of ἀρτιγέννητος to shift the metaphor from the realm of paternal begetting to that of maternal care and nurture.

1 Peter 2:4-10 is carefully linked with 1 Peter 2:1-3.  As Troy Martin has shown, the ὅν in vs. 4 is "grammatically subordinate and dependent upon the passage that contains the metaphor of newborn babies."[154]  He further shows that since the protasis in verse 3 comes after the apodosis, the term "Lord" links these two units.  He writes,

…the term *Lord* was positioned as the last element in that protasis so that an essential association could be made between the term *Lord* and the participial phrase that introduces the metaphor of the readers as living stones.  The Lord whom the readers had tasted in the previous metaphor, is the same Lord upon whom they, as living stones, are fashioned into a temple for God.[155]

He concludes, "Semantically, both of these metaphors are linked by the notion of growth."[156]

Both 2:1-3 and 2:4-10 are focused on growth which is made possible through Christ.  While it may appear that the author of 1 Peter has switched to a completely new idea in 2:4-10, there are very good reasons for seeing conceptual continuity between 2:1-3 and 4-10 even though the metaphor has shifted to a new semantic field.

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[152] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 144.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 395, 404-405.  Dubis sees οὖν as having a combination of inferential and resumptive functions.  See, Mark Dubis, *I Peter: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (BHGNT; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2010), 42.

[153] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 145 n.128.  Philip L. Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development in the Greco-Roman Context: A Reappraisal of the Paraenetic Utilization of Metaphor in 1 Peter 2.1-3," *JSNT* 31 / 4 (2009): 371-400; 394, n.325.

[154] Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, 177.  Cf. Elliott, *I Peter*, 407.

[155] Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, 177.

[156] Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, 177.

In 2:4-10, the author's statements on Christian identity reach a crescendo in a carefully crafted set of verses woven together with link words, quotations, and allusions. It will suffice to say here that 2:4 introduces the main themes of the section and is appropriately focused on the role of Christ. Verses 5-6 then look at believers, who, as they conform to Christ's example, are living stones that are coming together to form a spiritual temple. The author here layers several images on top of one another as expressions of Christian identity: believers as living stones, a spiritual house, a temple, and a priesthood. In verses 7-8, the author comments on those who disobey the word before returning, in verses 9-10, for his final, concluding statements on Christian identity, the people of God who are a chosen stock (γένος ἐκλεκτόν), royal priesthood (βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα), holy nation (ἔθνος ἅγιον), and people of his own possession (λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν).

In conclusion, the structure of 1 Peter can be outlined as follows:

I. **Prescript**: 1:1-2
II. **The People of God**: 1:3-2:10
    1. *Eulogy*: 1:3-12
        a. Benediction for Divine Regeneration, 1:3-5
        b. Joy and Endurance of Faith through Trials, 1:6-9
        c. Revelation of the Gospel, 1:10-12
    2. *Life in the Family of God*
        a. As Obedient Children, Be Holy, 1:13-16
        b. The Father as Judge, 1:17
        c. The Ransoming Work of Christ, 1:18-21
        d. The Imperishable Seed of the Word of God, 1:22-25
    3. *Growth like Newborn Babes*, 2:1-3
    4. *Growth into the People of God,* 2:4-10
        a. Introduction: Christ the Living Stone, 2:4
        b. Ecclesiology: Living Stones and a Spiritual Priesthood, 2:5-6
        c. Those who Reject the Living Stone, 2:7-8
        d. Divine Ethnography: The People of God, 2:9-10
III. **The People of God in the World**: 2:11-5:11
    1. 2:11-4:11
    2. 4:12-5:11
V. **Postscript**: 5:12-14

## 1.7      Summary

This Introduction has brought together insights from the history of scholarship, ethnic and metaphor theory, intertextuality, and the structure of 1 Peter. This thesis will go beyond previous

studies of 1 Peter by engaging with insights from ethnic and metaphor theory. From ethnic theory, one of the key insights for this study is that ethnicity is a social construct. This means that even though it gives the impression of being a fixed entity, ethnic identities are constantly in the process of being contested and renegotiated. In 1 Peter, this negotiation of identity is at the heart of 1:3-2:10. In most constructions of ethnicity, several categories structure ethnic identity, but foremost among these are the categories of putative common descent, kinship, and identification with a territory. It is not surprising, then, that the author of 1 Peter engages precisely these categories, among others, in his reconstruction of Christian identity as an ethnicity. However, he does so on his own terms, in a way imbued with theological significance.

He does this through the application of the complex metaphor of divine regeneration to believers. This metaphor grounds ethnic identity and structures the author's development of this ideology. As the section on metaphor demonstrated, metaphors are cognitive. The language in which they are expressed structures thought. In 1 Peter, the concept of Christians as an ethnic group, as a group defined by divine regeneration, structures the author's thinking. This is seen through the letter's structure: the divine regeneration metaphor appears frequently in 1:3-2:10, but not in a static way. The author develops this complex metaphor to describe the origin of believers' new identity and as well as their means of growth into a new people. The author's creative use of language flows from his vigorous attempts to put into words a new reality for which previous language is inadequate. To do this, the author incorporates a rich variety of traditional material from Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity to weave a new identity for beleaguered Christians in Asia Minor.

# Chapter 2  **Begotten Anew: Divine Begetting in 1 Peter**

## 2.1  **Introduction**

Immediately after the epistolary opening, the author begins his eulogy, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has begotten us anew (ἀναγεννήσας) to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1:3).  Divine regeneration is the very first act for which God is praised.  The author placed this theme at the very beginning of the eulogy to underline its importance.  This chapter will examine divine regeneration within its Jewish and early Christian context in order to appreciate how the author used Jewish traditions of divine begetting and Christian traditions of regeneration for his own theological purpose. The foundation of this chapter will rest on two discrete bodies of evidence gathered from Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity: the use of regeneration language, namely, ἀναγεννάω and παλιγγενεσία (§2.2), and the theme of God as begetter in Jewish and early Christian literature (§2.3).  Finally, this chapter will examine 1 Peter 1:3-5 and 1:23 in light of these insights (§2.4).

Previous studies have sought to locate the origin of 1 Peter's regeneration language in the Greco-Roman mystery cults.[1]  However, nearly all scholars since Harnack (1918) and Selwyn (1946) have found these arguments unconvincing.[2]  More recently, Feldmeier, with the majority of commentators, has also rejected the influence of the Mysteries.[3]  These arguments will not be rehearsed in detail here.[4]

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[1] See the sources cited in §1.2, "Regeneration in 1 Peter: A Review of Scholarship," 14f.  The main proponent of this argument was Richard Perdelwitz, *Die Mysterienreligion und das Problem des I. Petrusbriefes: Ein literarischer und religionsgeschichtlicher Versuch* (RVV 11,3; Gießen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1911).  Though this case has recently been argued in a 2011 thesis by Hammer, it still remains unconvincing.

[2] Harnack, "Terminologie der Wiedergeburt."  Edward Gordon Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1946), 305-311. F. Büchsel, "ἀναγεννάω," in *TDNT vol.5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964),  673-675.  For example, Michaels, *1 Peter*, 17-18.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 332. Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 82-83.

[3] Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt." Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), esp. 1-4, 51-53, 99-101.  Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 16-122.

[4] In brief, the influence of the mysteries on 1 Peter is to be rejected for several reasons.  First, there is no evidence in pre-Christian sources that rebirth language was used in any mystery rite.  Second, the content and

One point, however, from this debate is worth noticing. The language of "rebirth" obscures an important difference between the Mysteries and 1 Peter. As Achtemeier correctly observed, rebirth and rebegetting are different concepts; one is gendered feminine, the other masculine. First Peter speaks of divine begetting, not divine birth.[5] Achtemeier's observation is a case in point for the importance of translating ἀναγεννάω in 1 Peter as masculine. The gendered aspect of the image is significant, but often overlooked due to the absence in English of a smooth translation equivalent. This thesis will use "rebegotten" or "begotten anew" to preserve the masculine aspect of the metaphor. Interestingly, the author does employ feminine images later in 2:1-3. However, in order to recognize the switch from masculine to feminine imagery, it must be emphasized the language in 1:3 and 23 is masculine.

## 2.2 The Vocabulary of Regeneration: ἀναγεννάω and παλιγγενεσία

### 2.2.1 The Evidence from Second Temple Jewish Literature

This section and the one to follow will survey the language of rebegetting and rebirth, specifically the terms ἀναγεννάω and παλιγγενεσία, and their cognates, in Jewish and early Christian literature. This section will show that the concept of *divine regeneration* does not occur in pre-Christian Jewish literature. The general concept of *regeneration* was common in

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internal structure of the mysteries is fundamentally different from that of Christianity. Third, the initiation rites of the mysteries were generally kept secret. It is unclear how they would have influenced early Christians. Fourth and finally, because most of the evidence for rebirth language comes from the second century on, it seems likely that, in fact, Christian religious language influenced the mysteries, rather than the other way around. For example, Sallustius recounts the rites of the festival and explains how these rites relate to the myth of Attis and the Mother of gods. He describes abstention from certain types of food, the cutting down of a symbolic tree, and then, "after this we are fed on milk as though being reborn; that is followed by rejoicing and garlands and as it were a new ascent to the gods" (IV, 20-24). It is worth noting here that Sallustius is influenced by Julian the Apostate and that his recounting of this myth "was directly copied" from Julian's *Fifth Oration: Hymn to the Mother of Gods* (Nock, ci-cii). Both Julian and Sallustius were involved in writing polemics against the Christians, so it is not impossible that Julian and Sallustius, to some degree, are responding to Christian teaching and that their writing at times uses their terminology. Mounce also comes to this conclusion. See Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 88-89. For more on the scholarly rejection of influence on the mysteries, see Harnack, "Terminologie der Wiedergeburt," 110-111. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 305-311. Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 62-122. As Mounce writes, "It is absolutely essential to emphasize from the beginning that there are very few actual references to rebirth in the literature pertaining to the Mysteries, and the references we do have are either too late or too problematic to be conclusive….There is not one single text which proves that in pre-Christian times rebirth was a technical metaphor for any Mystery cult," "Metaphor of Rebirth," 622.

[5] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 94, with n. 19.

pre-Christian Jewish literature, but it was never predicated of *God*. To put it another way, God never "re-begets" anything in pre-Christian Jewish literature. However, the vocabulary used in the New Testament was known to Jewish authors who used these words in a variety of ways reflecting common Greek usage.[6] However, regeneration language was not limited to these terms, as Philo's *Questions on Exodus* and Pseudo-Philo's *Sermon on Jonah* illustrate. These examples complement the word studies on ἀναγεννάω and παλιγγενεσία by illustrating the flexibility of regeneration language.

The two key regeneration terms are ἀναγεννάω and παλιγγενεσία. Of the two, ἀναγεννάω was much more uncommon, occurring only twice in all pre-Christian Greek literature, once each in Philo and Josephus (ἀναγέννησις in Philo, *Eternity* 8-9; in Josephus, *War* 4.484).[7] The fact that ἀναγεννάω appears only in Jewish sources before the rise of Christianity may strengthen the connection between 1 Peter and its Jewish background, though this is tentative. Because of the dearth of evidence, ἀναγεννάω and παλιγγενεσία will be looked at together. However, while these terms can function synonymously, they also have their own semantic associations.[8] Παλιγγενεσία had a distinctly Stoic association not shared with ἀναγεννάω.[9] However, while παλιγγενεσία retained this usage in philosophical literature, it "seems quite early to have come into use outside the Stoic schools and to have become part of the heritage of the educated world, thus acquiring a more general sense."[10]

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[6] Büchsel, "ἀναγεννάω," 673-675. F. Büchsel, "παλιγγενεσία " in *TDNT vol. 1* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 686-689. Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 19-34.

[7] Παλιγγενεσία, on the other hand, has wide attestation. For example, it is used by Pythagoras (6-5th c. BCE), Aristoxenus (4th c. BCE), Chrysippus (3rd c. BCE), Arius Didymus (1st c. BCE), and Boethus (1st c. BCE). In the 1st-2nd centuries of the common era, the word was in use by authors such as Plutarch, Philo, Clement of Rome, and Galen.

[8] For later, evidence from Hesychius, the fifth century lexicographer, may be of some value. He defines παλιγγενεσία as τὸ ἐκ δευτέρου ἀναγεννηθῆναι, ἢ ἀνακαινισθῆναι (3:12). Also see evidence from Philo, discussed below, in *Eternity* 8-9. Büchsel, "ἀναγεννάω," 673.

[9] Dey, *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ*, 6-13. Cf. *SVF* 2. Cap. II *De Mundo*, § 10. *Conflagrationis et restaurationis mundi aeternae vices*, 183-191.

[10] Büchsel, "παλιγγενεσία," 687. Cf. Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 43-44.

The verb ἀναγεννάω is a composed of ἀνά and γεννάω, and has the basic meaning "beget again, cause to be born again."[11] The noun παλιγγενεσία, also a compound of πάλιν and γένεσις, has the basic meaning, the "state of being renewed, with a focus on a cosmic experience" or, an "experience of a complete change of life, *rebirth*."[12] These basic definitions could be used in a wide variety of contexts in Greek literature. The terms could connote procreative imagery, but they could also be used more generally to mean "renewal" without this association.[13]

In his study of rebirth language from ancient literature to the first century, William Mounce categorized fourteen uses of ἀναγεννάω and παλιγγενεσία such as cosmic renewal, the transmigration of the soul, a new stage in a person's life, rebirth of a country or city, the rebirth of the day, and rebirth as a metaphor for cyclical events.[14] By the first century, regeneration and rebirth language was common in Greek literature and could be used in a variety of ways.[15]

This variety and flexibility of meaning is reflected in Jewish and Christian usage. Josephus once uses ἀναγεννάω to describe the effects of divine judgment on the countryside surrounding Sodom and Gomorrah. He writes, "Still, too, may one see ashes reproduced (ἀναγεννωμένην) in the fruits, which from their outward appearance would be thought edible, but on being plucked with the hand dissolve into smoke and ashes" (*War* 4.484).[16]

Josephus' only use of παλιγγενεσία describes the exiles' return from Babylon.[17] The Jews were "feasting and celebrating the recovery and rebirth (τὴν ἀνάκτησιν καὶ παλιγγενεσίαν) of their native land" (*Ant*., 11. 66). This national celebration lasted for seven days, a number

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[11] BDAG, 59. LSJ, "to beget anew, regenerate," 93.

[12] BDAG, 752. LSJ, "new birth, new life, restoration, regeneration, of the word," 1112. See also, Dey, *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ*, 4.

[13] Mounce emphasizes, "The 'birth' aspect can be minimal or totally absent," "Metaphor of Rebirth," 12-13.

[14] Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 17-43. See also, Dey, *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ*, 25-30. Also, Büchsel, "παλιγγενεσία," 686-688.

[15] Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 43.

[16] A similar tradition is found in Wisdom 10:7, which says, "Evidence of their wickedness still remains; a continually smoking wasteland, plants bearing fruit that does not ripen, and a pillar of salt standing as a monument to an unbelieving soul."

[17] Büchsel, "παλιγγενεσία," 688. See *Ant*., XI, 66, 5 and § 2.3.2, "Divine Begetting in Josephus, Philo, and *Joseph and Aseneth*," 64f.

associated with creation and completion. The seven-day celebration marks the "rebirth" or re-establishment of the nation.

Philo's only use of ἀναγέννησις appears in *Eternity* 8-9 in a discussion of the eternality of the cosmos where it is preceded with πάλιν.[18] Philo uses παλιγγενεσία 13 times. Of those 13 instances, nine are in *Eternity*, and once each in *Cherubim* 114: 9; *Embassy* 325: 2; *Posterity* 124: 2; and *Moses* 2:65, 5.[19] In *Cherubim* and *Posterity*, Philo refers to the movement of the soul after its separation from the body at death. In *Embassy*, he uses it for rhetorical flourish.

In *Moses*, it describes the repopulation of the earth by Noah and his family after the flood. Philo describes Moses as "the beginner of a second generation of mankind (δευτέρας γενέσεως ἀνθρώπων, 2:60)."[20] In *Rewards*, Philo returns to this theme to explain that Noah exemplifies two important benefits. First, he is saved from global destruction. Second, he begins "the innocent generation." After the flood, Noah takes up the mantel of caring for creation. Like a new Adam, he is given the task of caring and protecting each kind of living creature, "mated in couples to produce a second creation (δευτέραν γένεσιν) to make good the annihilation of the first." In both texts, the re-establishment of the world after the flood is compared to a regeneration. A similar Noah tradition appears in *1 Clem.* 9:4, "Noah, being found faithful, proclaimed a second birth (παλιγγενεσίαν κόσμῳ) to the world by his ministry, and through him the Master saved the living creatures that entered the ark in harmony."

The closest predecessor to the New Testament's concept of divine regeneration occurs in Philo's *Questions on Exodus* 2:46. Unfortunately, *Questions on Exodus* now exists in its entirety

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[18] The authorship of *Eternity* is debated. F. H. Colson quips, "Among the works of Philo this is certainly the one whose genuineness can be most reasonably doubted," *Eternity*, 172. Colson's reservations stem from contradictions which arise when this work is compared with Philo's other works. Specifically, "Philo in his other works has denounced the doctrine that the world is uncreated and indestructible, in this book he appears to maintain that theory," *Eternity*, 173. Runia is probably correct when he argues for the genuineness of the text. Either way, *Eternity* demonstrates that the concept of cosmic regeneration was current roughly during the time of Philo and comprehensible in Jewish and philosophical writing. Cf. David T. Runia, "Philo's "De aeternitate mundi": The Problem of Its Interpretation," *CV* 35 / 2 (1981): 105-151. Also, Dey, *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ*, 7-8.

[19] *Eternity* 9, 47, 76, 85 x2, 93, 99, 103, 107.

[20] Philo writes that Noah and his family "became leaders of the regeneration, inaugurators of a second cycle, spared as embers to rekindle mankind…born to be the likeness of God's power and image of His nature, the visible of the Invisible, the created of the Eternal," *Moses*, II: 65, 5-10. Cf. Dey, *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ*, 9.

only in ancient Armenian.  Serendipitously, Greek fragments of this quaestio have survived.[21]

However, because the Armenian is substantially longer than the Greek fragment, a comparison

between the English translation of the Armenian and the Greek fragment will be carried out as

far as possible.[22]

In *Questions on Exodus* 2:46, Philo asks, "Why is the mountain covered with cloud for six

days, and Moses called above on the seventh day?"[23] In Philo's answer below, a dotted line has

been placed under the English translation of the Armenian which is reflected in the Greek

fragment.  All the text without the dotted line is absent from the Greek fragment.

According the Armenian textual tradition, Philo responds,

The even number, six, He apportioned both to the creation of the world and to the election of
the contemplative nation, wishing to show first of all that He had created both the world and
the nation elected for virtue.  And in the second place, because He wishes the nation to be
ordered and arrayed in the same manner as the whole world so that, as in the latter, it may
have a fitting order in accord with the right law and canon of the unchanging, placeless and
unmoving God.  But the calling above of the prophet is a second birth better than the first.
For the latter is mixed with a body and had corruptible parents, while the former is an
unmixed and simple soul of the sovereign, being changed from a productive to an
unproductive form, which has no mother but only a father, who is the Father of all.
Wherefore the calling above or, as we have said, the divine birth happened to come about for
him in accordance with the ever-virginal nature of the hebdomad.  For he is called on the
seventh day, in this (respect) differing from the earth-born first moulded man, for the latter
came into being from the earth and with a body, while the former (came) from the ether and
without a body.  Wherefore the most appropriate number, six, was assigned to the earthborn
man, while to the one differently born (was assigned) the higher nature of the hebdomad.[24]

Here is a transcription of the Greek text:

[21] Marcus, LCL 401; *Questions on Exodus*, 251, frag. 46.  The fragment is also listed in Harris, pp. 60-61.  The Greek texts is found in Cat. Lips 1, col. 832, Προσκοίου.  For more on working with the fragments of Philo, see James R. Royse, *The Spurious Texts of Philo of Alexandria: A Study of Textual Transmission and Corruption with Indexes to the Major Collections of Greek Fragments* (ALGHJ 24; Leiden: Brill, 1991).

[22] Caution is called for with this textual tradition.  For more on comparing Greek and Armenian fragments of Philo, see Royse, *Spurious Works of Philo*, 15-25, 192-193, 219. For a recent engagement with the Armenian and its translational issues, see James R. Royse, "Philo of Alexandria Quaestiones in Exodum 2.62-68: critical edition," *SPhil* 24 (2012): 1-64.  For more on the manuscript, see J. Rendel Harris, *Fragments of Philo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1886), xiv; i-xxii. For an up to date survey, see Earle Hilgert, "*The Quaestiones*: Texts and Translations," in *Both Literal and Allegorical: Studies in Philo of Alexandria's Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus* (ed. David M. Hay;  vol. 232 of BJS 232; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991),  1-15.

[23] For more information on the comparison of the Armenian to the extant Greek, see Ralph Marcus, "The Armenian Translation of Philo's *Quaestiones in Genesim et Exodum*," *JBL* 49 / 1 (1930): 61-64.

[24] Trans. R. Marcus, LCL 401, 91-92.

Τὸν ἴσον ἀριθμὸν ἀπένειμε καὶ τῇ τοῦ κόσμου γενέσει καὶ τῇ τοῦ ὁρατικοῦ γένους ἐκλογῇ, τὴν ἑξάδα· βουλόμενος ἐπιδεῖξαι ὅτι αὐτὸς καὶ τὸν κόσμον ἐδημιούργησε καὶ γένος εἵλετο. Ἡ δὲ ἀνάκλησις τοῦ προφήτου δευτέρα γένεσίς ἐστι τῆς προτέρας ἀμείνων. Ἑβδόμῃ δὲ ἀνακαλεῖται ἡμέρᾳ, ταύτῃ διαφέρων του πρωτοπλάστου· ὅτι ἐκεῖνος μὲν ἐκ γῆς καὶ μετὰ σώματος συνίστατο· οὗτος δὲ ἄνευ σώματος· διὸ τῷ μὲν γηγενεῖ ἀριθμὸς οἰκεῖος ἀπενεμήθη ἑξάς· τούτῳ δὲ ἡ ἱερωτάτη φύσις τῆς ἑβδομάδος.[25]

In English, the Greek says, origin

He assigned the hexad to the generation of the cosmos and to the people who see God. Wishing to show that he had both created the world and chosen the stock. But, the summoning up of the prophet is a second generation, better than the first. And he is summoned up on the seventh day, in this being different from the first formed one. For that one was put together out of earth and with a body, but this one (was put together) without a body. Therefore, to the earthborn man has been allotted the hexad as his own, but to this one the most holy nature of the hebdomad has been allotted.[26]

In this passage, Philo uses Pythagorean arithmology and numerical symbolism to interpret the Exodus narrative. The arithmology and numerical symbolism at work in this passage are more fully developed in *On the Creation of the World*, where nearly a quarter of the work is devoted to the importance of the number seven.

In order to understand Philo's explanation for the importance of the number seven, it will be necessary to look at why six was so important to Philo. David Runia writes,

Philo's starting point is his statement that the creation of the cosmos was completed in accordance with the perfect number six. This is clearly based on the LXX text of Gen. 2:1-2, which—in contrast to the Hebrew text—states that God completed his works on the sixth day.[27]

Philo, following the LXX, explains that the creation of the physical world was completed on the sixth day. Six is important for Philo, not only for its biblical connotations, but also because of its mathematical significance. According to Philo, six is both odd and even.[28] Six is also a

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[25] Printed in R. Marcus LCL 401, 251. See Harris, *Fragments of Philo*, 60-61, from Cat. Lips 61, col. 832 Προκοπίου.

[26] As far as I know, there is no published English translation of this fragment, so the translation is my own.

[27] David T. Runia, "Philo's Longest Arithmological Passage: *De opificio mundi* 89-128," in *De Jérusalem à Rome: mélanges offerts à Jean Riaud* (ed. L.-J. Bord and D. Hamidovic; Paris: P. Geuthner, 2000), 155-174; 159.

[28] Runia, "Arithmological Passage," 171. See, *Spec. Leg*. 2, 56-59.

perfect (complete) number.[29]  Because of the significant properties belonging to six, Philo has to explain why seven is more significant than six. Runia probes, "The question that arises is what the function of the *hebdomad* can be in this context."[30]  This question is particularly relevant for our passage, which involves both six and seven.

In *Questions on Exodus*, Philo asks, "Why is the mountain covered with cloud for six days, and Moses called above on the seventh day?"  The text of Exodus itself provides an excellent opportunity to contrast six with seven.  God created the world in six days, but completed it on the seventh, the Sabbath.[31]  Runia writes, "Philo states that the hebdomad is also called, literally '*completion-bringer.*'"[32]

This completion of seven is seen in both seven's sense of being a monadic number, and in its sense of being completive in the roles of nature.[33]  By monadic, Philo means that seven is neither a factor nor a product; it is a prime number.  This is significant because it means that seven does not have parts, it is a singularity.  Therefore, he reasons, it is particularly appropriate that seven is the number of God, who is singular.  By completive, Philo means that seven is often found in nature to signify the completion of cycles or series.  To give just a few more examples of seven's importance as the 'completion-bringer,' Philo cites the number of planets as known in antiquity.  In *Creation*, Philo's purpose is to "demonstrate the intelligibility and rationality of the world both in general terms and as related to Mosaic scripture and law."[34]  The whole treatise on seven reveals that Moses and the Law embody truths which are only partially revealed through the sensory world.  In *Questions*, Philo uses Exod 24:16b to return to this theme.

By covering the mountain with a cloud for six days, God demonstrates that he has created both the world and the chosen people.  However, by summoning Moses on the seventh day, God

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[29] Runia, "Arithmological Passage," 171.

[30] Runia, "Arithmological Passage," 171.

[31] Seven is also particularly important for Philo because of the Sabbath.  By marking the completion of the world, it is a symbol of completion.  For more, see Lutz Doering, *Schabbat: Sabbathalacha und -praxis im antiken Judentum und Urchristentum* (TSAJ 78; 1999), 366-374.

[32] Runia, "Arithmological Passage," 166.

[33] Runia, "Arithmological Passage," 165.

[34] Runia, "Arithmological Passage," 171.

completes his election of the chosen people by giving Moses "a second birth better than the first." Moses' summons on the seventh day demonstrates his close relationship with God and establishes the national election of Israel. Though Moses alone experiences this second birth, he becomes a role model to which all Israel should aspire and through which all Israel is represented before God.

Philo's description of Moses' "second birth" is completely integrated into his philosophical system. It is a piece of a much larger, complex system of ideas. This passage demonstrates that Philo can describe Moses' ascent to the divine as a second generation, or regeneration. Further, Moses' second generation is something which happens in the present by changing Moses' status in relation to God. Moses' change of status as an individual also has important ramifications for the nation of Israel.

In conclusion, the Christian concept of "new birth/begetting" or "rebirth/rebegetting" is distinct from what is found in Philo. At the same time, there is some semantic and conceptual continuity. It is impossible to say whether one tradition directly influenced the other, but both traditions used common terminology and language to describe a change of status based on a new relationship with God. In conclusion, for Philo, the idea of being "born anew" can refer to a change of status before God, the Stoic regeneration of the cosmos (if *Eternity* is authentic), to the movement of a disembodied soul after death, or to the "second generation of mankind" after the flood.[35]

Finally, two occurrences of the language of rebirth are found in Pseudo-Philo's *Sermon on Jonah*.[36] Jonah cries from the belly of the fish, "Ich, der ich aus dem Schlaf zum Wahrzeichen der Wiedergeburt herausgeholt wurde, werde (jedem) ein Bürge sein für sein eigenes Leben"

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[35] *Moses*, II: 60, 2-3. Burnett concludes his article "Philo's Concept of παλιγγενεσία," by defining παλιγγενεσία as "the rebirth of the soul into incorporeal existence" after death, 470. Unfortunately, Burnett, only interacts with the use of παλιγγενεσία in *Cherubim*. He does not offer an opinion on the authenticity of *Eternity* or discuss the occurrences of παλιγγενεσία elsewhere in the Philonic corpus. Though he seems to be generally correct that παλιγγενεσία in Philo refers to the souls upward mobility after death toward God, interaction with other Philonic texts would have greatly improved his analysis.

[36] Folker Siegert, ed., trans., "Über Jona," in *Drei hellenistisch-jüdische Predigten* (WUNT 20; 2 vols. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1980), 9-48. *On Jonah* only survives in Armenian. Siegert leaves a wide margin when he suggests a date between the second century BCE and the fourth century CE.

(25.§95). Later it is said of the repentant Ninevehites, "Siehst du nicht, (daß) diejenigen, die mir früher aus Unwissenheit den Dank verweigerten, geradezu wiedergeboren und durch (deine) Verkündigung zu neuem Leben erweckt (sind, so das) sie mir allein die Ehre geben?" (46. §184). These passages show that the language of being reborn or rebegotten could be used to describe the repentance of an individual.

Finally, it is worth noting that ἀναγεννάω does not occur in the LXX.[37] However, the phrase ἕως πάλιν γένωμαι occurs in Job 14:14.[38] In this context, Job is contrasting the mortality of man with a tree, which, if cut down, can sprout again. However, no significance should be placed on this verse because the LXX is only providing a straightforward translation of the Hebrew (אִם־יָמוּת גֶּבֶר הֲיִחְיֶה).

It has been seen that ἀναγεννάω and παλιγγενεσία are found in Philo and Josephus. Though these words came to have distinct meanings after the rise of Christianity and in later pagan literature, at this time they could be used in a variety of non-technical ways. These words usually occur in agricultural or cosmic passages where different types of things are being compared and contrasted. The Stoic concept of the cyclical nature of the universe, and its reflection in the agricultural cycle seems to have exerted some influence, especially over Philo. Philo uses παλιγγενεσία to describe the movement of the incorporeal soul after death. He can, however, use it in contexts which describe the present, such as the repopulation of the earth in *Moses*. Josephus used παλιγγενεσία to reflect the return of the exiles from Babylon. In summation, Josephus and Philo use regeneration in a variety of ways. Though Philo, Josephus and Pseudo-Philo use regeneration vocabulary, the New Testament authors take this language in new directions.

### 2. 2. 2  Divine Regeneration: The Evidence from the New Testament

In the New Testament, ἀναγεννάω only appears in 1 Peter 1:3 and 23. Παλιγγενεσία is only found in Mat 19:28 and Tit 3:5, but with different connotations. In Mat 19:27, the disciples ask Jesus what they will receive since they have left everything to follow him. Jesus replies, "Truly,

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[37] See Büchsel, "παλιγγενεσία," 687.

[38] For more, see TDNT entries by Büchsel crossreferences his entries on these two words.

I say to you, in the new world (ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ), when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Scholars disagree over the precise meaning of παλιγγενεσία, but agree that it refers to the eschatological new age, variously defined.[39] The παλιγγενεσία will come at a time in the future, when the Son of man will sit in judgment with his faithful disciples, but disagreement occurs over whether this also implies cosmic destruction and renewal following a Stoic-like pattern.[40]

The term is used differently in Tit 3:5. The text explains that God "saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal (διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως) in the Holy Spirit." Here, the author uses the language of new creation to describe individual salvation enacted through baptism.[41] Divine regeneration is personal.[42] As Zimmermann argues, however, the translation of this text should indicate that the image here is one of renewal rather than birth.[43] Thus in neither Mat 19:28 nor Tit 3:5 is the language of regeneration used specifically as *procreative imagery*, the imagery of begetting and birth. However, a few texts from James, John, 1 John, and 1 Peter do use procreative language of God to describe theological truths.

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[39] Dey, *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ*, 30. Fred W. Burnett, "παλιγγενεσία in Matt. 19:28: A Window on the Matthean Community?," *JSNT* 17 (1983): 60-72. J. Duncan Derrett, "Palingenesia (Matthew 19:28)," *JSNT* 20 (1984): 51-58. David C. Sim, "The Meaning of παλιγγενεσία in Matthew 19.28," *JSNT* 50 (1993): 3-12.

[40] Sim is probably right when he concludes, "This study has taken up and extended the common view that παλιγγενεσία in Mt. 19:28 means not just the new age but the total re-creation of the cosmos which accompanies the new age. Matthew describes this regeneration with a word borrowed from Stoicism, though he seemingly does not share the Stoic view of the manner of the prior destruction...Matthew twice refers to the passing away of heaven and earth at the eschaton and so testifies to his acceptance of the common Jewish and Christian apocalyptic notion that the end of the present age will witness the destruction of the imperfect cosmos which now exists. In its place God will create a new heaven and a new earth, a new creation," "παλιγγενεσία," 11-12.

[41] Christiane Zimmermann, "Wiederentstehung und Erneuerung (Tit 3:5): Zu einem erhaltenswerten Aspekt der Soteriologie des Titusbriefs," *NovT* 51 / 3 (2009): 272-295. See also, Dey, *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ*, 132-176.

[42] However, Zimmermann emphasizes that what is true of the individual is corporately true of all believers. She writes, "Das Lexem lässt von seinem paganen Gebrauch her nicht nur rein individuelles Geschehen, sondern auch die kosmische Welterneuerung anklingen, an der die christliche Gemeinde in Absehung von allen irdischen Machtansprüchen der römischen Herrscher partizipiert," Zimmermann, "Wiederentstehung und Erneuerung," 294.

[43] Zimmermann, "Wiederentstehung und Erneuerung," 295.

These will be discussed below.[44]  However, before looking at them, it will be useful to examine Jewish precedents for speaking about God as one who begets or gives birth.  This tradition will contextualize the way this language is used in the New Testament.

## 2.3    God as Begetter and Birthmother

### 2.3.1  This Day I Have Begotten You: Evidence from the Hebrew Scriptures

The idea of God "re-begetting" the king, Israel, or anyone else for that matter, is not found in the Hebrew scriptures or Jewish literature outside the New Testament.  However, there are a few texts which use the imagery of divine begetting or birth.[45]  None of these texts describes God as literally begetting or birthing; they operate at a metaphorical level. However, these texts serve as a precedent for the idea of divine rebegetting in 1 Peter through the extension of traditional material.  This section will establish that God can be the subject of begetting and bearing language.  Though uncommon, it was not impossible for a Jew to speak of God in this way. Thus, New Testament texts which use this language can still be located within, though perhaps at the edge, of the charted territory of the Jewish conceptual landscape.

Before looking at several specific texts, it will be helpful to sketch some of the main contours of the God as Father motif in the Hebrew scriptures in order to understand how the language of divine regeneration relates to this larger topos.  As Spieckermann emphasizes, the theme of God as father in the Hebrew scriptures was sparse compared with literature from other Ancient Near Eastern religions.[46]  The oldest biblical form of this concept in the biblical tradition is found in

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[44] For this imagery in John and 1 John, see §2.3.3, "Divine Regeneration in the Johannine Literature," 68ff.  For James, see §4.3, "Cross-Gender Imagery: Feminine Men, Maternal God," 148f.

[45] The literature on this topic is surprisingly sparse.  Only the following studies have been found which directly address this topic. Otto Michel and Otto Betz, "Von Gott gezeugt," in *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche. Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias* (ed. Walther Eltester; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1960),  1-23.  von Otto Michel and Otto Betz, "Nocheinmal: 'Von Gott gezeugt'," *NTS* 9 / 2 (1963): 129-130.  Paul Humbert, "Yahvé Deiu Géniteur? *Les verbes* yālad *et* ḥīl avec *Yahvé comme sujet. Image ou réalite?*," 18/19 (1965): 247-251.  P. A. H. De Boer, *Fatherhood and Motherhood in Israelite and Judean Piety* (Leiden: Brill, 1974).  Julia A. Foster, "The Motherhood of God: The Use of ḥyl as God-Language in the Hebrew Scriptures," in *Uncovering Ancient Stones: Essays in Memory of E. Neil Richardson* (ed. Lewis M. Hopfe; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1994),  93-102.  Also, Mounce, "Origins of Rebirth," Part III: Old Testament and Judaism is particularly helpful, 254-337.

[46] Hermann Spieckermann, "The "Father" of the Old Testament and Its History," in *The Divine Father: Religious and Philosophical Concepts of Divine Parenthood in Antiquity* (Themes in Biblical Narrative; Leiden: Brill, 2014), 73-84; 73-74.

pre-exilic literature and described the relationship of the Davidic king to God.[47]  For example, in

2 Sam 7, God binds himself to the house of David when he pledges, "I will be his father and he

shall be my son," (2 Sam 7:14) .  Psalm 2 is very significant in this context as an enthronement

psalm which describes the divine adoption of the king and the establishment of his divinely-

mediated authority.  By his own power, God pledges to uphold the line of Davidic succession.

In her recent work, *Gott als Vater im Alten Testament*, Annette Böckler identified three main

stages of progression which correspond, roughly, with the pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic

periods.  Böckler argues that the pre-exilic period is defined by God's pledge to ensure the

sucession of the Davidic monarch as exemplified by 2 Sam 7.  Feldmeier and Spieckermann

write of this commitment, "The dynasty and dominion [of the kingship] will endure because the

foundation of the dynastic throne participates in YHWH's eternity and his cosmic throne (Ps

93:1b, 2)."[48] However, these texts avoid ever describing God as physically begetting the future

king.[49]  As Feldmeier and Spieckermann observe of Psalm 2:7, "the birth of the son occurs

*hayyôm* 'today'; the birth depicts the enthronement."[50] Thus, the concept of divine generation is

employed to describe the enthronement of the Davidic king as an expression of his divine

authority.  This poetic language always maintains a separation between the divine and the

human.  The human king is not divinized, nor is God a physical participant in the generation of

the monarch.

However, the fall of the Davidic monarchy and the destruction of Jerusalem threw the

faithfulness of God into question.  In response to the exile and the immediate existential

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[47] Annette Böckler, *Gott als Vater im Alten Testament: Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte und Entwicklung eines Gottesbildes* (Gütersloh: Chr.Kaiser/Gütersloher Verlagshaus GmbH, 2002), 184-250.  Spieckermann, "The "Father" of the Old Testament," 74-76.

[48] Reinhard Feldmeier and Hermann Spieckermann, *God of the Living: A Biblical Theology* (trans. Mark E. Biddle; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2011), 56.

[49] This is in contradistinction to ancient Egyptian tradition where Amun had a much more direct role. Spieckermann writes, "The national god, Amun, together with the royal spouse of the reigning pharaoh, personally conceived the successor to the throne."  Spieckermann, "The "Father" of the Old Testament," 74f.  For more, see Alexandra von Lieven, "Father of the Fathers, Mother of the Mothers. God as Father (and Mother) in Ancient Egypt," in *The Divine Father: Religious and Philosophical Concepts of Divine Parenthood in Antiquity* (Themes in Biblical Narrative 18; Leiden: Brill, 2014),  19-63.

[50] Feldmeier and Spieckermann, *God of the Living: A Biblical Theology*, 57.  Also, Spieckermann, "The "Father" of the Old Testament," 75-76.

questions it provoked, the theme of God as father of the king was reinterpreted and democratized.[51] The motif of God as Father of the king fused with exodus traditions which described Israel as God's firstborn son (Exod 4:22).[52] The covenant promises which once applied to the house of David were now understood more broadly to apply to the nation of Israel. Consequently, God's faithfulness to David would also extend to Israel corporately. Böckler writes, "Weil Gott dem davidischen Königshaus ewig die Treue halten wollte, würde er sich nun dem judäischen Volk gegenüber als Vater erweisen. Er würde ihre Verfehlungen nur strafen, aber Davids Volk nie aufgeben."[53] The application of the status of sonship to Israel meant that Israel could relate to God in a new way. "Dem ganzen Volk galt nun einerseits die Zusage der ewigen Treue Gottes und seiner Vergebungsbereitschaft. Andererseits blieb die Forderung erhalten, als Gottes Sohn gehorsam zu sein (vgl. Hos 11)."[54] Thus, God was now the father of the nation and with that came the responsibility of the nation to obey God as a son obeys his father.

During the post-exilic period, this theme evolved again with the changing political circumstances. After the return from exile, the Temple was rebuilt and the existential problem of God's faithfulness receded into the background. By contrast, the reinstitution of the Temple cult provoked questions of identity. Once God was understood as the corporate Father of Israel, this title was personalized: God became the Father of individuals, particularly those who were socially vulnerable.[55] Jewish orphans and widows were individually cared for by God, their father. The direct appeal to God as father continued during the Second Temple period. "Even in

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[51] Also see Feldmeier and Spieckermann, *God of the Living: A Biblical Theology*, 57-65. Spieckermann, "The "Father" of the Old Testament," 76-77. To give one example, the author of Jubilees seems to have 2 Sam 7:14 in mind in Jub 1:24. van Ruite writes *sic*, "If the author of *Jubilees* has his phrase from 2 Samuel, it is clear that he refers it to the people of Israel. That what Nathan said about Salomon is very comparable by what it is said about Israel in *Jubilees*," Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, "Divine Sonship in the Book of *Jubilees*," in *The Divine Father: Religious and Philosophical Concepts of Divine Parenthood in Antiquity* (Themes in Biblical Narrative 18; Leiden: Brill, 2014), 85-105; 89.

[52] Böckler, *Gott als Vater*, 3.5.2 Exodus 4: 22f, 262-271; JHWH als Vater Israels: 271-343.

[53] Böckler, *Gott als Vater*, 393.

[54] Böckler, *Gott als Vater*, 393; 252-343.

[55] For example, see Sir 23:1, 4; 51:10; Tob 13:4; 3 Macc 5:7; 6:3, 8; Wis 14:3. Cf Gottlob Schrenk and Gottfried Quell, "πατήρ," in *TDNT vol. 5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 19654), 956-1014; 978-981, esp. n.209-210.

Judaism prior to Jesus, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> centuries B.C., it is apparent that God is commonly addressed as Father, not merely in the collective but also in the individual sense."[56] Any attempt to locate the New Testament's use of divine begetting/birth imagery must locate that motif within its context of the greater theological concept of God as father which was becoming more commonplace in Jewish literature before the New Testament.

The use of divine begetting/birth traditions in the Jewish scriptures largely follow the pattern of the macro-concept of God as Father. However, it must be noted that the notion of divine begetting/birth is rare in the Scriptures. Only two texts, Ps 2:7 and Deut 32:18, directly speak of God as one who begets. These texts fit Böckler's three-tiered conceptual progression because the first applies to the king and the second to the nation. Several other texts, such as Num 11:12, Isa 45:10-11, 66:7-9 and Ezek 23:4 use this concept more obliquely. Before each of these texts are briefly discussed, it must be stated that the primary goal of this section is not to unearth the religio-historical origins of these texts, or conduct a full-scale investigation into the possible dates for the texts' composition. Instead, this section seeks to survey the literary and theological material Jewish interpreters inherited during the Second Temple period and to understand how larger theological trends may have proved fertile soil indeed for the growth of the concept of divine begetting in the New Testament.

One further, preliminary observation must be made here. It is striking that a number of the texts which identify God as father or begetter also describe God like a mother, or one who gives birth and nurses. These feminine images will be discussed further in Chapter 4 below.[57] For now, it suffices to say that the God who begets in Deut 32 is also a God who gives birth. In the ideological construct of the Hebrew Bible, YHWH had no consort, which meant that paternal and maternal imagery could be employed to describe his relationship with Israel.[58] In many of the texts considered below, masculine and feminine images are used together.

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[56] Schrenk and Quell, "πατήρ," 956-1014.

[57] For more on the maternal depiction of God in the Hebrew scriptures, see Sarah J. Dille, *Mixing Metaphors: God as Mother and Father in Deutero-Isaiah* (JSOTSup 398; London: T&T Clark International, 2004). Foster, "The Motherhood of God."

[58] There is textual and inscriptional evidence that Ashera could accompany YHWH as his consort and that she was worshipped at a popular level. For more, see Christian Frevel, *Aschera und der Ausschiesslichkeitsanspruch*

In the pre-exilic period, a father-son relationship connects God and the king.  The classic

passage is Ps. 2:7, "He said to me, 'You are my son, today I have begotten you,'" which scholars

have read as an enthronement and adoption formula.[59]  The king is not physically born of God,

but he has been adopted as his agent on earth.  "Der König steht ganz nahe bei Gott, er ist

gleichsam dessen Stellvertreter."[60]  The king therefore is God's legal son.  Unlike some of

Israel's pagan neighbors, the Davidic king was always understood to be fully human even though

he was invested with divine authority.

The democratizing trend which extended the theme of God as father to corporate Israel

included the extension of the metaphor of divine begetting.  Buoyed up by the same interpretive

tide, Israel, too, came to be described as begotten of God.  Even though the dating of Deut 32 is

controversial, Deut 32 rose to theological and liturgical prominence during the post-exilic

period.[61]  Jeffrey Tigay writes, "According to Josephus, copies of *Ha'azinu* [Deut. 32] and other

biblical poems were kept in the Temple."[62]  Tigay gathered further evidence for the liturgical use

of this poem from 4QDeut[q] "which apparently contained only this poem and was no longer part

of the Torah scroll.  Perhaps it was used for reading the poem on some similar occasion, or for

teaching the poem by heart, as chapter 31 commands."[63]

Deuteronomy 32:18 says, "You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you (MT –יְלָדְךָ, LXX

–γεννήσαντά σε), and you forgot the God who gave you birth (MT – מְחֹלְלֶךָ, LXX –τρέφοντός

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*YHWHs: Beiträge zu literarischen, religionsgeschichtlichen und ikonographischen Aspekten der Ascheradiskussion* (Jerusalem: SLM Press; Tübingen: TOBIASlib: 2014).

[59] Michel and Betz, "Von Gott gezeugt," 4-5. Helmer Ringgren, "'ābh," in *TDOT* (ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974),  1-19; 18. Ernst Jenni, "אָב 'ābh father," in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament* (ed. Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann; Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 1997),  1-15; 11.

[60] Michel and Betz, "Von Gott gezeugt," 5.

[61] For example, Deut 32 was important for *Jubilees*, see van Ruiten, "Divine Sonship in the Book of *Jubilees*," 101-102.. For more on the dating of Deut. 32, see Böckler, *Gott als Vater*, 293-296. Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), see Excursus 30: The Poem Ha'azinu (32:31-43): 508-513.

[62] Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 513. Tigay cites Ant. 4.303; cf. 3.38; 5.61.  Paul Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32* (37; Leiden: Brill, 1996).

[63] Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 513.

σε)."[64]  Some interpreters have proposed that יָלַד (beget) is a hiphil, which results in a masculine meaning.  However, Julia Foster and P. De Boer rightly argue that it is unequivocally a qal.[65]  Despite this scholarly debate, מְחֹלְלֶךָ (give birth) is a masculine participle with a second person singular suffix which has the feminine meaning of "to be in travail" or "to give birth."  In this passage, both masculine and feminine imagery is applied to God.  The Rock has both begotten and born Israel.[66]  God's relationship with Israel could be described with both maternal and paternal language.

Psalm 2 and Deut 32 are the clearest examples of divine birth language, though there are other, more indirect examples.  In Num 11:12 Moses complains to God,

> Did I conceive all this people? Did I bring them forth, that thou shouldst say to me, "Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries the suckling child, to the land which thou didst swear to give their fathers."

Moses contrasts his responsibility to Israel with God's.  Moses is not responsible for them because it was God who brought them into existence.  In the same way a mother and father are responsible for their child, God is a mother and father to Israel.  Moses, who has played no such role, places the full parental responsible for Israel at God's feet.

In Isaiah 45:10-11, the prophet declares,
Woe to him who says to a father, 'What are you begetting?' or to a woman, 'With what are you in travail?' Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: "Will you question me about my children, or command me concerning the work of my hands?"

Isaiah 45 is a striking chapter in which God is declaring how he will use Cyrus the Persian to achieve his goals of restoring Jerusalem.  God will use Cyrus, "his Shepherd" (44:28) and "his anointed" (45:1).  Though God appointed Cyrus, he has done so "for the sake of my servant Jacob and for Israel my chosen" (45:4).  Because God is the Creator, he alone has complete authority to work by any means that he wishes (45:5, 8, 12, 18).  To speak against God would be

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[64] The combination of the "Rock" and the birth-imagery in Deut 32 is tantalizingly similar to 1 Peter.  However, no direct quotations of Deut. 32 occur in the letter.  For similar texts, see Isa 1:2 and Baruch 4:8.

[65] De Boer, *Fatherhood and Motherhood*, 42.  Foster, "The Motherhood of God," 101.

[66] For more on the religious context, see Michael P. Knowles, ""The Rock, His Work is Perfect": Unusual Imagery for God in Deuteronomy XXXII," *VT* 39 / 3 (1989): 307-322.

as foolish and impossible as a child speaking against the mother and father who are creating him. Again, both feminine and masculine imagery is deployed.

However, in this passage, the divine birth language is employed for a new purpose. Though the passage goes out of its way to emphasize that Israel is God's elect and that God is orchestrating world events for the sake of his chosen people, the divine birth language has a global perspective compared to the national perspective of previous usages. As John Goldingay writes,

> The context suggests that actually Cyrus and the Medes are Yhwh's children and handiwork. Both terms imply both regard and submission. In 19.25 'my people' applied to Egypt and Assyria. It is such usage that reappears here and makes it easier to accept that 'my children' is a description of non-Israelites unparalleled in the Hebrew Bible.[67]

This passage shows that divine birth imagery could be used with some flexibility to fit difference circumstances. It is also interesting to note that both masculine and feminine aspects of divine birth have been retained.

> One final passage is Ezek 23: 4,
> Oho'lah was the name of the elder and Ohol'ibah was the name of her sister. They became mine, and they bore sons and daughters. As for their names, Oho'lah is Samaria, and Ohol'ibah is Jerusalem.

God's relationship with the Northern and Southern Kingdoms is here dramatized through the extended metaphor of a marriage. The entire passage is rhetorically stylized language to shock the listener. Both sisters were promiscuous in Egypt (23:3). Then, "They became mine;" which likens God's marriage to the sisters with the Sinai covenant.[68] The sisters then "bore sons and daughters." This language is an extension of the marriage metaphor and demonstrates that the marriage has been consummated. This reference to God's divine paternity is part of the fabric of the metaphor. It does demonstrate, again, that the language of divine begetting could be used for theological and dramatic effect.

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[67] John Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40-55: A Literary-Theological Commentary* (London: T&T Clark International, 2005), 279. Also, Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (19A; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 252.

[68] Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapter 1-24* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 736.

A handful of other passages could also be cited here, such as Isa 49:21, Isa 1:2b, and Jer 2:27.[69] Overall, these passages demonstrate, though exceedingly rare, that divine begetting/birth language could be used with some flexibility for creative theological purposes.

### 2. 3. 2  Divine Begetting in Josephus, Philo, and *Joseph and Aseneth*

This section will look at how Josephus, Philo, and the author of *Joseph and Aseneth* speak of God as begetter.  Josephus uses such language only once, while Philo employs it on a number of occasions.  Finally, a few sections in *Joseph and Aseneth* employ this idea in a more oblique way.  Again, this type of language about God is rare, though its usage does indicate that such language was used in Second Temple Judaism.

In *Ant*. 4. 319, Josephus says that the laws are begotten of God.  Elsewhere, he refrains from using γεννᾶν of God.[70]  Philo, on the other hand, is much more comfortable with discussing God as a divine begetter.[71]  Interestingly, he never describes God as begetting the king or the nation of Israel as the Hebrew scriptures do.  He instead describes God as begetting the universe or virtue.

In *Spec. Laws* 3. 189, *Spec. Laws* 1. 96, *Drunkenness* 30, *Moses* 2. 134, and *Worse* 54, 147 Philo speaks of the universe as begotten of God.[72]  In many of these examples, Philo seems to be influenced by the Stoic concept of the *logos spermatikos*.  According to Stoic teaching, the *logos spermatikos* is the generative principle of the universe; it permeates and orders all things.[73]  For

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[69] For more on these texts see Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 293-308.

[70] Büchsel and Rengstorf, "γεννάω," 668.

[71] Philo describes God as begetting virtue in variety of ways, for more, see Richard A. Baer, *Philo's Use of the Categories Male and Female* (ALGHJ; Leiden: Brill, 1970), esp, "The Divine Impregnantion of the Soul," 55-64. Also, Beatrice Wyss, ""Vater Gott und seine Kinder und Frauen"," in *The Divine Father: Religious and Philosophical Concepts of Divine Parenthood in Antiquity* (Themes in Biblical Narrative 18; Leiden: Brill, 2014), 165-179; 167.

[72] *Moses* 2:210 and *Drunkenness* 30 are further discussed below in § 3.3.2, "Philo," 121f.  Cf. Wyss, ""Vater Gott und seine Kinder und Frauen","," esp. 166-167.

[73] There is a surprising lack of secondary literature on this topic in Stoics.  The main references to primary literature are given, along with their entry numbers in the *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta* (SVF) where possible.  For example, see Plutarch, *On the Conceptions against the Stoics* (Bk. XIII of *Moralia*) 35 (SVF 2.618-19); Plutarch, *On the Self-Contradiction of the Stoics,* cp.2 (SVF 1.26); Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, VII,

example, in *Drunkenness* 30-33 Philo describes God as the Father of the cosmos and the logos as its mother. Together, they are the parents of the universe (33). In surprising detail, Philo describes this union,

> Now "father and mother" is a phrase which can bear different meanings. For instance we should rightly say and without further question that the Architect who made this universe was at the same time the father of what was thus born, whilst its mother was the knowledge possessed by its Maker. With His knowledge God had union, not as men have it, and begat created being. And knowledge, having received the divine seed, when her travail was consummated bore the only beloved son who is apprehended by the senses, the world which we see.

God is father, and wisdom, the logos, is its mother. Their union has produced "the only beloved son who is apprehended by the senses," the world. Philo goes on to incorporate Ps. 8:22, where wisdom declares her priority over creation, in his discussion.[74]

In quite shocking, but nevertheless metaphorical, language, Philo takes the concept of God as divine begetter to a new level of specificity. He demonstrates in no uncertain terms that pious Jews during the Second Temple period could creatively engage with the concept of divine begetting with the expectation of acceptance within some quarters of the Jewish community. Finally, this passage also connects the concept of holy seed and divine begetting, which will be analyzed in the following chapter. At this point, it is important to note that rather than diminishing in Jewish thought, at least for Philo, the concept of divine begetting was developing in specificity and metaphorical depth. Elsewhere, Philo explains the symbolism of the high priestly garments when he writes,

> And very right and fit it is that he who is consecrated to the Father of the world should take with him also that Father's son, the universe, for the service of the Creator and Begetter.[75]

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135-136 (SVF 2.741); Aetius, *Placita Philosophorum* I 7, 33 (SVF 2.1027); Tertullian, *On the Soul* c 5 (SVF 1.137); Seneca, *Epistle* 120.4; Aristocles, preserved in Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel*, Bk XV, chapter XIV 817.

[74] However, as Corrington notes, "While Philo of Alexandria, for example, may speak of God as the 'father' of the universe and Wisdom (ἐπιστήμη) as 'mother' and 'nurse' (τιθήνη) of All (*De ebr.* 31.10; 33, a midrash on Prov 8:22), he also typically devalues the training (παιδεία) offered by the nurse/mother/Wisdom as imperfect or incomplete (cf. *De ebr.* 33; 61.11)," Gail Paterson Corrington, "The Milk of Salvation: Redemption by the Mother in Late Antiquity and Early Christianity," *HTR* 82 / 4 (1989): 393-420; 406. For more on God as a mother and wet-nurse in Philo and other Jewish literature, see Chapter 4, "New Born Babes and Spiritual Milk: 2:1-3," 142ff.

[75] Philo, *Spec. Leg.* I, 96. Also, *Vit. Mos.*, II, 134.

In this passage, Philo explains that God is the Father and Begetter of the Universe.  The universe itself is God's son (cf. *Moses*, 2. 134).  It is therefore appropriate that when the high priest enters the Temple that the cosmos is represented on his garments.  For Philo, the high priest represents not just the nation of Israel, but the entire cosmos because all have been created alike by God.  In *Spec. Laws*. 3. 189, Philo explains that since the universe has been begotten by God, he cares for it as his offspring.

Philo also explains God's relationship with Isaac using the language of begetting (*Names* 137-139; *Alleg. Interp*. 3. 218-19).  In *Alleg. Interp*. 3. 218-19 Philo is in the process of explaining the meaning of laughter, joy, and virtue in the narratives of Abraham and Isaac.[76]  He writes,

> Let sense-perception therefore be sorrowful, but let virtue always rejoice: for again when Happiness has been born she says with pride, "the Lord hath made laughter for me; for whosoever shall hear of it will rejoice with me" (Gen. xxi. 6).  Therefore, O ye initiate, open your ears wide and take in holiest teachings.  The "laughter" is joy, and "made" is equivalent to "beget," so that what is said is of this kind, the Lord begat Isaac; for He is Himself Father of the perfect nature, sowing and begetting happiness in men's souls.

Isaac, Philo explains, represents Happiness and Sarah Virtue.  God revealed that Abraham is to beget Happiness (Isaac).  Therefore, metaphorically, through Sarah, who represents Virtue, God has begotten Isaac, who represents Happiness.  God is the Father of Happiness in men's souls.  As in the previous example, this metaphor is startlingly specific.  Philo, at least, has no problem with portraying God in the act of begetting when it is done in order to reveal intelligible or symbolic truth.

One final, subtle example of divine begetting language is found in *Joseph and Aseneth*.  On two occasions, Aseneth poetically attributes divine qualities to Joseph.  The first occurs in *Jos. Asen*. 6:3-5.  Aseneth has just seen Joseph and is "cut to the heart" (6:1).  She declares,

> But I, foolish and daring, have despised him
> and spoken wicked words about him,
> and did not know that Joseph is (a) son of God.
> For who among men on earth will generate such beauty,
> And what womb will give birth to such light?
> …

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[76] Wyss, ""Vater Gott und seine Kinder und Frauen"," 167.

And now, where shall I go and hide from his face
in order that Joseph son of God does not see me
because I have spoken wicked (things) about him?

In response to Joseph's heavenly appearance, Aseneth asks, "For who among men will generate such beauty, and what womb will give birth to such light?"[77] An implicit answer is found in the statements buttressing either side of her question, "Joseph is (a) son of God." No normal person could look the way that Joseph does.[78] Aseneth recognizes that Joseph's angelic appearance stems from his relationship with the God of light and life. Of course, Aseneth is not suggesting that God has physically begat Joseph. Instead, Joseph's divine appearance stems from his close relationship with God. Following biblical patterns, Aseneth also uses male and female language in her speech to emphasize Joseph's distinction from human beings.

Aseneth uses the same language again in 13:14. She asks, "For who among men will give birth to such beauty and such great wisdom and virtue and power, as (owned by) the all-beautiful Joseph?" Elsewhere, Joseph is called the firstborn of the God of heaven (18:11) and the firstborn son of God (21:4).

However, the title 'son of God' is not used exclusively of Joseph. Burchard writes, "'sons of God' seems to be used elsewhere as a designation of the saved in general (16:14; 19:8)."[79] After her conversion, Aseneth herself becomes "a daughter of the Most High" (21:4). Through her conversion, Aseneth has become a member of the family of God. In conclusion, Josephus and Philo employ the language of God as a divine begetter, though the object and specificity of the image varies from author to author. The author of *Joseph and Aseneth* uses suggestive language to gesture in this direction, though stops short of articulating it directly.

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[77] George J. Brooke, "Men and Women as Angels in *Joseph and Aseneth*," *JSP* 14 / 2 (2005): 159-177.

[78] In the passage immediately preceding the quoted text of *Jos. Asen.* above, Aseneth describes Joseph as shining like the sun, a motif with counterparts in the Dead Sea Scrolls. See Brooke, "Men and Women," 166-167.

[79] Burchard, *Joseph and Aseneth*, 191.

### 2. 3. 3  Divine Regeneration in the Johannine Literature

#### 2. 3. 3. 1  Children of God: The Narrative Arch of Regeneration in John

In the New Testament, the theme of divine regeneration is uniquely shared between 1 Peter and the Johannine literature.[80]  Divine regeneration is mentioned explicitly in John 3 and 1 John, though it is alluded to in the Prolog and connects with other key themes in the Gospel such as the Fatherhood of God, the Sonship of Jesus, and the incorporation of believers into the family of God.[81]  Therefore, this section will first briefly sketch the theological arch of John's gospel that connects the Prolog to the Resurrection narratives before looking specifically at how Jesus' dialog with Nicodemus (3:1-21) fits into this structure.  It will be shown that divine regeneration is fully integrated into this theological vision.  Finally, the relevance of 1 John 3:1-24 will be discussed to show that this language was used outside the Gospel in the Johannine epistles.

Echoing the words of Genesis 1:1, the Prolog begins by introducing the Word, God, and the world.  Family language first appears verse 13.  It is striking that this language is first used not between the Son and the Father, but between God and his children, or those who have accepted the Word.[82]  John 1:12-13 says,

ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐχουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, ὃι οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκὸς οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρὸς ἀλλ’ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν.

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were begotten, not of blood nor the will of flesh nor the will of man, but of God.

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[80] James 1:18 refers to God "bringing forth" believers through the word. This verse will be discussed below in Chapter 4.

[81] Christiane Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters: Studien zu ausgewählten neutestamentlichen Gottesbezeichnungen vor ihrem frühjüdischen und paganen Sprachhorizont* (69; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 115-127. Adele Reinhartz, ed., *God the Father in the Gospel of John* (Semeia 85. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999).  Jan G. van der  Watt, *Family of the King. Dynamics of Metaphor in the Gospel according to John* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 160-200.

[82] I owe this insight to Andy Byers, a PhD candidate working on John, who was gracious enough to share some of his insights with me.

John here explains that all who receive the Son have the power to become children of God (τέκνα θεοῦ).[83]  This generation is explicitly contrasted with human generation; God's children are begotten "not of blood nor the will of flesh nor the will of man but of God."  Instead, they have been sired by God (ἐγεννήθησαν).  The maleness of God as Father is clarified in verse 14 which makes the masculine "begotten" more appropriate than the feminine "born."

While verse 13 clearly refers to process of procreation, the meaning of μονογενής in verse 14 is contested.[84]  Verse 14 says,

Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡ μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as the only Son from the Father. (RSV)

The begetting of those who receive the Word is in some way similar to that of the Son, who, was also not begotten of blood, nor the will of man, but of God.  Speaking of vs. 13, C.K. Barrett writes, "The reading which refers explicitly  to the birth of Jesus is to be rejected; but it remains probable that John was alluding to Jesus' birth, and declaring that the birth of the Christians, being bloodless and rooted in God's will alone, followed the pattern of the birth of Christ himself."[85]  Craig S. Keener further explains, "The narrative's logic implies a transferral: the Word that had been forever "with God" (1:1-2) became "flesh" (1:14) so others could be born not from flesh but from God (1:13; cf. 3:6)."[86]

The Word comes into the world in order to enable those who receive him to become children of God.  This is one of the key themes in John, which the very structure of the Prolog

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[83] John makes a distinction between υἱός, which is used only of Christ, and τέκνον, which is used of believers. Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* (AB 29; 2 vols.; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 11.

[84] John F. McHugh, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on John 1-4* (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 102. Pendrick, "ΜΟΝΟΓΕΝΗΣ," 587. Contrast, John V. Dahms, "The Johannine Use of Monogenēs Reconsidered," *NTS* 29 / 2 (1983): 222-232.   The implicit parallel between vs. 13 and vs. 14 may add some weight to the argument that vs. 14 also connotes ideas of divine birth, especially since both verses use the same verb, γίνομαι.

[85] C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (London: SPCK, 1967), 139.

[86] Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 1:405.

demonstrates, as R. Alan Culpepper has shown.[87]  Culpepper concluded that the central, most

important segment of the Prolog was 1:12b.[88]  Speaking of Jn 1:12b, Jerome Neyrey writes,

> The logic of the chiastic structure indicates that here is the key, pivotal center and the major
> idea of communication.  According to rhetorical logic, then, "the word became flesh" is not
> the center but rather "the giving of power to become children of God."[89]

John's Prolog explains how believers become children begotten of God.  In Neyrey's words, it

"serves as the functional center of the prolog, the ultimate benefaction achieved in Jesus."[90]

Through the rest of the Gospel narrative, the author shows how this is worked out.

Spiritual regeneration initiates a new kind of life and a new set of family relationships.

Believers are brought into the family of God the Father, and in so doing, become brothers and

sisters with one another and also with Jesus himself.  In Jn 11:52, the high priest prophesies that

Jesus should die not only for the nation, "but to gather into one the children of God who are

scattered abroad (τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ διεσκορπισμένα συναγάγῃ εἰς ἕν)," (11:52).  This is the

only other occurrence in John of the phrase τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ from the Prolog (1:12). Jesus'

ministry is not only for Israel, but to unite all who receive his testimony into one divine family.

As in 1 Peter, the redefinition of family boundaries and ethnic markers is done to draw

attention to the solidarity of all believers with God and with one another.  In this passage, the

image of diaspora Judaism is remodeled to describe the in-gathering of the Gentiles into a new

unity.  The use of diaspora language also echoes Petrine usage of similar language to draw

ethnically and geographically diverse believers together in solidarity.

Commentators disagree over who is being referred to in 11:52, whether it is the Jews or

Gentiles.[91]  However, it is more likely that this is a false dichotomy which hinges on both

meanings through Johannine irony.  Caiaphas is indeed referring to the return of dispersed Jews,

but the narrator is referring instead to the inclusion of all who accept Jesus' testimony.[92]  In order

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[87] R. Alan Culpepper, "The Pivot of John's Prologue," *NTS* 27 / 1 (1980): 1-31.

[88] Culpepper, "John's Prologue," 16-17, 31.

[89] Jerome H. Neyrey, *The Gospel of John* (NCBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 41.

[90] Neyrey, *John*, 44.

[91] Keener, *John*, 2:857.

[92] George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC 36; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 198.

to make this point, the narrator uses the language of ethnicity to strengthen the theme of the united, divine family.

In a world where nationality and ethnicity often went hand in hand, John and 1 Peter offer an alternative synthesis and antithesis to these socially constructed categories.[93] On the one hand, the theology of incorporation into the family of God broke down ethnic and national barriers. On the other, passages like this implicitly uphold this type of identity construction though redefining it. Believers are still defined based on their genealogy, ethnicity, or national identity. The difference is that their parentage, genealogy, and identity now come from God and the relationship believers have with his children. No matter what earthly nation they are physically born into, all people can be begotten into the family of God. Believers are still defined by ethnic categories, the difference is that they are now part of the spiritual race, divinely begotten by God himself.

Jesus continues his reorientation of the family from the cross when he says to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" (19:27). Through the establishment of the spiritual family, the beloved disciple becomes a spiritual son of Mary.[94] Mary, the physical mother of Jesus, is now the spiritual mother of all believers, or the church, which the beloved disciple represents.[95] Through this reorientation, believers become the spiritual descendants of Mary after the pattern of Jesus' descent from Mary. Just as in the Prolog, as Barrett observed, the spiritual journey of believers into the family of God follows the pattern of Jesus' physical life. In the same way, Jesus as the physical son of the Father has enabled those who believe to become the spiritual children of God the Father.

The central event in this reorientation is the resurrection; it is only after the resurrection that this theme can reach its crescendo in John 20 when Jesus says,[96]

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[93] David G. Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People': Ethnic Identity-Construction in 1 Peter 2.9," *NTS* 58 / 1 (2012): 123-143.

[94] Turid Karlsen Seim, "Descent and Divine Paternity in the Gospel of John: Does the Mother Matter?," *NTS* 51 / 3 (2005): 361-375; 639-370. Brown, *John*, 2:922-927.

[95] Brown, *John*, 2:922-927.

[96] Frances Back, *Gott als Vater der Jünger im Johannesevangelium* (WUNT 2/336; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 168-169.

Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God (20:17).

In this passage, Jesus refers to the other disciples as his brethren (τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου) and tells them what they should report that he is ascending "to my Father and your Father" (πατέρα μου καὶ πατέρα ὑμῶν).[97]  Through the resurrection, Jesus has enabled those who believe to enter the family of God.  Frances Back writes, "Das Ziel seiner Sendung besteht nicht nur in dem neuen Verhältnis zwischen Jesus und den Jüngern als Brüdern; mit der Vollendung des Aufstiegs Jesu zum Vater wird auch ein neues Verhältnis zwischen den Jüngern und Gott als ihrem Vater beginnen."[98]

In a subtle way, Jesus has managed simultaneously to assert his equality with believers, but also his distinction from them.[99]  He does this through his distinction between "my Father and your Father," which is indicative of the difference in kind between the sonship of Jesus and the sonship of believers.[100]

Believers have become part of the divine family.[101]  God is their father.  This means that they now share in the tasks the Father has given to the Son.  In Jn 20:21, Jesus says, "As the Father has sent me, even so I sent you."  Jesus' relationship to the Father was shown through his willingness to be sent by his Father.  Now, believers are likewise sent by God.[102]  Jesus then breathes on them and they receive the spirit in a scene which resonates with Jesus' own reception of the spirit in Jn 1:29-35.  Now believers likewise receive the spirit and are sent just as Jesus was sent.  Reflecting on this verse, Brown concludes,

> In Johannine thought they alone are children of God who believe in Jesus (i 12) and are begotten by the Spirit (iii 5), Jesus' ascension will make possible the giving of the Spirit who

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[97] Back, *Gott als Vater*, "Kapital 3: Jesu Rede von Gott als dem Jünger in Joh 20,11-18," 156-171.

[98] Back, *Gott als Vater*, 169.

[99] Contrast, Brown, *John*, 2:1016.  Brown argues that this language has exactly the opposite effect, namely, that it emphasises the unity between John and the disciples, see Ruth 1:16.

[100] If the correct meaning of μονογενής is in fact, "unique, or of its own kind," them this meaning would have an application here for understanding the difference in kind between the sonship of Jesus and the sonship of all other believers.  Jesus and all believers are God's children, but Jesus' sonship is of a different kind.

[101] Back, *Gott als Vater*, 170-171.

[102] Brown, *John*, 2:1016.

will beget the believing disciples as God's children—that is why, in anticipation, Jesus now refers to them as "my brothers."[103]

In conclusion, this section has sought to sketch some of the main narrative contours in John through which believers are incorporated into the family of God.  Through his incarnation, the Son enables those who believe to become children of God.  This theme also colors other episodes in the Gospel, such as Jesus' disputes with the Jewish leaders over whose children they are (cf. John 7, 8, and 9).  At the end of the Gospel, believers are now part of one spiritual family.  As such, they are now called to be obedient to the will of the Father just as Jesus was, and, in the same way, they are also given the Holy Spirit.  This narrative arch stretches from the Prolog to the final chapters of the Gospel.  Divine regeneration plays a key role in Johannine theology, and also in the Jesus' dialog with Nicodemus.

### 2. 3. 3. 2   You Must be Begotten Anew: Regeneration in John 3

Nicodemus is a strange, liminal character.  Each of his three appearances in the Gospel raise questions and can be interpreted with skeptical ambiguity or admiration (cf. 7:50; 19:38-42).[104] He is one of the Jewish leaders, yet is drawn to Jesus.  Jesus speaks to Nicodemus of divine regeneration because it specifically targets the liminal space that Nicodemus inhabits: no one can be half born.

In John, characters either walk in light or darkness; they accept or reject the truth.  The reader therefore is poised to suspect this shadowy figure who comes to Jesus at night (3:2) who seems to occupy a grey middle ground.  He is marginal, with traits of both the Pharisees and the followers of Jesus, but not a full member of either group.[105]  Jouette Bassler writes,

> For John's community, then, to be in transition, to be of two minds, is still to be an outsider. Thus, the peculiar brand of ambiguity associated with Nicodemus illustrates the message that

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[103] Brown, *John*, 2:1016.

[104] Jouette M. Bassler, "Mixed Signals: Nicodemus in the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 108 / 4 (1989): 635-646.  Raimo Hakola, "The Burden of Ambiguity: Nicodemus and the Social Identity of the Johannine Christians," *NTS* 55 / 4 (2009): 438-455.  Dennis D. Sylva, "Nicodemus and His Spices (John 19.39)," *NTS* 34 / 1 (1988): 148-151. Jaime Clark-Soles, "Characters who Count: the Case of Nicodemus," in *Engaging with C. H. Dodd on the Gospel of John: Sixty Years of Tradition and Interpretation* (ed. Tom Thatcher and Catrin H. Williams; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013),  126-145.

[105] A helpful dimension is added by Clark-Soles who argues that the author has depicted Nicodemus first as a character, but then adds complexity by shifting from a character portrayal to the portrayal of an individual person, Clark-Soles, "Characters who Count," 129-130.

Jesus articulated at their first encounter. Acquiring the state of full, unambiguous discipleship means passing through the truly liminal state of birth, in which all connections with the past are severed. To be anywhere short of this, to be anything less than fully committed to the Johannine Jesus (to be, in John's parlance, anything other than "born from above") is to retain the damning and dangerous connections with darkness, the "Jews," and the world.[106]

Quite literally, as Bassler observes, Nicodemus needs to be begotten again, or "begotten from above." To put it another way, Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be begotten again because this is exactly what he needs to hear. In order to fully become one of Jesus' disciples, Nicodemus must fully accept Jesus' testimony and become his disciple. As it is, Nicodemus is stuck in the spiritual birth canal.

As Clark-Soles has shown, there is a good deal of shared terminology between the Prolog and John 3 which strengthens the conceptual links between the two passages. In the Prolog, those who received (λαμβάνω) the Word prospered, but those who did not receive him, did not (1:11). Clark-Soles observes, "John 3 repeatedly raises the question of receiving Jesus (3:11, 27, 32, 33). In 3:11, Jesus declares to Nicodemus: καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἡμῶν οὐ λαμβάνετε."[107] Further, the theme of birth is central in both passages.[108] In the Prolog, those who received him (ἔλαβον) are given the right to be children of God. Here, Jesus tells Nicodemus, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is begotten/generated anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (3:3, ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν, οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ).

Many English translations obscure the meaning of the Greek by translating "γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν" with "born anew" though "beget anew/from above" is preferable.[109] Barrett and Brown rightly argue that throughout the dialog, Jesus uses γεννάω in the masculine sense of "beget," while Nicodemus mistakenly understands γεννάω in the feminine sense of "to be born."[110] The flexibility of γεννάω allows for another dimension of Johannine irony.

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[106] Bassler, "Mixed Signals," 646.

[107] The second-person plural is probably directed at the group that Nicodemus is a part of. With the Prolog, this might refer to "his own" from the Prolog who should have received him (1:11). Clark-Soles, "Characters who Count," 130.

[108] Clark-Soles, "Characters who Count," 130.

[109] McHugh, *John 1-4*, 225.

[110] Barrett, *St. John*, 171-176. Brown, *John*, 129-131.

Though Nicodemus has not asked a question, Jesus answers him as if he had. Brown explains,

> In interpreting what Jesus says to Nicodemus, we shall be mistaken if we fail to recognize the basic simplicity of the ideas involved. A man takes on flesh and enters the kingdom of the world because his father begets him; a man can enter the kingdom of God only when he is begotten by a heavenly Father. Life can come to a man only from his father; eternal life comes from the heavenly Father through the Son whom he has empowered to give life (v. 21).[111]

Human fathers beget human children; spiritual fathers beget spiritual children. In order for Nicodemus to become one of God's children, he must be begotten again through the Spirit in the manner described in the Prolog. Nicodemus responds in vs. 4,

> How can a man be born when he is old? How can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?

> πῶς δύναται ἄνθρωπος γεννηθῆναι γέρων ὤν; μὴ δύναται εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ δεύτερον εἰσελθεῖν καὶ γεννηθῆναι;

Nicodemus first misunderstands that Jesus is speaking spiritually not physically. This misunderstanding is compounded by the double meaning of ἄνωθεν, which can mean both "again, or anew" or "from above."[112] Jesus means the latter, while Nicodemus hears the former. Nicodemus' also misunderstands Jesus' response as speech about "birth" rather than "begetting." That Jesus' primary meaning is "begotten" rather than "born" is confirmed by Jesus' response in vs. 5-8,

> ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῇ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος, οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς σάρξ ἐστιν, καὶ τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος πνεῦμά ἐστιν. μὴ θαυμάσῃς ὅτι εἶπόν σοι· δεῖ ὑμᾶς γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν. τὸ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνεῖ καὶ τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἀκούεις, ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδας πόθεν ἔρχεται καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγει· οὕτως ἐστὶν πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος.

> Truly, Truly, I say to you, unless one is begotten of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is begotten of flesh is flesh, and that which is begotten of Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be begotten anew.' The wind blows

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[111] Brown, *John*, 128.

[112] Brown, *John*, 130-131. Barrett, *St. John*, 171-172. McHugh, *John 1-4*, 225. Clark-Soles illustrates how, even though Nicodemus is a "teacher of Israel," he is completely unable to respond adequately to Jesus. Clark-Soles, "Characters who Count," 133.

where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with everyone who is begotten of the Spirit.

Jesus' second response is much lengthier and more detailed than his first. He tells Nicodemus that he must be begotten "of water and spirit."[113] Central to Jesus' elaboration is the concept of Spirit. It is the reception of the Spirit that affects this status in the believer. This theme reaches its crescendo in Jn 20:17-23 when Jesus calls his disciples brothers and breathes on them the Holy Spirit. The thematic and linguistic connections between Jn 3 and Jn 20 are suggested by the wording of 3:8, "the wind blows where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes" (τὸ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνεῖ καὶ τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἀκούεις...).[114] Alternatively translated, "The Spirit breathes where he wills and you hear his voice...."[115] Barrett argues that both meanings are at work in John. The effect of this double-entendre is to both clarify and obscure the truth. Nicodemus can understand this passage at an earthly level; he has felt earthly wind. What Nicodemus does not, and cannot, understand is the spiritual level of this saying. The Spirit is not a physical thing that can be seen. It cannot be felt or controlled. Instead, the Spirit is the agent of God which affects man's regeneration and makes him alive.

In conclusion, it must be recognized, firstly, that Jesus' dialog with Nicodemus on divine begetting is part of a much larger, coherent theme that runs through the Gospel from the Prolog to the resurrection narrative. The discussion of divine begetting in John 3 is fully integrated into this narrative arch. Divine regeneration is equally integrated into the theological core of 1 Peter.

Secondly, the narrative arch sheds light on the significance of divine regeneration in Jn 3. Nicodemus is drawn to Jesus. Yet, he is a marginal figure. He does not publically commit to

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[113] There is a great deal of debate over what "water and spirit" refer to. At its most basic, it seems that "water and spirit" refers to baptism and the reception of the Holy Spirit, with the caveat that this is "thick," symbolic language that expands meaning. For more, see Linda Belleville, ""Born of Water and Spirit:" John 3:5," *TrinJ* 1 / 2 (1980): 125-141. Hugo Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel* (Chicago: Argonaut, 1929), 48-71. Adele Reinhartz, ""And the Word Was Begotten": Divine Epigenesis in the Gospel of John," in *God the Father in the Gospel of John* (ed. Adele Reinhartz; Semeia 85. Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 83-103. Seim, "Divine Paternity." Turid Karlsen Seim, "Motherhood and the Making of Fathers in Antiquity," in *Women and Gender in Ancient Religions* (ed. Stephen P. Ahearne-Kroll, et al.; WUNT 263; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 99-123.

[114] RSV.

[115] Barrett's translation, Barrett, *St. John*, 175-176.

following Jesus, but at the same time does not act like those who have rejected Jesus' message. Unlike the other disciples, Nicodemus does not undergo the same public realignment of status, social networks and familial relationship which the other disciples experience. What he needs is to be begotten anew. Seen in this light, Jesus' dialog with Nicodemus is much more thoroughly embedded in the context of the Gospel than is usually recognized. Jesus intentionally chose to discuss regeneration with Nicodemus because this, specifically, was exactly what he needed.

Finally, it must be noted that the role of the Spirit is central to the concept of regeneration in John. The spirit effects regeneration when Jesus breathes the spirit on his followers after his resurrection. Questions of baptism aside, there is a deep connection between the theology of divine begetting, the Spirit and the resurrection, all of which will be important in the following discussion of 1 Peter. This section has shown that divine regeneration is central to John's gospel, and that this narrative structure clarifies aspects of Nicodemus' interaction with Jesus.

### 2. 3. 3. 3   Divine Begetting in 1 John

As in John's gospel, divine generation fits into 1 John's focus on the inclusion of believers in the family of God.[116] In the letter, believers are described as "begotten of God" nine times in six verses (see Table 2-1 below).

**Table 2-1 Divine Begetting in 1 John**

|  |  | NA[28] | RSV |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 2:29 | ἐὰν εἰδῆτε ὅτι δίκαιός ἐστιν, γινώσκετε ὅτι καὶ πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην <u>ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται.</u> | If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that every one who does right is born of him. |
| 2. x2 | 3:9 | Πᾶς <u>ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ</u> ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ, ὅτι σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ μένει, καὶ οὐ δύναται ἁμαρτάνειν, ὅτι <u>ἐκ τοῦ γεγέννηται.</u> | No one born of God commits sin; for God's nature abides in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God. |
| 3. | 4:7 | Ἀγαπητοί, ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους, | Beloved, let us love one |

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[116] For example, throughout the letter, John addresses believers as children or little children (2:1, 12, 13, 18, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21).

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν,<br>καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν <u>ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται</u><br>καὶ γινώσκει τὸν θεόν. | another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. |
| 4. | 5:4 | ὅτι πᾶν <u>τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ</u> νικᾷ τὸν κόσμον·<br>καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ νίκη ἡ νικήσασα τὸν κόσμον, ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν. | For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith. |
| 5. x2 | 5:18 | Οἴδαμεν ὅτι πᾶς <u>ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ</u> οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει, ἀλλ' <u>ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ</u> τηρεῖ ἑυατὸν καὶ ὁ πονηρὸς οὐχ ἅπτεται αὐτοῦ. | We know that any one born of God does not sin, but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him. |
| 6.*<br>-x2 | 5:1 | Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰσοῦς ἐστιν ὁ Χριστὸς <u>ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται,</u> καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν <u>τὸν γεννήσαντα</u> ἀγαπᾷ καὶ <u>τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ</u>. | Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and every one who loves the parent loves the child. |

Despite the fact that 1 John repeatedly and emphatically calls God as "Father" (1:2, 3; 2:1, 13, 15, 16, 22, 23 x2, 24; 3:1; 4:14; 5:7) many English translations render the Greek with feminine gendered language.[117]  Yet, as Menken and others have persuasively argued, the masculine interpretation is preferable.[118]  Menken provides numerous examples from Greek literature to demonstrate that "γεννᾶσθαι ἐκ with a male agent was a normal way of speaking, meaning 'to be begotten by'."[119]

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[117] For example, besides the RSV given above, the relevant phrase of 1 Jn 2:29 has been translated: "everyone who does right has been born of him" (NRSV); "everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him," (ESV); "everyone who does what is right has been born of him," (NIV); "every one that doeth righteousness is born of him," (KJV); "everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him," (NKJV).  For a thorough survey of ancient and modern translations, see Maarten J. J. Menken, ""Born of God" or "Begotten of God"? A Translation Problem in the Johannine Writings," *NovT* 51 (2009): 352-368; 355-360.

[118] For example, Raymond E. Brown, *The Epistles of John: Translated with Introduction, Notes and Commentary* (AB 30 30; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1982), 384-387.

[119] Menken, "Translation Problem," 363.  Some of the examples given by Menken include Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 1.7.2; Plutarch, *Def. orac*. 415 E 4; Pseudo-Plutarch, *De Fluvis* 13.3; Chariton, *Chaer*. 2.11.5; Cassius Dio, *Historiae Romanae* 16.57; and Lucian *Dial. d.* 20.14.

1 John 5:1 may contain a triple-usage of this language, referring to the believers as those who are begotten (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται), to the Father as the begetter (τὸν γεννήσαντα), and to Jesus as the one who was begotten (τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ).[120] In this verse, God the Father is explicitly described as begetter. The language of divine generation therefore allows the author to describe the relationships between the believers, the Father, and the Son as one of procreation and life.[121]

In 1 John 3:9 the theme of divine regeneration is developed to contrast those who are children of God and those who are not.[122] Some scholars have claimed that this passage is unique in the New Testament because of its use of "divine sperm."[123] However, the phrase "σπέρμα αὐτοῦ" has the more likely meaning "God's offspring." This interpretation has been freshly and successfully argued by de Waal Dryden and followed by Yarbrough and Lieu.[124]

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[120] The identification of God as begetter and Jesus as begotten is debated. Lieu identifies the referents as God and Christ, Judith M. Lieu, *I, II, & III John: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 200-201. Strecker advocates the former, but disagrees with the latter, Georg Strecker, *The Johannine Letters: A Commentary on 1, 2, and 3 John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 175. Smalley allows that these phrases *may* refer to God and Jesus respectively, Stephen S. Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John* (Waco: Word Books, 1984), 267. Similarly, Brown, *Epistles of John*, 535-537. See also, Rudolf Bultmann, *The Johannine Epistles: A Commentary on the Johannine Epistles* (Johannine Epistles; trans. R. Philip O'Hara, et al.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1973), 76-77.

[121] Lieu writes, "it is striking that the same verb is used of God's relationship with Jesus and with believers; this contrasts with 1 John's restriction of "Son" (*huios*) to Jesus and of "children" (*tekna*, always plural) to believers…On one level believers are brought into a relationship that they share with that between Jesus and God but that is not identical to it," *I, II, & III John*, 200.

[122] Judith Lieu and John Byron have both recently drawn attention to the influence of the Cain and Abel narrative (Gen 4:1-16) on 1 John 3. In John 3, Cain functions as a foil to Christ (rather than the expected Abel). One embodies hatred of his brother through murder, the other embodies love and willingness to die for his brother. The author of 1 John thus uses the language of descent to describe the former as "of the devil" and the latter as "of God." Importantly, one's deeds identify one's family membership. It is not surprising, then, that the author repeatedly draws upon familial language to exhort his readers to good behaviour (1 Jn 3:1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18). For more, see Judith M. Lieu, "What was from the Beginning: Scripture and Tradition in the Johannine Epistles," *NTS* 39 / 3 (1993): 458-477. Lieu, *I, II, & III John: A Commentary*, 138-140. John Byron, "Slaughter, Fratricide and Sacrilege. Cain and Abel Traditions in 1 John 3," *Bib* 88 / 4 (2007): 526-535. John Byron, *Cain and Abel in Text and Tradition: Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the First Sibling Rivalry* (14; Leiden: Brill, 2011), esp. 209-212.

[123] These scholars, however, disagree over what this "divine sperm" refers. Options include the word of God, the Spirit, a generative life source or principle, or some (perhaps fluid) combination. The answer to this question has implications for how the referents to the pronouns in the verse are identified. For a thorough survey of opinion, see J. de Waal Dryden, "The Sense of σπέρμα in 1 John 3:9 in Light of Lexical Evidence," *FN* 11 (1998): 85-100; 86. See also, Menken, "Translation Problem." Brown, *Epistles of John*, 408-411. J. du Preez, "'Sperma autou' in I John 3:9," *Neot* 9 / 1 (1975): 105-112.

[124] Waal Dryden, "Sense of σπέρμα." He has been followed by Robert W. Yarbrough, *1-3 John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 195. Lieu, *I, II, & III John: A Commentary*, 137-138. de Waal also lists the following

De Waal Dryden cites the evidence from the LXX, for which the most common meaning of σπέρμα is "offspring" or "posterity."[125]  Turning his attention to the New Testament writings, de Waal Dryden observes that with the exception of the parables and 1 Cor 15:38, all of the remaining instances of σπέρμα have the transferred meaning of "offspring."  Within the Johannine writings, the word σπέρμα is used only four times (Jn 7:42; 8:33, 37, and Rev 12:17.)[126]  In each of these cases, the intended meaning is "offspring."   In Jn 7:42, Christ is described as ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ; the Jews declare that σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐσμεν (8:33);  Jesus agrees that σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε (8:37); finally, in Rev 12:17, the dragon goes off to make war on the woman and τῶν λοιπῶν σπέρματος αὐτῆς.[127]  In each of these instances, σπέρμα is used to refer to physical or spiritual offspring.  In Jn 8, the author alternates between τέκνα and σπέρμα which suggests that John could use these words synonymously.[128]

De Waal Dryden then suggests that the author of 1 John used σπέρμα instead of τέκνα "to emphasize God's action in begetting his children."[129]  Noting that the seed idiom is associated with covenant promises in the Scriptures, de Waal Dryden speculates that such themes may be resonant here.  He writes that "it is possible that John uses σπέρμα, a word with covenantal overtones not associated with τέκνα, to press the theological point that that God's children do not sin because they are born of *God*" (emph. original).[130]

The use of σπέρμα connects the themes of divine begetting, new Christian identity, and moral ethical behavior.  The choice of σπέρμα evokes septuagintal meaning but also evokes the metaphor of procreation and regeneration.  In this way, the author of 1 John plays on a double

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commentators with this view: N. Alexander, Argyle, Bengel, Moffatt, Sander, and Wohlenberg, "Sense of σπέρμα," 87 n. 16.

[125] Waal Dryden cites the statistic of 176/218 (81%) of the occurrences of σπέρμα are used in the transferred sense of "offspring."  Waal Dryden, "Sense of σπέρμα," 89.

[126] Waal Dryden includes Rev among the Johannine literature.

[127] Waal Dryden, "Sense of σπέρμα," 91-92.

[128] Also, Waal Dryden notes that τέκνα and σπέρμα are similarly used together in Ro 9:6-8.  Waal Dryden, "Sense of σπέρμα," 96.

[129] Waal Dryden, "Sense of σπέρμα," 99.

[130] Waal Dryden, "Sense of σπέρμα," 99.

entendre not possible in English.  In conclusion, de Waal Dryden has rescued the "offspring" interpretation of σπέρμα.  However, as de Waal Dryden himself recognizes, the particular efficacy of this word is in the physicality and earthiness of the metaphor.  Thus, while "offspring" is the most appropriate English translation of σπέρμα here, the interpreter should not neglect the inherent metaphorical overtones of this specific, intentional lexical choice.  In conclusion, divine regeneration is important in 1 John, which is demonstrated by the repetition of this theme and its creative deployment in the letter.

## 2 . 4    Begotten Anew: Divine Begetting in 1 Peter 1:3-5, 23

Regeneration is at the forefront of 1 Peter's eulogy.  God is first praised for his action of divine regeneration.  The first section of the eulogy expounds this theme.  First Peter 1:3-5 says,

Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰεησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς εἰς ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν δι' ἀναστάσεως Ἰσοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκ νεκρῶν, εἰς κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον, τετηρημένην ἐν οὐρανοῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς τοὺς ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ φρουρουμένους διὰ πίστεως εἰς σωτηρίαν ἑτοίμην ἀποκαλυφθῆναι ἐν καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ.

God is "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.  According to his great mercy, he caused us to be begotten again (ἀναγεννήσας)."  In order to unpack this, the following interpretation will begin by studying the participle, and then working outwards from there through the verse.

As said above, the basic meaning of ἀναγεννάω is "to beget anew, regenerate."[131]  Though it can be used of either male or female roles, the masculine meaning is meant here, as will be discussed below, a fact obscured by English translations such as "to be born anew."[132]

The verb ἀναγεννήσας is a nominative masculine singular aorist active participle.  The participle ἀναγεννήσας is part of a dependent clause which functions as an attributive, adjectival clause to the predicate nominative clause ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.  Daniel Wallace writes, "every adjectival clause *describes*, *explains*, or *restricts* a noun, pronoun, or other substantive."[133]  Thus, the clause ὁ κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς must describe,

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[131] BDAG, 59. LSJ, "to beget anew, regenerate," 93.

[132] For example, the NIV has "he has given us new birth;" the ESV, "he has caused us to be born again;" the RSV, "we have been born anew." Contrast, the KJV, "begotten us again;" the ASV, "begat us again."

[133] Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 662.

explain, or in some way relate to the predicate nominate ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ. The predicate nominate begins the eulogy by naming the identity of this God who is worthy to be praised. Thus, God is identified and praised as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is specifically praised for his action of regenerating believers through Christ. This places God in the role of Father to Jesus, but also positions believers in relation to Christ. Therefore, this clause should be translated with "begotten anew" rather than "born anew" because it stands in relation to the God who is identified as Father.

The theme of rebegetting stands within the greater metaphor of God as Father, which has implications for christology and ecclesiology. As in John's gospel, the theme of rebegetting/rebirth is part of the fabric of the larger metaphor in the text. In 1 Peter, God has already been identified as father in the epistolary prescript (1:2). The theme of fatherhood is picked up again in the eulogy in 1:3 where it describes who Jesus is in relation to God, but also who believers are in relation to Jesus and the Father. [134]

Some commentators have gone so far as to identify the participial clause as "virtually a title ("the Begetter" or "the Progenitor," with the understanding that a new act of begetting has taken place)."[135] In the previous sections, this chapter has demonstrated that there is a small tradition within the Jewish literature of identifying God as one who begets. Those traditions provide a conceptual precedent for the development of this theme in 1 Peter. Speaking of how the verse identifies God, Paul J. Achtemeier writes,

> It is that God who has become, through Christ, the "Father" of all Christians through his merciful act of begetting them anew through his Word (1:23, 25). The rare use of the word ἀναγεννάω puts emphasis rather on rebegetting or begetting anew rather than on being born anew, though of course the subsequent new birth is assumed (e.g., 2:2).[136]

Achtemeier identifies the masculine meaning ἀναγεννάω, but at the same time recognizes that the image of rebegetting implies the experience of rebirth for the believer, which is demonstrated

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[134] Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt," 81-82. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 122.

[135] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 18. Mounce, "Metaphor of Rebirth," 164. Also see Elliott, who writes, "Thus the metaphor of God as father is likewise consonant with the recurrent theme of rebirth (1:3, 23; 2:2) that implies God as progenitor and the believing community as God's family or household," Elliott, *I Peter*, 331.

[136] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 94.

through the development of this theme throughout the letter. Achtemeier makes three other helpful observations.

First, the appropriateness of the translation "rebeget, or beget anew" is increased due to the connection with the seed theme developed in 1:23.[137] He points out that when this verb is translated as "beget anew, or rebeget" its already dubious connection with the Mystery religions becomes even more unlikely.[138] Second, this translation significantly weakens the connection with baptism since the metaphor is significantly altered when the verse is read as "beget anew" rather than "born anew."[139] Third, the fact that the participle is aorist points back to a past event which changed the status of all believers corporately at the same time.[140]

The text explains that this rebegetting happened δι᾽ ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκ νεκρῶν, "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." The regeneration of believers is achieved through the resurrection of Jesus.[141] The author is not concerned to delineate a complete sequence of temporal events. Rather, the author lays the significance of believers' new status on the resurrection of Jesus rather than on the experience of the individual. By foregrounding the resurrection, regeneration applies to all believers equally and corporately. This contributes to the letter's goal of strengthening the corporate solidarity of believers who were facing social ostracism based on their identity as Christians. In its corporate aspect, it also anticipates Christian ethnic identity construction which also applies to all believers corporately.

Incidentally, the corporate aspect of Christian regeneration weakens the argument of a baptismal interpretation of Petrine regeneration. The theology of baptism may underlie the letter's theology, but presenting baptismal theology is not its primary goal.[142] Nowhere in the letter are regeneration and baptism discussed together. Rather, the individual's experience of

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[137] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 94.

[138] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 94.

[139] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 91-94.

[140] Also, Michaels, *1 Peter*, 16.

[141] Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 123.

[142] Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 123. Contra, Elliott, *I Peter*, 333. Leonhard Goppelt, *Der Erste Petrusbrief* (vol. XII/1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978), 95.

regeneration and new identity is upstaged by the central position of the resurrection. This is emphasized through the phrase, ὁ κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς. Through his great mercy, God has "rebegotten us." The author here includes himself in this statement of Christian identity to highlight its corporate character.

Finally, the participle is active. This emphasizes the fact that the new status of believers depends entirely on divine action.[143] After all, this text is a blessing of thanksgiving (εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατήρ) praising God for what he has done.[144] Feldmeier writes, "As people can contribute absolutely nothing to their siring and birth, so also the metaphor of new siring or the renewed birth underlines that salvation is something that happens to someone, that the regenerate is simply a receiver."[145]

Believers have been begotten anew through the resurrection into a living hope (εἰς ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν). This is the first of three, possibly four, prepositional εἰς phrases which develop the meaning of regeneration (1:4- εἰς κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον; -εἰς ὑμᾶς, 5- εἰς σωτηρίαν ἑτοίμην ἀποκαλυφθῆναι ἐν καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ). The clauses highlight the effects of regeneration: ἐλπίδος (3b), κληρονομία (4a), and σωτηρία in (5b).[146]

Three of these prepositional phrases begin with a telic εἰς; it is possible that all four are telic.[147] The telic εἰς can express metaphorical direction, i.e., goal or purpose.[148] The telic εἰς may also denote divine appointment (cf. Mt 5:22; 1 Cor 11:22; 14:22; Col 1:16, 1:19-20; Jas 5:3; Rev 22:2), which seems consistent with usage elsewhere in 1 Peter (cf. 1:2, 11; 2:8).[149] For example, the telic force of εἰς is prominent in the phrase in 2:21, εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ἐκλήθητε "for this (reason/purpose) you were called" (repeated in 3:9, ὅτι εἰς τοῦτο ἐκλήθητε, cf. 4:6).[150] The

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[143] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 18.

[144] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 16. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 92. Elliott, *I Peter*, 330. Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt," 81.

[145] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 130. Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt," 82.

[146] Goppelt, *Der Erste Petrusbrief*, 95, 97. Elliott, *I Peter*, 330, 333. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 19.

[147] Murray J. Harris, *Prepositions and Theology in New Testament Greek* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 99. It is unclear whether the phrase εἰς ὑμᾶς in vs. 4 should be understood as telic, see below.

[148] Harris, *Prepositions*, 88.

[149] Ethelbert Stauffer, "εἰς," in *TDNT vol. 2* (ed. G. Kittel; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 420-442; 428. For more on 1 Petr 1:11, see Harris, *Prepositions*, 88-89.

[150] Cf. Dubis, *I Peter*, 76, 99.

relative frequency of the telic εἰς in 1 Peter strengthens the case for the telic force where this meaning is unclear.

Each of these three prepositional phrases will be discussed since each encapsulates an important element of believers' new regenerated identity. The first directs the reader's attention to the living hope which is the means by which believers participate in the risen life of Christ and live as new children of God. The second directs attention towards believers' spiritual, eschatological inheritance. Finally, the third encapsulates the dual temporality in which believers' now live. It is a present reality, but one looking forward to a future, eschatological fulfillment.

### 2. 4. 1  εἰς ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν: For a Living Hope

Believers are begotten anew "into a living hope," or better, "for a living hope."[151]  Harris explains that this εἰς phrase can be telic, ecbatic (expressing a goal that is actually realized, also known as consecutive or resultative εἰς)[152] or both.[153]  He writes of this phrase, "telic: 'In his great mercy God has caused us to be born anew *so that we may possess* a life-giving hope' or ecbatic: '…*and so we have* a living hope' or both—defining the purpose and/or outcome of divine regeneration" (emphasis original).[154]  The difference between the telic and ecbatic meaning is slight, though Harris is probably right to interpret both the telic and ecbatic meanings here. Divine regeneration looks forward but is also presently realized.

This living hope comes "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." The aorist tense of the participle places believers' regeneration in temporal reference to the event of the passion and resurrection. Believers can hope because they are already assured of the power of divine life: the power of divine life was demonstrated at Christ's resurrection.[155]  Believers' hope is living because it is imbued with the same life-giving power of the resurrection.[156]

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[151] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 92.

[152] Harris, *Prepositions*, 90.

[153] Harris, *Prepositions*, 101.

[154] Harris, *Prepositions*, 101.

[155] Elliott, *I Peter*, 334.

[156] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 19.

In 1 Peter, the life of Christ enlivens believers as a corporate body.[157]  The movement of life from Christ to believers is seen elsewhere in the letter.  In 1 Peter 2:4-5 believers are called living stones (λίθοι ζῶντες) after Christ the living stone (λίθον ζῶντα).  Elsewhere, "the living word of God" dwells in believers (1:23-25).  Together, the living hope, word, and stone are three figures of speech that describe how divine life is communicated to believers.  Feldmeier concludes, "The descriptions of hope, word and stone as 'living' may in all three cases be understood as inclusive, such that the item that one so describes is thereby qualified  as a form of appearance of the divine life-power that communicates itself through this to believers."[158]  Or, more succinctly, "living hope is a hope that makes alive."[159]

In 1 Peter, hope is active.  It is the basis of moral conduct.[160]  As Parsons writes, "this vision of the future cannot be simply passive; it must be active, flowing into present action."[161]  The author elsewhere exhorts believers to "hope completely (ἐλπίσατε)" on the grace which will come at the revelation of Jesus Christ.  Later, believers are called to be able to give an account for the hope that is in them (4:15).

This hope transforms believers' lives in the present, and looks forward to the future realization of soteriological promises.  Feldmeier writes, "As a trusting anticipation of the renewed reality, hope becomes here virtually the life principle of the regenerate Christian humanity."[162] Feldmeier makes this point more strongly when he stresses the fact that believers have been begotten anew not to a new life, but to a living hope.  He writes, "Bemerkenswert is ja, dass die Wiedergeburt nicht zu neuem Leben erfolgt, sondern zu lebendiger Hoffnung, d. h. das neue Leben ist nur prädikative Näherbestimmung der Hoffnung, die Inhalt der Wiedergeburt ist."[163] In conclusion, believers have been begotten anew to a living hope which is guaranteed by the

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[157] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 20.

[158] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 69.

[159] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 69.

[160] Parsons, "Born Anew," 99.

[161] Parsons, "Born Anew," 99-100.

[162] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 69.

[163] Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt," 83.

past resurrection of Christ from dead.  The divine life of Christ now animates believers, which has the dramatic effect of changing the entire character of their lives in the present and looks forward to future fulfillment.

### 2. 4. 2  εἰς κληρονομίαν: For an Imperishable, Undefiled, Unfading Inheritance

The first εἰς phrase had a decided past and present temporal reference which anticipated eschatological fulfillment.  This future orientation is made explicit in the second εἰς clause. Verse five has two εἰς phrases, the first is telic, the second is debatable.  These phrases link together; each phrase develops the meaning of previous phrase.

Several features are noteworthy.  First, the fact that believers have been begotten anew for an inheritance is a development of the family of God imagery.  Through their regeneration, they are now God's children and heirs. Just as human children are born into an inheritance, so also are divine children born into the status of heirs.[164]  Inheritance is an effect of regeneration.[165]

Second, as heirs, believers have a present status which looks forward to future fulfillment. "Die Metapher des Erbes unterstreicht den Aspekt der christlichen Existenz zwischen den Zeiten: Als 'Erbe' ist das Heil noch zukünftig, aber als 'Erben' haben die Wiedergeborenen Anspruch darauf."[166]  As Achtemeier notes, the nature of inheritance itself points to the future.[167]

The word inheritance (κληρονομία) conjures many allusions to the LXX and Jewish tradition, such as the promised land.[168]  The author, however, does not explain exactly what this inheritance is, though he does use litotes to explain what it is not.  It is ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον.  This triad of α-privatives contrasts the earthly nature of the worldly things with the imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance which awaits believers.[169]  Feldmeier explains that these three negative attributes are soteriological, such that they bring divine qualities to

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[164] Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt," 84.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 335.

[165] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 71.

[166] Feldmeier, "Wiedergeburt," 84.  Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 71.

[167] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 95.

[168] Elliott, *I Peter*, 335.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 96.  Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 124.  Parsons, "Born Anew," 102.

[169] Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 124. Elliott, *I Peter*, 35-336.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 21.

human beings.[170]  They therefore explain what it means to have living hope, thus building on the previous phrase.  In other words, he writes, these attributes explain how "participation in the indestructible fullness of divine life is guaranteed to the elect through the divine new siring."[171] Through their divine siring, believers share in the divine attributes of immortality, purity, holiness, and eternal glory.[172]

Believers' inheritance is ἄφθαρτον, "imperishable."  As God's children and heirs, believers inherit and participate in divine qualities.  Feldmeier writes,

> The attribute of imperishability in the context of biblically influenced theology does not have its point in the ontological contrast of God and human, but in the inclusion of the human in the sphere of the divine life and the resulting creative transformation of the human that results from this.[173] [italics removed]

The same root is used in 1 Peter 1:18-19,

> You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers (πατροπαραδότου), not with perishable things (φθαρτοῖς), such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

1 Peter 1:18-19 contrasts what believers have inherited from their earthly fathers with what they will now inherit from their heavenly father.  Perishability defines earthly things, things that will pass away and are ultimately of limited value, while imperishability is a divine attribute that believers will receive from God.  The same root is used again in 1:23, where the author explains that believers have been begotten again not of "perishable seed" (ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς), but of imperishable, which is the living and abiding word of God (ἀλλ' ἀφθάρτου διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος).  The believers' divine inheritance is of the same kind as the seed with which they have been sired.  Both are ἄφθαρτος because God himself is ἄφθαρτος.  This illustrates the internal coherence and thematic consistency of the letter.

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[170] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 72.

[171] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 72.

[172] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, Excursus 2: "Imperishable, Undefiled, Unfading,"—The Reception and Transformation of Metaphysical Attributes of in 1 Peter," 73-78.

[173] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 75.

Second, believers' inheritance is ἀμίαντον, "undefiled, or uncorrupted." This word is associated with purity in both Greco-Roman and Jewish literature.[174] For example, in 2 Macc 14:36, Temple priests pray, "O holy One, Lord of all holiness, keep undefiled (ἀμίαντον) for ever this house that has been so recently purified (κεκαθαρισμένον)." Because purity is both an attribute of God as well as a prerequisite for entry into divine space, ἀμίαντος came to be understood as everything that belongs to God. As such, it took on ethical dimensions in Jewish writing. Feldmeier writes, ἀμίαντος in Jewish tradition "designates cultic purity but also sexual virginity, just as, on the other hand, sexual offense and idolatry or any passion defiles the person or his or her soul."[175] In 1 Peter, believers' inheritance is undefiled, or pure, taking on connotations of cultic purity, ethical purity and divine presence. The theme of cultic holiness is developed at several future points in the letter. For example, believers are called to holiness (1:15-16) and are later described in cultic terms (2:4-6). Like divine regeneration, Christian holiness depends completely on divine action.

Finally, believers' inheritance is ἀμάραντον, a rare word meaning "unfading." A form of the word occurs again in 1 Peter 5:4 to describe the unfading crown of glory (τὸν ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον) believers will receive. Believers' unfading crown contrasts with the fading laurel crowns of military or athletic victors.[176] The metaphor of vegetation is picked up again in 1 Peter to highlight the contrast between the impermanent grass of the field and the living and abiding word of God (1:24-25). Through divine regeneration, believers are now divine heirs who await an inheritance through which they will share in the imperishable, uncorrupted and unfading divine life.

The next εἰς phrase occurs at the very end of verse four and forms a clear segue into verse five. Divine regeneration has happened εἰς ὑμᾶς. Harris writes of both possible meanings that it can be "telic, indicating the beneficiaries of the inheritance, or εἰς equivalent to a dative of

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[174] For the Hellenistic context, in which this word was associated with cultic purity, see Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 76. In the LXX, see Wis 4:2; 8:20; 2 Macc 14:36; 15:34.

[175] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 76.

[176] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 77.

advantage (ὑμῖν): 'a life-giving hope, *namely*, *an inheritance…*reserved in heaven *for you/for your benefit*' (emphasis original)."[177]  Though it is difficult to determine the precise grammatical category, the meaning of the phrase is clear.  As a dative of advantage, all of this divine action has happened "for your benefit."[178]  This phrase highlights the switch of person in the text: verse 3 begins in the first person plural, praising the God and Father of *our* Lord Jesus Christ who has begotten *us* anew.  Here, the pronoun switches to the second person plural, divine regeneration is *for you*.

### 2. 4. 3  εἰς σωτηρίαν:  For Salvation

This salvation is "ready to be revealed in the last time." This explanatory clause emphasizes the present and future dimensions of salvation.[179]  The salvation is prepared or at hand, ready to be revealed in the last time.  This phrase emphasizes the present reality of believers' salvation as well as its not-yet quality and future realization.

This prepositional phrase can be ecbatic, telic, or both.  Harris writes, it is "ecbatic, defining the outcome of God's powerful protection: 'you who, through faith, are being protected by God's power, *and so acquire a salvation* that is ready to be disclosed at the final time'; or telic "…*so that you may acquire a salvation* that is ready to be disclosed at the final time."[180]  The difference here between ecbatic and telic is slight, though it seems probable that the telic force is present given this phrase's placement at the end of a string of telic εἰς phrases.  The telic meaning here is strengthened by 1 Peter 1:9, which says directly that believers can obtain salvation, the outcome of faith, the salvation of their souls.  Regeneration has happened for salvation.

In conclusion, each of the telic εἰς phrases develops the meaning of divine siring.  Believers have been begotten anew for a living hope, for an inheritance and for salvation.  Their identity as newly-begotten children of God means that they are indwelt with divine life, the same divine life which raised Christ from the dead.  As God's children, they are entitled to an inheritance which

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[177] Harris, *Prepositions*, 101.

[178] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 22. Also, Elliott, *I Peter*, 336.

[179] Elliott, *I Peter*, 337-338. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 23.

[180] Harris, *Prepositions*, 101.

has divine attributes and through which divine attributes will be communicated to them. Finally, believers look forward to a salvation which, though a present reality, will be made fully known at the last time. At that time, presumably, they will fully participate in divine life and receive their heavenly inheritance.

### 2. 4. 4  1 Peter 1:23

The concept of regeneration appears again in 1 Peter 1:22-23. The Greek text says,

Τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν ἡγνικότες ἐν τῇ ὑπακοῇ τῆς ἀληθείας εἰς φιλαδελφίαν ἀνυπόκριτον, ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας ἀλλήλους ἀγαπήσατε ἐκτενῶς ἀναγεγεννημένοι οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς ἀλλ' ἀφθάρτου διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος.

This verse builds on 1 Peter 1:3-5. It is therefore not surprising that many of the same vocabulary and themes appear. Here, divine regeneration is the foundation of an ethical appeal to good conduct among believers.

The structure of this passage deserves comment. The main verb, the imperative ἀγαπήσατε, is framed by two participles, ἡγνικότες and ἀναγεγεννημένοι. Feldmeier writes of them,

> The first is active and speaks of the purification of the soul in obedience to the truth and therefore stresses the renewal of existence through one's own endeavors, while the second is passive, calling to remembrance once again the action of God in rebirth that goes before all self-determination and is the foundation for the mutual love.[181]

As Feldmeier observes, the first participle is active and focuses on the believers' active obedience to the truth through the purification of their souls. The second is passive and focuses attention on the gracious act of God believers have received which is the foundation of their call to love. Verse 22 begins, "Having purified your souls in obedience to the truth through/for (εἰς) unfeigned brotherly love." Two features are immediately significant.

First, the participle ἡγνικότες is a perfect active participle from ἁγνίζω, "to purify, cleanse." The verb ἁγνίζω normally refers to the realm of cultic and moral purity and so echoes the purity element first encountered in ἀμίαντος.[182] In the future, believers will inherit an undefiled inheritance. In the present, they are reminded that their souls were purified, and that that

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[181] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 121.

[182] For more on ἁγνίζω, see Elliott, *I Peter*, 382-383. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 136. Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 121.

purification has ongoing effects in the present, namely obedience to truth.[183] For 1 Peter, obedience and purity are deeply connected.

The importance of obedience for 1 Peter is seen by its place in the epistolary prescript 1:2 (εἰς ὑπακοήν) where it is again linked with sanctification (ῥαντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).[184] It is as obedient children (ὡς τέκνα ὑπακοῆς) that believers are called to be holy as God is holy (1:14-16). Just as newly born children must learn to be obedient to their earthly parents, so must newly begotten divine children learn obedience to their divine father. Through their regeneration, believers are called to become like their father, which involves the purification of their hearts for obedience. Believers' souls have been sanctified because it is only through sanctification that they can love one another from a pure heart (ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας).[185]

Therefore, secondly, believers' souls have been purified "for unfeigned brotherly love" (εἰς φιλαδελφίαν ἀνυπόκριτον). This phrase is another example of the telic εἰς, of which Peter is so fond. Believers are to love one another without hypocrisy. 1 Peter 1:3-5 focused on the vertical plane by explaining how believers become God's children through divine begetting. In 1 Peter 1:22-23, attention is now focused on the effects of divine begetting for the horizontal relationship between believers who, by means of their divine siring into the family of God, are now brothers and sisters.[186] Achtemeier writes, "Christians have been incorporated into a new family by their rebegetting, and are thus to regard other Christians similarly as members of that family."[187] Above all, they are called to love one another (ἀλλήλους ἀγαπήσατε).

After the main verb (ἀγαπήσατε), believers are reminded that they are to love because they have been begotten anew, not of perishable seed, but of the imperishable seed of the word of God. Divine regeneration is thus the reason and the means by which believers love each other. Conversely, it is the living and abiding word of God in them which enables them to love each

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[183] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 74.

[184] The debate among commentators as to the meaning of this phrase, whether the obedience is Christ's or the believers', does not negate the strong connection between sanctification and obedience.

[185] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 122-123.

[186] Cf. Elliott, *I Peter*, 112-116, 384-386.

[187] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 137.

other. It is clear from this verse that ἀναγεννάω should be translated with the masculine "to beget anew" rather than the feminine "to be born anew." The participle is followed by a contrast between perishable and imperishable seed which clearly indicates that the masculine meaning of the verse is intended here. The concept of holy or divine seed will be investigated in the following chapter. It will suffice to note here that the author not only uses the concept of rebegetting to establish the theological status of believers before God, but that he also establishes this concept in order to construct a robust ethical statement on how believers should relate to God and to one another.

## 2.5    Conclusion

The use of divine regeneration in 1 Peter is a creative development both within early Christianity and Second Temple Judaism. This chapter sought to contextualize divine regeneration within the conceptual world of the Jewish Scripture, the literature of Second Temple Judaism, and early Christianity in order to illuminate this theme in 1 Peter.

To review, by the first Christian century, the vocabulary of regeneration, ἀναγεννάω and παλιγγενεσία, were part of the Greek vernacular used by Jewish authors writing in Greek, as seen by usage in Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament. While παλιγγενεσία had a technical meaning within Stoicism, by the time of the rise of Christianity this term had transcended Stoicism and could be used generally in a variety of ways. Ἀναγεννάω, on the other hand, was very rare before 1 Peter, appearing only twice in all Greek literature, once each in Philo (*Eternity* 8-9) and Josephus (*War* 4.484). The language of regeneration was in circulation in Jewish Greek literature of the Second Temple period.

This chapter then examined the Jewish literature which could describe God as a begetter or birthmother as a subcategory within the larger theme of God as Father (Deut 32:18; Ps 2:7; Num 11:12; Isa 45:10-11; Ezek 23: 4 cf. Isa 49:21, Isa 1:2b, and Jer 2:27). Importantly, by the Second Temple period, speech about God as father had shifted towards democratization; righteous individuals could appeal to God as their father. A similar trend is partially evident for the God as begetter theme, but there are no examples of God as begetter of individuals. Overall, though

speech about God as begetter or birthmother was uncommon, its existence and continuity testifies to the fact that such language, understood metaphorically, was accepted within authoritative Scripture and later Jewish literature. However, there are no examples of Jews speaking of God as one who "re-begets" or "gives birth anew;" this is a Christian innovation.

In the New Testament, divine regeneration language features prominently in 1 Peter and the Johannine literature. In these texts, God is not only Father, but one who begets anew, as Jesus says in John 3. This chapter has argued that the use of rebegetting in John 3 is not an isolated narrative, but participates in a Gospel-wide theme of divine procreation which stretches from the Prolog to the Resurrection narratives. Jesus' words to Nicodemus, therefore, are spoken to Nicodemus personally, but they participate in the gospel's wider narrative arch. Summarily, the theme of divine regeneration is thus fully imbedded in the fabric of John.

This chapter has argued that something similar is going on in 1 Peter. The degree to which the theme of divine siring is present in both John and 1 Peter provides implicit evidence to the deep internalization of this theme among the New Testament writers. This theme is not an accessory to their theological statements, but one of the core pillars of their self-identity. Several conclusions have been reached on Petrine regeneration.

First, as many scholars have noted, the letter is thoroughly saturated in Jewish traditions, concepts, and texts. As the evidence gathered in the previous sections demonstrates, it is much more likely that the Christian theme of divine regeneration was a development of the Jewish traditions of God as divine begetter, not from any influence of the Mystery cults. Though divine *re*-generation is a Christian innovation, it is in continuity with Jewish traditions of God as divine begetter. Petrine regeneration must therefore be seen within the polychromatic context of Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity.

Second, there is a level of continuity between divine generation 1 Peter and the Johannine literature. For these texts, the concept of divine generation is not a theological addendum, but the foundation upon which many key theological motifs are built, such as ecclesiology, Christology, soteriology, and eschatology.

Third, the divine begetting in 1 Peter is based on death and resurrection of Christ (1:3). The Christ event is the key temporal marker around which all the other temporal designations in the letter pivot. The foregrounding of the resurrection in 1 Peter means that the corporate character of Christianity is emphasized against the experience of individuals. All believers equally have been begotten anew to through the resurrection, regardless of when this was enacted in an individual's life.

Fourth, the Christ event is the event through which all believers have been begotten anew. Therefore, they are now God's children, and, as God's children, they are also his heirs (1:4). This status as heirs looks forward to the eschaton when believers will receive their inheritance which at present is being kept for them in heaven (1:4-5). They currently have a living hope; this hope both looks backward to the resurrection and forward to the fulfillment of divine promises.

Fifthly and finally, the character of believers' lives should be infused with hope. Their status as children of God has clear ramifications for their ethical behavior in the present (1:15-16). Specifically, believers are called to love one another from a pure heart (1:22). The reality of their new status as divine children means that they are now part of one family. Fellow Christians are now all brothers and sisters in the divine family. What the author of 1 Peter has established here is the foundation of Christian fictive kinship and ethnicity.

## Chapter 3    Imperishable Seed

### 3.1    Introduction

The divine regeneration metaphor is expanded in 1:23-25: believers have been begotten anew not of perishable seed (ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς), but of imperishable (ἀφθάρτου, 1:23).  Both aspects of this description are important: "seed" connotes ideas of genealogy, heritage, ethnicity, and covenant, while "imperishability" is a quintessentially divine quality.  The letter's use of "imperishable seed" effectively achieves two, related goals: it establishes a spiritual heritage for believers and communicates divine properties to them.  The description of believers as begotten of "imperishable seed" deepens their spiritual identity, encourages them to love one another, and reinforces their separation from their previous way of life.  It also makes an important contribution to the ethnic language developed in 2:9-10.  Because all believers have been begotten with one, imperishable seed, they are now one holy race.

This chapter will investigate the uses of metaphorical seed language in the Hebrew scriptures (§3.2), Second Temple Judaism (§3.3), the New Testament (§3.4) and especially 1 Peter (§3.5). The most basic meaning of "seed" is the literal, agrarian meaning, but other, non-agrarian, metaphorical uses emerged.[1]  In these uses, the agrarian source domain continued to play an influential role in shaping target domains such as offspring and posterity.

This chapter will first investigate the four main uses of the seed idiom in the Hebrew scriptures: the posterity of Abraham (§3.2.1), the Davidic monarchy (§3.2.2), the levitical priesthood (§3.2.3), and corporate Israel (§3.2.4).  In each category, seed language is completely human, though invested with divine promise, often a covenant.  This chapter will then look at how the concept of "holy seed" was democratized to all Israel in Ezra and Jubilees (§3.2.4 - 3.3.1).  This democratization went hand in hand with the strong concern for Israel's corporate holiness.  The New Testament (§3.4) usage of the seed idiom reflects contemporary Jewish

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[1] The words for "seed" (Hb root, זרע; Gk σπέρμα, σπόρος, σπορά) most commonly refers to seed in the agricultural sense of that which is planted in the ground. Siegfried Schulz and Gottfried Quell, "σπέρμα, σπείρω, σπορά, σπόρος, σπόριμος," in *TDNT vol. 7* (ed. G. Friedrich; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971),  536-547; 538.  H. D. Preuss, "זָרַע zāra'; זֶרַע zera'," in *TDOT* (ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980),  143-162; 146-148.

usage.  However, a new question was on the table for early Christians: how were Gentiles to be brought into the people of God and included as Abraham's seed?

In all of the texts up to this point (with the possible exception of Mal 2:15), the seed under consideration is completely human.  Philo seems to be the first Jew to actively discuss divine seed, but he does so under the influence of Stoicism (§3.3.2).  Divine seed is equally rarely mentioned in the New Testament (§3.4).  Despite some claims to its presence in Jn 3:5 and 1 Jn 3:9, 1 Peter is the only place in the New Testament to discuss seed endowed with divine qualities that generates believers (§3.5).  The following discussion of the seed idiom in Jewish and Christian usage will therefore serve to highlight the continuity 1 Peter shares with this tradition, but also the author's innovation.

## 3.2      Holy Seed in Biblical Literature

### 3.2.1  Seed Language in the Hebrew Scriptures

In the Scriptures, seed language is used to refer to offspring, descendants, families, tribes and nations.[2]   One's seed can refer to all of one's descendants or a specific individual.[3]  For example, the LXX usually renders זרע with σπέρμα, while the Targumim consistently interpret 'seed' as 'sons,' "interpreting the term 'seed' as a plural of sense or collective, meaning 'descendants', and hence 'Israel.'"[4]  H. D. Preuss writes,

> Thus *zera'* articulates more than mere blood relationship, a shared heritage and growth; it also indicates more than the intimate solidarity of the individual with the fathers and the people.  It expresses an organic cohesion within history under the same God, under his guidance in judgment and salvation, the unfolding into the future of the gifts given and promised to the fathers by Yahweh, and the assurance of standing in this heritage and being able to apply it to oneself.[5]

This idiom is frequent and widespread in Hebrew scriptures.[6]  In its most basic sense, seed language is the language of genealogy and ethnicity.  It establishes continuity between

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[2] Preuss, "זָרַע zāra'; זֶרַע zera'," 150-154.

[3] Max Wilcox, "The Promise of the 'Seed' in the New Testament and the Targumim," *JSNT* 5 (1979): 2-20.

[4] Wilcox, "Promise of 'Seed'," 3, 10.  However, as Wilcox also notes, the Targumim combine this plural rendering of 'seed' with singular pronouns, thus allowing both individual and corporate interpretations.

[5] Preuss, "זָרַע zāra'; זֶרַע zera'," 162.

[6] Preuss, "זָרַע zāra'; זֶרַע zera'," 150-162.

generations to connect future generations with divine promise. Seed language can have ethnic overtones because it is deeply connected with founding ancestors, genealogy, consanguinity, and kinship.[7] For our purposes, seed language is used in four significant contexts: for the descent of Abraham specifically, the nation of Israel generally, the Davidic monarchy, and the Levitical priesthood.[8]

Paradigmatically, God promised Abraham that he would bless his seed.[9] God says, "For all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants (lit. 'seed'; Heb, וּלְזַרְעֲךָ; Gk, τῷ σπέρματί σου) for ever" (Gen 13:15). In this promise, the "seed" refers both to the individual and the collective, to Isaac specifically as well as Abraham's future descendants through Isaac.[10]

With the possible exception of Mal 2:15, holy seed is never divine seed.[11] God himself is never the origin of the seed.[12] Rather, it is Israel's close relationship to God that endows Israel with divine qualities such as holiness. Israel is a fully human community endowed with divine holiness, as in Ezra 9. In what follows, the primary focus will be on the ideology of these texts and their reception in the Second Temple period by Jewish and Christian thinkers. The agrarian associations of seed language makes this idiom a rich source domain for interpretive techniques

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[7] T. Desmond Alexander, "Genealogies, Seed and the Compositional Unity of Genesis," *TynBul* 44 / 2 (1993): 255-270.

[8] In his article, Alexander highlights the connection between seed, national identity and the royal monarchy, Alexander, "Genealogies," 267-270.

[9] On the seed of Abraham, see Gen 12:7; 13:15, 16; 15:3, 5, 13, 18; 17:7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 19; 17:7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 19; 21:12, 13; 22:17; 18; 24:7; 26:3, 4, 24; 28:4, 13, 14; 32:12; 35:12; Ex 32:13; 33:1; Deut 1:8; 4:37; 10:15; 11:9; 34:4; Josh 24:3; 2 Chr 20:7; Ps 105:6; Isa 41:8.

[10] Wilcox, "Promise of 'Seed'," 4-5.

[11] Schulz and Quell, "σπέρμα, σπόρος," 542. Cf. Markus Zehnder, "A Fresh Look at Malachi II 13-16," *VT* LIII / 2 (2003): 224-259. Russell Fuller, "Text-Critical Problems in Malachi 2:10-16," *JBL* 10 / 1 (1991): 47-57.

[12] Zehnder interprets the זרע אלהים in Mal as referring to the offspring of human men in the context of debates over intermarriage. He writes, "The phrase זרע אלהים connects in the most meaningful way to the preceding verse if it is used as a designation for the offspring resulting from the marriages of the addressed men. According to the prophet, this offspring constitutes 'godly seed' only if the children are born out of the relation between members of the YHWH-congregation and Israelite wives, whereas the children born by women of foreign faiths cannot be called 'godly seed'," "A Fresh Look," 249. Zehnder also proposes the less likely alternative that the phrase could refer to the men themselves rather than their offspring, though he notes that the former option is more likely, "Fresh Look," 249-250. It is interesting that in this regard, the similar situation of intermarriage with foreign women provokes a similar interpretive move to that seen in the Ezra-Nehemiah intermarriage crisis.

such as *gezerah shawa*, or more modestly, lexematic association, interpreting scripture with scripture in order to apply biblical precedents in new ways.[13]

### 3. 2. 2  Royal Seed: The Davidic Monarchy

In 2 Sam 7:12-16, the Lord declares that he will make David a house. He says,

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring (Heb אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ; Gk τὸ σπέρμα σου) after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.  He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.  I will be his father and he shall be my son…I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you….your throne shall be established forever.

The notion of seed here can refer either to an individual or a group.[14]  In one sense, Solomon, the builder of the Temple, is the fulfilment of this promise.[15]  In another, God has promised David that his kingdom will continue forever through his descendants.  This text roots the Davidic monarchy in perpetuity and attaches clear importance to hereditary succession.  David's descendants will inherit the promise after his death.[16]

The seed idiom is used elsewhere in the Scriptures of the Davidic monarchy.[17]  God promised to ensure that the seed of David would endure for ever (Ps 18:50; 89:3-4, 28-37). 2

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[13] Friedrich Avemarie, "Interpreting Scripture through Scripture: Exegesis based on Lexematic Association in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Pauline Epistles," in *Echoes from the Caves: Qumran and the New Testament* (ed. Florentino García Martínez;  vol. 85 of Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah; Leiden: Brill 2009),  83-102. Wilcox identifies several examples which hang on the word seed, such as Acts 2:14b-40 depending on Ps 88 (89) 4-5 and 2 Sam 7:13, and Ps 131 (132): 11.  These links will be discussed in the section on Acts.  Wilcox, "Promise of 'Seed'," 6-8.  Within the biblical texts themselves, seed language is already used to link different things, such as the linking of the promise of Abraham's seed to the seed of David in Jer 33:21-22. Cf. Wilcox, "Promise of 'Seed'," 5.

[14] P. Kyle McCarter, *II Samuel* (AB 9; New York: Doubleday, 1984), 205.

[15] Reference to the Temple plays on polyvalent meanings of "house" בַּיִת in this passage. At the beginning of the narrative, David, dwelling (יָשַׁב) securely in his own house (vs. 1, בַּיִת), desires to build a house (vs. 5, בַּיִת) for the Lord to dwell in (vs. 5, ישׁב).[15]  The Lord the declares that he will make David a house (vs. 11, בַּיִת).  In this narrative, the meaning of "house" is shifts from physical house, to Temple, to offspring to dynasty.  The narrative suggests that the "houses" which will be built are connected.  McCarter, *II Samuel*, 205-210.

[16] For more on the structure and parallellism of these verses, see Lyle Eslinger, *House of God or House of David: The Rhetoric of 2 Samuel 7* (164; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 45-46.

[17] 1 Sam 20:42; 2 Sam 22:51; 1 Kgs 2:33; Ps 18:50; Ps. 89:4, 29, 36.  Also see Ps 132:11-12, which clearly refers to the promised offspring of David.  In the Apocrypha, see Sir 44:12; 45:24-25; 47:11, 20, 22.

Kings 11:1 can speak of a זֶרַע הַמַּמְלָכָה, a royal seed, or, a royal race.[18]  David and his seed after him are forever bound to the Lord's promises.[19]  The same idiom is used of the hereditary nature of the priesthood.  In Ben Sira, the two are brought together with the result that the priesthood is infused with royal power.[20]

### 3. 2. 3  Pure Seed: The Levitical Priesthood

Enquiry into the biblical priesthood, especially on matters of genealogy, is immediately faced with problems of historicity, revisionist ideology and textual complexity. [21]  Even casual readers are faced with the different roles and attitudes towards the Aaronides, Levites, Zadokites, and the descendants of Eliezer, Gershom, Phineas, and Ithamar.[22]  As Nelson writes,

> In accordance with ancient tendency to structure social and political relationships by means of fictional genealogical claims, priestly family trees were often adjusted to meet current needs…Later genealogical lists were idealized and corrected to reflect orthodox opinion rather than historical reality.[23]

Nelson's observations highlight two important points.  First, there is confusion within the biblical priestly genealogical record itself.  Second, priestly genealogy is an especially malleable social construct that could be reconfigured for new social realities.[24]

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[18] On other royal seed, see 2 Kgs 25:25; 1 Kgs 11:14; 2 Chr 22:10; Jer 41:1; Dan 1:3.

[19] For hints at the interrelationships between seed language, royalty, and Genesis, see Alexander, "Genealogies," 267.

[20] Sir 45:23-25. Cf. Robert Hayward, *The Jewish Temple: A Non-Biblical Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1996), 70-71.

[21] Robert A. Kugler, "Priests," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010),  1096-1099; 1096.

[22] For a helpful overview of the evidence, see Richard D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priesthood: Community and Priesthood in Biblical Theology* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 1-15.  Joachim Schaper, "Levites," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010),  885-887.

[23] Nelson, *Faithful Priest*, 6.

[24] This is true of all genealogies.  As Gary Knoppers writes, "Genealogies, whether from Israel, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, or Greece, are not simply complications of traditional material, but are assertions about identity, territory, and relationships," Gary N. Knoppers, "Intermarriage, Social Complexity, and Ethnic Diversity in the Genealogy of Judah," *JBL* 120 / 1 (2001): 15-30; 18.  For more literature on genealogy, see sources listed in Knoppers, "Genealogy of Judah," 18.

[24] For more on these works, see Robert A. Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest: The Levi-Priestly Tradition from Aramaic Levi to Testament of Levi* (SBLEJL 9; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996).  James L. Kugel, "Levi's Elevation to the Priesthood in the Second Temple Writings," *HTR* 86 / 1 (193): 1-64.  James C. VanderKam, "*Jubilees'* Exegetical Creation of Levi the Priest," *RevQ* 17 (1996): 359-373; Martha Himmelfarb, "Levi, Phineas, and the Problem of Intermarriage at the Time of the Maccabean Revolt," *JSQ* 6 (1999): 1-24. Martha Himmelfarb, *A*

By the time of the Second Temple period, the biblical accounts of priesthood were charged with contemporary questions of legitimacy, authority, and power. Faced with resolving at times contradictory textual evidence, Jews began expanding priestly literature through their own writings, such as *Jubilees*, *Aramaic Levi Document*, and the *Testament of Levi*.[25] Jubilees is especially attentive to detail in its descriptions of Levi, priesthood, and genealogy.[26] Like the monarchy, the priesthood has a strong sense of genetic continuity and transference. The seed idiom was one way to communicate this.[27]

After Korah's rebellion in Num 16, the Lord reveals to Moses that Eleazar, son of Aaron is to be a priest holy to the Lord (Num 16:36). The people are to remember "that no one who is not a priest, who is not of the descendants (זרע) of Aaron, should draw near to burn incense before the LORD, lest he become as Korah and his company" (16:40). Numbers 25 records the gruesome tale of Phineas, son of Eleazar, who slew an Israelite with his Midianite wife. In response, the LORD declared (25:12-3),

> Behold, I give him my *covenant of peace*; and it shall be to him, and to his descendants (זרע) after him, *the covenant of perpetual priesthood*, because he was jealous for his God, and made atonement for the people of Israel. (emph. added)

In Sir 45:7-26, the author recounts how God made an "everlasting covenant" with Aaron and his seed "for all the days of heaven" to serve the Lord, wear the holy garments, and eat the holy food. The author goes on to explain that because of Phineas' zealous acts, God established with him "a covenant of peace" (45:24), the heritage of Aaron, to be passed down from son to son (45:25). These passages affirm descent from Aaron through Eleazar.

The importance of priestly heredity is seen in the two contexts in which the seed idiom appears in scriptural legislation: the context of priests' wives[28]; and those who are descended

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*Kingdom of Priests: Ancestry and Merit in Ancient Judaism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). Cana Werman, "Levi and Levites in the Second Temple Period," *DSD* 4 / 2 (1997): 211-225.

[25] For more on these works, see Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest: The Levi-Priestly Tradition from Aramaic Levi to Testament of Levi*. Kugel, "Levi's Elevation." VanderKam, "Exegetical Creation of Levi."; Himmelfarb, "Levi." Himmelfarb, *Kingdom of Priests*. Werman, "Levi and Levites."

[26] For more on genealogy in Jubilees, see Betsy Halpern-Amaru, *The Empowerment of Women in the Book of Jubilees* (JSJSup 60; Leiden: Brill, 1999).

[27] Ex 28:34; 30:21.

[28] Lev 21:10-15 esp. vs15, 17; 22:13.

from Aaron but disqualified from temple service by physical impediment.[29] These contexts highlight the importance of both genealogical continuity and suitability in the priesthood. Increased proximity to the sacred required a high level of physical, ritual, and moral purity. The maintenance of such purity is part of the eternal covenant of priesthood and is thus required of Aaron and his seed after him.

Though he does not use the seed idiom here, Josephus proudly boasts of his descent from both priestly and royal lines at the beginning of his autobiography (*Life* 1). He writes,

> My family (Ἐμοὶ δὲ γένος) is of no ignoble one, tracing its *descent far back to priestly ancestors* (ἐξ ἱερέων ἄνωθεν καταβεβηκός). Different races claim nobility on various grounds; with us a connection with the priesthood is the hallmark of an illustrious line. Not only, however, were my ancestors priests, but they belonged to the first of the twenty-four courses—a peculiar distinction—and to the most eminent of its constituent clans. Moreover, on my mother's side *I am of royal blood* (τοῦ βασιλικοῦ γένους); for the posterity of Asamonaeus, from whom she sprang, for a very considerable period were kings, as well as high-priests, of our nation. (emp. added)

Priesthood and monarchy were hereditary institutions that one had to be born into. Josephus, if he is to be believed, was fortunate enough to be born into both.[30]

### 3. 2. 4  Holy Seed: Corporate Israel

Like appeals to God as Father, the concept of holy or royal seed was becoming democratized in the Second Temple period. During the post-exilic period, Jews began to construct a national identity in which all Israel could be described as corporately holy, or, as in Ezra, "holy seed." In Ezra 9-10, Ezra extends the Pentateuchal prohibitions on intermarriage from several specific nations to a prohibition against all intermarriage for all Jews in order to preserve Israel's "holy seed." Ezra 9:1-2 says,

> The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated (לֹא־נִבְדְּלוּ) themselves from the peoples of the lands (מֵעַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת) with their abominations (כְּתוֹעֲבֹתֵיהֶם), from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken some of their daughters to be wives for themselves and for their sons; so that the holy race (זֶרַע הַקֹּדֶשׁ; Gk, σπέρμα τὸ ἅγιον) has

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[29] Lev 21: 21-23; 22:3- 4.

[30] Oliver Gussmann, *Das Priesterverständis des Flavius Josephus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008). Gussmann discusses this passage specifically on pgs. 205-215; for more on Josephus' lineage generally, see 200-215.

mixed itself (וְהִתְעָרְבוּ, root עָרַב) with the peoples of the lands. And in this faithlessness the hand of the officials and chief men has been foremost.

Jewish men had taken women from "the peoples of the land" as their wives. Ezra exhorted them to send away their wives to protect Israel's corporate holiness.

A scholarly debate continues over the identity of these "foreign women" (10:2). Some scholars identify these women as non-Jewish, pagan women,[31] while others identify them as non-*golah* women of Jewish descent who remained in the land,[32] or some combination of the two.[33] What is significant here is the passage's internal logic, which extends biblical law beyond its original context to address the present crisis. In the Torah, only intermarriage with seven named Canaanite nations is banned (Exod 23:23-25; 34:11-16; Deut 7:3-4; 20:15-17).[34] As Epstein notes, the prohibition is partly political, but mainly religious.[35] The danger of idolatry clearly motivated the prohibition against intermarriage.

In Ezra 9:1, five nations from Deut 7:1 (cf. Exod 34:11) are listed along with the Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites (MT)/Edomites (1 Esdras) from Deut 23:3-7.[36] Ezra

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[31] Louis M. Epstein, *Marriage Laws in the Bible and the Talmud* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942). Christine E. Hayes, "Intermarriage and Impurity in Ancient Jewish Sources," *HTR* 92 / 1 (1999): 3-36. A. Philip Brown, "The Problem of Mixed Marriages in Ezra 9-10," *BSac* 162 (2005): 437-458.

[32] Lester L. Grabbe, "Triumph of the Pious or Failure of the Xenophobes? The Ezra-Nehemiah Reforms and their *Nachgeschichte*," in *Jewish Local Patriotism and Self-Identification in the Graeco-Roman Period* (ed. Siân Jones and Sarah Pearce; Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 31; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 50-65. Daniel Smith-Christopher, "The Mixed-Marriage Crisis in Ezra 9-10 and Nehemiah 13: A Study of the Sociology of Post-Exilic Judaean Community," in *Second Temple Studies: 2. Temple Community in the Persian Period* (ed. Tamara C. Eskenazi and Kent Harold Richards; JSOTSup 175; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 243-265. Tamara C. Eskenazi and Eleanore P. Judd, "Marriage to a Stranger in Ezra 9-10," in *Second Temple Studies: 2. Temple Community in the Persian Period* (ed. Tamara C. Eskenazi and Kent Harold Richards; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 266-285.

[33] Csilla Saysell, *"According to the Law": Reading Ezra 9-10 as Chrisitian Scripture* (JTISup; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012). Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: A Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 1988), 69, 174-175.

[34] Shaye J. D. Cohen, "From the Bible to the Talmud: The Problem of Intermarriage," *HAR* 7 / 23-39 (1983) 23-26. Hayes, "Intermarriage and Impurity," 6. These prohibitions still do not prohibit universal exogamy. The fact that Deut 21:10-14 regulates the taking of a captive woman also seems to imply that the taking of a foreign woman was acceptable under certain circumstances. "The law of the captive woman who is spared does not specify where she is from and the reason for permitting her to become and Israelite's wife is not spelt out but again it is likely that without an extended family she poses less of a threat for Israel's commitment to YHWH," Saysell, *"According to the Law,"* 35. Epstein, *Marriage Laws*, 55-56, 158.

[35] Epstein, *Marriage Laws*, 158.

[36] Saysell argues that Amorite should be read for a number of reasons, including that fact that it is the harder reading. For more, see Saysell, *"According to the Law"*, 40-42.

combined the language of Deut 7:3-4 with Deut 23:3-7.[37] By Ezra's time, these nations (with the exception of Egypt and Ammon) had not existed for some time.[38] Instead, the list is stylized to evoke the Pentateuchal lists. An intentional parallel is drawn between Israel's first entrance into the land and her re-entrance now. Just as her first entrance required faithfulness to the Lord alone, so now the Lord requires faithfulness and obedience through right marriage practice.

However, Ezra's universal ban on intermarriage exceeded the bounds laid down in the Law. This is particularly clear through his repeated use of the terms "abomination" (תועבה; Ezr 9:1; 11, 14); "faithlessness" (מעל; Ezr 9:2; 10:2, 6, 10; cf. Neh 1:8; 13:27); and "separation" (בדל).[39] According to the Deuteronomistic History, the sin of מעל is considered one of the main reasons for the Exile, which is reflected in Ezra's prayer.[40]

Finally, the verb "to separate" (בדל) resonates with the cultic priestly duty of separating the holy from the unholy and the clean from the unclean (Lev 10:10; 11:47) and the concept of national divine election (Lev 20:24, 26; 1 Kgs 8:53). בדל is also used of the separation of the priests and levites from the rest of the congregation of Israel (Num 8:14; 16:9, 21; Deut 10:8; 1 Chr 23:13).[41] Both of these usages are found in Ezra.

Ezra 6:21 describes the separation (בדל) of the children of Israel from the pollutions of the people of the land. Next, Ezra 8:24 uses בדל to describe the setting apart of men for the roles of chief priests. The terms תועבה, מעל, and בדל show Ezra's dependence on the reasoning and theology of the Law. His description of the intermarriage crisis is saturated in the language of the Torah. Improper marriages place individuals in danger of idolatry and religious apostasy, the punishment for which is Exile, from which Israel has just returned! However, Ezra took the

[37] Linguistic connections between Ezra 9 and Deut 7 demonstrate that Deut 7 is more resonate in Ezra 9 than Exod 34. Saysell, *"According to the Law"*, 32, 35-36.

[38] Grabbe, "Triumph of the Pious," 57. Smith-Christopher, "Mixed Marriage Crisis," 257. H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (WBC 16; Waco: Word Books, 1985), 130.

[39] For more on sexual sins, see Lev 18:22, 26, 27, 29, 30; Deut 12:31; 22:5; 24:4. For idolatry, see Deut 7:25, 12:31; 13:14; 17:4; 18:9, 12; 20:18; 27:15; 32:16. For cultic transgressions, see Deut 17:1; 23:18. Fore more on מעל, Jacob Milgrom, "The Concept of Ma'al in the Bible and the Ancient near East," *JAOS* 96 / 2 (1976): 236-247.

[40] Saysell, *"According to the Law"*, 100. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 132.

[41] Katherine E. Southwood, *Ethnicity and the Mixed Marriage Crisis in Ezra 9-10: An Anthropological Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 132-136.

prohibition further than the Law: all intermarriage is forbidden. Ezra reinforced this point with the language of "holy seed" (זֶרַע הַקֹּדֶשׁ; Gk σπέρμα τὸ ἅγιον).

This phrase, זֶרַע הַקֹּדֶשׁ, is rare in biblical Hebrew, otherwise occurring only in Isa 6:13c.[42] Apart from Isa 6:13c, the phrase זֶרַע הַקֹּדֶשׁ is unique to Ezra 9:2. In using this phrase, Ezra drew together several biblical traditions to advance universal marriage prohibitions. As shown, the Pentateuchal and prophetic literature use זֶרַע to identify the nation of Israel, the descendants of Abraham and Jacob.[43] Ezra now evokes these traditions to remind Israel who she is.

When the phrase זֶרַע הַקֹּדֶשׁ is used in Ezra, it strongly suggests that the quality of the seed, holiness, is at stake. In Deut 7, the logic following the command against intermarriage concerns idolatry. In Ezra, the logic is different; it focuses on the challenge these marriages present to Israel's corporate holiness. Through this language, Ezra is claiming that the inherently holy seed is compromised by being "mixed" (עָרַב) with inappropriate marriage partners.[44] Ezra extended the legal restrictions to prohibit all Israelites from intermarriage with all of "the peoples of the

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[42] Two observations are noteworthy. The first is that Isa 6:13c uses the phrase holy seed in connection with a remnant after judgment. If the passage existed at the time of Ezra's writing, then it may have been an influence, or the influence may have gone from Ezra to Isaiah, the complex literary development make any decisive statements difficult. One interesting note, however, is a variant at Qumran which gives the phrase a definite article זרע הקדש, which has the effect of making it identical to the phrase in Ezra 9:2. The second observation is that מַצֶּבֶת is never translated as "stump" elsewhere in the Scriptures. Instead, it refers to some kind of cultic pillar or statue. Interestingly, in one of the earliest examples of the extension of holiness to corporate Israel, there is a comparison between the community and cultic material objects. It is noteworthy that this verse may have influenced the development of the tradition of community as temple in Second Temple Judaism placing making analogues of the holy community and cultic objects.

The numerous textual critical issues in Isaiah 6:13, such as the passage's date and form, are debated among scholars in the large amount of scholarly literature devoted to this passage. Cf. W. H. Brownlee, "The Text of Isaiah vi, 13 in the Light of the DSIa," *VT* 2 (1951): 296-298. Samuel Iwry, "Maṣṣēbāh and Bāmāh in IQ Isaiah^A 6:13," 76 (1957): 225-232. G. W. Ahlström, "Isaiah vi. 13," *JSS* XIX / 2 (1974): 169-172. F Hvidberg, "The Maṣṣēba and the Holy Seed," in *Interpretationes ad Vetus Testamentum pertinentes Sigmundo Mowinckel septuagenario Missae* (ed. Nils Dahl; Oslo, 1955), 97-99. J. A. Emerton, "The Translation and Interpretation of Isaiah vi. 13," in *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honour of E. I. J. Rosenthal* (ed. J. A. Emerton and Stefan C. Reif; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 85-118. G. K. Beale, "Isaiah vi 9-13: A Retributive Taunt against Idolatry," *VT* XLI / 3 (1991): 257-278.

[43] For example, see 2 Kgs 17:20; 1 Chr 16:13; 2 Chr 20:7; Neh 9:2; Est 6:13; Ps 22:23; 105:6; Isa 41:8; 45:19; 65:9, 23; Jer 23:8; 30:10; 31:36, 37; Ez 20:5; 44:22.

[44] the language of mixing suggests another set of legal precedents: the prohibitions against mixing different kinds of things (Lev 19:19; Deut 22:9-11). Cf. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 131-132. Williamson also draws attention to Ps 106:35 where "mixing" language is used to condemn intermarriage with the Canaanites on religious grounds.

land" by using the priestly rationale of maintaining corporate holiness. What was once only within the purview of priests is now the concern of all Israelites.

All Israel is holy because she has been set apart by a holy God. Separation is an inherent part of holiness.[45] The quality of different kinds of things requires separation, just as priests are to distinguish between the holy and the profane (Lev 10:10). In Ezra 9:2, this logic is extended to all Israelites. Therefore, they are not to mingle their seed with the profane seed of the gentiles. In Ezra, the use of the word זֶרַע links these concepts together.[46]

Through creative textual exegesis, Ezra has combined several legal traditions to establish a new legal precedent.[47] The Pentateuchal legal prohibitions against intermarriage for priests and Israelites are extended through intertextually linking these passages with the prohibitions against mixing different kinds of seeds. The result is that all Israel is holy seed, and therefore vulnerable to defilement and pollution. This means that all Israelites are responsible for maintaining the corporate holiness of the nation.

In Ezra, priestly, genealogical purity concerns are extended to the national level. Priestly regulations are nationalized and democratized. The concept of "holy seed" is thus incredibly efficient at realigning Jewish identity in order to enforce corporate holiness as an end in itself. The concept of genealogical purity continues to develop in Second Temple Judaism, especially in Jubilees. All Israel is inherently holy due to God's covenant with the patriarchs, which is passed down through the generations. Thus, each generation is responsible for maintaining national holiness by maintaining the holiness of Jewish seed with appropriate marriage partners.

Ezra 9-10 does not include any form of conversion or proselytism because genealogical purity and ancestry are not things that can be changed or acquired. It is impossible for the "foreign" women to become Israelites, or for their offspring to become "holy seed" if they were not already. In conclusion, the corporate holiness in Ezra 9-10 is expressed through the expansion of

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[45] Saysell, *"According to the Law"*, 89.

[46] Saysell, *"According to the Law"*, 87-91.

[47] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 130-131. Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 114-123.

Pentateuchal legislation in order impress upon all Israelites that they must maintain national holiness by guarding their "holy seed."

## 3.3 Holy or Divine Seed in Greco-Roman Jewish Literature

Many texts from the Second Temple period develop the application of priestly standards of holiness to the entire nation of Israel.[48] Jubilees, Pseudo-Philo, Philo, and works from among the Dead Sea scrolls fall into this category in various ways.[49] A full investigation into the development of this theme obviously lies well beyond the bounds of this study. This study will focus instead on the use of the seed idiom, and the development of this language as a way of describing the corporate holiness of Israel.

### 3.3.1 Jubilees

The Book of Jubilees is an example of the "rewritten bible" genre which retells the history of Israel from Gen 1 to Exod 24:12-18.[50] The book is framed by the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai where angels dictate the text of Jubilees to Moses. The additions, expansions, and omissions

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[48] See especially Martha Himmelfarb, ""A Kingdom of Priests": The Democratization of the Priesthood in the Literature of Second Temple Judaism," 6 (1997): 89-104. Himmelfarb, *Kingdom of Priests*.

[49] For the application of priestly standards to members of the Yaḥad, see §5.4, "A Spiritual House: Community as Temple at Qumran," 172f.

[50] Though useful, the genre label "rewritten bible" is not unproblematic. Geza Vermes coined the term in 1973 to refer to texts, such as the Palestinian Targum, Jos., *Ant.*, Pseudo-Philo, Jubilees, and the Genesis Apocryphon, which answer questions and solve exegetical problems in the text. Geza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* (SPB 4; Leiden: Brill, 1973), 95. George Nickelsburg defined the term loosely to reflect the "developing ways of retelling the events of biblical history," George W. Nickelsburg, "The Bible Rewritten and Expanded," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. Michael E. Stone; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 89-156; 89. Nicklesburg concludes that the term should be broadly defined to include texts which exist themselves in a multitude of different genres. George Brooke defines the term as "any representation of an authoritative scriptural text that implicitly incorporates interpretive elements, large or small, in the retelling itself," George J. Brooke, "Rewritten Bible," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 777-781. Brooke concludes that "rewritten bible" should be understood as an "umbrella term describing the particular kind of intertextual activity that always gives priority to one text over another," "Rewritten Bible," 780. Brooke also helpfully articulates the role of authority in "rewritten texts," George J. Brooke, "Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible and Pesher," *DSD* 17 (2010): 332-357; cf. 343. Brooke notes that the role of authority between the text being rewritten and the emergent text is mutually affirmative. Rewritten biblical texts "seem to both confer and receive authority from the scriptural text that they seek to elucidate, re-present, or rewrite," "Genre Theory," 343. This observation is useful to the discussion of Jubilees because it aptly describes the relationship of the Jubilees to the Pentateuch. Jubilees' retelling of those narratives confers authority to the original text by its dependence upon them and it derives its own authority from its re-presentation of those narratives to address the present concerns of the author. More recently, see Lutz Doering, "The Reception of the Book of Exodus in the *Book of Jubilees*," in *The Book of Exodus: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 485-510.

reveal the author's concern for a solar calendar, the Torah, and the holiness of Israel, to name three of this work's most distinctive and well-known features.[51]  Scholars generally date the book around the middle of the 2nd c. B.C.E.[52]

Jubilees has a robust theology of the corporate holiness of Israel, a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Jub 16:18, 33:20; cf. Exod 19:6).[53]  Though Jubilees does not erase the boundary between priests and laymen, the significance of this distinction is tempered by a heightened awareness of Israel's corporate holiness.  According to Jubilees, Jacob is *the* holy seed promised to Abraham.  Therefore, all of his descendants are also holy seed.

Israel's corporate holiness manifests itself practically in the call to separate from the gentiles.  As will be seen below, the underlying rationale for Jubilees' prohibition against intermarriage is Israel's ontological difference from the other nations.  Intermarriage is prohibited because it mixes two different *kinds* of things.  To sketch the contours of national holiness in Jubilees, this section will first look at how divine holiness is portrayed (§3.3.1.1), followed by prominence of the election of Jacob (§3.3.1.2), the subsequent holiness of his descendants (§3.3.1.3), and the importance of separation from the gentiles, especially from intermarriage (§3.3.1.4).

### 3. 3. 1. 1   The Holiness of God

God's holiness is the foundation of Israel's holiness.  Israel is to be holy because God is holy (see Lev 11:44; 19:2; 20:7, 26; 21:8).[54]  In Jub 16:24, Abraham's descendants are called to be "like the one who had made everything" (Jub 16:26). Israel cannot imitate God's creative action, but she can imitate his holiness.  "Holiness implies *imitatio dei*, namely, Israel should emulate God by living a godly life.  Observance of the divine commandments leads to God's attribution

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[51] James C. VanderKam, "The Origins and Purposes of the Book of Jubilees," in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (ed. Matthias Albani, et al.;  vol. 65 of Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 3-24; 16-19.

[52] VanderKam, "Origins and Purposes," 19-20.  Klaus Berger, *Das Buch der Jubiläen* (JSHRZ 2/3; Gütersloh: G. Mohn, 1981), 299-300.

[53] Doering, "Exodus in the *Book of Jubilees*," 496-499. Christine E. Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 74. Himmelfarb, *Kingdom of Priests*, 53.

[54]Martha Himmelfarb, "Sexual Relations and Purity in the Temple Scroll and the Book of Jubilees," *DSD* 6 / 1 (1999): 11-36.

of holiness, but not to the same degree—not to God, but to godliness."[55]  Israel will never have the status of creator of the universe, but the people of Israel are called the children of the living God and are expected to live lives characterized by separation, righteousness, and justice.

Jubilees connects God's holiness with his status as creator, the source of all life, and his actions as a righteous judge.[56]  As creator, God is the rightful judge of the earth.  The author of Jubilees explains that Israel's special relationship with God did not begin on Mt. Sinai or even with Abraham. Israel's relationship with "the one who had made everything" aptly began at creation.  Similar patterns of thought are found in 1 Peter, which bases believers' holiness on divine holiness (quoting Leviticus 19:2 1:15-16).  The letter also highlights God's role as judge (1:17; 2:23; 4:5, 6, cf. 4:17) and is the only New Testament document to call God as the "faithful creator" ($\pi\iota\sigma\tau\tilde{\omega}\ \kappa\tau\iota\sigma\tau\eta$, 4:19).

Israel's imitation of God comes to a crescendo in Jub 1:22-25.  This long section is worth quoting in full.

> Then the Lord said to Moses: "I know their contrary nature, their way of thinking, and their stubbornness.  They will not listen until they acknowledge their sin and the sins of their ancestors.  After this they will return to me in a full and upright manner and with all (their) minds and with all (their souls).  I will cut away the foreskins of their minds and the foreskins of their descendants' minds.  I will create a holy spirit for them and will purify them in order that they may not turn away from me from that time forever.  Their souls will adhere to me and to all my commandments.  They will perform my commandments.  I will become their father and they will become my children.  All of them will be called children of the living God.  Every angel and every spirit will know them.  They will know that they are my children and that I am their father in a just and proper way and that I love them.

As Matthew Thiessen observes, Jubilees has woven together many of the typical Deuteronomistic themes of sin, exile, and restoration.[57]  In the concluding verses of the prolog, these themes come together: the nature of God, circumcision, and with it, signs of the covenant, purity, holiness, angels, and, finally, adoption as children of the living God.[58]

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[55] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 1398.

[56] Jub 10:32; 16:26; 21:4-25. For God as a righteous judge, see Jub 5:16; 33:18; cf. Jub 9:15; 14:14.

[57] Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Circumcision: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 71.

[58] For more on the phrase "children of the living God," (Jub 1:24f), see van Ruiten, "Divine Sonship in the Book of *Jubilees*," 90f.

### 3. 3. 1. 2    The Election of the Descendants of Jacob

God as creator set apart a people for himself from the beginning of the world. Just as Jubilees understood the Law to be woven into the fabric of the universe, so is Israel's election part of the created order. Speaking to the newly created angels on the seventh day of creation, God says,

> I will now separate a people for myself from among the nations. They, too, will keep the sabbath. I will sanctify the people for myself and will bless them as I sanctified the sabbath day. I will sanctify them for myself; in this way I will bless them. They will become my people and I will become their God. I have chosen the descendants of Jacob among all of those whom I have seen. I have recorded them as my first-born son and have sanctified them for myself throughout the ages of eternity. (Jub 2:19)

In this passage, God declares his intention to elect the descendants of Jacob and to set them apart for Sabbath keeping. The following verses reiterate this theme (Jub 2:31-33). God has uniquely elected Israel to be his holy people and to keep his holy sabbath. The special election of Jacob is also noted by Jubilees' double reference to Jacob as God's "firstborn son" (Jub 2:20; 19:29.[59] As van Ruiten notes, "It is clear that the term 'first-born' in *Jub* 2:20 reflects Israel's position in relation to the other people: Israel has been chosen out of all the nations."[60]

At the beginning of Jubilees, God identified himself as "the God of Israel, the father of all Jacob's children, and the king on Mt. Zion" (Jub 1:28). The author carefully identified the elect people of God with the descendants of Jacob (2:20).[61] As van Ruiten observed,

> A strong analogy is drawn between the sabbath and the election of the people of Israel. After 22 words of creation, God rested on the seventh day, a blessed and holy day; so after 22 heads of humanity, Jacob, who is also blessed and holy appears.[62]

The author of Jubilees specifically links Jacob and his descendants with sabbath keeping.[63] In this divine self-designation God unites himself with Jacob and his descendants. This is the first

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[59]For more on Jacob as God's firstborn, see van Ruiten, "Divine Sonship in the Book of *Jubilees*."

[60] van Ruiten, "Divine Sonship in the Book of *Jubilees*," 93.

[61] John C. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (CBQMS 18; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987), 228-231. Robert Hayward, "The Sanctification of Time in the Second Temple Period: Case Studies in the Septuagint and Jubilees," in *Holiness: Past & Present* (ed. Stephen C. Barton; London: T&T Clark, 2003), 141-167. Annie Jaubert, *La Notion D'Alliance dans le Judaïsme aux abords de l'ère Chrétinne* (6; Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1963), 99-100.

[62] van Ruiten, "Divine Sonship in the Book of *Jubilees*," 91. Cf. R. H. Charles, *The Book of Jubilees or The Little Genesis: Translated from the Editor's Ethiopic Text and Edited, with Introduction, Notes, and Indices* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1902), 18.

[63] For more on the Sabbath in Jubilees, see Lutz Doering, "The Concept of the Sabbath in the Book of Jubilees," in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (ed. Matthias Albani, et al.; Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum 65;

hint at how seriously the author takes the name Israel, the name given to the Jacob by God. For the author of Jubilees, Israel is not established on the earth until the twelve sons of Jacob are present.[64]

Further, the author expands the promises to Abraham to directly include Jacob and his children when God speaks, "I will become God for you, your son and your grandson and all your descendants" (Jub 12:24). Kugel notes that these are the author's intentional theological additions to put Jacob and his descendants at the focal point of the covenant.[65]

The author of Jubilees was heavily influenced by Exod 19:3-6 in which Israel is called to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation."[66] In Exodus 19:3, God speaks to "the house of Jacob." The rare title "house of Jacob" makes its use by the author of Jubilees noteworthy.[67] He took Exod 19:3-6 seriously. Hayward summarizes

> As a consequence of his reading of Exodus 19:4, that writer was convinced that it was impossible to speak of Israel until 'the house of Jacob' was complete: in other words, only when the birth of Benjamin, Jacob's youngest son, is assured and imminent, will Jubilees countenance the change of Jacob's name to Israel, and envisage the emergence in history of the 'kingdom of priests and the holy nation.'[68]

With Benjamin's birth, Exod 19:3-6 became a possibility.[69] Though Exodus 19:3-6 is specifically invoked in two contexts (the promises to Abraham in Jub 16:18 and Reuben's rape of Bilhah in Jub 33:20), the theology of a "kingdom of priests" and "a holy nation" neatly summarizes the theological heart of the work.[70] Crucially, this detailed attention to Jacob

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Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 179-205. James L. Kugel, "4Q369 'Prayer of Enosh' and Ancient Biblical Interpretation," *DSD* 5 / 2 (1998): 119-148; 123-126.

[64] Hayward, "Sanctification of Time," 160-161. More specifically, Jacob's name is changed to Israel when eleven of his sons have been born and Rachel is pregnant with Benjamin. See Jub 32:3, 17.

[65] James L. Kugel, *A Walk through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of its Creation* (JSJSup 156; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 91.

[66] Hayward, "Sanctification of Time," 160.

[67] Hawyard notes, "The only other occurrence of the expression in the Pentateuch is at Gen 46:27, where it refers to the sum total of Jacob's descendants who went to Egypt, "Sanctification of Time," 160 n. 37.

[68] Hayward, "Sanctification of Time," 160.

[69] Jubilees makes this possibly by removing the preceding accounts of Jacob's renaming. Cf. Hayward, "Sanctification of Time," 161.

[70] Jaubert, *La Notion D'Alliance*, 97.

highlights the importance of genealogy in Jubilees. Descent from one of Jacob's sons is what defines the nation of Israel, and with it comes divine election, covenant, and promise. As just stated, the two contexts in which Exod 19:3-6 is invoked are contexts that pivot on the maintenance of this divinely sanctioned bloodline.

In sum, Israel's election began at the creation of the world. It was built into the fabric of the universe along with the sabbath. However, though predestined from the beginning, this election could not be actualized until the arrival of Israel himself, that is, Jacob and his holy descendants.

### 3. 3. 1. 3 Holy Separation and Holy Seed

As many scholars have noted, one of the distinguishing features of Jubilees is its very strict prohibition against intermarriage and conversion.[71] According to Jubilees, neither is possible. More mundane interactions with gentiles are to be minimized. In this section, the underlying logic of these strict horizontal boundaries will be examined. It will be shown that the rationale for these boundaries is derived from the halakhic precedent against mixing different kinds of things. This is done through the use of the "holy seed" idiom in a way very similar to Ezra 9. Finally, the prohibitions against intermarriage and other types of interactions with gentiles will be examined as an outworking of these concepts.

As James Kugel observed, the language of "holy seed" is "a crucial biblical phrase for Jubilees."[72] The use of this relatively rare phrase in Jubilees in key passages of the text alerts the reader to Jubilees' developed understanding of the corporate holiness of Israel. The language of "holy seed" first appears in Jub 16:17 where God promised Abraham and Sarah that he would give them an heir. God promised that although all of Abraham's descendants would be blessed (Jub 16:17-18),

> one of Isaac's sons would become holy progeny and would not be numbered among the nations, for he would become the share of the Most High. All his descendants had fallen into that (share) which God owns so that they would become a kingdom, a priesthood, and a holy people.

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[71] Cana Werman, "*Jubilees* 30: Building a Paradigm for the Ban on Intermarriage," *HTR* 90 / 1 (1997): 1-22.

[72] Kugel, *Walk through Jubilees*, 103.

In this passage, God reiterates his covenant with Abraham and explains how it would be passed on to Isaac and his descendants: one of Isaac's descendants would become "holy progeny" (or, better, "holy seed"). This "holy seed" is Jacob, as Jubilees later makes explicit (Jub 22:27; 25:3, 12, 18). This passage alludes to Exod 19:6, in which Israel is described as "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."[73] The promises of "holy seed" look forward to the fulfilment of the vision in Exod 19:6.

Because there can be no "holy nation" until Jacob, Jubilees waits until all twelve of Jacob's sons are either born or on the way before Jacob's name is changed to Israel.[74] It is finally with the renaming of Jacob to Israel that God's holy people have come into existence. It is fitting therefore, that then, and only then, does the author of Jubilees describe the holy, corporate identity of Israel.

However, even though Israel cannot fully be said to exist until the birth of all twelve sons, the separation of Israel as God's holy people is as old as creation. At creation, God established the sabbath and circumcision as signs of the covenant. When Israel observes these signs, it is a marker of her divinely elected status and heavenly identity, an identity which is shared with the two highest orders of angels, the angels of holiness and the presence. Though Israel shares several attributes with the highest angelic orders, Israel remains an earthly nation. As the Watchers learned, serious consequences follow when the proper boundaries between heaven and earth are breached. Jubilees recounts that Enoch "testified to the Watchers who had sinned with the daughters of men because they had begun to mix with earthly women so that they became defiled" (Jub 4:22).

In continuity with the Enoch tradition, Jubilees explains that the need for the flood arose because of the sexual union of angels with human women (Jub 4:22; 5:1-5). All angels are prohibited from engaging in any sexual activity, especially sexual activity with different kinds of beings, such as humans. Angels and humans are different *kinds* of things. Angels belong in the

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[73] The other place where this verse is referred to is Jub 33:20 and will be discussed below.

[74] Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 18. Hayward, "Sanctification of Time," 160-161.

realm of heaven and people belong to earth.  The grave sin of the watchers involved the mixing

of things which ought not to be mixed: the heavenly with the earthly.

For Israel to intermarry or engage in sexual relationships with other people is a defilement of

Israel's holy seed and an infringement of the law by mixing different kinds of things.  Kugel

summarizes,

> *Jubilee's* view of Israel's holiness is rather surprising.  Israel is "holy" virtually in the sense
> of the angelic, a people whose existence and function on earth is comparable to that of God's
> own sacred hosts on high.  As a result, any mingling—and particularly, any sexual union—
> between an Israelite and a foreigner is monstrous.  Jubilees defines such unions as "unclean"
> and "an abomination", an act of "fornication" that belongs to the same order of sexual
> sacrileges as incest, bestiality, and other forbidden unions of the priestly code.[75]

With the language of holy seed, the horizontal boundaries between Israel and the other

nations take concrete form.  The prohibitions against intermarriage, social and business

relationships, and table fellowship all contribute to the strong boundary formation of the

Jubilees.  Jubilees' use of Exod 19:6 indicates that the entire nation of Israel is involved in

maintaining Israel's holiness.  These epithets are given to Israel *in toto*; they are not individual

ascriptions but attributes which describe the corporate character of Israel.[76]

### 3. 3. 1. 4  Separation from Gentiles

Israel's corporate holiness meant practical separation from Gentiles.  In his testament,

Abraham exhorts his "son" Jacob to separate from the nations through a series of social

restrictions.[77]  He says,
> Now you, my son Jacob, remember what I say
> and keep the commandments of your father Abraham.
> Separate from the nations,
> and do not eat with them.
> Do not do as they do,

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[75] James L. Kugel, "The Holiness of Israel and the Land in Second Temple Times," in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran* (ed. Michael V. Fox, et al.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996),  21-32; 25.

[76] John H. Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy: An Exegetical Examination of 1 Peter 2:4-10 and the Phrase Βασίλειον  ἱεράτευμα* (NovTSup 12; Leiden: Brill, 1966), 80.

[77] Eberhard Schwarz, *Identität durch Abgrenzung: Abgrenzungsprozesse in Israel im 2.vorchristlichen Jahrhundert und ihre traditionsgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Erforschung des Jubiläenbuches* (162; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1982), esp. 21-36.

and do not become their companion,
for their actions are something that is impure,
and all their ways are defiled and something abominable and detestable.
They offer sacrifices to the dead,
and they worship demons.
They eat in tombs,
and everything they do is empty and worthless. (Jub 22:16-17)

In this testament, the specific content of the first command to "separate from the nations" is elaborated. Jacob, who embodies and represents the nation of Israel, is commanded not to eat with Gentiles or to do as they do because their actions are "defiled and something abominable and detestable." As in Ezra, the language of holiness, purity, cult, and priesthood is employed to draw attention to the theological dimensions of these social interactions.

Abraham's exhortations to Jacob are practical. The command to separate from the nations is given concrete expression with the second prohibition against eating with Gentiles.[78] This prohibition reiterates a standard position in Judaism. Many halakhic concerns prevented Jews from sharing table fellowship with Gentiles.[79] In the Second Temple period, Jews who refused to eat non-kosher food were regarded as model figures.[80] The emphasis on food laws strengthened the social barrier between Jews and non-Jews. With their representative Jacob, all Jews are encouraged to avoid companionship with Gentiles. In lurid terms Abraham describes how Gentiles worship demons and eat in tombs; the first would be idolatrous and the second the height of impurity.[81]

A few verses later, Jacob is warned against taking a wife from among the daughters of the Canaanites (Jub 22:20-21). The Canaanites are specifically forbidden because all of Canaan's descendants were implicated in Ham's sin.[82]

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[78] For his discussion of "Das Verbot gemeinsamer kultischer Mahlzeiten," see Schwarz, *Identität*, 23-25.

[79] For example, the animals may have been slaughtered incorrectly, offered to idols, or of a kind that was not suitable for eating. Cf. Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 140.

[80] For example, Dan 1:8-16; Tob 1:10-12; 1 Macc 1:47-48, 62-63; 2 Macc 6:18-21; 7:1. See Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 140. Dennis E. Smith, "Meals," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (ed. John J Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 924-926.

[81] Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 141.

[82] For more on the inner-logic of this passage, see Kugel, *Walk through Jubilees*, 127.

Be careful, my son Jacob, not to marry a woman from all the descendants of Canaan's daughters, because all of his descendants are (meant) for being uprooted from the earth; on the day of judgment there will be no one (descended) from him who will be saved. (Jub 22:20).[83]

There is a comparison between the Jacob's "holy seed" and the seed of Canaan. The agricultural source domain is dominant here. Jacob and his "holy seed" will become a "righteous plant" (Jub 1:16; 16:26; 21:24) which will multiply over all the earth (Jub 25:16, 20; 32:18-19).[84] In contrast, the seed of those who are outside the covenant, or those who break it, will be uprooted, destroyed, and forgotten (Jub 15:26; 30:22; 31:17; 33:14, 17, 19). The use of this language evokes the same Levitical overtones as in Ezra: intermarriage is a breach of the command against mixing different kinds of seed. Though none of Abraham's commandments were new, all of them found scriptural precedents in the Hebrew scriptures and more contemporary Second Temple literature, they explain the practical implications of Israel's unique status.[85] Through these prohibitions, Israel's relationship with God was expressed in concrete, social dimensions, the most important of which was the prohibition against intermarriage.

The prohibition against intermarriage is emphasized in Abraham's final words to Jacob (Jub 20-22) and again in Rebecca's exhortation to him (Jub 25:1-10). Abraham and Rebecca both stress its importance to Jacob because he and his descendants are "holy seed." Jacob's selection of a wife is thus endowed with divine significance. After Jacob has married an acceptable woman and has produced offspring, Jubilees' most stringent prohibition against intermarriage occurs in the narrative of the rape of Dinah in Jub 30 (cp. Gen 34).[86]

The account begins by stating that Dinah was taken by force (Jub 30:2). Unlike in Genesis, Dinah was not out visiting the women of the land (Gen 34:1). Jubilees' narrative elides other

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[83] Charles translated the warning from "taking a wife from any of the seed of the daughters of Canaan; for all his seed is to be rooted out of the earth," Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 141. Charles' translation renders the seed idiom explicit, which in turn allows the agrarian metaphor of being uprooted to be seen more clearly.

[84] For more on the "righteous plant" metaphor see, Patrick A. Tiller, "The "Eternal Planting" in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 4 / 3 (1997): 312-335. Also, Paul Swarup, *The Self-Understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls Community: An Eternal Planting, A House of Holiness* (JSPSupp 59; London: T&T Clark, 2006).

[85] For a brief discussion of the rationale behind the food laws and the references passages on this topic, see Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 140. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 43-45. For demon worship and eating over graves, see Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 140-141. Kugel, *Walk through Jubilees*, 127.

[86] For a thorough analysis of this passage see Werman, "*Jubilees* 30." For prohibitions elsewhere in Jubilees, see section 1.5.1.4 on Separation from Gentiles below.

problematic features of the Genesis account.[87]  In Jubilees, Dinah is taken by Shechem and

defiled, a sin made all the more grievous by the added detail that she was twelve years old.

When Shechem and Hamor come to discuss the matter with Jacob and his sons, Jubilees omits

all reference to circumcision by saying vaguely that "they spoke deceptively with them" (Jub

30:3).[88]  The content of this deception is hidden to exclude the possibility of gentile

circumcision.  Genesis says that Simeon and Levi slaughter the men of the city while they were

recovering from circumcision.  Since all references to non-Israelite circumcision have been

omitted in Jubilees, the rewritten text says only that Simeon and Levi came upon the

Shechemites unexpectedly (Jub 30:4).  The content of this deception is hidden to exclude the

possibility of gentile circumcision.

The whole narrative is directed against intermarriage (Jub 30:18-20).[89]  The centrality of this

prohibition is seen at the transition in Jub 30:6-7 when the author leaves the Genesis narrative

behind and focuses solely on intermarriage.

> The Lord handed them [the Shechemites] over to Jacob's sons for them to uproot them with
> the sword  and to effect punishment against them and so that there should not be something
> like this within Israel—defiling an Israelite virgin.  If there is a man in Israel who wishes to
> give his daughter or his sister to any foreigner, he is to die.  He is to be stoned because he has
> done something sinful and shameful within Israel.  The woman is to be burned because she
> has defiled the reputation of her father's house; she is to be uprooted from Israel. (Jub 30:6-7)

Further on Jubilees continues,

> This law has no temporal limit. There is no remission or any forgiveness; but rather the man
> who has defiled his daughter within all of Israel is to be eradicated because he has given one
> of his descendants to Molech and has sinned by defiling them. (Jub 30:10)

As commentators have observed, the Genesis narrative is not about intermarriage.  Jubilees

has nonetheless recast the text to explain, in no uncertain terms, that intermarriage with gentiles

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[87] For example, in Genesis, Jacob seems open to Shechem's proposal to marry Dinah.  Next, the sons of Jacob
require Shechem and all Hivites of the town to be circumcised.  Then, after the slaughter of the Hivites, Jacob
chastises Simeon and Levi for placing the family in a dangerous position.  Simeon and Levi are not applauded for
their acts and the whole narrative ends on the disjointed question, "Should he treat our sister like a whore?" (Gen
34:31).  Jubilees revises these aspects of the narrative intermarriage.  For an analysis of the use of Gen 34 in Jub 30
see Werman, "*Jubilees* 30," 3-10. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 120-154.

[88] Werman, "*Jubilees* 30," 8.

[89] See Kugel, "Levi's Elevation," 6-7, 39, 47.

is a breach of the Pentateuchal law against offering one's children to Molech (Lev 18:21; Lev 20:1-5).[90] According to both Leviticus and Jubilees, any person who offers his children to Molech is to be stoned (Lev 20:2; Jub 30:7). Any woman who enters an exogamous marriage is to be burned (Jub 30:7). Jubilees' punishment for the woman is based on the penalty for a priest's daughter who engages in harlotry: she is to be burned with fire (Lev 21:9).[91] Jubilees extends this penalty to all Israelite women. Jubilees suggests that all Israelite women should be regarded as holy as the daughters of priests.

Jubilees then goes on not only to prohibit intermarriage, but all forms of sexual impropriety. Jubilees continues, "No adulterer or impure person is to be found within Israel throughout all the time of the earth's history, for Israel is holy to the Lord" (Jub 30:8). Thus, as in the flood narrative, Jubilees uses the language of adultery/fornication and impurity to include all sexual sins, such as incest, sodomy and miscegenation.[92] A story originally about rape becomes a prohibition not only against intermarriage, but of many other sexual sins as well because the standards of the Holiness Code are applied to all Israel.[93]

Jubilees explains that these prohibitions are handled with such severity because they defile God's sanctuary, his name, and the people of Israel (Jub 30:15).[94] Werman writes, "The whole nation, not just the perpetrators of intermarriage, is defiled, and there is no purification for anyone."[95] There is no ritual solution to moral defilement. The only solution to such defilement is the destruction of the guilty parties.

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[90] Consult further Geza Vermes, "Leviticus 18:21 in Ancient Jewish Bible Exegesis," in *Studies in Aggadah, Targum, and Jewish Liturgy in Memory of Joseph Heinemann* (ed. Jakob J. Petuchowski and Ezra Fleischer; Jerusalem: Magness, 1981), 108-124. Werman, "*Jubilees* 30," 11-21.

[91] Werman, "*Jubilees* 30," 12-13.

[92] Werman, "*Jubilees* 30," 14.

[93] Lutz Doering, "Purity and Impurity in the Book of Jubilees," in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of Jubilees* (ed. Gabriele Boccaccini and Giovanni Ibba; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 261-275.

[94] In her study of sexuality and purity regulations in Jubilees, Himmelfarb discusses how the author of Jubilees, unconfined by source criticism, combined different aspects of the Priestly source and the Holiness code. She writes, "Thus, Jubilees follows H in extending the category of impurity to forbidden relations, but it follows P in limiting the geographical extent of susceptibility to impurity to the Temple," "Sexual Relations," 31.

[95] Werman, "*Jubilees* 30," 15.

Practically, this means that all Israelites have an active role in maintaining the purity of the Temple and the nation. As Martha Himmelfarb writes, "Even ordinary Jews are thus given a sort of priestly power. Only if they observe God's commandments regarding sexual relations will sacrifices, the priestly work *par excellence*, be acceptable."[96] Though only Levi and his descendants are responsible for performing sacrifices in the Temple, all Jews are responsible for maintaining the moral, national purity necessary to protect the efficacy of those sacrifices.[97]

In conclusion, the author of Jubilees used the narrative of Dinah's rape to explain the corporate holiness of Israel in three specific ways. First, the author used the story to establish the precedent that all Jewish women, not just the daughters of priests, should be burned for entering exogamous marriages. A law which previously applied only to priestly families is now applied to all Israelites. Second, Jubilees sentences all Israelites, male or female, to death for entering exogamous marriage or allowing their offspring to do so. Any Israelite who offers his or her seed to Molech is to die. Third, the author of Jubilees explains that the sexual sin of normal Israelites defiles the Temple, God's name, and the nation. According to Jubilees, Israel is a priestly nation even though not all Israelites are priests. Jubilees therefore involves all Israel in the maintenances of the purity of the sanctuary.

In conclusion, the author of Jubilees defined Israel vertically through her relationship with God, the creator and source of life. In the prolog, the author of Jubilees writes, that Israel will become "children of the living God," and that God himself will be their father. The author of Jubilees roots his most significant theological concepts in the creation narrative. At creation,

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[96] Himmelfarb, "Sexual Relations," 31. See further, Himmelfarb, *Kingdom of Priests*, esp. 53-58. Further, Himmelfarb observes that even though Jubilees uses the story of Dinah as one of the explanations of how the priesthood came to Levi, the author of Jubilees uses this story not to draw attention to the priesthood of Levi, but of all Israel. She writes, "Clearly Jubilees wants to emphasize that the emergence of the Levitical priesthood does not mark the end of a sort of priesthood of all Israel," *Kingdom of Priest*, 71.

[97] Jubilees still maintains the distinction between priests and laymen. In fact, Jubilees includes four explanations for Levi's elevation to the priesthood, indicating its value. In one of these episodes, Isaac blesses Levi and Judah at the same time, and gives the superior blessing to Levi. For more, see Kugel, "Levi's Elevation," 1-64. James C. VanderKam, "Isaac's Blessing of Levi and His Descendants in *Jubilees* 31," in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Technological Innovations, New Texts, and Reformulated Issues* (ed. Donald W. Parry and Eugene Ulrich; vol. 30 of Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 497-519. VanderKam, "Exegetical Creation of Levi," 359-373. Contrast with Himmelfarb, who wrongly argues that Jubilees diminishes the Levitical priesthood, Himmelfarb, ""Kingdom of Priests"," 93.

God created the world, sanctified the sabbath, and elected his chosen people Israel. Israel's identity belongs exclusively to the descendants of Jacob. No conversion is possible. Members of this group are born with holy seed which must in turn be sown back into the community to maintain their holy, corporate identity.

### 3. 3. 2 Philo

In Ezra and Jubilees, Israel is exclusively holy seed. Philo, by contrast, can speak of divine seed in a direct, albeit allegorical, way as the means by which God is active in the world, the nation, or the individual. He is comfortable with using the language of divine insemination in allegorical contexts, specifically of the cosmos and nation. In this way, Philo is heavily influenced by Stoic concept of the λόγος σπερματικός, the divine rationality which pervades all things.[98] It is intriguing that the imperishable seed in 1 Peter is also associated with the λόγος (1:23-25).

Two passages from Philo describe the creation of the universe as an act of divine procreation (*Moses* 2.210; *Drunkenness* 30). In *Moses* 2.210, the prophet (Moses) surveys the cosmos which he discovers is "motherless, exempt from female parentage, begotten by the Father alone, without begetting, brought to birth, yet not carried in the womb (ἐκ μόνου πατρὸς σπαρεῖσαν ἄνευ σπορᾶς καὶ γεννηθεῖσαν ἄνευ κυήσεως)."[99] According to Philo, God is the sole "Parent of All" (τὴν τοῦ γεννητοῦ τῶν ὅλον, 2.209) . He does not need any female consort or pre-existent matter in order to bring the universe into existence. God's status as divine begetter of the world is a useful metaphor for his status as sole creator.

This analogy is adapted in *Drunkenness* 30. Philo there uses the phrase "father and mother" from Deut 21:18 as opportunity to discuss the origin of the universe.[100] He writes,

> For instance, we should rightly say and without further question that the Architect who made this universe was at the same time the father of what was born, whilst its mother was the knowledge possessed by its Maker.

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[98] Cf. Michael J. White, "Stoic Natural Philosophy (Physics and Cosmology)," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (ed. Brad Inwood; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 124-152. Cf. §2.3.2, "Divine Begetting in Josephus, Philo, and *Joseph and Aseneth*," 64f.

[99] Also see *Worse*, 147, which also identifies God as the husband and father of the universe.

[100] Wyss, ""Vater Gott und seine Kinder und Frauen"," 168-169.

As in *Moses*, God is the father of the universe.  However, in this passage Philo explains that the knowledge acts as mother.  Philo uses Prov 8 and Jewish Sophia traditions to expand this analogy.[101]  The presence of wisdom allows Philo to elaborate on the process by which God created the universe.  In startlingly specific terms, he writes in *Drunkenness* 30,

> With His knowledge God had union, not as men have it, and begat created being.  And knowledge, having received divine seed (τά τοῦ θεοῦ σπέρματα), when her travail was consummated bore the only beloved son who is apprehended by the senses, the world which we see.

In this passage, Philo describes the creation of the world as the result of God's union with knowledge.  Though he specifically states that this union is unlike human sexual unions, he nonetheless uses sexual language to describe the creation of the physical world.

In *Moses* 1:279, Philo uses this language of Israel.  Balak laments his inability to curse the Hebrews because of their unique place before God.  He asks of the Hebrews,

> Who has made accurate discovery of how the sowing of their generation was first made?  Their bodies have been moulded from human seeds, but their souls are sprung from divine seeds, and therefore their stock (ἀγχίσποροι θεοῦ) is akin to God."

The Hebrews, Balak declares, have physical bodies, but their souls are divine, which makes them a race uniquely "akin to God."  They are physical beings endowed with divine souls.  Colson observed that a phrase similar to ἀγχίσποροι θεοῦ appears in Aeschylus's *Niobe*.

**Table 3-1 Aeschylus' Niobe (Plato's Republic iii.391 E)[102]**

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|---|---|
| οἱ θεῶν ἀγχίσποροι<br>Ζηνὸς ἐγγύς, ὧν κατ᾽ Ἰδαῖον πάγον<br>Διός πατρῴου βωμός ἐστ᾽ ἐν αἰθέρι,<br>καὶ οὔ πώ σπιν ἐξίτηλον αἷμα δαιμόνων. | The near-sown seed of gods,<br>Close kin to Zeus, for whom on Ida's top<br>Ancestral altars flame to the highest heaven,<br>Nor in their life-blood fails the fire divine. |

Colson concluded that this was a conscious quotation due to the verbal similarities and the lack of any corresponding septuagintal text.[103]  If Colson is correct, then this passage shows the

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[101] Simon J. Gathercole, "Wisdom Personified," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010),  1339.

[102] Trans. Colson, LCL, *Philo VI*, 420-421

[103] Colson, *Philo VI*, 420-421.

influence of the Greek tradition on Philo.  As these passages from *Moses* and *Drunkenness* illustrate, Philo can use startlingly anthropomorphic, though metaphorical, language of God.

Finally, Philo uses divine seed language in one further significant context, the pregnancies of the matriarchs or other notable women.  Philo uses the pregnancies of Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, Tamar, and the widow of Zarepath in 1 Kgs 17:10 as opportunities to illuminate the means by which God brings about virtue in the mind of the righteous person.[104]  In each of these pregnancies, God is involved at the physical level, but this involvement points to perfecting of virtue in the mind and soul.

On the physical level, Philo emphasizes that the respective husbands are always the physical fathers.  In *Cherubim* 45, he writes that when Sarah "brings forth it is not the Author of her visitation," in other words, it is not due to God's physical visit to her in Gen 21:1 that she has become pregnant "but to him who seeks to win wisdom, whose name is Abraham."[105]  Philo goes on to explain this general principle through the example of Leah (*Cherubim* 46-47).  Even though God opens Leah's womb, Leah's child comes from Jacob.  Philo explains the allegorical meaning, "Thus virtue (Leah) receives the divine seed (τὰ θεῖα σπέρματα) from the Creator, but brings forth to one of her own lovers, who is preferred above all others who seek her favor."  In other words, God is the source of good things which come through virtue, but it is the role of the upright man to enact them in his own life.

Allegorically, the women represent virtues.  Their husbands, like Abraham, represent the one who "seeks to win wisdom."  Philo consistently follows this pattern and describes, in language that is no less surprising given its repetition, the (allegorical) divine insemination of these women.  Leah receives from God "the seed of wisdom, and is in the birth-throes, and brings forth beautiful ideas worthy of the Father Who begat them" (*Posterity* 135).[106]  Tamar "bore in her womb the divine seed (θείων σπερμάτων)" (*Names* 134).[107]  Abraham compares Sarah to virtue

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[104] See *Cherubim*, 44-47; *Worse*, 60; *Abraham*, 101; *QG* 3.18; *Alleg Interp.* 3.180; *Posterity*, 135; *Names*, 255; *Unchangeable*, 137.

[105] Cf. *Alleg. Interp.* 181.

[106] Cf. *Names* 255; *Alleg. Interpt.* 181.

[107] Cf. *Unchangeable* 136-137.

such that he would not be able to exercise and enjoy this virtue unless God had not sent down "seeds from heaven to cause her to become pregnant" (*Worse* 60). With the birth of Isaac who represents happiness, the virtuous soul is able to experience "the exercise of perfect virtue in a perfect life" (*Worse* 60). In each of these texts, Philo employs strikingly anthropomorphic language. Though he may be influenced by Greco-Roman traditions in this regard, it is still striking to read these kinds of statements in a Jewish author. Yet, such statements demonstrate the theological flexibility in Jewish thought to accommodate such language. Philo's allegorical appropriation of divine procreative language goes beyond anything in the New Testament in its specificity and range.

Except for the single passage from *Moses* 1:279, which applies divine generative language to the nation of Israel, Philo more commonly uses this language of the entire cosmos, or the development of virtue in the individual human soul. *Moses* 1:279, like Ezra and Jubilees, focuses on the status of the nation as holy or divine seed. Philo, in most of his other passages, focuses instead on how the individual's progress towards a perfect, virtuous life is the work of God, which can be thought of as the growth of divine seed in the human soul.

In sum, Ezra and Jubilees do not develop the seed metaphor. For them, being "holy seed" is a fixed status because it describes who Israel is before God and what this means for ethical behavior in the world. By contrast, when Philo uses the language of divine insemination in the soul, the act of divine impregnation is the beginning of the soul's ethical and moral journey towards perfection. Thus, the divine insemination is not a status, it is a beginning that moves towards perfection. In this respect, Philo's use of divine insemination bears resemblance to the imperishable seed language in 1 Peter, which also sees this seed as a starting point instead of a status. Finally, as the texts from Philo show, the quality of the seed is expressed in its development in the individual's life. Divine seed, therefore, should make the individual more divine. Divine seed, which comes from the Author of the universe, perfect in virtue, should foster virtue and divine qualities in the soul of the recipient.

## 3.4       The Idiom Seed in the New Testament

This section will briefly look at the seed idiom in the New Testament and the erroneous claims for divine seed language in the Johannine literature before turning to this theme in 1 Peter.   In the New Testament, seed language is used most commonly in connection with God's promise to Abraham, and, to a lesser extent David.[108]  Descent from the seed of Abraham was a common way of expressing national, ethnic, Jewish identity.[109]  Abraham was exemplary because of his faith and obedience.[110]  Abrahamic descent functioned as way of making the divine promises present to contemporary generations of Jews. The seed idiom reinforced the genealogical continuity between the past, present, and future.  The promises to Abraham have been passed down through the generations to the present generation.

Genealogy was clearly important to Paul and other New Testament writers who grappled with how to incorporate Gentiles into the people of God.[111]  This is especially true in the case in Galatians where Paul directly confronts the question of how Gentiles are incorporated into the (hitherto ethnically defined) people of God.[112]  For Paul, the gospel has radically altered all previous ethnic and theological categories.  Thus, Jewish and Gentile identities are challenged and redefined by the gospel.  Through Christ, the promised seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16), all who believe, Jew or Gentile, can become Abraham's seed and heirs to the promise (Gal 3:29).  Paul often used the mechanism of adoption to describe how believers were incorporated into the

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[108] σπέρμα  is the most common word for seed, occurring 41, compared to  σπορά a *hapax legomenon* in 1 Ptr 1:23.  With reference to Abraham and Sarah, see Lk 1:55; Jn 8:33, 37; Acts 3:25, 7:5, 6; Rom 4:13, 16, 18; 9:7, 8; 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22; Gal 3:16, 19, 29; Heb 2:16; cf. Heb 11:18.  For references to the seed of David, see Jn 7:42; Acts 13:23; Rom 1:3; 2 Tim 2:8.

[109] For New Testament texts on the seed of Abraham, see Lk 1:55; Jn 8:33, 37; Acts 3:25, 7:5-6; Rom 4:13, 18; 9:7, 8, 29, 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22; Gal 3:16, 19, 29; Heb 2:16; 11:11; 11:18.   Wilcox, "Promise of 'Seed'," 2-20.

[110] See Martin Goodman, George H. van Kooten, and Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, *Abraham, the Nations, and the Hagarites: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives on Kinship with Abraham* (Themes in Biblical Narrative 13; Leiden: Brill, 2010).  Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 139-140. Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (WBC 41; Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 110-112.

[111] For some recent discussions of ethnicity in Paul, see Buell and Johnson Hodge, "Politics of Interpretation." Charles H. Cosgrove, "Did Paul Value Ethnicity?," *CBQ* 68 / 2 (2006): 268-290.  Johnson Hodge, *If Sons, then Heirs*.  John M. G. Barclay, "'Neither Jew nor Greek': Multiculturalism and the New Perspective on Paul," in *Ethnicity and the Bible* (ed. Mark G. Brett; Boston: Brill, 2002),  197-214.

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family of God (Rom 8:15; 8:23; Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5 cf. Rom 9:4).  Paul also uses the language of

ethnicity  on occasion as he works to find appropriate ways of describing the new reality of

Christian fellowship.[113]

In the Johannine literature, some have argued that the concept of divine seed is found in the

references to "water and spirit" in Jn 3:5 and "seed" in 1 Jn 3:9.  However, both of these

interpretations are misguided.[114]  Instead, as said above, the "seed" in 1 Jn 3:9 is an idiom for

"offspring."[115]  In Jn 3:5, it is more likely that the "water" refers to John's baptism.[116]  In Jn

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[113] By grappling with the significance of Jewish identity, ethnicity, and Gentile believers, the interpreter is immediately drawn into the heart of recent debates on Paul, as any brief survey of the differences between the traditional perspective, new perspective, and radical new perspective will reveal.

[114] The "offspring" reading is more convincing because it makes better sense contextually and produces a better reading of the pronouns in the verse.  For more on the interpretation of this verse, see §2.3.3.3, "Divine Begetting in 1 John," 79f.  The "water and spirit" has seen a host of scholarly proposals that identify the "water" as a circumlocution for physical birth (the mother's amniotic fluid), physical semen, metaphorical semen, or some other kind of generative material or principal.  The amniotic fluid proposal suffers for lack of precise evidence, as does Witherington's general observation that water is a common circumlocution for generative material.  The arguments put forward by van Tilborg, Reinhartz, Seim, and Rothschild that Greco-Roman embryology are possible.  van Tilborg's collection of Greco-Roman texts which use "water and spirit" to discuss physical generation is strong.  Reinhartz and Seim's allocation of epigenesis to interpret Jn 3:5 is less convincing, but still possible.  It is possible that these Greco-Roman parallels played a role in the wording and development in the text.  However, it is difficult to discern how much weight should be placed on them since a series of problems to these lines of thought have been noted.  Internally, as Rothschild, pointed out, the theory of epigenesis does not map neatly onto the Gospel of John as it now is.  Within the text of John, the evangelist is clearly distinguishing physical generation from physical existence, which seems to mitigate any direct reliance on Greco-Roman embryology.  Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel*, 48-71; 49.  Russell Fowler, "Born of Water and the Spirit (Jn 3:5)," *ExpTim* 82 (1971): 159. D. G. Spriggs, "Meaning of 'Water' in John 3:5," *ExpTim* 85 (1974): 149-150.  Margaret Pamment, "John 3:5," *NovT* 25 / 2 (1983): 189-190.  Ben Witherington, "The Waters of Birth: John 3.5 and 1 John 5.6-8," *NTS* 35 / 1 (1989): 155-160. H. J. Cadbury, "The Ancient Physiological Notions Underlying John I 13 and Hebrews XI 11," 9 / 2 (1924): 430-439.  Pieter Willem van der Horst, "Sarah's Seminal Emission: Hebrews 11:11 in Light of Ancient Embryology," in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (ed. David L. Balch and Everett Ferguson; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990),  287-302.  Yii-Jan Singh, "Semen, Philosophy, and Paul," *JPS* 4 / 2 (2007): 32-45.

[115] See §2.3.3, "Divine Regeneration in the Johannine literature," 68f.  For more on this reading of 1 Jn 3:9, see Waal Dryden, "Sense of σπέρμα."  He has been followed by Yarbrough, *1-3 John*, 195. Lieu, *I, II, & III John: A Commentary*, 137-138.  de Waal also lists the following commentators with this view: N. Alexander, Argyle, Bengel, Moffatt, Sander, and Wohlenberg, "Sense of σπέρμα," 87 n. 16.  For various interpretations of Jn 3:5, see Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel*, 48-71; 49.  Fowler, "Water and Spirit."  Spriggs, "Meaning of 'Water'."  Pamment, "John 3:5."  Witherington, "Waters of Birth."  Cadbury, "Ancient Physiological Notions."  Horst, "Sarah's Seminal Emission."  Singh, "Semen, Philosophy, and Paul."

[116] The majority of commentators interpret water here as some form of water baptism (John's, Jesus', Christian, etc.).  For example, Michaels lists the following commentators who interpret water with baptism: Westcott, Bernard, Hoskyns, Brown, Beasley-Murray, Schnackenburg, Barrett, and Moloney, J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 182-183.  For a thorough survey of commentators who take this view, see Belleville, "Water and Spirit," 127-130.  Also, John Reid, "'Born of Water and Spirit'," *ExpTim* 15 (1904): 413-415; 413-415. Keener, *John*, 547-549.

1:24, the Pharisees send priests and Levites to ask John about his authority to baptize. John says

he has come to baptize with water (1:26, 33) but is awaiting one who will baptize with the Holy

Spirit (1:29-34).[117] His baptism is anticipatory and self-consciously incomplete.[118]

When Jesus explains that being "born again" (3:3) means being born with "water and spirit"

he is referring to the water of John's baptism plus the spirit. John's baptism is necessary not

sufficient.[119] However, Michaels is correct to qualify this explanation by warning his readers

against limiting the meaning of "water and spirit."[120] Water and spirit are polyvalent, each with

a wide range of associated ideals, symbols, and that expands meaning rather than limits it. The

New Testament broadly reflects contemporary Jewish usage of the seed idiom. However,

nowhere does the New Testament refer to divine seed, or seed endowed with divine properties

except in 1 Peter.

### 3.5 Imperishable Seed in 1 Peter

#### 3.5.1 Introduction

According to 1 Peter 1:23-25, believers have been rebegotten not of perishable (ἐκ σπορᾶς

φθαρτῆς) but of imperishable seed (ἀφθάρτος). The divine regeneration theme is developed

through the use of the seed idiom in 1 Pet 1:23-25 in order to explain the source and means of

believers' new ethnic identity. This identity is ethnic because it establishes putative kinship

among believers by connecting them to God through the resurrection. It also functions as the

basis for believers' sense of solidarity, ethical conduct, and cultural formation.

Inherent in 1 Pet 1:3-2:10 is the contrast between human beings who have been begotten of

normal means and those who have been begotten of imperishable seed. Fundamental to this

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[117] Michaels, *John*, 182.

[118] Turid Karlsen Seim, "Baptismal Reflections in the Fourth Gospel," in *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism: Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity* (ed. David Hellhom, et al.; Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 176; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 717-734; 719.

[119] Michaels advocates a baptismal reading, but he is surely right to see here more than a narrow baptismal reference. Water is a polyvalent image, which has connotations of purification, cleansing, and life. Michaels, *John*, 184-185. Belleville, "Water and Spirit," 139-140. Reid, "'Born of Water and Spirit'," 414.

[120] Michaels, *John*, 184-185.

contrast is the principle that like begets like; the nature of the offspring is derived from the nature of the parent. Human beings beget human children, spiritual children must be begotten spiritually. This section will investigate how 1 Peter uses the seed idiom to highlight the differences between these two kinds of person.

1 Peter 1:25 concludes vs. 22-25, which explain that divine regeneration is the means by which sincere love for the brotherhood is made possible (1:22).[121] The section concludes with a long quotation from Isa 40:6-8 which consolidates the divine regeneration theme up to this point.

### 3. 5. 2 From σπορά to διασπορά

Thus far, this chapter has been concerned with studying idiomatic uses of σπορά and the more common σπέρμα in the Jewish scriptures, literature of the Second Temple period, and New Testament. σπέρμα is by far the dominant term used to describe the promises that are made to a person's offspring, such as Noah, Abraham, and David. In this sense, the seed idiom is often connected to issues of genealogy, inheritance, and covenant. The term σπορά, by contrast, occurs much less frequently, but can also be used in Jewish literature of human procreation and offspring.[122]

The idiomatic use of σπορά in the context of divine regeneration is unusual. The noun σπορά, a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, is a paronym of the more common masculine noun σπόρος. Both nouns are paronyms from the root σπείρω and can mean sowing, that which is sown, or seed, depending on the context.[123] Given the letter's regeneration theme, the translation "seed" is the most appropriate in 1 Pet 1:23.[124] Believers' regeneration with imperishable seed creates a dynamic contrast with the perishable seed of human generation.[125]

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[121] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 138-139. Jobes, *1 Peter*, 124.

[122] See LXX Job 21:8. For examples from Philo where σπορά is used of human offspring, see *Virtues* 199; *Moses* 1.28, 2.289; *Posterity*, 176-177; *Abraham* 46, 101, 112, 132, 250; *Decalogue* 119, 129; *QG* 2. frag. 17c; *All. Interp.* 1.10; *Heir* 38, 171; *Spec. Laws* 3.113. For use of σπείρω the context of human procreation, see *Creation* 161; *Posterity*, 177

[123] BDAG, 936. Elliott, *I Peter*, 388.

[124] In this context, the difference between "that which is sown" and "seed" makes very little practical difference to the meaning of the text. Contrast with Michaels, who sees "sowing" as the primary referent, Michaels, *1 Peter*, 76.

[125] Parsons, "Born Anew," 228.

One reason for this lexical choice may have been that σπορά makes a theologically loaded pun with διασπορά.[126] To my knowledge, the only interpreter who has suggested this link is Parsons.[127] He writes that the author

> could see Christians, the elect of God, as constituting a special sowing, a *diaspora*… They were constituted as such by the sowing of a special incorruptible seed scattered throughout the world…, - a nuance less apparent had he employed the nouns more commonly used for "seed" (σπέρμα or σπόρος…).[128]

Parsons understood σπορά to mean "sowing," and interpreted the preaching of the word of God as the time of this sowing.[129] Parsons' reading is possible, though it is more likely that σπορά should be translated "seed" because it is used in conjunction with ἀναγεννάω as part of the metaphor of divine regeneration.[130]

By using σπορά and διασπορά the author is doing more than making a clever pun. This linguistic connection points to an intimate link between believers' theological and social reality. Believers' divine generation with imperishable seed is the source of their new identity as Christians as well as the cause of their social alienation. Their divine regeneration has vertical (soteriological) and horizontal (ethical, social) implications.

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[126] Interestingly, such a word play with would not be unique in the ancient world. According to Claudius Iolaus, the Spartans are so named because they sprang from the "sown" teeth of a dragon after it was slain by Kadmus (whose very name is probably Semitic, from *qedem*, "east".) The Spartans are thus literally "sown men." See Ap. Rhod. 3.1355-57 and Ovid *Metam.* 2.696, 7-5-7, 830-32; 4.276-78, 551-60; 10.241-42. For more on this connection, see Louis H. Feldman, *Jew & Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 12. Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition*, 260. In 1 Peter, such a word play would not be out of character with 1 Peter. As Elliott has shown, the author makes much of the linguistic connection between πάροικος and οἶκος, see Elliott, *Home for the Homeless*, 200-208.

[127] Parsons, "Born Anew," 229. For more on the theme of diaspora in 1 Pet, see Martin, who identifies it as the letter's controlling metaphor, Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, esp. 144-161.

[128] Parsons, "Born Anew," 229-230.

[129] As for the occasion of this sowing, Parsons turned to the synoptic gospels for answers. He identified some of the parables in the synoptic gospels (Mk 4:3-9, Mt 13:3-9; Lk 8:5-8; and Mk 4:14-20; Mt 13:18-23; Lk 8:11-15) as possible sources for the material in 1 Pet 1:23-25. While there are a few pieces of evidence which point in this direction, such as the shared analogy of the word as seed, any deeper literary relationship between these texts is very difficult to maintain for a variety of reasons, not least of which is the dearth of close literary connections between 1 Peter and the Synoptics. For the purpose of this study, these connections are noted, and while it may be possible that parables from the Jesus tradition contributed to early Christian teaching which in turn influenced 1 Peter, the specifics of this relationship must remain in the realms of the general and hypothetical. For more on this, see Parsons, "Born Anew," 219-221. Elliott, *I Peter*, 392.

[130] In reality, the difference in this context between "seed" and "sowing" is very slight. The argument put forward here would be the same if this word was read as "sowing" instead of "seed."

They are not physically displaced. Rather, their Christian identity has displaced them socially and results in their new existence in a theological and social διασπορά. Due to their divine regeneration, believers are now living a different kind of existence than they had before. The letter constructs this new existence by contrasting their former existence with their new regenerated life. In this way, the author's use of σπορά clearly connects with his diaspora language and with his goal of fostering group solidarity.[131]

### 3. 5. 3 Two Kinds of Being: The Perishable and the Imperishable

In 1 Peter, all humanity can be divided into two groups that form a strong antithesis.[132] First, there are those who have been begotten and reared in the normal way, who live in physical familial relationships, and whose inheritance is immortality. On the other hand are those who have been begotten anew, who now live within the family of God, are called to different standards of behavior, and will receive a spiritual, imperishable inheritance.

Philo uses similar language to describe another kind of binary division in *Allegorical Interpretation*.[133] Describing the creation of man in Gen 2:7 with similar terminology to 1 Peter, Philo writes,

> There are two types of men; the one a heavenly man, the other an earthly (ἐκ σποράδος ὕλης). The heavenly man, being made after the image of God, is altogether without part or lot in corruptible and terrestrial substance (φθαρτῆς καὶ γεώδους οὐσίας); by the earthly one was compacted out of the matter scattered here and there, which Moses calls "clay."[134]

In this difficult passage, Philo seems to be concerned with preserving the divinity of the image of God. Because God is "not only not in the form of man (ἀνθρωπόμορφος), but belongs to no class or kind (ἄποιος)," Philo wants to separate the physical creation of man from the man who bears the formless image of God.[135] In the creation of man, God breathes into the terrestrial man

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[131] Several scholars have highlighted 1 Peter's use of diaspora languae, most significantly Martin, who identifies it as the letter's controlling metaphor. However, though scholars have noted the importance of diaspora language, its links with 1:23 has gone unobserved. For more on the diaspora theme in 1 Peter, see Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, 144-161. Michaels, *1 Peter*, xlv-xlix.

[132] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 113.

[133] For more on the comparison between Philo and 1 Peter, see Torrey Seland, *Strangers in the Light: Philonic Perspectives on Christian Identity* (vol. 76; Leiden: Brill, 2005).

[134] *Alleg. Interp.* 1.32.

[135] *Alleg. Interp.* 1.36.

"a power of real life" so that he becomes a living soul (1.32). For Philo, all people are composed of both earthly and heavenly components. For Philo, this is not an ontological antithesis, but an anthropological antithesis. All human beings are composed of both the heavenly and the earthly. Therefore, all humans have heavenly and earthy pieces at the same time. In 1 Peter, the perishable and the imperishable are mutually exclusive. Believers are begotten anew οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς ἀλλὰ ἀφθαρτῆς. They are a new race of people, a race generated not from perishable origins, but from the imperishable life of the resurrected Christ.

In order to appreciate fully the significance of the imperishable seed with which believers have been rebegotten, it will be necessary to look at how the author contrasts the believers with their unbelieving counterparts. First Peter was written to Christians who were a small, ostracized minority living, like strangers and aliens, in a dominant culture. This social pressure meant that one of Peter's goals in his letter is to strengthen the identity and solidarity of these Christians in the midst of their suffering. The dominant culture is assumed while author of 1 Peter who devotes his attention to Christian identity construction.[136] Therefore, this dualistic perspective in 1 Peter allows the reader to see the dominant culture as a poor counterpart to Christian identity.

Before conversion, believers were defined by "the passions of their former ignorance (ταῖς πρότερον ἐν τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ ὑμῶν ἐπιθυμίαις, 1:14) and the worthless behavior they inherited from their forefathers (ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ὑμῶν ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου, 1:18). Sinful human beings beget more sinful human beings. This causal chain of inheritance can only be broken by the intervening action of God.[137] This intervention comes in the form of the death and resurrection of Christ who sets believers free not with perishable things (φθαρτοῖς), but with the blood of Christ, like a lamb without blemish (1:18-19). The contrast of the perishable with the imperishable defines the means of believers' redemption (οὐ φθαρτοῖς...ἀλλὰ τιμίῳ αἵματι, 1:18-19), the quality of the seed with which they have been begotten anew (οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς

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[136] Michaels also notes this when he writes, "Of the two groups, believers are the more clearly defined," *1 Peter*, 113.

[137] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 123. For an analysis of a similar worldview in the Hodayot, see also Jason Maston, *Divine and Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism and Paul* (WUNT 2/297; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), esp. 80-97.

ἀλλ' ἀφθάρτου, 1:23), and the quality of the inheritance which they will receive at the revelation of Jesus (εἰς κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον, 1:4, 7).[138] Interestingly, both the future inheritance and the blood of Christ are contrasted with gold, which is tested by fire (1:7), but in the end is perishable (φθαρτοῖς, 1:18).

In 1 Peter, obedience is connected to purification. Those who believe have purified their souls through obedience (1:22). Believers are addressed as obedient children (1:2, 14, 22 cf. 3:6) and called to be obedient to Jesus Christ (1:2). This takes the practical form of being obedient to the truth (1:22). Immediately afterwards, this section concludes with a quotation of Isa 40:6-8 and explanatory gloss. While the truth should be broadly conceived as the truth of the Christian message, it is warranted to see a connection between the truth in vs. 22 and the preached message of the gospel in vs. 23. Believers are those who respond to the truth of the gospel message with obedience.

The inverse of this is stated in 2:3. Those who have rejected Christ "stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do." Those who do not believe are characterized by disobedience, mortality, and immorality. Conversely, obedience, redemption and sanctification are for those who believe. The fullest expression of Christian morality is stated in vs. 22 "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart." The purification of obedience enables Christians to love their brothers and sisters in Christ.[139] The divine seed in vs. 23, following immediately afterwards, explains how believers have been enabled to fulfil this commandment.[140] Their new status as Christians is defined by their obedience to the word and imperishable life, just as those who disobey are characterized by their disobedience and ultimate mortality.

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[138] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 76. Jobes, *1 Peter*, 124-125. Parsons, "Born Anew," 213-214.

[139] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 138-139. Parsons, "Born Anew," 213-214.

[140] Jobes, *1 Peter*, 124-125.

### 3. 5. 4   ἐκ σπορᾶς and διὰ λόγου: The Source and Origin of Divine Regeneration

   How exactly does this divine regeneration happen?  What is this imperishable seed and how does it affect these changes in the life of the believer?  Unfortunately, 1 Peter does not provide the reader with many details.  However, as the last chapter demonstrated, prepositions are often carefully chosen in 1 Peter and many provide some clues to the inner workings of 1:23.

   In 1 Pet 1:23, the author writes,
   ἀναγεγεννημένοι <u>οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς  ἀλλ᾽ ἀφθάρτου</u> <u>διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεου καὶ μένοντος</u>.
   You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.[141]

   Believers have been begotten anew of (ἐκ) imperishable seed through (διά) the word of God. The first preposition, ἐκ, establishes the origin or source of the regeneration; the second, διά, the means of regeneration.[142]  The preposition ἐκ is often used to discuss issues of genealogy, lineage, or parentage, as seen elsewhere in the New Testament.[143]  In its most basic sense, ἐκ means "from, or out of."[144] From this spatial idea "there naturally developed the primary non-spatial/metaphorical notion of *origin*…" (emph. original).[145]  Ἐκ is often used in contexts of procreation and generation, especially in Paul and John.[146]  In 1 Peter 1:23, the author uses it to construct the new ethnic identity of believers who have been begotten *of* imperishable seed.  In the letter, the author incorporates elements of language which evoke ethnic concepts such as origin and lineage and applies them to believers through Christ.

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[141] RSV.

[142] Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 150.  Eugene A. LaVerdiere, "A Grammatical Ambiguity in 1 Pet 1:23," *CBQ* 36 (1969): 89-94; 92.  Against, see Achtemeier, who finds this distinction "overly subtle," Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 139. Dubis, *I Peter*, 38.  Dubis sees the change in pronouns as a stylistic variation without exegetical significance.

[143] See n.310 below for more references.  For a sample of references from John in which it is used this way, see Jn 8, in which the whole chapter pivots around issues of parentage and lineage, esp. Jn 8:41, 42, 44, 47.

[144] BDAG, pg. 234-235,  def. 3, "to denote origin, cause, motive, reason—a. in expr. which have to do w. birth and begetting;" def. 4, "de note orign as to family, race, city, people, district."

[145] Harris, *Prepositions*, 103.

[146] For a discussion of ἐκ in related contexts in Paul, see Johnson Hodge, *If Sons, then Heirs*, "Descendants of a Faithful Ancestor: Hoi Ek Pisteos," 79-91.  For an essay on ἐκ in John, see Leander E. Keck, "Derivation as Destiny: "Of-ness" in Johannine Christology, Anthropology, and Soteriology," in *Exploring the Gospel of John: In Honor of D. Moody Smith* (ed. R. Alan Culpepper and C. Clifton Black; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996),  274-288.

Because believers are now endowed with the living and abiding power of God, they are a new kind of being defined qualitatively by life rather than death. An origin in the divine life of resurrection corresponds to a destination in the imperishable divine inheritance. Likewise, a human origin corresponds to a human, physical mortality. Thus, ἐκ indicates the origin or source of divine regeneration: the imperishable seed. The διά phrase indicates the cause or means of this regeneration: the living and abiding word of God.

According to Harris, διά expresses "the idea of 'intervention,' the idea of any cause, whether direct or indirect, primary or secondary, that comes between the beginning and end of an action."[147] In 1 Peter, two causes are connected to regeneration: the resurrection of Christ (δι' ἀναστάσεως, 1:3) and the reception of the word of God (1:23-25).[148] Both of these complementary clauses use διά to express the means by which regeneration is achieved.[149] Selwyn correctly observed that the origin of regeneration in 1:3, the resurrection, "is not fundamentally different" from the source of life in 1:23, the imperishable seed.[150] The life of the resurrection is communicated to believers through the living and abiding word of God. The first focuses on the origin of new life, the second on the means by which that life comes to those who believe. The quotation of Isa 40:6-8 in 1 Pet 1:24-25 draws together many of the themes from the preceding context including themes of regeneration and the dichotomy between what is perishable and that which abides forever.[151]

### 3. 5. 5  Like Grass: The Function of Isaiah 40:6-8 in 1 Peter 1:24-25

1 Peter 1 concludes with a long quotation from Isaiah 40:6-8. In vv. 24-25, Peter writes,

διότι

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[147] Harris, *Prepositions*, 69.

[148] Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 152.

[149] LaVerdiere writes, "In the present context, *dia* with the genitive expresses an instrumental relationship between anagegennēmenoi and logou. The *logos* is thus the means, the cause or the mediating principle through which Christians have been regenerated," LaVerdiere, "Ambiguity," 91. That is of course not to say that all occurrences of διά should be given special attention. διά is common preposition and can have the simpler meaning of 'through.' It occurs 18 times in 1 Peter and it would be difficult to maintain that all of these uses have deep theological significance.

[150] Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 152.

[151] Parsons, "Born Anew," 213-214.

*πᾶσα σὰρξ ὡς χόρτος*
*καὶ πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῆς ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου·*
*ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος καὶ τὸ ἄνθος ἐξέπεσεν·*
*τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.*
*τοῦτο δέ ἐστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν εἰς ὑμᾶς.*[152]

For
"All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass.
The grass withers, and the flower falls,
but the word of the Lord abides forever."
That word is the good news which was preached to you.

With this quotation, the author clinches his argument by bringing the letter's anthropological antithesis. What is the end of human flesh and for those who are begotten anew? For one it is death, the other life.

All human flesh is doomed to perish. Like the grass of the field, all human beings will eventually reach the end of their lives and die. By contrast, the word of the Lord will never die and the same will be true for those who have been begotten by it. As Achtemeier correctly writes, this quotation "is not so much a proof of what has been maintained in v. 23 as a comment on it, verifying as it were that what the author has said has the backing of the authoritative Scriptures of the early Christian community."[153] As the quotation appears in the text, it epitomizes the section's main themes at the same time as it authenticates them with the scriptures. In brief, the quotation of Isa 40:6-8 is an effective and elegant way to conclude 1 Peter 1.

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[152] Textually, the Petrine quotation of Isaiah 40:6-8 closely follows the LXX and the MT with a few minor variations. Commentators agree that these minor variants are inconsequential except, perhaps, for the change from "our God" (LXX; MT) to "lord" in 1:25a. This change may be accounted for in a number of ways, but the most likely explanation is that the change was christological. The author altered the text in order to bring reinterpret the message of hope proclaimed in Isa 40 as the message revealed through and proclaimed about Christ. For more on this and other textual features on the use of Isa 40:6-8 in 1 Pet 1:24-25, see Martin H. Scharlemann, "Why the Kuriou in 1 Peter 1:25?," *CTM* 30 (1959): 352-356. Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition*, 123-128. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 141. Elliott, *I Peter*, 390, 392.

[153] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 141. While Schutter is correct that this quotation "is more than simply a proof-text," he over-interprets his evidence when he claims that "what seems to be involved is an oracle's hidden meaning on the order of I Pet 1.10-12, the 'unriddling of a riddle' characteristic of a pesher-like hermeneutic," Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition*, 126-127.

Several reasons make this quote a fitting conclusion. It brings out the final implications of the author's argument. The quotation's agricultural image also ties in neatly with the language of seed and begetting. As with σπορά and διασπορά, the author of 1 Peter is sensitive to linguistic relationships and is therefore quite capable of making careful semantic choices. The use of Isa 40:6-8 is not only conceptually coherent in this context, but also links with the preceding and proceeding passages. Specifically, the means of regeneration, the "living and abiding word" (διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος) links with "the word of the Lord which abides forever" (τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα).[154]

This investigation will not map all of the intertextual relationships between this quotation and its context.[155] Rather, this section will sketch out how this quotation encapsulates many of the themes which have been studied thus far, such as the difference in kind between physical people and spiritually regenerated people, the importance of preaching and of the word, and the agricultural and biological semantic fields which ground the metaphors of growth, generation, and mortality.

The quotation begins πᾶσα σὰρξ ὡς χόρτος, "all flesh is like grass." The phrase πᾶσα σὰρξ appears frequently in the Greek scriptures, often in contexts of creation, judgment, and catastrophe, particularly Noah's flood.[156] One interesting result from perusing the occurrences of this phrase in the LXX is that it often includes animal life as well as humanity.[157] As it says in

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[154] A number of textual variants have arisen seeking to clarify the arrangement of adjectives to their nouns. Though both adjectives could apply to God, it makes better sense for them to be read with the "word." As Feldmeier notes, the "living" character of God is self-evident. In addition, the "abiding" nature of the word is repeatd again at 1:25. Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 124. Dubis, *I Peter*, 38-39.

[155] For example, this section will not engage the scholarly proposals which suggest that the greater context of Isa 40 (and, indeed of Deutero-Isaiah in general) is being engaged in 1 Peter. Such proposals suggest intriguing and plausible links through some of the shared themes between these two texts, such as exile, return, Babylon, and God as shepherd, to name a few. While interesting, these topics extend beyond the range of this investigation. The interested reader is directed to the following literature for more on this topic, see Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 152. Elliott, *I Peter*, 393. Jobes, *1 Peter*, 125-130.

[156] It appears 60x in the LXX, see LXX Gen 6:12, 17, 19; 7:15, 16, 21; 8:17, 21; 9:11, 15 x2, 16, 17; Lev 17:11, 14 x3; Num 16:22; 18:15; 27:16; Jdt 2:3; Ps 64:3; 135:25; 144:21; Prov 4:22; 26:10; Job 34:15; Sir 1:10; 13:16; 14:17; 17:4; 18:13; 3:21, 30; 39:19; 40:8; 41:4; 45:1, 4; 46:19; Joel 3:1; Zech 2:17; Isa 40:5, 6; 49:26; 66:1623, 24; Jer 12:12; 32:31; 51:35; Ez 21:4, 9, 10, 12; Dan 2:11; Theo. Dan 4:12; Bel 5.

[157] This is particularly true in the examples from the flood narrative, which specifically include animal life, though other examples are found elsewhere. See, LXX Gen 6:17, 19; 7:15, 16, 21; 8:17, 21; 9:11, 15 x2, 16, 17; Lev 17:11, 14 x3; Num 18:15; Sir 13:16; 44:18.

Leviticus, "the life of all flesh is in its blood," (Lev 17:11, 14), whether it be animal or human.[158] All flesh means everything that has "life blood" in it. In this way, "all flesh" can function as a metonym for all created life.[159] Humans and animals alike share what it means to be alive. At the same time, human beings are destined to die as the animals do.

In a few cases, the idiom of "all flesh" emphasizes the mortality of all created beings.[160] For example, in Job 34:14-15 Elihu declares that if God "should wish to confine and keep his spirit within himself, all flesh will die together, and every mortal return to dust, whence too he was formed." Elihu's speech echoes with refrains from the fall narrative in Genesis. The punishment for Adam's transgression is death and a return to the dust from which he was made (Gen 2:17; 4:19).[161] A similar sentiment is echoed in Sir 14:17-19,

> All flesh becomes old like a garment,
> for the covenant of old is, "By death you shall die!"
> Like a sprouting leaf on a thickly leaved tree,
> some it sheds, but others it puts forth;
> so is a generation of flesh and blood,
> the one dies and the other is born.
> Every decaying deed ceases,
> and the one who does it will pass away with it.[162]

These verses speak of mortality and transience; all living things will die.[163] As a tree puts out leaves that are green for a time then wither away, so is the existence of humanity, whose life is but a breath. The confluence of horticultural imagery and the themes of transience and mortality is similar to Isa 40:6-8. All flesh, like grass and the flower of the field, will wither and fade.

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[158] All LXX translations are taken from NETS.

[159] For example, see Gen 6:19; 7:15, 16, 21; 8:17, 21; 9:11, 15; Lev 17:11, 14.

[160] For a look at the portrayal of flesh as inherently mortal in the Hebrew scriptures, see Maston, *Divine and Human Agency*, 84-85.

[161] For more on the connections between dust and mortality, see Maston, *Divine and Human Agency*, 85-86. For specific connections between dust, mortality, and Gen 2-3, see Maston, *Divine and Human Agency*, 92-93.

[162] Cf. LXX Ps 77:39.

[163] Cf. Sir 41:4.

The problem is one of *kind*. The *kind* of thing that human beings are is a kind of thing that dies. With death comes depravity and ultimate separation from God. Jason Maston examines how the *Hodayot* overcame this intractable problem.[164] He writes,

> The depravity of humanity, and the resulting incapacity to accomplish anything righteous, creates a significant problem for the human because this condition will keep one from attaining salvation. The solution to this problem is not a renewed effort on the human's part, but instead divine intervention. The interaction of the divine and human agents in the *Hodayot* consistently gives priority to God. God determines from before creation who will be righteous or wicked, and through his spirit, he enacts his eternal decree, gives knowledge, and purifies from sin.[165]

The author of 1 Peter has also recognized that the fundamental condition of humanity is defined by mortality and that the solution to this problem is the graceful intervention of God. However, the author of 1 Peter solves this problem differently from the *Hodayot*. Both authors recognize the inherent problem of humanity, but Peter's solution is that through the merciful and life giving act of resurrection, those who believe can become a new kind of being through divine regeneration.

At a basic, biological level, the kind of thing something is is determined by the kind of seed it comes from. This basic fact of life is clearly articulated in Genesis, all things are given to reproduce each according to its kind.[166] In 1 Peter, Jesus overcomes the innate (literally, in-born) mortality of humanity through his resurrection from the dead, which in turn enables those who believe to be begotten anew of an imperishable seed into a new kind of existence. Peter writes, "you have been begotten anew, not of perishable, but of imperishable seed." Through this divine regeneration, believers are begotten into a new existence defined by resurrected life.

In 1 Pet 1:3, the author declares that believers have been begotten anew from the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Jesus died in the flesh and is raised into an existence defined by life and glory.[167] This divinely generated life comes to believers through the living and abiding

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[164] For an early comparison of the Hodayot and 1 Peter, see Frederick W. Danker, "I Peter 1,24-2,17 - A Consolation Pericope," *ZNW* / 58 (1967): 93-102. More recently, see Robert L. Cavin, *New Existence and Righteous Living: Colossians and 1 Peter in Conversation with 4QInstruction and the Hodayot* (Berlin: De Gruyter).

[165] Maston, *Divine and Human Agency*, 94-95.

[166] See esp. Gen 1:12.

[167] For example, see 1:3, 23; 2:4; 3:22; 4:13-14; 5:1, 4.

word of God (λόγος in 1:23, ῥῆμα in v. 25). The word is living because it is defined by the power of the resurrection which raised Christ from the dead. The author also describes it as abiding, which links Isa 40:8 with the word that was preached to believers (1 Pet 1:23, 25).

A note on the substance and content of this "word" is called for. The English translation of the verse obscures the presence of two different Greek words for "word" in 1 Pet 1:23-25, λόγος and ῥῆμα. Given the importance that Peter gives to the λόγος as the imperishable seed, it will be worthwhile to investigate how these terms are used and what they mean.

First, ῥῆμα only appears in one verse in the letter, occurring twice in 1 Pet 1:25. It is clear that its appearance in 1:25b is directly influenced by its use in 1:25a, quoting Isa 40:8.[168] Second, ῥῆμα is linked in 1:25b with τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν εἰς ὑμᾶς, "that which was preached to you."[169] The author of 1 Peter has directly connected the ῥῆμα with the preaching of the gospel. In 1 Peter, the gospel is preached to believers through the Holy Spirit (1:12) and to those who have died (4:6). The gospel also demands obedience, and all men will be judged on their response, those within the household of God, and those without (4:17). 1 Peter 4:17 says,

> For the time has come for judgement to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God (τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίῳ)?

Obedience is the right response to the gospel. Earlier in the letter, the author wrote that men "stumble because they disobey the word (τῷ λόγῳ), as they were destined to do" (2:8). If the λόγος and the preaching of the gospel (τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίῳ) are spoken of by the author as both requiring obedience, then this suggests that in the mind of the author these things were perhaps not completely identical, but very closely connected concepts.

Given the placement of the Isa 40:6-8 quotation directly after 1:23, and the author's inclusion of an explanatory gloss explaining that the ῥῆμα is the preached word, it is clear that the λόγος in

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[168] Elliott, *I Peter*, 392. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 142. Dubis, *I Peter*, 41.

[169] This precise wording is also probably influenced by Isa 40. As Achtemeier writes, "If ῥῆμα reflects Isa 40:8, quoted in v. 25a, the participle that identifies that word as 'good news'…probably reflects the language of Isa 40:9, the verse that immediately follows the material cited in 1:24-25a, where the participle forms of the same verb appear twice…" Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 142. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 79.

1:23 refers to the same reality as the ῥῆμα.[170] Indeed, it seems that it is this connection which enables the author to attach this quotation to the preceding discussion of the imperishable seed. The word which is preached is the good news of the resurrection of Jesus. In this way, the resurrection becomes a reality to those who hear the gospel. Through preaching, the resurrected life of Christ comes to those who hear, believe, and obey the gospel. The word is the seed of regeneration because it is the means by which believers are brought into the life-giving reality of the resurrected Christ.

The word of God (λόγος and ῥῆμα) is the imperishable seed which begets believers into a new reality of imperishable existence. As 1 Pet 1:25 (quoting Isa 40:8) says, "the word of the lord abides forever (τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα)." The δέ at the beginning of the line emphasizes the disjunction between the old reality, the withering of the grass and the fading of transient beauty, and the eternally abiding word of God.

In this way, the quotation of Isa 40:6-8 recapitulates and clinches the author's argument. Believers have been begotten anew of imperishable seed, the message of the gospel, the word of God, which imparts resurrected life to those who obey it. When a person hears the word and believes, she becomes a new kind of person, a person not defined by the mortality of human life but by the immortality of divine life. Those who have been begotten anew of imperishable seed look forward with hope to the imperishable existence which awaits them at the final revelation of Christ in glory (1 Pet 1:4-5; 4:13).

## 3.6 Conclusion

To summarize, the kind of seed something is determines the kind of thing it will be. Based on agricultural Source Domains, the Jewish idiom of speaking of one's offspring or descendants as seed summoned up associations of heritage, divine promise, and the continuity between one generation and the next. The seed idiom occurs in three main contexts in the Hebrew scriptures: that of the nation (especially with regard to Abraham), the Davidic monarchy, and the levitical priesthood. In each of these groups, the seed idiom highlights the hereditary nature of group

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[170] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 142. Elliott, *I Peter*, 392.

membership. The seed idiom enforces the idea that group members must be born, they cannot be made.

Often in the Hebrew Scriptures, the seed idiom is used as a stereotyped piece of language, or a dead metaphor. In some contexts, however, the agricultural source of the language is actively engaged by the biblical writer. This is clearly the case in Ezra 9:1-2 when Ezra laments that the holy seed (זֶרַע הַקֹּדֶשׁ; Gk, σπέρμα τὸ ἅγιον) has become defiled through improper marriages. Ezra then expands existing Pentateuchal legislation (Exod 23:23-25; 34:11-16; Deut 7:3-4; 20:15-17) to prohibit all exogamous marriage. He does this through textual exegesis that combines those marriage prohibitions with other Pentateuchal priestly legislation that advocating separation (בדל) and prohibits mixing (ערב) of different kinds. By doing this, Ezra democratizes priestly legislation. In some sense, all Israel is holy. All Israel is now called to maintain a higher level of national holiness that reflects the higher standards of holiness once given only to priests. No conversion is possible, only those who are born into this holy nation are "holy seed." Just as other sacred things must be protected, the sacredness of Israel must be maintained by strict social boundaries. The seed idiom is therefore very important to Ezra's social program.

A similar ideology is found in Jubilees, which also actively uses of the seed idiom. Jubilees democratizes the priestly standards of holiness of the nation of Israel. According to Jubilees, Israel truly is a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Jub 16:18, 33:20; cf. Exod 19:6). Again, the seed idiom is a central to Jubilees' strategy for articulating this ideology. Jubilees understand this Jacob is the "holy seed" *par excellence*. Once all twelve of his sons have been born, Israel's status as a holy nation is inaugurated. Direct descent from Jacob defines Israel and sets her apart for holiness, divine election, and God's covenant promises. All members of Israel must be descended from Jacob, the holy seed. Therefore, no one who has not descended from Jacob can become a member of Israel: no conversion is possible and exogamous marriages are anathema.

The author creatively uses the seed language to emphasize the difference in *kind* between Israel and other nations. Any mixing of kinds has devastating effects, as the Watchers learned when the crossed the boundaries between heaven and earth. Similarly, the holy seed of Israel

must not become defiled by being mixed with the profane seed of the nations. For Ezra and Jubilees, being "holy seed" is a status, it is not something that progresses over time.

Up to this point, all of the seed under discussion is human seed invested with divine promises or qualities. None of this seed is divine in the sense of having originated with God. Philo, however, does speak of divine seed in creative, yet allegorical ways. In *Drunkenness* 30, Philo describes the creation of the cosmos as the result of God's divine union with Wisdom, who receives divine seed and bore the visible world. In this way, Philo was particularly influenced by the Stoic doctrine of the λόγος σπερματικός. Elsewhere, Philo describes the Hebrews as "divinely sown" (ἀγχίσποροι θεοῦ; *Moses* 1:279). Finally, Philo uses divine seed language when he explains the allegorical interpretation of several women's pregnancies (*Cherubim* 45-47; *Posterity* 135; *Names* 134; *Worse* 60). Philo's use of this imagery has some similarities with 1 Peter's in the sense that divine seed should commute divine properties; it is a means of imputing divine qualities to the individual. However, Philo's explicit development of this language, even though allegorical, goes far beyond other Jewish and Christian usage.

The seed idiom in the New Testament broadly matches contemporary Jewish usage. Some scholars have argued that the concept of "divine seed" is found in Jn 3:5 and 1 Jn 3:9. However, the water in Jn 3:5 is more properly interpreted as a reference to John's baptism, while in 1 Jn 3:9 is better translated "offspring" rather than seed (see §2.3.3.3, "Divine Begetting in 1 John," 78f).

The author of 1 Peter uses the seed idiom in 1:23 to explain the origin and the means of divine regeneration. At its most basic level, the author's discussion of "divine seed" serves as an alternative to believers' human generation. Mortal parents beget mortal children, but the imperishable, immortal God begets immortal children. The most important conclusions can be summarized as follows.

First, the author uses the term σπορά, instead of the more common σπέρμα. This thesis argued that the author chose this word in order to create a theologically loaded pun on διασπορά. Believers' diaspora existence is the direct result of their regeneration with divine σπορά. Thus, their regeneration with divine σπορά precipitates their διασπορά existence.

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Second, the Petrine seed language draws attention to the difference in kind between believers and un-believers. Because believers have been begotten with imperishable seed, they are now a new kind of person. They are now defined by the imperishable, divine quality of the seed, while those who do not believe are defined by human mortality.

Third, the imperishable seed is imputed to believers "through the living and abiding word of God." The "living and abiding" quality of the word is thus transferred to believers. The reference to life is strongly associated in 1 Peter with the resurrection. The seed is therefore the means by which divine properties are transferred to believers. Furthermore, the seed language unifies believers. They are united because they are united by the same seed and are endowed with the same life-giving and abiding properties. The seed language is thus a means of strengthening group solidarity. As the context of the passage makes clear, it is also the intimately connected with the letter's command to love one another.

All of these themes are brought together and consolidated in the quotation of Isa 40:6-8 in 1 Pet 1:24-25. This quotation sharpens the anthropological antithesis in this section. All flesh is doomed to perish. Indeed, biblical uses of the phrase "all flesh" often emphasize the mortality of all created life. The ultimate end of all physically begotten life is death, but the word of God abides forever.

In the context of 1 Peter, the reference to "the word of the Lord which abides forever" (τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) evokes the imperishable seed which comes to believers "through the living and abiding word of God" (διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος). The quotation of Isa 40:6-8 thus clinches the author's argument. Those who have been begotten anew of divine seed are regenerated with the living and abiding life of Christ, which comes to them through the gospel. Through regeneration, believers become a new kind of being because they are endowed with divine properties and the imperishable life of the resurrection.

# Chapter 4    New Born Babies and Spiritual Milk: 2:1-3

## 4 . 1        More than Nutrition: Milk and Ethnic Identity

When an infant is born, she depends completely on her mother's or wet nurse's care.  Philo

knowingly writes of this maternal bond,

Her first gift was birth, through which the non-existent is brought into existence, and the second is the efflux of milk, the happily timed aliment which flows so gently fostering the tender growth of every creature.[171]

In 1 Peter 2:1-3, the author compares believers to newborn babes who are to crave the pure,

"wordly" milk in order to grow in Christian maturity.  These verses begin the unit of 1 Peter 2:1-

10, in which the author develops the regeneration theme to describe believers' growth and

corporate, ethnic formation.  In 2:1-10, the author links together the themes of infancy, growth,

households, temple, and finally nationhood to achieve his definitive statement of identity in

verses 9-10: Christian ethnicity, people-hood, and priesthood.  The image of believers as infants

in 2:1-3 plays an important, underappreciated role in this conceptual development by expanding

the image of regeneration in 1 Peter 1 and providing a segue into the corporate identity

construction of 1 Peter 2:4-10.

This chapter will therefore first examine how breastfeeding was a part of socializing the infant

in ancient Jewish society.  Breastfeeding was a symbol of an infant's rightful belonging within

Judaism.  The spiritual breastfeeding of Christians played an important role in the author's

formation of Christian ethnic identity.  Next, this chapter will investigate Jewish use of

transgender imagery in Jewish literature.  This analysis is necessary because the author of 1 Peter

does not call God "mother" but seems to attribute this imagery to God the Father.[172]  In Jewish

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[171] *Virtue*, 130.  This sentiment is echoed by the rabbis, "Everything that gives birth, nurses," Bekhorot 7b.  Cf. Inbar Raveh, *Feminist Rereadings of Rabbinic Literature* (Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press, 2014), 4. Philo is here involved in a polemic against infant exposure, a common practice in the Greco-Roman world from which Jews were recognized to abstain.  He argues that just as irrational animals should not be separated from newborns, neither should human mothers be separated from their children.   For more on Jews and exposure, see Adele Reinhartz, "Parents and Children: A Philonic Perspective," in *The Jewish Family in Antiquity* (ed. Shaye J. D. Cohen; BJS 289; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993),  61-88; 69-71.  Ross S. Kraemer, "Jewish Mothers and Daughters in the Greco-Roman World," in *The Jewish Family in Antiquity* (ed. Shaye J. D. Cohen; BJS 289; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993),  89-112; 108.

[172] Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 374.  F. J. J. van Rensburg, "Metaphors in the Soteriology in 1 Peter: Identifiying and Interpreting the Salvific Images," in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology* (ed. Jan G. van der Watt; NovTSup 121; Leiden: Brill, 2005),  409-435; 420.

literature, God, and other male figures, are, at times, depicted with maternal imagery. This imagery is used for a variety of reasons, such as to highlight the tender bond between Israel and God. In the New Testament, Paul describes himself in maternal terms on several occasions. This tradition illustrates that the author's use of maternal imagery in 1 Peter 2:1-3 is not without Jewish and early Christian precedents. Finally, this chapter will look at the significance of this maternal imagery in 1 Peter 2:1-3. It will be shown that the letter not only uses this imagery to construct the ethnic identity of believers, but also to bring out aspects of God's relationship with believers that are often associated with motherhood. Therefore, this Petrine imagery is a creative way of communicating theological truths, but is still in continuity with Jewish and early Christian traditions.

## 4.2    Breastfeeding and Ethnic Identity

In her 2012 article, Cynthia Chapman persuasively argues for the importance of breast milk as a kinship forging substance in the Hebrew scriptures.[173] She writes,

> Through breastfeeding, a mother or wet nurse was understood to confer upon an infant her own tribal identity and royal or priestly status. Biblical birth narratives of foundational male figures include breastfeeding episodes in order to bolster the hero's royal or priestly credentials and to establish his insider ethnicity.[174]

Chapman uses this insight to shed new light on a number of biblical texts such as the narratives of Sarah, Moses' mother, and Naomi. In each narrative, breast milk "is a substance that is understood to transmit ethnicity and social/ritual status from the mother to child."[175]

In Gen 21:7, Sarah exclaims in amazement, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would suckle (הֵינִיקָה; root ינק) children (בָנִים)? Yet I have born him a son in his old age." The main verb for breastfeeding is ינק, "*suck, of an infant at [its] mother's breast.*"[176] The reader

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[173] Cynthia R. Chapman, ""Oh that you were like a brother to me, one who had nursed at my mother's breasts." Breast Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," *JHebS* 12 / Article 7 (2012): 1-41. As Chapman shows, this cultural interpretation of breast milk was widespread. She documents evidence from literature of the Ancient Near East, Arab-Muslim, Old Irish, Trobriand, and Abkhazian cultures. See, Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 3-11. For a similar point in rabbinic literature, see also Raveh, *Feminist Rereadings of Rabbinic Literature*.

[174] Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 3.

[175] Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 26.

[176] BDB, 413. The substantive derived from this root refers to sucklings, or nursing infants; Num 11:12; Deut 32:25; 1 Sam 15:3; 22:19; Ps 8:3; Jer 44:7; Lam 2:11. In the Hiphil, the verb refers to one who nurses: Gen 21:7;24:59; 35:8; Exod 2:7; Deut 32:13; 1 Kgs 3:21; 2 Kgs 11:2; 2 Chr 2:11; Lam 4:3; Isa 49:23.

might expect an affluent woman like Sarah to employ a wet nurse, but the text is clear that Sarah herself breastfeeds Isaac.[177] Sarah's status and ethnicity make it imperative that she, not Hagar, nurse Isaac.[178]

Later rabbinic exegetes used the plural "children (בָנִים)" in Gen 21:7 as a peg from which to hang a discussion on conversion. The plural "children (בָנִים)" are proselytes.[179] Genesis Rabbah 53:9 says,

> Our mother Sarah was extremely modest. Said Abraham to her: "This is not a time for modesty, but uncover your breasts so that everyone may know that the Holy One, blessed be He, has begun to perform miracles." He uncovered her breasts and they were gushing forth as two fountains, and noble ladies came and suckled their children saying, "We are not worthy to suckle our children with the milk of this righteous man." The Rabbis said, whoever came for the sake of heaven became a God-fearer.

In this vignette, pagan noblewomen bring their children to Sarah to be nursed by her. It is more startling in light of other rabbinic teaching that forbids Jewish women from breastfeeding non-Jewish infants.[180] Levinson writes, "The noblewomen suckle their sons from the same milk as Isaac, thus becoming like the sons of one mother."[181] As he points out, the admission of the noble women "We are not worthy" was almost a technical term for conversion.[182] In this scene, the "God-fearer" is depicted as joining Israel. The gentile noble ladies bring their children to Sarah to be nourished from her milk and in so doing mark themselves as converts to Judaism.

The narrative of Moses' birth similarly contains fantastical elements. Chapman quips, "The story of Moses' mother securing the paid position as wet nurse to her own child is as

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[177] Affluent women in the ancient world often employed wet nurses. Mayer Gruber, "Breast-feeding Practices in Biblical Israel and in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia," *JANESCU* 19 (1989): 61-83. Also, Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 28.

[178] Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 26-30.

[179] Joshua Levinson, "Bodies and Bo(a)rders: Emerging Fictions of Identity in Late Antiquity," *HTR* 93 / 4 (2000): 343-372; 352-356.

[180] Tal Ilan, *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine* (TSAJ 44; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck), 120-121. See m*AZ* 2.1. For later debate on this issue, see Michele Klein, *A Time to be Born: Customs and Folklore of Jewish Birth* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2000), 198-199.

[181] He also observes, "As the Rabbis said in another context when attempting to appease the ruling authorities, 'are we not all the sons of one mother' (*b. Roš Hač.* 19a)." However, Levinson notes that this alliance is always of a subservient, secondary kind, "Bodies and Bo(a)rders," 354 n.36.

[182] *b. Yeb* 47a. Levinson, "Bodies and Bo(a)rders," 354.

preposterous as Sarah nursing a child from the age of ninety to ninety three."[183]  Even though

Pharaoh's daughter adopts Moses, she calls for one of the Hebrew women to nurse (ינק) the

infant (Exod 2:7, 9).  Moses' mother is summoned and agrees to nurse her own son for payment,

thus making mockery of the Egyptians.[184]

   Exodus makes explicit that Moses is the child of a Levite father and mother (2:1).[185]  "Like

Isaac, he is doubly marked with the ethnicity appropriate to his later eponym."[186]  Moses'

breastfeeding and nurture in the home of his Levite parents establishes Moses' true identity and

loyalty as a Hebrew and fits his future status as a leader of his people.

   Josephus embellishes the narrative here to dramatically emphasize the ethnic symbolism of

breastfeeding.[187]  After the king's daughter, here named Thermuthis, finds Moses, she orders an

Egyptian wet nurse be brought to nurse the infant.[188]  In *Antiquities* II.225-227 Josephus writes,
   And so Thermuthis ordered a woman to be brought to suckle the infant.  But when, instead of
   taking the breast, it spurned it, and then repeated this action with several women, Mariam,
   who had come upon the scene, apparently without design and from mere curiosity, said, "It is
   lost labor, my royal lady, to summon to feed the child these women who have no ties of
   kinship with it (μηδὲν πρὸς αὐτὸ συγγενὲς ἔχουσιν).  Wert thou now to have one of the Hebrew
   women  fetched, maybe it would take the breast of one of its own race (προσοῖτο θηλὴν
   ὁμοφύλου)."

Thermuthis ordered pagan wet nurses for Moses, but he *repeatedly* rejected them.  Mariam then

explained Moses' behavior and offered to find a Hebrew nurse, "of its own race" who had "ties

of kinship with it."  Josephus continues that when Moses is reunited with his mother, "the infant,

gleefully as it were, fastened upon the breast" (*Ant*. II.227).  Milk confers more than nutrition; it

is a symbolic embodiment of ethnic identity.  The infant Moses powerfully rejects the breasts of

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[183] Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 32.

[184] Glae A. Yee, ""Take this Child and Suckle it for Me": Wet Nurses and Resistance in Ancient Israel," *BTB* 39 / 4 (2009): 1-10; 8-9.  Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 31.

[185] Cf. Exod 6:20, where Moses' mother is named as a literal daughter of Levi.  Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 33.

[186] Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 32.

[187] A similar narrative is also found in *Exodus Rabbah* 1.  However, there was rabbinic debate on the issue of whether a non-Jew could nurse a Jewish infant.  For example, *Avoda Zara* 2,1 allows it.

[188] Yee, "Wet Nurses and Resistance," 5.

Thermuthis' nurses and everything that Egyptian identity entails. Despite his Egyptian upbringing, this narrative depicts Moses' true ethnic membership as an Israelite.

The final example to be discussed here is the narrative of Naomi in Ruth. At the conclusion of Ruth, Boaz marries Ruth, Naomi's widowed Moabite daughter-in-law, and they have a child, Obed. The very last verse of the book states, "Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David" (Ruth 4:22). The book of Ruth is ultimately about the ancestry of King David.[189] Many of the elements in the narrative are crafted to show the righteous character of Ruth and her inclusion into Israel. Yet by the end of the book, the narrator's focus is directed squarely at Naomi.[190] The final vignette depicts a dialog between the local women and Naomi. The narrative continues (4:16-17a),

> Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her bosom (בְחֵיקָהּ; root ינק), and became his nurse (לְאֹמֶנֶת; root אָמַן). And the women of the neighbourhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi (יֻלַּד־בֵּן לְנָעֳמִי)."

In verse 16, Naomi takes the child into her "bosom" (חֵיק), a term that denotes intimate contact (1 Kgs 1:2; Mic 7:5 cf. Gen 16:5; 2 Sam 12:8), such as a wife (Deut 28:54) or a mother (Num 11:12; 1 Kgs 3:20; Lam 2:12). The narrator then says that Naomi was a nurse (אֹמֶנֶת) to Obed. The feminine אֹמֶנֶת, from the root אָמַן, can be translated foster-mother or nurse (cf. 2 Sam 4:4).[191]

Because this chapter will presently look at how God (and other male figures) can be described with maternal language, it is worth noting here that the masculine אֹמֵן can be translated "foster-father" or "guardian" (Num 11:12; 2 Kgs 10:1, 5; Est 2:7; Isa 49:23).[192] In

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[189] Kirsten Nielsen, *Ruth A Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 1997), 21-28. Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 35. Indeed, this was already noted by Goethe, who wrote, "Beispielswillen jedoch gedenken wir des Buches Ruth, welches bei seinem hohen Zweck, einem Könige von Israel anständige, interessante Voreltern zu verschaffen, zugleich als das lieblichste kleine Ganze betrachtet werden kann, das uns episch und idyllisch überliefert worden ist." *West-östlicher Diwan,* J. W. Goethe: Berliner Ausgabe. Poetische Werke vol. 3, 2nd ed. Berlin 1973, 165. My thanks to Dr. Doering for showing this passage to me.

[190] So Nielsen, "the book can be interpreted as a conscious reaction to the smear campaign against him [David], the point being that everything that rivals regard as suspicious about the history of David's family points in fact to its special election by Yahweh," *Ruth*, 24.

[191] BDB, 52-53.

[192] Brenda Forster, "The Biblical ʾŌmēn and Evidence for the Nurturance of Children by Hebrew Males," 42 / 3 (1993): 321-331.

these cases, the term refers to the role of guardian, or foster-parent (2 Kgs 10:1, 5; note Mordecai in Est 2:7).[193]

However, some texts seem to engage more creatively with blending male and female roles, such as Num 11:12 and Isa 49:23.[194]  For example, though אֹמֵן is rightly translated "foster-father" or "guardian," rabbinic exegetes took advantage of the term's maternal meaning to describe Mordecai as breastfeeding Esther.[195]  In Num 11:12 (see below), Moses asks, "Did I bring [the people] forth, that thou shouldst say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom (בְחֵיקֶךָ, root חֵיק), as a nurse carries the suckling child (הָאֹמֵן)?"  Or, for example, Isa 49:23a, "Kings shall be your foster fathers (אֹמְנַיִךְ), and their queens your nursing mothers (מֵינִיקֹתַיִךְ)."  The parallelism is suggestive.[196]

In Ruth, the narrator goes out of his way to thrice describe Naomi in a maternal relationship to Obed: she takes the child into her bosom, she nurses him, and the village women proclaim Obed as her son.  Chapman summarizes,

> The birth story of Obed resembles those of Isaac and Moses for the simple reason that we once again have an outlandish story of breastfeeding in the context of a narrative about a foundational royal figure who could be viewed as tainted by foreignness.[197]

The births of Isaac, Moses, and Obed are all endowed with national significance; their births and upbringing, therefore, are part of Israel's national foundation story.  Chapman allows that Naomi's act may be symbolic, but she stresses the power of the symbol when she writes, "Whether literal or symbolic, Naomi's breastfeeding is the ritual action required to confer upon

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[193] With Chapman, "Mordecai, however, plays the role of both mother and father to Ester, and the term אמן is used in a literary context where Esther's hidden Jewish identity is linked to the time she spent under Mordecai's 'guardianship (בְאָמְנָה אִתּוֹ),'" "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 37. See Esth 2:20.

[194] So Chapman argues, "Still, there is sufficient evidence for understanding אמן, even in its masculine form, to have a base meaning rooted in the idea of breastfeeding," "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 36-38.

[195] "R. Judan said: At one time Mordecai went around among all the nursing women, but just then he could not fine one for [the infant] Esther. So he himself gave her suck," (*Gen. Rab* 30, 8; quoted from Raveh, *Feminist Rereadings of Rabbinic Literature*, 13.).  Raveh continues, "Admittedly, it is recorded that when one Sage taught this midrash his colleagues began to laugh, but he responded in all seriousness, citing the Mishna in tractate Makhshirim, which states that 'the milk of a male is ritually permissible' as proof of the possibility of such a situation," Raveh, *Feminist Rereadings of Rabbinic Literature*, 13. Cf. Makhshirim, 6, 7.

[196] Through this imagery, the royal foster parents commute their royal to Israel.  Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 11-17, 36-37.  See also Isa 60:16

[197] Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 35.

Obed unquestionable Judean ethnicity."[198]  In each of the narratives of the births of Isaac, Moses, and Obed, breastfeeding plays a role in marking the child as a legitimate member of ethnic Israel.[199]  Each narrative draws attention to both parents as ethnic insiders: Abraham and Sarah as  descendants of Terah (Gen 11:27-31), Amram and Jochebed as descendants of Levi (Exod 2:1),[200] and, more obliquely, Naomi and Boaz as Ephrathites from Bethlehem (Ruth 1:1-2; 2:1). Nursing from the mother's milk symbolizes the child's reception into the nation, and marks the child, in these narratives, as a future leader of his people.

## 4.3      Cross-Gender Imagery: Feminine Men, Maternal God

As shown in previous chapters, the Hebrew Bible occasionally describes God as a Father or begetter.  The application of maternal imagery to God is even more uncommon.  However, as several scholars have pointed out, it does, nonetheless, appear on a few occasions.[201]  However, before looking at these examples it will be useful to clarify how cross-gender metaphors function and how they relate to their subjects.  Finally, this section will consider some examples of cross-gender imagery in Jewish and early Christian literature.

In his article, "Cross-Gender Imagery in the Bible," Al Wolters makes a helpful distinction between gender at a lexical level and gender at a grammatical level.[202]  Lexically, some words are clearly marked as male or female, such as "queen" and "bachelor."  The gender designation

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[198] Chapman, "Milk as Kinship-Forging Substance," 39.

[199] The breastfeeding is a symbolic, rather than a legal, act.  The breastfeeding thus functions within the narrative to mark the infant as a member of Israel.  There were debates in Tannaitic law about whether a Gentile woman was allowed to nurse a Jewish baby (t. Nid 2:5; m. A.Z. 2:1; t.A.Z. 3:3; t. Shab 9(10):22.  The latter text allows it if it is a case of life or death, which would imply that Gentile wetnurses were allowed when no suitable Jewish women were available.  Julius Preuss, *Biblisch-talmudische Medizin: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Heilkunde und der Kultur überhaupt* (Berlin: Verlag Von S. Karger, 1923), 474-475.

[200] Jochebed is specifically named as a daughter of Levi (Exod 6:20).

[201] Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), esp60-69. Foster, "The Motherhood of God." Al Wolters, "Cross-Gender Imagery in the Bible," *BBR* 8 (1998): 217-228.  Mayer Gruber, *The Motherhood of God and Other Studies* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).  Dille, *Mixing Metaphors*.  Carol Meyers, "Female Images of God in the Hebrew Bible," in *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament* (ed. Carol Meyers; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000),  525-528.

[202] Wolters, "Cross-Gender Imagery," 218-219.

of such a word, however, does not always correspond to the gender of the subject, "since it is possible, by way of exception, for a woman to be metaphorically called a king and for a man to be metaphorically said to give birth."[203] Grammatical features are a much more accurate way of assessing gender, what Wolters calls "gender designation."

Following Wolters, "gender designation" is "a grammatical feature of language and involves the use of gender-specific forms of such parts of speech as pronouns, articles, adjectives, and verbs."[204] Wolters writes, "these grammatical features, unlike the lexical items that we discussed…are reliable indicators of whether a given person is masculine or feminine and are thus independent of the phenomenon of cross-gender imagery." What this means is that even if God is described using feminine metaphors or imagery, God is still to be understood as male if the grammatical elements of the language identify him as male.[205] Therefore, with regard to Hebrew, "we can posit that grammatical gender consistently matches natural, or personal, gender."[206]

Jewish and early Christian literature is no stranger to cross-gender imagery.[207] For example, Ps 7:14 says, "Behold, the wicked man conceives evil (יְחַבֶּל־אָוֶן; ὠδίνησεν ἀδικίαν), and is pregnant with mischief (וְהָרָה עָמָל; συνέλαβεν πόνον), and brings forth lies (וְיָלַד שָׁקֶר; ἔτεκεν ἀνομίαν)." This verse seems to be echoed in Jas 1:14-15, "but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived (συλλαβοῦσα) gives birth to sin (τίκτει ἁμαρτίαν); and sin when it is full grown brings forth death (ἀποκύει

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[203] Wolters, "Cross-Gender Imagery," 218.

[204] Wolters, "Cross-Gender Imagery," 219.

[205] See also, Forster, "Biblical 'Ōmēn," 322.

[206] Wolters, "Cross-Gender Imagery," 220.

[207] For more examples, see Wolters, "Cross-Gender Imagery," 220-223. Wolters lists the following twelve examples: 2 Sam 17:8; Isa 13:8; 19:6; 33:11; Hos 13:13; Nah 3:13; Prov 8:30; Jer 3:2; Matt 23:37; Gal 4:19; 1 Thess 2:7; 5:3. In rabbinic literature, Mordecai is described as explicitly breastfeeding Esther, see fn. 195 above. Rabbinic literature also tells the story of a man who's wife dies in childbirth, leaving him with his infant son. Too poor to afford a wet-nurse, God fills the man's breasts with milk and he nurses his son (b. *Baba Metzia* 87a; b. *Shabbat* 53b). For some examples of divine maternal imagery in Clement of Alexandria and Ireneaus, see Michael Lattke, *Odes of Solomon: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 270-271.

θάνατον)."[208] Further on in Jas 1:17-18, the author contrasts evil procreation with divine generation, "Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will be brought us forth (ἀπεκύησεν) by the word of truth (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." In James, the destructive (de)generation of wickedness serves as a foil to divine generation through "the word of truth," note especially the repeated use of ἀποκυέω in 1:15 and 18.[209] Through conceptual and verbal similarities, divine regeneration is one example of a close relationship between James and 1 Peter.[210]

In Matthew 23:37, Jesus, still grammatically masculine (ὁ Ἰησοῦς), likens himself to a hen, a female animal.[211] By far, the most striking example of cross gender imagery in early Christian literature is found in the *Odes of Solomon* 19 which uses maternal imagery to describe the Trinity (*Ode* 19:1-4),[212]

> A cup of milk was offered to me,
> and I drank it in the sweetness of the Lord's kindness.
> The Son is the cup, and he who was milked, the Father,
> and [the one] who milked him, the Spirit of holiness.
> Because his breasts were full,

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[208] All three verbs are closely associated with procreation. ἀποκυέω has the primary meaning to "give birth, bear," BDAG, 94. συλλαμβάνω has a secondary meaning of "conceive in a sexual sense, of the woman...become pregnant," BDAG, 776. τίκτω has the primary meaning "bear, give birth," BDAG, 816-817.

[209] As Konradt observes, "the word is defined in James 1:18 more specifically as λόγος ἀληθείας, which fits well with the context of conversion theology, and ἀληθείας is also mentioned in the Petrine context (1:22). The expression 'word of truth' occurs at various points in the corpus Paulinum with reference to missionary proclamation, but never in the frameword of the interpretation of coversion as birth," Matthias Konradt, "The Historical Context of the Letter of James in Light of its Traditio-Historical Relations with First Peter," in *The Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition: A New Perspective on James to Jude* (ed. Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert W. Wall; Waco: Baylor, 200), 101-125; 106. For more on the relationship between James and 1 Peter, see fn. 40 below.

[210] Konradt has persuasively argued for a close relationship between 1 Peter and James. One example of this "close tradition-historical relationship" is the similarity between Jas 1:18-21 and 1 Pet 1:22-2:2. Though the terminology of regeneration is different, "the word is introduced as the effective medium for conversion only in James 1:18 and 1 Peter 1:23...PsJames and Peter apply a a bipartite scheme here, in which the Christian's reaction—initially occurring in conversion and constantly expected of him—to God's soteriological action is formulated concisely by referring to the break with the old life, indicated by the verb ἀποτίθεσθαι, in the negative part, and to a new existence in a positive demand," Konradt, "Historical Context of the Letter of James," 106.

[211] Wolters, "Cross-Gender Imagery," 222.

[212] See also *Od. Sol*. 8:16, "I fashioned their members, and my breasts I prepared for them, that they might drink my holy milk and live by it." Also, *Od. Sol*. 35:5-6, "I was carried like a child by its mother; and he gave me milk, the dew of the Lord."

and it was not desirable that his milk should be poured out/discharged for no reason/uselessly,
The Spirit of holiness opened his [viz., the Father's] bosom
and mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father.[213]

The Holy Spirit opened her bosom, and mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father. More examples of cross-gender could be added to these, but these are sufficient to demonstrate that the feminine experience of conception, pregnancy, birth and breastfeeding could be used as source domains for masculine target domains. This type of imagery was used of human male subjects, but also of God.

This thesis has already explored the Song of Moses (Deut 32), which describes God with paternal and maternal language: God fills the roles of both parents to Israel. In an indictment against Israel, Moses declares, "You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth" (Deut 32:18). The second part of this verse, "the God who gave you birth (מְחֹלְלֶךָ; τρέφοντός σε)" is described in exclusively maternal terms as Trible, Foster, and others have emphasized.[214] Trible writes, "The word *mᵉḥōl ᵉlekā* only designates a woman in labor, and this activity the poetry ascribes to the deity. With labor pains, God gave birth to Israel."[215] With Wolters, we can say that feminine imagery is used of God, here אֵל, but that he remains grammatically masculine throughout. Consistently, the LXX translation, "θεοῦ τοῦ τρέφοντός σε" is also grammatically masculine.

In a more elliptical way, God is described in maternal terms in Num 11:12-15. In his exasperation over the Israelites, Moses says to the Lord,

Did I conceive (הָרִיתִי; ἐν γαστρὶ ἔλαβον) all this people? Did I bring them forth (יְלִדְתִּיהוּ; ἔτεκον), that thou shouldst say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries the suckling child (כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא הָאֹמֵן אֶת־הַיֹּנֵק; ὡσεὶ ἄραι τιθηνὸς τὸν θηλάζοντα), to the land which thou didst swear to give their fathers?

These verses are full of the language of conception, birth, and child-minding; in short, maternity. In a series of images, Moses uses the progressive stages of maternity to make his case before God. Moses first asks, "Did I conceive (הָרִיתִי; ἐν γαστρὶ ἔλαβον) all this people?" In

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[213] Trans. Lattke, *Odes of Solomon*, 268.

[214] Trible, *Rhetoric of Sexualtiy*, 63. Foster, "The Motherhood of God," 100-101. Dille, *Mixing Metaphors*, 37.

[215] Trible, *Rhetoric of Sexualtiy*, 63.

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Hebrew, the verb הָרָה is the technical term for conception and pregnancy.[216]  The LXX translates this with a common idiom for pregnancy (ἐν γαστρὶ ἔλαβον).[217]  Moses asserts that he did not become pregnant with this people; thereby implying that the metaphorical conception of, and therefore real responsibility for, this people belongs to God.[218]

Moses does not stop at conception.  In his second rhetorical question he continues, "Did I bring him forth (יְלִדְתִּיהוּ; ἔτεκον)?"  The Qal of יָלַד most often means to give birth, though it is occasionally used with the masculine meaning, "to beget."[219]  The context here strongly suggests the maternal meaning.  The implied negative answer to Moses' rhetorical answer is used for rhetorical force as Moses goes on to demand why he is treated like a mother or childminder if Israel is not in fact his child.  If Israel is indeed God's problem, then, Moses asks, why does God make the following demands, "Carry them in your bosom (בְּחֵיקֶךָ שָׂאֵהוּ; Λαβὲ αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν κόλπον σου), as a nurse carries the suckling child (כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא הָאֹמֵן אֶת־הַיֹּנֵק; ὡσεὶ ἄραι τιθηνὸς τὸν θηλάζοντα)..."

The Lord is like a birthmother and nurse to the nation.  It is the Lord that gave birth to them and it is therefore the Lord's responsibility to care for them as a mother cares for her nursing child.  However, the הָאֹמֵן, the child-minder or foster-father, is grammatically masculine.[220]  God is like a birthmother or nurse, but he is still a masculine subject.  The masculine הָאֹמֵן is elsewhere used to mean foster-father, child-minder, or guardian in the Scriptures (2 Kgs 10:1, 5;

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[216] With reference to paternal roles, Gesenius's lists only examples of the word in the plural when it functions as a zeugma for the roles of both parents together.  Gesenius does not include any use of the word referring solely to the act of fathering.  Sameul Prideaux Tregelles, *Gesenius's Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (London: Bagster & Sons, 1881), 231.  Also, M. Ottoson, "הָרָה," in *TDOT* (ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978),  458-461.

[217] For sample of texts from the Scriptures and New Testament, see Gen 16:4, 5, 11; 25:21, 23; Mt 1:18, 23; 24:19; Mk 13:17; Lk 21:23; 1 Th 5:3; Rev 12:2.

[218] Trible, *Rhetoric of Sexualtiy*, 69. Dille, *Mixing Metaphors*, 35-36.

[219] For examples of יָלַד in Qal meaning to give bear or give birth, see Gen 3:16; 4:1, 2, 17, 20, 22, 25.  Occasionally, the verb is used in Qal for the father's role, see Gen 4:18 x 3.

[220]  So Forster, "While some feminist scholars wish to assign this description to the motherhood of God (and Moses), philologically, had the Bible intended to convey a mother-nurturing image, a form *ʾōmenet* would have been used, as indeed, the case in Ruth 4:16 and 2 Sam. 4:4, where the referents are women.  However, here in Numbers 11:12 and in seven other verses, the masculine form is used," Forster, "Biblical 'Ōmēn," 322.

Isa 49:23; Est 2:7) to refer to a man who looks after and cares for children.[221] הָאֹמֵן, therefore, is dependent on the metaphor of childcare in general but it is not calling God a birthmother or wet-nurse. The masculine form here and elsewhere disqualifies the interpretation of "breastfeeding." When the author of the Hodayot echoes this passage (see below), he consistently uses אמן.[222] Numbers 11:12 therefore is an example of a cross-gender metaphor because it uses feminine imagery of a masculine subject.

Another elliptical reference to God as mother is found in Ps 27:10, "For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me up." In this text, God is favorably compared with both parents, but the second verb governing LORD is specifically masculine. The comparison between human parents and God is found in a more elaborate form in Isa 49:15. There, the Lord asks, "Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget." YHWH is like a mother, in fact, YWHW is better than human parents. Sarah Dille writes,

> In 49.14-15 YHWH is portrayed in terms of the nursing mother…The most obvious association of the nursing mother is one who cares for her child, feeds, nurtures, and has compassion. A closer examination reveals that in this unit a *good mother* is one who *does not forget*. YHWH is not just described in terms of a mother, but YHWH is either the model mother or something better than a mother (in contrast to bad mothers, such as Zion, insofar as YHWH does not forget).[223]

Human mothers do not forget or neglect their own children. Yet, even if a human mother neglects her own child, the Lord will never neglect Israel.

The speaker in the Hodayot echoes Ps 27:10 in 1QH^a XVII, 34-36.[224] The speaker says in 1QH^a XVII, 34-36,

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[221]Forster, "Biblical 'Ōmēn," 322. Alfred Jepsen, "אָמַן," in *TDOT* (ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 292-323; 294. Tregelles, *Gesenuis's*, 58.

[222] For אמן in the Dead Sea Scrolls, see 1QH 15:21, 22; 17:31, 36; CD XI, 11; 4Q179 lii12.

[223] Dille, *Mixing Metaphors*, 176.

[224]Lutz Doering, "God as Father in Texts from Qumran," in *The Divine Father: Religious and Philosophical Concepts of Divine Parenthood in Antiquity* (Themes in Biblical Narrative 18; Leiden: Brill, 2014), 107-135; 123, cf. Isa 163:116. In her study of allusions to Scripture in the Hodayot, Julie Hughes suggests that Ps. 27:10 may be a gnomic allusion in the hymn. She more firmly links Isa 49:15 to this hymn based on formal and semantic indicators. Further, Hughes suggests that imagery of Naomi from Ruth 4:15-16 is used to fill out the image. Julie Hughes, *Scriptural Allusions and Exegesis in the Hodayot* (STDJ 59; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 166-167. Cf, Jacob Cherian, "The Moses at Qumran: The מורה הצדק as the Nursing-Father of the יחד," in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed.

For my father did not acknowledge me, and my mother abandoned me to you, but you are a father to all the children of your truth and you rejoice over them as a woman loves her nursing child, and like a foster-father (וכאומן) you sustain of all your creatures in (your) bosom.[225]

In this text, the speaker laments first his father then his mother. He minimizes the significance of his human parents compared to his dependence upon the Lord. The speaker then further differentiates between the "children of your truth" and "all your creatures in (your) bosom." Doering concludes, "The section clearly implies a restriction of God's fatherhood in the full sense to this particular group, as which members of the yaḥad will have seen themselves."[226]

Human parents are ultimately unable to teach their children truth since truth comes from God alone.[227] This meditation seems to be part of the author of the Hodayot's greater struggle with the human condition of mortality.[228] Humans, those who are "born of women," are necessarily separate from God.[229] In order to find truth, the speaker must turn to God, who loves "all the children of your truth." In this way, God is superior to human parents and metaphorically takes over the roles of both parents in caring for them and teaching truth to them. Thus, the poet suggests that God's activity is comparable to a mother's, though, as Doering notes, "he shies away from an outright *identification* of God as 'mother.'"[230]

On top of this, it is fascinating that only a few verses earlier in the Hodayot, the speaker applied the imagery of a foster-father to himself in relation to the community. The teacher says in 1QH<sup>a</sup> XV, 23-25,

James H. Charlesworth; The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Community; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 351-375.

[225] Trans. Hartmut Stegemann and Eileen Schuller, *1QHodayot<sup>a</sup>* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), 233.

[226] Doering, "God as Father in Texts from Qumran," 123.

[227] As Maston notes, the yaḥad sought to overcome this problem within the community. He writes of the present and eschatological salvation, "In the current age, salvation consists (at least) of joining the human community of the redeemed, possessing knowledge, and being in a state of purity despite one's sinfulness," Maston, *Divine and Human Agency*, 82.

[228] Maston, *Divine and Human Agency*, 80-123.

[229] The speaker refers to humans as those who are born of women. Maston notes that this phrase comes from Job and "indicates the frailty and mortality of humanity (14.1; 15.14; 25.4)," *Divine and Human Agency,* 84. For example, see 1QH<sup>a</sup> V, 20; XXI 1, 8; XXII 12. Cf. 1QH<sup>a</sup> IX 21-22; XI 6-13, XII 29-31. Elsewhere in the DSS, see IQS XI 21; possibly 4Q482 4; 4Q501 5. Cf. Gal 4:4.

[230] Doering, "God as Father in Texts from Qumran," 123.

...and you have made me a father to the children of kindness and like a foster-father (וכאומן) to the people of good omen. They opened the mouth like a nurs[ing child] (כיונ[ק]) and like the playing of an infant child in the bosom of its foster-father (אומניו).[231]

Here, the speaker uses language of himself in relation to the community that he later uses to describe the relationship of God to himself. Though the speaker relates to the community as a foster-father to an infant, when the speaker discusses his relationship to God, it is he, the speaker who is the infant and God who is the carer.[232] However, the speaker still acknowledges that "you have made me a father." God has assigned him this position. Thus, the speaker is "like a foster-father" to the community, while God is its true father, superior to human parents.

Beverly Roberts Gaventa has cited this text from Qumran as the closest parallel to Paul's maternal imagery because the speakers, Paul and the Teacher, do not just use feminine imagery in a remote way, but apply it to themselves.[233] Further, Otto Betz has argued that the imagery of the pregnant woman giving birth earlier in the Hodayot is an analogy for the relationship of the teacher to the community.[234] The author of the Hodayot was clearly engaging with the wide-ranging potential of the imagery of pregnancy, birth, and cross-gender imagery.

Two further texts from Isaiah compare God to a mother. In Isa 42:14, the Lord says, "For a long time I have kept still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in travail, I will grasp and pant." In this verse, the Lord is comparing his imminent action to the birth pangs of a pregnant woman.[235] A few chapters later in Isa 45:9-10, an elliptical reference to God as father and mother is found. The text says,

"Woe to him who says to his father, 'What are you begetting?' or to a woman, 'With what are you in travail?'" Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: "Will you question me about my children, or command me concerning the work of my hands?..."

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[231] Trans. Stegemann and Schuller, *1QHodayot^a*, 214, for textual notes, see 207.

[232] Hughes, *Scriptural Allusions*, 178. For a study of the use of feminine imagery as applied to male subjects, see Wolters, "Cross-Gender Imagery," 217-228.

[233] Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 24-25.

[234] Otto Betz, "Die Geburt der Gemeinde durch den Lehrer," *NTS* 3 / 4 (1957): 314-326; 320.

[235] For more on this text, see Dille, *Mixing Metaphors*, Chapter 3: "Like a Woman in Labor: Isaiah 42:47-17," 41-73. Gruber, *The Motherhood of God*, 8-9.

Implicitly, the author is comparing the LORD to a father and mother.[236]  Just as it would be

absurd for a situation in these verses to ever happen, it equally absurd for human beings to

contend with God about his governance of the world.

These texts show that the Hebrew scriptures contain several descriptions of God which

describe him with maternal imagery or language.  Evidence from Second Temple sources that

describes God in maternal terms is very uncommon.  An earlier chapter explored Philo's

description of God as father of the universe, while its mother "was the knowledge possessed by

its Maker" (*Drunkenness* 30).  While Philo is comfortable attributing various forms of

fatherhood to God, motherhood is the domain of Divine Wisdom, a divine hypostasis, but

distinct and subordinate to the divine identity.

Though the Scriptures describe God as being like a nursing mother, it seems that Jews of the

Second Temple period avoided this comparison, perhaps out of a desire to avoid any comparison

with Isis or other goddess cults since *Isis lactans* was a very common depiction of the

goddess.[237]  Besides the above mentioned text from the Hodayot, Philo occasionally describes

God as a nurse. Speaking of Philo, Corrington writes,

> He also frequently speaks of both God and the Stoic "right reason" (ὀρθὸς λόγος) as "nurses,"
> and not simply as *paidagogoi* responsible for the intellectual and moral upbringing of the
> "children." For example, in *De congr.* 171(30).4, commenting on the providing of manna in
> Deut 8:2-3, Philo declares that "(God) provided them when they were unable to live without
> nourishment; for he is good and the source of goods, benefactor, savior, nurse, bringer of
> wealth, provider of great gifts." In *De migr. Abr.* 24.13, God as nurse is the source of
> Wisdom: "For he is the one who nourishes and nurses (τροφεὺς καὶ τιθηνός) wise deeds, words
> and thoughts."[238]

As Corrington demonstrates, the language of God as nurse was current in the ancient world.  It

was contemporary in the cults of Isis and Cynic philosophers who described themselves as

"nurses" responsible for the education of their students.[239]  Thus, the author of 1 Peter may have

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[236] For more on this text, see Dille, *Mixing Metaphors*, Chapter 5, "The Divine Artisan: Isaiah 45.49-13", 102-127.  Gruber, *The Motherhood of God*, 7-8.  Foster, "The Motherhood of God," 98-99.

[237] Cf. Corrington, "Milk of Salvation," 393-420, 412.

[238] Corrington, "Milk of Salvation," 406-407.  Cf. *Leg. Allegor*. III.177.

[239] Corrington, "Milk of Salvation," 407.  Cf. Abraham J. Malherbe, ""Gentle as a Nurse": The Cynic Background to 1 Thess ii," *NovT* 12 (1970): 203-217.  For a rebuttal to Malherbe, see Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 21-23.

been influenced by material from a variety of different sources and traditions, but it is important to note that there is Isaianic precedent for his use of the parental image of God, and that this language was still being engaged at some level by the Qumran community in their meditative exegesis of Scripture.

On several occasions the Apostle Paul uses the imagery of a mother or wet-nurse to describe his relationship to different communities. Beverly Roberts Gaventa has drawn attention to seven occasions in Paul's writings where he uses feminine metaphors: 1 Thess 2:7; 5:3; Gal 1:15; 4:19; 1 Cor 3:1-2; 1 Cor 15:8; Rom 8:22.[240] For example, 1 Thess 2:7 says, "For we became infants in your midst, as if a nurse taking care of her own children."[241]

Especially relevant is 1 Cor 3:1-2, "But, brothers and sisters, I could not speak with you as spiritual persons but only as fleshly persons, as infants in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, for you could not take solid food, and even now you cannot."[242] Gaventa notes that Paul's use of this imagery creative and distinct because he applies it to himself.[243] Paul uses this image to emphasize that it is not just the content or quality of the food that matters, "it also concerns the one who feeds them. And the language is unequivocal: Paul is the nursing mother of the church."[244] As Gaventa explains, Paul is using the image of the nursing mother to describe his apostolic vocation in relation to the Corinthian church. The imagery of the nursing mother is a particularly apt way of describing a relationship of care and nurture, which is very similar to the use of the wet-nurse image in 1 Peter. It describes continued care and nourishment towards growth and maturity. As Gaventa notes, paternal language is useful for referring to the initial act of conversion, but maternal images always involve extended amounts of time.[245]

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[240] Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 4; 1-62.

[241] Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, "Apostles as Infants and Nurses," 17-28.

[242] Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, "Mother's Milk and Ministry," 41-50.

[243] Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 45.

[244] Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 45.

[245] Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 6.

In the New Testament, the language of breastfeeding and nursing also appears in Hebrews where the believers are chastised for still requiring milk and not solid food. Hebrews 5:12-14 says,

> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of God's word. You need milk not solid food; for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the words of righteousness, for he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their faculties trained by practice to distinguish good from evil.

As in 1 Cor 3:1-2, Heb 5:12-14 makes clear that the recipients of this letter are being chastised for their immaturity. These believers should be mature enough to handle advanced spiritual teaching, but instead they are still being weaned on the basics of the faith. This negative use of milk language highlights a significant difference between 1 Peter and the other New Testament writings. In 1 Peter, the language of nursing is not used pejoratively. Instead, believers are told to "crave" the pure, spiritual milk of the word. It is not something believers will eventually outgrow. Instead, it should describe their status as children who are continually striving after the things of God.

## 4.4    Nursed to Salvation: 1 Peter 2:1-3

A nursing infant is a growing infant. In the same way, believers are to crave the pure, "logical" milk because it is what brings them life and enables them to grow. The two themes of life and growth are significant elements in Peter's use of the nursing infant image. These twin themes link 1 Peter 2:1-3 with the metaphors of regeneration in 1 Peter 1 and connect the image to the architectural and ethnic imagery in 2:4-10.

Immediately after his discussion of the imperishable seed, the word of God explained through a quotation of Isa 40:6-8, the author launches into ethical instruction, "So put away all malice and all guile and insincerity and envy and all slander. Like newborn babes (ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη), long for the pure spiritual milk (τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα), that by it you may grow up into salvation (αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν)" (2:1-2). Though much could be said about these verses, this chapter will limit its analysis to what relevant for the remit of this study.

First, the terminology in 2:2-3 emphasizes the similarity between believers and newborns. Believers are now exhorted "like newborn babes" (ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη). The word ἀρτιγέννητα appears only once in all Greek literature before 1 Peter.[246] After 1 Peter, the word appears almost exclusively in Patristic quotations or allusions to 1 Peter.[247] The term ἀρτιγέννητα is composed of ἄρτι plus γεννητός, and appropriately means "just born or made."[248] As a compound, the word evokes ἀναγεννάω from 1:3, 23. Yet again, the author has crafted a word play loaded with theological content: just as believers have been begotten anew, they are now also like newly born children. Βρέφος has the primary meaning of a child that is still unborn, or a fetus.[249] Only in its secondary meaning does it refer to a very small child, newborn, or infant.[250] While the phrase ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη may be "technically redundant", it emphasizes the conceptual immediacy between believers' divine regeneration in 1:3, 22 and their dependence on the word of God.[251]

Second, the status of being a newborn infant is not derogatory.[252] Those who have been rebegotten can positively think of themselves as nursing infants. Just as human infants are completely dependent on their mother, so are believers completely dependent on "pure spiritual milk" (τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα). As commentators have observed, the point of the image is not to highlight the believers' immaturity in faith, or their recent baptism, but rather to focus

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[246] Aristophanes, *Nomina aetatum (fragmenta)*, pg. 277. E. Miller, "Opuscles divers," LGM repr. Hildesheim: Olm, 1965: 274-280.

[247] In the first three centuries, see for example, Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 1:6; Origen, *Comm. Joan.* 13:33; *Comm. Mat.* 12:31; 13:26, 27; 16:25; *Frag. ep. 1 Cor.* 12; Eusebius, *Comm. Isa* 2:44, 50, 57.

[248] LSJ, 249.

[249] BDAG, 183. For examples from Jewish sources, see Sir 19:11; Ps.-Phocyl. 184; Jos. *Antiquities*, 20, 18; Lk 1:41, 44.

[250] BDAG, 183-184. For examples from Jewish sources, see 1 Macc 1:61; 2 Macc 6:10; 4 Macc 4:25Test Sol. 13:3, 4; ApcSed 9; ApocEsdr p. 28, Jos. *War*, 6, 205; Lk 2:12, 16; 18:15; Ac 7:19; 2 Tim 3:15.

[251] Elliott, *I Peter*, 399. J. Francis, "'Like New Born Babes' — The Image of the Child in 1 Peter 2:2-3," *ST* III (1978): 111-117; 113.

[252] As opposed to other biblical texts where the image of feeding on milk has a negative connotation (1 Cor 3:1-2; Heb 5:12-14), no such connotations are found in 1 Peter. As Achtemeier notes, the interpretation that all Christians in Asia Minor were recent converts "defies imagination," *I Peter*, 145. For more, see Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 154. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 146. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 83-84.

attention on their continued and complete dependence on God the way a newborn is completely dependent on his mother.[253]

Third, the metaphor applies to all believers, regardless of their progress in spiritual growth; all believers are sustained by the word of God and should desire it as their source of life.[254] "The metaphor's point of comparison is not the smallness or innocence of a baby, but its strong and instinctive longing for a mother's milk."[255] The pure, "wordly" milk is just as necessary for the life of believers' as a mother's milk is for the life of an infant, or, as Goppelt writes, "it also corresponds to actual need."[256] It is precisely *because* all believers, not just converts, are to crave (and continue to crave) divine milk that all Christians are being made into one people of God. All believers are nourished by the same milk in order to become one people. To use Chapman's language, the spiritual milk is a spiritual "kinship forming substance."

Fourth, the author has also conceptually developed the metaphor of regeneration to encompass not only the origin of believers but also to describe their ongoing life as Christians. Though they never outgrow their need for the divine milk, the context of 1 Peter 2:1-3 is one of growth. As the letter makes clear, both the origin and continued sustenance of believers comes from the word of God. As Elliott writes, "The phrase 'newborn babies' continues the theme of rebirth (1:3, 22); the previous metaphor of word-as-seed (means of rebirth) is balanced by the metaphor of word-as-milk (means of nourishment); and the focus now advances from the origin of Christian life to the process of its growth."[257] Put succinctly, regeneration is not an end in itself, it is the beginning of new life, and that necessarily means growth.[258]

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[253] Most commentators reject the interpretation that these verses contain remnants of baptismal liturgy. Elliott, *I Peter*, 399. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 145. Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark), 126. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 84. Goppelt, *I Peter*, 130.

[254] Michaels, *1 Peter*.

[255] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 86.

[256] Goppelt, *I Peter*, 132.

[257] Elliott, *I Peter*, 395. Also, Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 126.

[258] Goppelt, *Der Erste Petrusbrief*, 131.

Thus, it is not surprising that that author develops the regeneration theme in the midst of ethical exhortation.[259] Believers must now grow into their new identity as obedient children by following the commands of God and by listening to his word. Having put to death the manifold vices of 2:1, they must "desire" (ἐπιποθήσατε) pure, spiritual milk. Michaels astutely picks up on the inherent contrast between the new object of Christian desire, the spiritual milk, and the desecrating objects of believers' previous desire.[260] "The imperative ἐπιποθήσατε is for Peter the recognition of legitimate 'desire,' the equivalent for Christian believers of the 'impulses' (ἐπιθυμίαι) that controlled them in the past (1:14; 2:11; 4:2-3)…"[261] By contrasting good desires with those of believers' previous existence, the author is sharpening the contrast between believers and other people, a contrast already seen in earlier parts of the letter.[262]

This contrast between good desires and bad desires is increased in light of Greco-Roman beliefs on breastfeeding, in which the milk provided the infant not only with nourishment but also with moral qualities.[263] Greco-Roman and Jewish authors believed that milk commuted the moral and intellectual properties of the nurse to the infant.[264] This is seen clearly in Greco-Roman texts on how to choose a wet-nurse.[265] The quality of the milk and the moral character of the nurse had a direct impact on the growth of the nursling. Children inherited traits from their fathers, but they are also deeply formed by the physical and moral qualities of the milk they received.[266]

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[259] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 126.

[260] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 86.

[261] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 86.

[262] Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 390-391.

[263] Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 389.

[264] For more, see below. Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 378-386.

[265] Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 380-386. Jennifer Houston McNeel, *Paul as Infant and Nursing Mother: Metaphor, Rhetoric, and Identity in 1 Thessalonians 2:5-8* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014), 74-77.

[266] While Tite correctly applies insights from the Greco-Roman world to the interpretation of 1 Peter, his conclusion regarding the numeric identity of the Petrine blood and milk, while completely consistent with current medical thinking of the time, is not supported by evidence within 1 Peter. The ancients did believe that menstrual blood were connected, but there does not seem to be evidence that this knowledge is applicable to 1 Peter. The blood in 1 Peter is described as "precious" (τιμίῳ, 1:19) while the milk is described as "'wordly' and pure (λογικὸν and ἄδολον). If the author were making medical connection between them, one would expect him to highlight this connection with more closely related vocabulary.

With this in mind, Tite examines the importance of the much debated adjectives of the "pure, spiritual milk" (τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα). The function of these adjectives is paraenetic; they are part of the author's exhortation strategy to call the audience to crave that which will aid them in the growth of virtue and aversion of vice. He writes,

> What constitutes bad milk, therefore, is milk that leads the nursling (= Petrine Christian) to vice rather than virtue; and it is this possibility of falling into vice that threatens the proper growth of the Christian into salvation.

Christians are to crave not just any milk, but the τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα. The two adjectives define the quality of the milk.[267] ἄδολος is composed of an alpha privative and δόλος, "deceit, guile," meaning "without deceit" or "unadulterated."[268] Just as ancient medical authors believed that impure milk would cause illness in infants, the author urges believers to crave only pure milk so that they would grow into salvation.[269] In 1 Peter, the author uses the adjective in a wordplay to contrast the quality of the milk with the vices they should put to death in their lives. As Michaels notes, the ἄδολον γάλα helps guard believers against vice in general and deceit (δόλος, 2:1) in particular. In light of their regeneration, believers are now called to leave behind wicked behavior and to crave the pure milk which will enable them to grow in virtue and to follow the example of Christ in whom no δόλος was found (οὐδὲ εὑρέθη δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ, 2:22). In other words, the wordplay between δόλος/ ἄδολος indicates that the adjectives are context specific. The same is true for λογικός.[270]

In the classical world, λογικός has two main meanings, the first is "rational, or having to do with reason," the second is "having to do with word or speech."[271] As McCartney has demonstrated, these two meanings can overlap.[272] These definitions are sometimes mediated by

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[267] Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 388.

[268] For examples of δόλος, see Mat 26:4; Mk 7:22; 14:1; Jn 1:47; Acts 13:10; Rom 1:29; 2 Cor 12:16; 1 Thes 2:3; Rev 14:5. Cf. BDAG, 21.

[269] Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 388-389.

[270] Elliott, *I Peter*, 400.

[271] For a full treatment of this issue, see Dan G. McCartney, "λογικός in 1 Peter 2,2," *ZNW* 82 / 1 (1991): 128-132. Cf. G. Kittel, "λογικός," in *TDNT vol. 4* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 142-143.

[272] He writes, "My conclusion from all this is that the very common meaning of 'rational' was often closely tied to the facility of speech," McCartney, "λογικός," 132.

the only other use of this word in the New Testament, Rom 12:1, where λογικός is taken to describe "spiritual" or "metaphorical" acts of worship.[273]

However, there is a growing consensus in Petrine studies that λογικός should be interpreted in this context as pertaining to words and verbal communication because of the immediate context.[274] Related to λόγος, the word recalls the phrase διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεοῦ in 1:23.[275] Conceptually, it is also connected to the theme of the "word of the Lord" (ῥῆμα κυρίου) which is a major them in 1:23-25.[276] This theme is reprised in 2:1-3 through the use of λογικός. As Elliott writes, both adjectives "are chosen to integrate the metaphor of milk as object of desire into a broader line of thought involving divine means of rebirth and its moral implications."[277] The preaching of the Gospel is the *means* by which believers have been begotten anew: it is the imperishable seed which was preached to them (1:23-25). As such, the word of God now defines the *quality* of the milk that believers are to crave.

Believers are to crave the pure, "wordly" milk so that they may grow up to salvation (εἰς σωτηρίαν). Elsewhere in 1 Peter, it was shown that the preposition εἰς often indicates goal or purpose. The εἰς has the same function here and echoes an identical phrase in 1:5 where the phrase develops the theme of regeneration.[278] The milk believers should crave is the milk they need to grow into members of the family of God and ultimately inherit their promised salvation (1:3).

Finally, though the imagery in 2:1-3 is very intimate, feminine and maternal, the main focal point of 2:1-3 is on the milk.[279] Up to this point, images of God as father have been dominant in

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[273] For the "spiritual" reading, see BDAG, 477. Kittel, "λογικός," 142. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 155. Goppelt, *I Peter*, 130. With nuance, Michaels, *1 Peter*, 86-90. Recently and fervently, Karen H. Jobes, "Got Milk? Septuagint Psalm 33 and the Interpretation of 1 Peter 2:1-3," *WTJ* 63 / 1-14 (2002).

[274] McCartney, "λογικός," 130-132. Also, Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 146-147. Elliott, *I Peter*, 400-401. Bigg, *St. Peter*, 126. Francis, "New Born Babes," 115.

[275] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 147. Elliott, *I Peter*, 400. Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 389-390. With nuance, Michaels, *1 Peter*, 87.

[276] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 147. Elliott, *I Peter*, 400-401.

[277] Elliott, *I Peter*, 401.

[278] See §2.4, "Begotten Anew: Divine Begetting in 1 Peter 1:3-5, 23," 81ff. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 147.

[279] Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 387.

the letter. Though paternal images continue after 2:1-3, the image of believers as nursing infants adds another dimension to this portrait. In this passage, God is not described as a mother or nurse per se, but is described with maternal imagery.[280] In sum, several elements are noteworthy.

First, by employing the imagery of the nursing infant to describe believers and their relationship with God, the author of 1 Peter still stands within traditional Jewish and early Christian use of cross-gender imagery. Though uncommon, Jewish and Christian texts could use feminine or maternal imagery of male subjects, even God. The author of 1 Peter is unusual in its development of this imagery to include breastfeeding, but absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. *Odes of Solomon* 19 demonstrates that at least some Christians continued, in highly stylized, metaphorical contexts, to use maternal imagery to describe God.

Second, the letter's use of theologically responsible language points towards the theological truth that God is not a human that he should be either male or female. God is not a big "man" in the sky, much less a heavenly "woman." He is a different kind of thing altogether, as later systematicians would insist. As neither male nor female, both maternal and paternal language can be used of God; in the image of God, he created them "male and female" (Gen 1:27).[281]

Third, the author takes this maternal imagery further by his suggestive quotation of Ps 33:9 LXX. In 2:3, the author concludes by reminding believers to crave the milk "for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord" (εἰ *ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος*). Following after the metaphor of nursing infants, the placement of this quotation is striking and suggestive. As Gaventa observes, metaphors are invitations; they provoke a response of acceptance or rejection from the reader.[282] If they are accepted, metaphors invite the reader to try a new way of seeing the subject, a

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[280] Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 374, 391.

[281] In fact, Phyllis Trible has pointed to Gen 1:27 as further evidence to support this claim. Gen 1:27 says that "God created humankind in his image; in the image of God created he him; male and female he created he them." Trible argues that this metaphor suggests that since both "male and female" are described as being "in the image of God," the feminine, as well as the male, can be used in a theologically defensible way to describe the mystery of God. Trible, *Rhetoric of Sexualtiy*, 12-23.

[282] Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 11-12.

metaphor "rearranges the furniture of the mind."[283]  Psalm 33:9 is here used as a poetic and suggestive conclusion to 2:1-3.  As Trible says, "such language is open to nuances, suggestions, hints, and guesses.  Rather than limiting a subject, it seeks a fullness with a connotative, but not a denotative, emphasis."[284]

The quotation of the Psalm follows directly after the exhortation to crave the milk and functions as the exhortation's motivation.[285]  Why are believers to crave this milk?  "For you have tasted the kindness of the Lord."  The word "taste" (γεύω) is evocative.  The language points to an identification between Christ and the milk, but without making this explicit.  The context has shown that the use of the adjective λογικός indicates that the milk is intimately related to the "word of God." The letter clarifies in 1:25, "that word is the good news which was preached to you."  At the same time, the content of that word is the message of the ministry, death, and resurrection of Christ.  In the 2:4-10, the author bounds from one metaphor to another, pulling together many different images in order to communicate truth through metaphor.  The point should not be to extract the metaphors in order to pull them apart, but to respond to the invitation to see the world through the lenses they present.  Similarly, the point here in 2:3 is not to differentiate between Christ and the message about Christ, but to recognize the inherent intimacy of "tasting" the goodness of Christ the way an infant tastes her mother's milk.  Since the author intentionally modified his quotation of Isa 40:8 (from θεός to κύριος), interpreted as the word which was preached, it follows that the κύριος in 2:3 refers to Christ.[286]  The letter strongly suggests that Christ is the object of the tasting.[287]  If the infants are the ones in need of nourishment, it is Christ that they are craving.

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[283] Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 11.

[284] Trible, *Rhetoric of Sexualtiy*, 15-16.

[285] Commentators generally agree that εἰ is causal rather than conditional since the accompanying verb is in the aorist tense and so refers to an event that occurred in the last.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 402.  Goppelt, *I Peter*, 132.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 143.  Kelly, *Epistles of Peter*, 86.  Norbert Brox, *Der erste Petrusbrief* (EKK 21; Zurich: Benzinger/Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1979), 93. Tite, "Nurslings, Milk and Moral Development," 387. Contra, Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 125.

[286] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 403.

[287] Kelly rightly, says, "If in a sense it is God's word, in a deeper sense it is Christ Himself, whom they receive in word and sacrament," Kelly, *Epistles of Peter*, 86.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 90.  Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 131.  Goppelt, *I Peter*, 133.

In sum, the image of the nursing infant is a development of the regeneration language in 1 Peter 1.  In the first chapter of his letter, the author grounded the identity of believers on the resurrection of Christ as the source of their regeneration and new life.  Now, in 1 Peter 2, the author develops the implications of that identity: it is not static, but requires growth, the kind of growth that should come naturally to a newborn.  As Jobes and Tite have shown, the placement of the image of the nursing infant within the paraenesis of 2:1-3 is not accidental, but central for the author's purpose of encouraging believers' moral development.  Believers have been redeemed from their previous life, now they are called to a new way of being.  As noted above, a similar idea is found in Jas 1:21, "therefore put away all filthiness and rank growth of wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον), which is able to save your souls."[288]  In both James and 1 Peter, regeneration moves believers out of their old ways of existence into a new existence through the generative word.

In conclusion, the metaphor of the nursing infant is a natural development of the regeneration theme.  Believers are ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα, like those who are "now born."  The imagery in 2:1-3 shifts from paternal to maternal semantic domains and associations, but the implication of this switch is that this maternal imagery is to be applied to the divine Father.  Believers who have been begotten must now be nursed and raised up "as obedient children."  This mothering will be a life-long process.  Following the same train of thought, the author's semantic and metaphorical shift from paternal to maternal imagery and language is accompanied by a similar theological shift from ontology to ethics, or, from status to behavior.  Believers have been rebegotten, now they must learn to live as members of the divine family.  However, it must be noted that for the author, theology and ethics are never very far apart; theology and ethics rather are mutually reinforcing. Nevertheless, in 2:1-3, his goal is on exhorting the recipients to good behavior, and to do this he combines paraenetic exhortation with the feminine metaphor of a nursing infant.  Finally, 2:1-3 is grounded on Christ.  Christ is the object which believers should crave and strive to emulate.  Several of these conclusions are useful devices for highlighting the connections

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[288] Konradt, "Historical Context of the Letter of James," 106.

between 2:1-3 and 2:4-10.  Specifically, the call to maturity and growth is a central feature of 2:4-10, as is a clear focus on Christ.

## 4 . 5     Conclusion

This chapter has sought to interpret 1 Peter 2:1-3 in light of its context in Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity.  Specifically, this chapter has argued that the imagery in 2:1-3 is an important, integrated part of the divine regeneration metaphor and contributes to the ethnic identity of believers.  This chapter examined two discrete bodies of evidence before turning to 1 Peter.  First, this chapter examined the significance of breastfeeding in the Hebrew scriptures and Second Temple Jewish literature.  In these texts, breastfeeding serves as a "kinship forming substance."  In the descriptions of Sarah, Jochebed, and Naomi nursing Isaac, Moses, and Obed, respectively, the breastfeeding marks the infants as full members of Israel, free from the "taint" of foreignness.  This line of reasoning is also found in Josephus, who expands Moses' birth narrative specifically to highlight this point.

This chapter also briefly surveyed some of the Greco-Roman material on the selection of a wet-nurse.  This literature demonstrates that breastfeeding in the ancient world was about more than just nutrition.  The nurse's milk communicated some of the physical and moral qualities of the nurse to the child.  In brief, the imagery in 1 Peter 2:1-3 should be read in light of both the context of ethnic membership as well as contemporary Greco-Roman attitudes on wet-nursing and child development.

This chapter then examined cross-gender imagery to demonstrate that such imagery was plentiful in Jewish and early Christian literature.  As the rabbinic example of Mordecai, who literally breastfed Esther shows (*Gen. Rab* 30, 8), this imagery could be startling, provocative, and humorous.  Cross-gender imagery is also found in the New Testament.  Paul uses feminine imagery of several occasions (1 Thess 2:7; 5:3; Gal 1:15; 4:19; 1 Cor 3:1-2; 1 Cor 15:8; Rom 8:22; see also Heb 5:12-14).

What is perhaps more surprising, to some, is that this language could, on occasion, also be applied to God.  Texts such as Deut 32:18 and Num 11:12-15 are the clearest examples (though

God himself always remains a grammatically male subject; see also Isa 42:14). The language of 1 Peter 2:1-3, therefore, was part of several colorful, polyvalent traditions that involved ethnicity, wet-nursing, and cross-gender imagery, particularly as it is applied to God. Each of these perspectives contributes to a rich interpretation of 1 Peter 2:1-3.

In 1 Peter 2:1, believers in are compared to newborn babes (ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη). Unlike other New Testament texts, this status is *not derogative*. Instead, all believers are corporately described as infants. As such, they have all partaken in divine milk which functions as a *kinship forging substance*. One milk marks them as members of one people.

By using the imagery of nursing infants, 1 Peter 2:1-3 used the cross-gender imagery to describe the relationship between believers and God. This Petrine imagery stands in continuity with other Jewish and early Christian traditions that can used maternal imagery of male subjects, even God.

1 Peter 2:1-3 is about growth and formation. Appropriately, it focuses on the ethical formation of believers. This process is begun through divine regeneration with the imperishable word and continued with the "worldly" milk. In line with the contemporary medical beliefs of the day, believers, like other infants, were influenced by the quality of the milk they received, here, the guileless, milk of the word (τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα). The guilelessness (ἄδολον) of the milk underlined the contrast between what believers were called away from (2:1) and what they were called to. The adjective λογικος continues and develops the theme of the word from 1:23-25 (λόγος; ῥῆμα) into 2:1-3. The word of God which was the means of believers' regeneration is now the means of the continued maintenance and growth.

With the use of Ps 33:9, the author hints that Christ is the milk which believers are to crave. This is not said directly, but the metaphor invites this interpretation. Christ is thus at the core of Christian formation and identity and is the pattern on which believers should model themselves.

# Chapter 5    From House to House of God: House and Cultic Language in 1 Peter 2:4-10

## 5 . 1    Introduction: Structure and Spiritual Formation

1 Peter 2:4-10 is one of the densest parts of the letter.  Packed with quotations and allusions, this passage applies cultic language to Christians (2:5-6), contains the so-called stone testimonium (2:4-8), and the author's clearest statement Christian ethnic identity (2:9).  In these verses, the author develops what it means to grow up in the family of God.  He uses these verses to sharpen the antithesis between those who respond to the word with obedience and those who reject it.  The previous chapter emphasized growth; this chapter continues this theme by describing the goal towards which this vivid language is aimed: the formation of the people of God.

In 1 Peter 2:4-10, the author weaves together the themes of household, family, temple, priesthood, and nation to express the fullness of Christian identity.  This chapter will begin with an examination of the οἶκος language in 1 Peter 2:4-6 (§5.2-3).  At 2:5, the author uses the dual meaning of οἶκος to transition smoothly from the semantic domain of the house to that of the temple, the house of God.  Next, this chapter will briefly survey "community-as-temple" language at Qumran and the New Testament in order to trace the some of the streams of tradition which may lie behind 1 Peter (§5.4-5).  Finally, this chapter will look at 1 Peter 2:4-10 in detail to examine how the construction of Christian ethnic identity concludes the author's theme of divine regeneration (§5.6-9).

## 5 . 2    From House to House of God

In 2:4-5, the author shifts from house to temple language.  He does this by playing on the double meaning of οἶκος, which can mean both "house" and "temple."[1]  In 1 Peter 2:4-6 the author says,

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[1] Nijay K. Gupta, "A Spiritual House of Royal Priests, Chosen and Honored: The Presence and Function of Cultic Imagery in 1 Peter," *PRSt* 36 / 1 (2009): 61-76; 72.

Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:
> "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and he who believes in him will not be put to shame."

πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι λίθον ζῶντα ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδεδοκιμασμένον, παρὰ δὲ θεῷ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον, καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶτες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον ἀνενέγκαι πνεθματικὰς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους θεῷ διὰ Ἰσοῦ Χριστοῦ. διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ·
> ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Ζιὼν λίθον ἀκρογωνιαῖον, ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ.

Because these verses combine two metaphors using οἶκος, the community as family/house and the community as temple, this section of 1 Peter is particularly dense. In order to trace this shift from house/family to temple, it will be useful to look first at the meaning of οἶκος and then at Jewish precedents for the "spiritualization" of temple worship, namely the Qumran community's self-understanding of their common life as an embodiment of the temple.[2]

J. H. Elliott famously disavowed understanding οἶκος πνευματικός in 2:5 as a temple.[3] Because the opposite is advocated here, it will be useful to review his arguments against this proposition. Elliott argued that the context of 1 Peter and the tradition of interpretation "indicate that οἶκος meant not 'temple' in a cultic connotation but 'house' or 'household.'"[4] First, Elliott argued that the most natural meaning of οἶκος in 1 Peter and the rest of the New Testament is "house" or more particularly, "household."[5] This interpretation is strengthened by the prevalence of "household" language and exhortation, such as in 2:13-3:9. Second, he argued that οἶκος cannot mean temple because the metaphor would be inconsistent if Christians were described as both the stones of the temple and its priests.[6] Third, he observed that when

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[2] The term "spiritualization" is deeply problematic. In a forthcoming publication, I argue that it should be replaced with "non-normative." See " 'Spiritual' Sacrifices and Living Temples: Christian Identity in 1 Peter 2:5" in *Identity in the Later New Testament: Hearing the Muted Voices of the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews* (eds. K. Hockey, M. Pierce, F. Watson; LNTS; London: T&T Clark), *forthcoming*.

[3] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 157-159. Elliott, *I Peter*, 415-418.

[4] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 157.

[5] Elliott draws attention to 1 Pet 4:17, where he writes that the phrase "τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ obviously denotes not a temple but the Christian congregation in the communal sense," Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 158. While Elliott is correct that the primary meaning of οἶκος in 4:17 is "household", there is nothing to stop it also having cultic connotations.

[6] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 162.

Christians are described as the "temple of God" in the New Testament, οἶκος is never used.[7]
Fourth, he questioned the significance of the stone-passages for the interpretation of οἶκος.
Elliott grants that the stone passages are themselves connected with Messianic thinking and the
Temple elsewhere. However, the fact that they are nowhere else connected with the term οἶκος,
for Elliott, detracts from the possibility that this context is significant for the meaning of οἶκος.
Finally, he argues that based on the structure of the passage, "οἶκος πνευματικός represents the
author's interpretation of βασίλειον" which connects with the image of building rather than
priesthood.[8]

It must first be noted that Elliott's argument from the structure of the passage depends on
βασίλειον being a substantive rather than an adjective, a view rightly rejected by most
commentators.[9] Further, even if βασίλειον were a substantive, Elliot's proposed structure, and its
subsequent interpretation, would be overly complex and unconvincing.[10]

To tackle his arguments in reverse order, Elliott's fourth argument about the absence of other
texts that use οἶκος and stone passages is unconvincing. Absence of evidence is not evidence of
absence. This argument is significantly weakened by the clear cultic terminology in 2:5. The
same reasoning can also be applied to Elliott's third argument. Elliott's last two arguments from
metaphor and terminology are more interesting. However, his argument that the metaphor
cannot sustain the duality of Christians as the temple and the priests in the temple
misunderstands the way metaphor functions. As Achtemeier noted, the author of Hebrews has
no problem with describing Christ as a heavenly high priest and the heavenly sacrifice.[11]
Metaphors are tools that help the author communicate a theological reality that is larger than the
metaphor itself. Elliott falls before his own hurdle since he concludes that οἶκος should be

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[7] However, בית is used with the stone passages in 1QS 8:4b-10a . For more, see §5.4.1, "Community as Temple in the Serekh ha-Yaḥad," 174f. Cf. Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 159.

[8] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 149, 153.

[9] For example, the following commentators disagree with Elliott on this: Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 164. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 108. Dubis, *I Peter*, 56. Bigg, *St. Peter*, 134. Agreeing with Elliott, Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 165-166.

[10] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 159.

[11] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 159.

understood as both "house" (in an architectural sense) and "household" (in a communal sense). If believers cannot be both the temple and the priests in the temple, then it would follow that they cannot be the house and the residents in the house. Elliott's last argument questions whether οἶκος can mean temple. This argument is addressed in the upcoming section.

## 5.3    House of God: The Meanings of οἶκος

In its most basic sense, οἶκος means "house," but it can also take on the meanings of "household", "family/clan", or "house of God, temple."[12] The range of meaning found in Jewish and Christian literature for οἶκος reflects a similar semantic range of the Hebrew בַּיִת.[13] In the LXX, οἶκος is often used to translate בַּיִת, and so it takes on much of the Hebrew's range of meaning.[14] In Jewish and Christian literature written in Greek, the Hebrew force of בַּיִת manifests itself in the continuation of distinctively Jewish forms of expression. For our purposes, it is worth noting that בַּיִת and οἶκος have a range of meanings which are based on the primary meaning of "house" but are often extended to include the meanings of household, family, tribe, and race. In the New Testament, οἶκος often designates the nation of Israel, or the descendants of the David, among others.[15]

Significantly, בַּיִת and οἶκος are often used to refer to the Temple, the house of God. Hoffner writes, "When a building was built to receive the deity or his servants (priests, musicians, etc.), it was called *beth ha' elohim*, "house of God, temple" (Jgs. 17:5; Dnl. 1:2, etc.)."[16] This thesis has already looked at the significance of the word "house" in 2 Sam 7 which pivots on the term's polyvalent meanings.[17] In 1 Kgs 8 and 2 Chr 6, Solomon makes clear in his prayer that the building of this temple fulfils what God promised in 2 Sam 7. When Solomon dedicates the

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[12] Otto Michel, "οἶκος," in *TDNT vol. 5* (ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 119-131. BDAG, 698-699.

[13] Michel, "οἶκος," 120.

[14] Harry A. Hoffner, "בַּיִת," in *TDOT* (ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 107-116; 113-115.

[15] Michel, "οἶκος," 129-130.

[16] Hoffner, "בַּיִת," 111.

[17] See §3.2.2, "Royal Seed: The Davidic Monarchy," 99f.

temple, he says in his prayer that he has built God "an exalted house (בַּיִת; οἶκος)" (1 Kgs 8:13; 2 Chr 6). The inherent flexibility of the word "house" enables the author to switch back and forth between meanings to construct a multi-layered text.

The New Testament authors preserve the flexibility of οἶκος, especially in their quotations or allusions to Old Testament texts. The Synoptics recount how Jesus responds to the Pharisees by reminding them that David entered the house of God to feed his troops (Mat 12:4; Mk 2:26; Lk 6:4). Elsewhere, Jesus declares that the Temple is to be a house of prayer, alluding to Isa 56:7 (Mat 21:13; Mk 11:17; Lk 19:46 cf. Jn 2:16-17). Hebrews 10:21 and to a lesser extent 1 Tim 3:15 use the language of οἶκος as a temple to describe the church. While Elliott is correct to say that οἶκος primarily means "house or household," and that it is not used elsewhere in conjunction with the stone passages, he is too quick to limit its polyvalence. Further, this investigation has shown that οἶκος is often used to refer to the "house of God" or temple in texts that are quotations or allusions to the Septuagint. The significant influence of the LXX in 1 Peter should encourage the recipient to listen for septuagintal forms of speech, especially in passages which quote or allude the scriptures such as 1 Peter 2:4-10.

The kernel of truth in Elliott's argument is the inherent ambiguity of οἶκος in 2:5: the meaning of "household" is still relevant. In his fervent, if unconvincing, reasoning for the translation of οἶκος as "household", Elliott's work demonstrates that οἶκος should be interpreted here as polyvalent. Its meaning should be not constricted to "temple" but should be seen as a careful word choice which allows the author to slide from one metaphor to another. The author of 1 Peter used the multiple meanings of οἶκος ("house", "household", "family" and "temple") to make a smooth transition from the language of household to that of temple. This interpretation fits easily into the verse, "like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (2:5). In this verse, the author describes how those who believe are being built up into a spiritual temple, serving God as a holy priesthood, and offering acceptable sacrifices.

It is as a corporate community that believers become a temple and priesthood.  The author of

1 Peter has 'spiritualized' temple worship so that the community itself embodies these values.[18]

A similar self-understanding is found at Qumran and in other parts of the New Testament.[19]

## 5.4      A Spiritual House: Community as Temple at Qumran

Due to the corruption of the Jerusalem Temple, the yaḥad broke away from mainstream

Judaism and formed small communities, the most well known of which is at the Dead Sea, where

they strove to live a holy life dedicated to the study of the Scriptures, the maintenance of the

highest levels of ritual purity, and eager eschatological expectation.  The community believed

that their fellowship embodied an interim Temple until the time of restoration when God himself

would establish an eschatological Temple.[20]  Simply put, the community believed itself to a

faithful, albeit temporary, substitute Temple taking the place of the defiled Jerusalem cult until

the arrival of the eschaton.  Lawrence Schiffman writes,

> The sectarians saw their group as a virtual Temple in which, through purity regulations,
> prayer and the study of God's laws, it was possible to achieve the spiritual connection with the
> divine which had been vouchsafed to Israel in God's central sanctuary according to the
> Bible.[21]

Several features of the Qumran community's self-understanding are structurally similar to 1

Peter.  While the sectarians made a distinction between those who were descended from priests

and those who were not, the entire community, and not just the hereditary priests, embodied the

Temple.[22]  This cultic embodiment meant all members were obligated to live holy lives

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[18] See fn. 2 above.

[19] Before the Dead Sea Scrolls, there is no precedent for the "community as temple" idea in earlier Jewish literature.

[20] Bertil Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comprehensive Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament* (SNTSMS 1; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 4-46.  Georg Klinzing, *Die Umdeutung des Kultus in der Qumrangemeinde und im NT* (SUNT 7; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 50-166.  George J. Brooke, "Miqdash Adam, Eden, and the Qumran Community," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel, Community without Temple* (ed. Beate Ego, et al.; WUNT 118; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999),  285-301; 297.  Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Community Without Temple: The Qumran Community's Withdrawal from the Jerusalem Temple," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel, Community without Temple* (ed. Beate Ego, et al.; WUNT 118; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999),  267-284; 277.

[21] Schiffman, "Community without Temple," 280.

[22] Compare Florentino García Martínez, "Priestly Functions in a Community withut Temple," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel, Community without Temple* (ed. Beate Ego, et al.; WUNT 118; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999),  303-319; 303-304.  Schiffman, "Community without Temple," 272-273.

according to the Torah's regulations for priests as interpreted by the community. The sectarians applied the laws restricting access to the temple from those with physical defects to their community.[23] Men with physical blemishes were not permitted into the community because of the priestly restrictions given to "the descendants of Aaron" in Lev 21:16-24 (1QSa 2:5-8).[24] The sectarians extended these precepts to the community as a whole (1QSa 2:3; CD 15:15-17).

Similarly, the age restrictions in the Qumran community reflect those of the priests and Levites (CD 10:7-10; Lev 27:3; Num 4:3, 23, 30, 35, 39, 47; cf. 1QM 7:1; Num 8:25).[25] The sectarians also carefully restricted access to pure food and drink according the hierarchy within the group; more junior members were allowed less access than those who had reached full membership.[26] Volunteers to the community, מתנדבים, were described in the language of free-will sacrifices, which suggests a link between their self-perception as offerings and their place within the temple-like community.[27] Schiffman concludes, "Accordingly, the life of the sect was conducted as if the community were a virtual Temple."[28]

However, it is then perhaps surprising that the theme of community as Temple is not more prominent in the scrolls, an oddity observed by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza.[29] She argues that the writings at Qumran and the New Testament are sufficiently different that each merits interpretation on its own terms.[30] Therefore, in order to appreciate the extent of the similarities, as well as the differences, between the community as temple motif at Qumran and 1 Peter, this

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[23] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 6-9. Schiffman, "Community without Temple," 273-274. Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Purity and Perfection: Exclusion from the Council fo the Community in the *Serekh Ha-'Edah*," in *Biblical Archaelogy Today* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1985), 373-389; 377-378.

[24] Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1873. Schiffman, "Purity and Perfection," 377.

[25] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 7-8. Schiffman, "Purity and Perfection."

[26] Schiffman, "Community without Temple," 723-274. Joseph M. Baumgarten, *Studies in Qumran Law* (SJLA 24; Leiden: Brill, 1977), 49.

[27] Devorah Dimant, "The Volunteers in the *Rule of the Community*: A Biblical Notion in Sectarian Garb," *RevQ* 23 (2007): 233-245.

[28] Schiffman, "Community without Temple," 273. Schiffman, "Purity and Perfection," 385.

[29] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Cultic Language in Qumran and in the NT," *CBQ* 38 (1976): 159-177; 164. Also see, J. C. Coppens, "The Spiritual Temple in Pauline Letters and its Background," *SE* 6 (1969): 53-66; 59.

[30] Schüssler Fiorenza, "Cultic Language," 163-164.

chapter will examine the two texts from Qumran that most clearly articulate this ideology, the Community Rule (*Serekh ha-Yaḥad*) and 4QFlorilegium.

### 5. 4. 1  Community as Temple in the *Serekh ha-Yaḥad*

The *Serekh ha-Yaḥad*, or the Community Rule, is one of the most important sectarian texts found at Qumran, as seen by its multiple copies in Caves 1, 4, 5, and possibly a fragment from Cave 11.[31] With liturgical, hymnic, theological, and legal sections, the Rule describes the religious beliefs and practices of the yaḥad.[32]  However, differing versions of the document circulated and continued to be copied contemporaneously.[33]  While all of editions of the Rule are clearly related to one another, the precise redactional, chronological, and ideological relationships between them is still an open question.[34]

This study will work primarily with 1QS, but will incorporate material from other versions of the text where relevant.  Since this study does not rely on a particular theory of textual development, this chapter will not engage with the complex question of the Rule's compositional history in general.[35]  However, this study will note relevant redactional issues in 1QS 8-9 where the community as temple theme is most developed.

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[31] Sarianna Metso, "Rule of the Community (1QS + Fragments)," in *Eerdmans Diciontary of Early Judaism* (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 1169-1171.  For a thorough treatment of the material from Caves 1, 4 and 5, see Sarianna Metso, *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule* (STDJ XXI; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 13-67.

[32] Michael A Knibb, "Rule of the Community," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 793-797.

[33] Metso, *Textual Development*, 13-67.

[34] For example, see the differing conclusions reached by Metso and Schofield on the textual priority of 1QS. Metso argues that 4QS[e] and 4QS[b,d] are off-shoots from an earlier form of the Serekh no longer in existence.  The forms of the text in 4QS[e] and 4QS[b,d] were then used to produce 1QS.  However, 1QS is paleographically older than 4QS[e] and 4QS[b,d].  This means, according to Metso's model, 4QS[e] and 4QS[b,d] continued to be copied after 1QS was completed.  Schofield, instead, argues that scholars cannot reconstruct a linear genetic relationship between the Rule texts at Qumran.  She explains the relationship between the documents using a "radial, temporal-spatial model" which works from the premise that the material at Qumran is evidence of a much larger movement.  This means that different versions of the Rule may have been in use in different communities at the same time.  The inherent flexibility in Schofield's model alleviates some of the genetic problems faced by Metso.  Metso, *Textual Development*, 107-149, esp. 147.  Alison Schofield, *From Qumran to the Yaḥad: A New Paradigm of Textual Development for The Community Rule* (77; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 21-130.

[35] According to Metso, there is no evidence that the material in 1QS V-VII and VIII-IX ever circulated independently.  However, the material in VIII-IX itself has undergone extensive redaction.  Metso identifies VIII 13b-14 and VIII 15b-IX 11 as a secondary insertions.  Thus, the original text was VIII 1-13a+15a and functioned as an introduction to the rules for the *maskil*. Metso, *Textual Development*, 72, 108, 118, 124, 143-144.

Sarianna Metso investigated the complex redactional history of the Rule. She concluded that the text of 1QS 1-4 did not originally appear at the beginning of the Rule and that the final psalm in col. 10-11 was also not part of the original document.[36] There is no evidence that col. 5-7 and col. 8-9 ever existed separately.[37] From the textual evidence available, it is warranted to conclude that the material in 8-9 is part of the oldest layer of material in the Rule, though it has undergone a series of revisions.[38]

Column 8 describes a community of "twelve men and three priests." The next part of the text discusses the community as a temple in cultic and architectural language. Not surprisingly, col. 8 has provoked a good deal of scholarly debate. Two questions are relevant. First, does col. 8 gives us any information about the founding of the Qumran community, as Sutcliffe, Leaney, Dohmen, Knibb and others have suggested?[39] Is col. 8-9 a remnant of a founding "manifesto" for the "pioneer community"? Second, scholars have debated whether the reference to fifteen men in col. 8 refers to an elite group or, symbolically, to the whole community. These two questions are closely related. Some scholars, such as Sutcliffe, argue that the "pioneer community" was originally composed of fifteen members, while scholars such as Collins, Baumgarten, Berg and others do not accept the founding narrative but nonetheless identify the group of fifteen as an elite group within the yaḥad.[40] Scholars such as Leaney, Knibb, Metso,

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[36] Metso, *Textual Development*, 107-108.

[37] Metso, *Textual Development*, 108, 143.

[38] However, it is worth noting that despite being in the oldest layer of text, the material in VIII-IX, like the rest of the document, has undergone several stages of editing, in which the wording has been changed, and the original form of the text supplemented by additions. Metso, *Textual Development*, 143-144.

[39] Edmund F. Sutcliffe, "The First Fifteen Members of the Qumran Community," *JSS* 4 (1959): 134-138; 137-138. A. R. C. Leaney, *The Rule of Qumran and Its Meaning: Introduction, translation, and commentary* (NTL; London: SCM Press, 1966), 115, 210-212. Michael A. Knibb, *The Qumran Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 127. Christoph Dohmen, "Zur Gründung der Gemeinde von Qumran (1QS VIII-IX)," *RevQ* 41 / 11 (1982): 81-96; 83.

[40] Sutcliffe, "First Fifteen Members." Leaney, *Rule of Qumran*. John J. Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community: The Sectarian Movement of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 71-72. Shane A. Berg, "An Elite Group within the *Yaḥad*: Revisiting 1QS 8-9," in *Qumran Studies: New Approaches, New Questions* (ed. Michael Thomas Davis and Brent A. Strawn; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 161-177; 162-171. Joseph M. Baumgarten, "The Duodecimal Courts of Qumran, Revelation, and the Sanhedrin," *JBL* 95 (1976): 59-78; 63.

Hultgren, Swarup and others argue that the "fifteen" are a symbolic representation of the entire community for the reasons discussed below.[41]

1QS 8:1-4a states, "In the Community council [בעצת היחד] (there shall be) twelve men and three priests, perfect in everything that has been revealed…" Already, two points are important. The first is that a clear distinction is made between priests and laymen. Distinction and hierarchy are maintained throughout the Rule.[42] Further, this distinction is apparent regardless of whether the fifteen are an elite or symbolic group. Either way, the author is making a distinction, symbolic or otherwise, about the constitution of the community. The second important observation is that this group called to obey perfectly. Column 8:2 explains that these men will perfectly obey what has been revealed from the law to implement virtues such as truth, justice and compassionate love. They will also "preserve faithfulness in the land…in order to atone for sin" (1QS 8:3).[43]

Who are these fifteen men; are they a cipher for the entire community or do they constitute an inner, elite group within yaḥad?[44] Though Collins, Milik, Berg, and others have argued that the fifteen constitute an elite group within the yaḥad, the symbolic potency of the number fifteen has convinced most scholars that the fifteen are a symbolic representation of Israel: the twelve men

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[41] Leaney, *Rule of Qumran*, 211-213. Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 129. Metso, *Textual Development*, 123. Stephen Hultgren, *From the Damascus Covenant to the Covenant of the Community: Literary, Historical, and Theological Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 66; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 314. Swarup, *Eternal Planting*, 56-57.

[42] For example, Rob Kugler writes, "In each type of assembly priests took the preeminent place (1QS 2:1-21; 6:3-4, 8-9a; 1QSa 2:11-17; CD 14:3-6), even trumping the Davidic messiah in the eschatological banquet (1QSa 2:12-14. Priests and levites spoke the blessings and curses for members of the community and their benediction over food was necessary before dining (1QS 1:18-24; 2:1, 11; 6:4-5; 1QSa 2:17-21). The examination of the community members' spirits was accomplished by priests (1QS 6:9-10; CD 14:6), and whenever ten were gathered from the community council or the assembly of the camps a priest had to be present with them (1QS 6:3-4; CD 13:2. Robert A. Kugler, "Making All Experience Religious: The Hegemony of Ritual at Qumran," *JSJ* 33 (2002): 131-152; 135-136. Cf. Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 59-60, 73. Cf. Joseph Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (STB; trans. John Strugnell; London: SCM Press, 1959), 99-101. Baumgarten, "Duodecimal Courts," 63. Coppens, "Spiritual Temple," 60-61.

[43] For more on effecting atonement at Qumran, see below. Cf. Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 130.

[44] Early scholars debated whether the group was composed of a total of twelve or fifteen members: are the three priests included in the group, or in addition to them? That the group is comprised of fifteen members total is confirmed by two pieces of evidence. First, the symbolic value of the twelve priests and three laymen suggests that a symbolic reading is preferable, as discussed below. Second, Hultgren has noted that the number fifteen is confirmed by 4Q265 frag.7 ii 7 which says that there will be fifteen men in the community council. Hultgren, *From the Damascus Covenant*, 314, n.178. For more on deliberative groups at Qumran, see Baumgarten, "Duodecimal Courts," 59-78.

represent the twelve tribes of Israel and the three priests represent the three priestly families (cf. Num 3:17).[45] Thus, the community represents Israel *in nuce*. The entire community represents Israel, though the distinction between priests and laymen is still maintained by the language of "twelve men and three priests."

Against this, Collins argues that the fifteen are an elite group within the yaḥad. According to him, this group does not fulfill any special administrative or executive function, but is set aside for special training in holiness.[46] Collins' inclusion of the element of hierarchy in his interpretation of the remainder of col. 8 is compelling. In other words, the elite group fulfills a higher level of holiness than the rest of the group. In col. 8. 4b-10 (quoted below), the elite group is represented by the "holy of holies" while the rest of the yaḥad represent the "holy place."[47] However, this chapter will argue that a better reading is provided by interpreting the "twelve men and three" priests as the whole community of the yaḥad, but bifurcated into the classified groups of laymen and priests who represent the Temple and the Holy of Holies respectively. Collins writes,

> The great concern for holiness in the *Serek* is evidently related to the fact that it envisions the *yaḥad* as a substitute for the temple cult. Traditionally, the whole temple was holy, but there was still an area marked off as "the holy of holies." Even if all Jerusalem was regarded as holy, the temple was still especially holy. According to the editor's reconstruction of 4QMMT, Israel is holy, but the priests are the most holy and should not intermarry with those who are merely holy. The holiness of the whole body is enhanced by the existence of a part that is especially holy.[48]

In 1QS 8:4b-10a, the Rule lays out an ethos statement outlining the goals that the community will ultimately fulfill.[49] Though long, it will be worthwhile to quote 1QS 8:4b-10a in full.

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[45] For a symbolic interpretation of fifteen, see: Milik, *Ten Years*, 100. Carol A. Newsom, *The Self as Symbolic Space: Constructing Identity at Qumran* (STDJ LII; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 155-156. Leaney, *Rule of Qumran*, 210-212. Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 129. Swarup, *Eternal Planting*, 57. Hultgren, *From the Damascus Covenant*, 314. Most scholars who argue for the presence of a elite group or inner council still acknowledge the potent symbolic value of the twelve men and three priests. For example, Sutcliffe, "First Fifteen Members," 134. Milik, *Ten Years*, 100. Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 72.

[46] Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 71.

[47] Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 73. Coppens, "Spiritual Temple," 60-61.

[48] Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 73.

[49] Michael Knibb and others have identified col. VIII.I-X.8*a* as some of the earliest material in the Rule. As Sarianna Metso has noted, this hypothesis is complicated by the absence of this material in 4QS[e]. Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 77-78, 127, 129. Metso, "Rule of the Community (1QS + Fragments)," 1170.

When these things exist in Israel the Community council shall be founded (נכונה) on truth, *Blank* to be an everlasting plantation, a house of holiness for Israel (בית קודש לישראל) and the foundation of the holy of holies for Aaron (וסוד קודש קודשים לאהרון), true witnesses for the judgment and chosen by the will (of God) to atone for the land and to render the wicked their retribution. *Blank* This (the Community) is the tested rampart, the precious cornerstone (חומת הבחן פנת יקר) that does not *Blank* /whose foundations/shake or tremble from their place. *Blank* (It will be) the most holy dwelling for Aaron with eternal knowledge of the covenant of justice and in order to offer a pleasant /aroma/; and it will be a house of perfection and truth (ובית תמים ואמת) in Israel in order to establish {/..../} a covenant in compliance with the everlasting decrees. /And these will be accepted in order to atone for the land and to decide the judgment of the wickedness ...

In this passage, the author describes the Community council as "founded" (כונ) on truth, and, "a house of perfection and truth" (ובית תמים ואמת).[50] The community will be "a house of holiness for Israel" (בית קודש לישראל) and "the foundation of the holy of holies for Aaron" ( וסוד קודש קודשים לאהרון). In this context, the meaning of בית is clearly the temple, as the emphasis upon holiness and the cultic language in the following phrase makes clear.[51] The "holy of holies for Aaron" (קודש קודשים לאהרון) is the inner most part of the Temple which is now represented by the community's priestly members.[52] However, it seems that these designations are more focused on holiness than strict comparisons with architecture. So Gärtner, "The two groups in the community, Aaron and Israel, here represent the two most important rooms in the Temple, the 'Holy place' and the 'Holy of holies.'"[53] Similarly Knibb, "It is thus entirely appropriate that the holy of holies of the temple formed by the community should be linked specifically with the priests in the community."[54] Though the community as a whole constitutes a substitute, interim Temple, the priestly members of the community are compared with the holiest, inner sanctum of the Temple.[55]

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[50] BDB, "be set up, established fixed," literally of a house upon pillars (Jdg 16:26, 29), or metaphorically, of the temple mount (Isa 2:2; Mic 4:1).

[51] Dimant, "Volunteers," 238. Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 131.

[52] Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 131.

[53] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 26-27.

[54] Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 131.

[55] García Martínez, "Priestly Functions," 303-304. Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 133.

A similar alignment of the Qumran community to the architectural features of the temple is found in 4QpIsa[d] (4Q164). In this text, the author interprets the architectural features in Isa 54:11-12 as the members of the community. 4QpIsa[d] Frag. 1:1b-8 says,

> And I will found you in sapphi[res. Its interpretation:] they will found the council of the Community, [the] priests and the peo[ple...] the assembly of their elect, like a sapphire stone in the midst of stones. [ I will make] all your battlements [of rubies]. Its interpretation concerns the twelve [chiefs of the priests who] illuminate with the judgment of the Urim and Thummim [...without] any from among them missing, like the sun in all its light. And a[ll your gates of glittering stones.] Its interpretation concerns the chiefs of the tribes of Israel in the l[ast days...of] its lot, the posts of [...]

Speaking of this text, Judith Newman writes,

> the sectarian pesher on Isa 54:11-12, in which God's pledge to rebuild the Jerusalem temple's antimony, pinnacles, foundations, and gates are related to different strata of the community: Israel, the priests and the people, the Council of the *Yaḥad*, and the twelve priests who enlighten with the Urim and Thummim, and the chiefs of the tribes.[56]

A hierarchy of the community was mapped onto their self-understanding as a temple. However, this stratification does not diminish the corporate aspect of the community's cultic self-understanding. Though some sectarians were priests and leaders, the entire community nevertheless understood itself as a temple. Even the most junior member of the yaḥad was charged with keeping strict purity regulations befitting the nature of this self-understanding.

This emphasizes the fact that the community as temple in the Rule is *not* understood metaphorically. The community concretely understood itself as an interim, substitute temple. The reality of this temple embodiment fuelled the community's entire ethical and halakhic program.[57] This reality was just as real as their belief in the efficacy of their atonement. Their real existence as temple effected real atonement.

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[56] Judith H. Newman, "Priestly Prophets at Qumran: Summoning Sinai through the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*," in *The Signficance of Sinai: Traditions about Sinai and Divine Revelation in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. George J. Brooke, et al.; Themes in Biblical Narrative: Jewish and Christian Traditions; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 29-72; 45. Also, according to Collins, the "Council of the Yaḥad" was merely another designation for the Yaḥad as a whole, Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 52ff.

[57] Kugler writes, "The evidence of ritual density at Qumran appears overwhelming. From the way they measured their time to the way they consumed their meals, from their rising in the morning to their laying down at night, from the way they prayed to the way they saw to the purity of the bodies, from their entry into the community to their departure from it, the people of Qumran patterned their actions in 'more or less' invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances' aimed at bringing them closer to God," Kugler, "Making All Experience Religious: The Hegemony of Ritual at Qumran," 149. Kugler does not discuss the community as temple motif, though it dovetails

After sketching the community hierarchy through architectural language, 1QS states, "This (the Community) is the tested rampart, the precious cornerstone (חומת הבחן פנת יקר) that does not *Blank* /whose foundations/shake or tremble from their place."  The wording for these phrases is inspired by Isa 28:16, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone (אֶבֶן בֹּחַן פִּנַּת יִקְרַת), of a sure foundation (מוּסָד מוּסָד): 'He who believes will not be in haste.'"[58]  The community applied the prophecy in Isa 28:16 to themselves; they were the sure foundation.[59]  The use of Isa 28:16 is claimed by the community and used to legitimize their identity.[60]  Isaiah 28:16 is used twice in the Hodayot, each time with a similar function to 1QS.

> In 1QH[a] 15.11b-12 the speaker says,
> You set me like a tower of strength, like a high wall, like a high rampart ( ותשימני כמגדל עוז
> כחומה נשגבה ותכן על סדע), and you placed my edifice upon cliffs and eternal foundations for
> my base.  All my walls are a tested wall which does not sway ( מבניתי ואושי עולם לסודי וכול
> קירותי לחומת בחן ללוא ת׳ד{ז}עזע).[61]

The speaker applies Isaiah's words to himself, seeing himself as the building founded by God.[62]  The speaker also alludes to Isa 28:16 in 1QH[a] 14. 28b-30.[63]

In 1QS 8, the author explains how the community fulfils the functions of the Temple through prayer and obedience to the law.  The author writes, "(It will be) the most holy dwelling for Aaron with eternal knowledge of the covenant of justice and in order to offer a pleasant /aroma/", and these offerings "will be accepted in order to atone for the land" and "to decide the

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with his argument.  Collins makes this connection explicit, "As is widely recognized, the *yaḥad* is hereby declared to be a substitute for the temple cult….The function of atonement, however, is not restricted to any one specific ritual. Rather the entire life of the *yaḥad* was sanctified so that the community became 'a holy house for Aaron' a 'temple of men.'…The ritualized life, then, was essentially a life of obedience." John J. Collins, "Prayer and the Meaning of Ritual in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Prayer and Poetry in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature* (ed. Florentino García Martínez;  vol. 98 of Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah; Leiden: Brill, 2012),  69-85; 75-76.

[58] Dimant, "Volunteers," 239.

[59] Dekker, *Zion's Rock-Solid Foundations*, 26.

[60] Swarup, *Eternal Planting*, 169-174.

[61] Trans. Stegemann and Schuller, *1QHodayot[a]*, 214.

[62] Dekker, *Zion's Rock-Solid Foundations*, 26-27.

[63] Dekker, *Zion's Rock-Solid Foundations*, 26-27.

judgment of the wickedness." One of the central goals of the community is to offer spiritual sacrifices and to make atonement for sin. This is stated in 1QS 9. 3-5,

> When these things exist in Israel in accordance with these rules in order to establish the spirit of holiness in truth eternal, in order to atone for the guilt of iniquity and for the unfaithfulness of sin, and for approval for the earth, without the flesh of burnt offerings and without the fats of sacrifice – the offerings of the lips in compliance with the decree will be like the pleasant aroma of justice and the perfectness of behavior will be acceptable like the freewill offering…

The goal of the community is "to atone for the guilt of iniquity and for the unfaithfulness of sin." This atonement will be achieved "without the flesh of burnt offerings and without the fats of sacrifice." Instead of animals, the community will offer "the offerings of lips" which will be "like a pleasant aroma of justice" and the "the perfectness of behaviour will be acceptable like the freewill offering." The activities of the community, worship, prayer, and obedience to the law as they understood it, constitute sacrifices acceptable to God.[64]

Finally, the community's self-understanding as temple was expressed through a strong antithesis between in-group members and non-members.[65] The sectarians divided humanity into the righteous and the wicked. The antithesis between the righteous and the wicked is seen in 1QS through the sectarian's concern to maintain the purity and holiness of their community.

One of the goals of the community was to "atone for the land", and linked with it was the goal "to render the wicked their retribution." Holiness, atonement, and obedience are diametrically opposed to defilement, desecration, and disobedience. The work of "atoning for the land" is thus connected with rendering retribution to the wicked. A few verses later, the phrase "to atone for the land" is paired with "to decide the judgment of the wickedness." The sectarians' task is to atone for the land and to judge the wicked for their acts of lawlessness. This is also seen in the use of Isa 28 and the stone image. Swarup writes of the stone, "While it stands for strength and reliability for those who trust in the work of God, it also stands for the devastation and destruction of those who do not."[66] There can be no holiness in the midst of wickedness and

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[64] Baumgarten, *Studies in Qumran Law*, 46-51. Dimant, "Volunteers," 240-241. Collins, "Prayer," 75-76.

[65] Swarup, *Eternal Planting*, 170-171.

[66] Swarup, *Eternal Planting*, 172.

defilement.  Therefore, the wicked must be judged and the land atoned for if the community is to ultimately fulfil its mandate to be God's holy temple.

There are several important conclusions to be gathered from the Community Rule.  The first and most basic is that the community considered itself a valid, efficacious substitute for the Jerusalem.  Second, the community mapped its hierarchy onto its embodiment of the temple, with laymen and priests representing the Temple and Holy of Holies respectively.  Third, the community developed this self-understanding through the use of Scripture.  1QS VIII is especially dependent on Isa 28:16 (cf. Isa 54:11-12).  The community internalized several scriptural texts and applied these texts to themselves.

Fourth, the community fulfilled the functions of the temple, namely, their activities of worship, prayer, and obedience functioned as sacrifice and achieved atonement.   Finally, the community upheld a sharp division between the righteous and the wicked, the holy and the defiled.  This antithesis played a role in the community's temple ideology.  The righteous were called to separate from wickedness and to devote themselves to holiness.  They believed that their corporate holiness would eventually be vindicated by God who would soon overturn the defiling actions of the wicked.  The community as temple ideology in 1 Peter shares points of contact with each of these conclusions, but also significant differences.

### 5. 4. 2  4QFlorilegium

4QFlorilegium (4Q174) is a fragmentary example of biblical exegesis.  Altogether, some twenty six fragments of the text have been identified, most likely composed in six columns on three sheets of leather.[67]  The script of the scroll dates it from the end of the first century B.C.E. to the beginning of the first century C.E.[68]  Though the scroll contains the terms פשר (frag. 1-2 col. I:14, 19) and מדרש (frag. 1-2 col. I:14), 4QFlorilegium should not be classified as a *pesher*

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[67] Brooke draws on the extensive work of Annette Steudel.  George J. Brooke, "Florilegium (4Q174)," in *Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 646-647.

[68] George J. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran* (JSOTSup 29. Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1985), 83-84.

or *midrash*, or at least not without careful qualification.[69]  The exegesis of 2 Sam 7:10-14 is best

described as a thematic commentary.[70]  4QFlorilegium selectively interprets 2 Sam 7:10-14 with

the aid of several subsidiary quotations from Exod 15:17-18, Deut 23:3; and Amos 9:11.  The

author weaves these subsidiary texts into his interpretation of 2 Sam 7 in order to explain how

the sectarian community fulfilled the function of an interim, proleptic sanctuary.

The sectarian interpreted the pun on בית in 2 Sam 7 as a מקדש.[71]  In fact, 4QFlorilegium is

careful to distinguish three "מקדשים": the מקדש אדני (1.3), the מקדש ישראל (1.6), and the  מקדש

אדם(1.6).[72]

The first sanctuary is the מקדש אדני (1.3).  The text is broken at מקדש אדני but the quotation

of Exodus 15:17-18 makes the reconstruction safe.  Dimant writes, "This Exodus verse was

traditionally interpreted as an allusion to the eschatological temple erected in the final age by

God himself, so in adducing it here the pesher relies on an old well-known exegetical

tradition."[73]  Nearly all scholars agree that the מקדש אדני is a future, eschatological sanctuary

that God himself will build.[74]  4QFlorilegium explains that this sanctuary will be established

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[69] George J. Brooke, "Thematic Commentaries on Prophetic Scriptures," in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (ed. Matthias Henze; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 134-157; 145-146.  Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 141.

[70] Brooke, "Thematic Commentaries on Prophetic Scriptures," 143-149.

[71] Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 129.

[72] Schwartz and Dimant have both commented on the intention differentiation of the three sanctuaries. Daniel R. Schwartz, "The Three Temples of 4QFlorilegium," *RevQ* 10 (1979-81): 83-91; 86. Devorah Dimant, "4QFlorilegium and the Idea of the Community as Temple," in *History, Ideology, and Bible Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Forschung zum Alten Testament 90; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 280.

[73] Dimant, "Community as Temple," 278.

[74] David Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magness Press, 1988), 88.  Allan J. McNicol, "The Eschatological Temple in the Qumran Pesher 4QFlorilegium 1:1-7," *OJRS* 5 / 2 (1977): 133-141; 136.  Schwartz, "Three Temples," 86, 89.  Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 134-135, 178-179. With modification, also M.O. Wise, "4QFlorilegium and the Temple of Adam," *RevQ* 15 (1991): 103-132; 131.  Dimant, "Community as Temple," 278-281. Swarup, *Eternal Planting*, 115.  Gartner and Knibb are exceptions, they incorrectly take the מקדש אדני as a reference to the community, Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 32.  Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 260.

באחרית הימים, "in the latter days" (1.2).[75] This future sanctuary will be protected against the entry of Ammonites, Moabites, and other problematic categories of people.[76]

The second temple mentioned is the מקדש ישראל. The text continues, "And foreigners shall not make it desolate again, as they desolated formerly the מקדש ישראל because of their sin" (I.5-6a).[77] The מקדש ישראל refers to the First and Second Temples, both of which became defiled.[78] Some scholars specify either the First or Second Temple, but it seems best to see both Temples in view here.[79] Both temples will eventually be replaced by the eschatological sanctuary built by God.

In the meantime, the third named sanctuary, the מקדש אדם, will serve as a substitute. The variously translated phrase מקדש אדם has provoked a great deal of debate. It divides those who affirm that the community functioned as a temple with those who argue that no such view was maintained by the sectarians.[80] The former argue for a translation such as "temple of man, Man/Men, or Adam," while the latter advocate translations such as "temple among men," or "man-made temple."[81]

Though alternatives have been proposed, the best understanding of מקדש אדם is a sanctuary (composed) of men. This understanding makes the best sense of the Hebrew construct.[82] The phrase מקדש אדם also allows for intentional polyvalence with the name Adam, as George

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[75] For more on this phrase, see Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 175-178.

[76] The author here quotes Deut 23:3, a prohibition against the Ammonites and Moabites. The scroll also states that no *mamzer* (ממזר), stranger (בן נכר), or *ger* (גר) will enter the eschatological sanctuary. Cf. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 179-183.

[77] Unless otherwise stated, the translation is by Brooke.

[78] Dimant, "Community as Temple," 280. Wise, "Temple of Adam," 131. McNicol, "Eschatological Temple," 138.

[79] For the First Temple, see Swarup, *Eternal Planting*, 115. For the Second Temple, see Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity*, 91. Schwartz, "Three Temples," 89-90.

[80] For example, those who oppose the community as temple interpretation, Wise, "Temple of Adam," 121-122; 131-132. McNicol, "Eschatological Temple," 133, 138-141. Schwartz, "Three Temples," 88-90. The following scholars advocate it, Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 30-42. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 178-193. Swarup, *Eternal Planting*, 155-122. Dimant, "Community as Temple," 281-287.

[81] See summaries in Brooke and Wise. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 184-193. Wise, "Temple of Adam," 107-110.

[82] Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 185.

Brooke has argued.[83] The sanctuary of men is also in some way a sanctuary of Adam "where the intention of God in creating Eden would be restored."[84] 4QFlorilegium thus speaks of a community which functions as a "temple of man, Man, men, or Adam" whose function is to offer smoke offerings to God until the eschaton.

The purpose of this temple is "for there to be in it for him smoke offerings before him, works of thanksgiving (מעשי תודה)" (so Brooke, I.6b-7a). The מעשי תודה has also received a great deal of scholarly attention due to the difficulty of reading the manuscript at this point. The phrase can be reconstructed as "מעשי תורה", "works of the Law" or "מעשי תודה", "works of thanksgiving."[85] Dimant argues convincingly for *dalet*, "works of thanksgiving."[86] Yet, even though the reading "works of thanksgiving" is defensible, the author might also intend a pun with "works of the law," akin to the polyvalent reading of מקדש אדם.[87] The community as temple offers up smoke offerings of thanksgiving, but they also maintain their status of holiness through obedience to the law.

The remaining text in this section is a thematic exegesis on 2 Sam 7:11b, "and I will give you rest from all your enemies." The sectarian explains (I.7b-9),

that means that he will give rest to them for all the sons of Belial who cause them to stumble in order to destroy them [through their errors], just as they came with the plots of Belial to cause to stumble the sons of light, and in order to devise against them plots of wickedness so that they [might be caught] by Belial through their [wicked] error.

Two points are worth making. First, this passage develops the antithesis between the righteous and their enemies, between darkness and light. The broken beginning of 4QFlor quotes 2 Sam 7:10-11a and looks forward to a future when "his enemies" and a "son of wickedness" will no longer afflict the righteous. With quotation of 2 Sam 2:11b in line7b, the

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[83] Brooke, "Miqdash Adam," 288.

[84] Brooke, "Miqdash Adam," 289.

[85] Following the summary provided by Dimant, Strugnell, Brooke, Puech and Stuedel read "thanksgiving" with *dalet*; Allegro, Milgrom, and Qimron read "torah" with a *reš*.

[86] She writes, "*Dalet* and not *reš* is suggested by the straight horizontal stroke, which is slightly lower than than in *reš*, as well as its pronounced straight vertical upper stroke with two tips. This can be observed in the magnified photograph presentation of PAM 43440," Dimant, "Community as Temple," 271.

[87] Brooke, "Miqdash Adam," 288.

author moves his interpretation forward: the enemies are the sons of Belial who seek to cause the righteous to stumble through their devious plots. The sons of Belial are diametrically contrasted with the sons of light. The community as temple motif is thus used in conjunction with a strong statement of antithesis against those who "through their [wicked] error" oppose the community. A similar opposition is found in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1.[88]

Second, a matrix of key terms are repeated: Belial (בליעל), stumble (מכשילים), and plots (מחשבות). None of these terms appears in 2 Sam 7, but they are each repeated twice, and in the case of Belial, three times. The author weaves these themes into his reading of 2 Sam 7 to contemporize the text of 2 Sam 7 with the community's present struggle.

In 4QFlor, the sectarian does not distinguish any leadership hierarchy as in the Rule. However, both authors understood the community as embodying the interim temple. In neither text is the motif a metaphor. In the Rule, the community achieves atonement. In 4QFlor, the community is tasked with offering "works of thanksgiving" to God as smoke offerings. 4QFlor also employs a strong dichotomy between insiders and outsiders. The task of maintaining strict moral and ritual purity meant that strong boundaries had to be drawn to keep out all sources of moral and ritual defilement. This strict boundary is necessary because Israel's previous temples were defiled. Therefore, the מקדש אדם must function as an interim temple until the eschaton. The community understood embodiment of the temple as limited. The author of 4QFlor explains this through his interpretation of 2 Sam 7 and other texts.

In conclusion, both the Rule and 4QFlor discuss the theme of the community as temple, but in different ways. In 4QFlor, the community looks forward to a future temple, though no such temple is mentioned in 1QS. However, in both the Rule and 4QFlor, the community's embodiment of the temple is efficacious, whether it be for atonement or smoke offerings as works of thanksgiving. The community's understanding of themselves as an interim temple heightened their awareness of moral and ritual purity concerns. All forms of defilement must be kept at bay, especially defilement caused by the wicked error of Belial and his followers.

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[88] For more see §5.5.2.2, "2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1," 195f.

Finally, scriptural texts are integral to the Rule and to 4QFlor, though in different forms. This sectarian literature is woven out of biblical texts especially Isa 28:16 and 2 Sam 7:10-11. Many of these elements appear in 1 Peter though with differing degrees of alignment and deviation.

## 5.5 Living Temples in the New Testament

The texts from Qumran demonstrate that one Jewish group had already conceived of itself as a temple before the rise of Christianity, though it is difficult to specify the precise nature of their relationship.[89] Both groups made similar hermeneutical moves, placed significant value on a number of overlapping biblical texts, and understood themselves as living in or at the dawn of the eschaton. The structural similarities of the community as temple motif within the yaḥad and among the early Christians are particularly striking. While there is no evidence for direct literary influence, such influence cannot be ruled out. Or, early Christianity may have been influenced by sectarian teachings indirectly through a mediating tradition.[90] 1 Peter, then, was the heir to a number of diverse manifestations of this theme. This survey will briefly sketch out the contours of New Testament examples of this theme in order to evaluate their proximity to, and difference from, 1 Peter.

### 5.5.1 The Temple of his Body: Jesus and the Gospels

There is evidence that a reorientation of temple thinking goes back to Jesus. Questions remain about how much of Jesus' teaching, self-perception, and view of the temple can be ascertained from the Gospel records. However, this section will work from the assumption that the Gospels themselves are broadly reliable witnesses to the Jesus tradition in general and to his view of the temple in particular.[91] Wardle argues that

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[89] However, as Wardle and others have shown, the Yaḥad were not unique in their criticism of the Jerusalem temple. Other groups used their dissatisfaction with Jerusalem to bolster the authority of alternative temples, such as those at Mt. Gerizim and Leontopolis. Timothy Wardle, *The Jerusalem Temple and Early Christian Identity* (WUNT 2/291; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 98-139.

[90] Or, the yaḥad and early Christianity may both represent contemporary interpretive traditions. The precise relationship between the two is unclear, but the similarities strongly suggest that some relationship existed, though perhaps an indirect one.

[91] Cf. see the defense by Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 167-169. Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 105. However, even if they are not strictly historical, they preserve early Christian tradition which nonetheless influenced

the Gospels' presentation of animosity between Jesus and the chief priests in Jerusalem rests on solid historical ground, and that hostilities between early Jewish Christians in Jerusalem and the same priests continued in the years following Jesus' death…[and] that this animus is what lay behind the formation of the early Christian idea of the community-as-temple.[92]

Jesus' relationship with the temple is complex.[93]  On one hand, he is portrayed as visiting it frequently (Jn 2:13; 5:1; 7:10; 11:55).  He taught in it (Mk 14:49; Mt 26:55; Lk 19:47; 21:37; 22:53; Jn 7:14, 28; 18:20; Ac 5:20), and, after his healing, commanded that a leper show himself to the priest and offer appropriate sacrifices (Mk 1:40-44).[94]  According to the Gospels, Jesus did not have an aversion to the temple as an institution.[95]  However, as with many Jews of his day, he came into conflict with the religious leaders and the temple authorities.[96]

All four Gospels record Jesus' cleansing of the temple (Mt 21:12-13/Mk 11:15-17/Lk 19:45-46/Jn 2:14-17), though scholars are divided over its interpretation.[97]  It is sufficient to say here that Jesus' action is a response to what he understood as a compromise of the temple's sanctity.[98] Jesus also predicted or threatened the destruction of the temple on several occasions (Mk 13:1-2/Mt 24:1-3/Lk 21:5-7; Mk 14:58/ Mt 26:61; Mk 15:29/Mt 27:40; Jn 2:19; cf. Acts 6:14).[99]  In several places, Jesus' action of destroying the temple is connected to his claim to raise it up again in three days (Mk 14:58/Mt 26:61; Mk 15:29/Mt 27:14; Jn 2:19-22).[100]

In John, his speech against the temple is linked to his cleansing of it.  He says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn 2:19). The evangelist explains, "he spoke of the

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the author of 1 Peter.  Either way, they are relevant for evaluating Petrine material.  The present author believes that there is warrant for maintaining the broad historicity of the Gospels on this issue.

[92] Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 169.

[93] Gottlob Schrenk, "τὸ ἱερόν," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965),  230-247; 242-246.

[94] Cf. Schrenk, "τὸ ἱερόν," 242-243.  Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 170.

[95] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 114. Daniel M. Gurtner, "Matthew's Theology of the Temple and the "Parting of the Ways": Christian Origins and the First Gospel," in *Built upon the Rock* (ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008),  128-153; 130.

[96] Schrenk, "τὸ ἱερόν," 244-245.  Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 172-191.  Gurtner, "Theology of the Temple," 130. Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 113.

[97] Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 172.  Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 106-114.  Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 286.

[98] For a recent survey, see also J. Ådna, "Temple Act," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (ed. Joel B. Green, et al.; Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2013),  947-952.

[99] Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 182.

[100] Cf. Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 112-113.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 97.

temple of his body" (Jn 2:21). For John, the body of Jesus is spoken of as a temple.[101] The statements about raising up the temple after three days in Mark and Matthew also led readers to a similar conclusion, though it is not stated as clearly as it is in John (cf. Mk 8:31/Mt 16:21/Lk 9:22).[102]

The parable of the vineyard also critiques the temple authorities (Mk 12:1-12/ Mt 21:33-46/Lk 20:9-19 cf. Acts 4:11). The parable concludes, "Have you not read in the scriptures, 'The stone the builders rejected has become the head of the corner (κεφαλὴν γωνίας), this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'" (Mk 12:10-11 cf. Lk20:17/Mt 21:42). The use of Psalm 118 is significant, especially since it appears in all three Synoptic gospels and is later taken up in 1 Peter and elsewhere in the New Testament (Acts 4:11).[103] Jesus infers that the Jewish leaders are the builders who have rejected him, the stone (λίθον).[104] Psalm 118:22 is thematically connected with Isa 28:16, "Behold, I am laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone (ἀκρογωνιαῖον), of a sure foundation: 'He who believes in him will not be put to shame" (LXX).[105] So Goppelt, "Perhaps the very early Christian interpretation of 'the stone' in Psalm 118 occasioned also the interpretation of Isa. 8:14; 28:16."[106] It is warranted to conclude that the stone passages (Ps 118:22; Isa 8:14, 28:16) were associated with the temple and with messianism in early Christianity before 1 Peter (Mt 21:42, 44; Mk12:10; Lk 20:18; Acts 4:11; Rom 9:32-33; 10:11).

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[101] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 107, 120. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 286.

[102] Several other hints towards this are found in the Synoptics. In Mat 12:6, Jesus says, "I tell you, something greater than the temple is here." Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 115-116.

[103] J. Duncan M. Derrett, "The Stone that the Builders Rejected," *SE* IV (1968): 108-186. Elliott, *I Peter*, 409.

[104] There may be an Aramaic pun embedded here. The Aramaic word אבן was sometimes interchanged with בן as it is in the Targum in Ps 118:22, "The Young Man (*or* child) whom the builders forsook has come amongst the sons of Jesse and has been found worth to become king and rule." Max Wilcox, "Peter and the Rock: A Fresh Look at Matthew xvi. 17-19," *NTS* 22 / 1 (1975): 73-88; 84-85.

[105] 4Q173 is a pesher of Ps 118:26 and may allude to Isa 8:14. Ps. 118:22 is about the stone the builders rejected. The pesher may have interpreted this verse, but the fragment is too small to tell. John M. Allegro, *Qumrân Cave 4: I (4Q158-4Q186)* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 52-53.

[106] Evidence that Ps 118 was connected with Isa 8:14 from an early point is perhaps found in the fragmentary Psalm pesher 4Q173 V.2. See n.104 above. Goppelt, *I Peter*, 138. Also, Klyne R. Snodgrass, "1 Peter II. 1-10: Its Formation and Literary Affinities," *NTS* 24 (1997): 97-106; 106.

The purpose of this section is not to exhaustively survey texts which document Jesus' relationship to the temple; rather, the goal is to attempt to locate the seeds from which the community as temple motif emerged in early Christianity.[107] Jesus prophesied the destruction of the temple. In some cases, he claimed that he would raise it again in three days. In John, this temple is explained as his body. It therefore seems highly probable that these statements reflect authentic tradition in which Jesus' body is like, or in fact, is, a temple. This line of thinking is not extended to the church by Jesus in the Gospels.[108]

One final episode should be noted before moving forward: Jesus' words to Peter, "on this rock I will build my church" (καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδμήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, Mt 16:17-19).[109] Whether these verses can be determined to be authentic or not need not detain us here.[110] However, two defensible conclusions are worth noting. First, it is likely Peter was known by his Greek and Aramaic names.[111] Second, these names involve word plays and puns in Aramaic and Greek on the words for rock and building (Mt 16:18; Mk 3:16; Jn 1:40-42).[112] Word plays and terminology such as Cephas, πέτρα/πέτρος, οἰκοδομέω, and ἐκκλησία, may have triggered or inspired early Christian thinkers like Paul and the author of 1 Peter to develop their Christology *and* ecclesiology with texts like Ps 118:22, Isa 8:14, and Isa 28:16 (cf. Eph 2:20-22).[113] Early Christian thinking on the significance of Jesus' death, such as Paul's teaching on union with

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[107] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 97.

[108] Schrenk, "τὸ ἱερόν," 244.

[109] C. F. D. Moule, "Some Reflections on the Stone *Testimonia* in relation to the Name Peter," *NTS* 2 / 1 (1955): 56-59. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 97.

[110] Bernard P. Robinson, "Peter and His Successors: Tradition and Redaction in Matthew 16.17-19," *JSNT* 21 (1984): 85-104. Wilcox, "Peter and the Rock," 73-74.

[111] Lutz Doering, "Apostle, Co-Elder, and Witness of Suffering: Author Construction and Peter Image in 1 Peter," in *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen/Pseudepigraphy and Author Fiction in Early Christian Letters* (WUNT 246; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 645-681; 650-652. Cf. Markus Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter in Ancient Reception and Modern Debate* (WUNT 262; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 148-150. Robinson, "Peter and His Successors," 91. Cf. Mat 16:18. Jn 1:42; Mk 3:16

[112] Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter*, 148-157. Wilcox, "Peter and the Rock," 74. Moule, "Some Reflections," 56-59.

[113]Moule, "Some Reflections," 57-58. Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 147. In a fascinating article, Barber argues that Matthew depicts Jesus as the Davidic temple builder here instating Peter in a priestly role in his new temple. Michael Patrick Barber, "Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder and Peter's Priestly Role in Matthew 16:16-19," *JBL* 132 / 4 (2013): 935-953.

Christ, suggests that early Christians may have understand what was true of Christ as also true, in a qualified way, of themselves, or, more appropriately, of the church.

### 5. 5. 2  Do you Not Know you are God's Temple? Living Temples in Paul

The community as temple theme appears in four places in the Pauline corpus: 1 Cor 3:1-17; 6:12-19; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1; and Eph 2:19-22.[114]

### 5. 5. 2. 1  1 Corinthians 3:1-17 and 6:12-19: You are God's Temple

In 1 Corinthians 3:1-17, Paul uses the community as temple metaphor to address the problem of disunity in the church.[115]  He explains that he and Apollos are fellow servants working together at tasks assigned them by God (1 Cor 3:5).[116]  "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave growth" (1 Cor 3:6).   As in 1 Peter, agricultural images are used with architectural ones.[117]

With the phrase "God's building" in 1 Cor 3:9, Paul embarks on an extended metaphor to describe the church as the temple of God.[118]  Paul says, "like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation (ὡς σοφὸς ἀριτέκτων θεμέλιον ἔθηκα), and another man is building upon it (ἄλλος δὲ ἐποικοδομεῖ)" (1 Cor 3:10).[119]  Paul founded the Church in Corinth, but now other leaders are taking over the task of building up the Corinthians in faith.[120]  However, he is quick to explain that there is only one foundation, Christ (1 Cor 3:11).[121]  In 1 Cor 3:12, a man's work is compared to the different materials available for construction: gold, silver, precious stones, wood

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[114] Whether Paul wrote Ephesians need not detain us here.  Either way, the letter was accepted by the early church as authoritative and so influenced subsequent tradition.  For the sake of convenience, the author of Ephesians will be addressed as Paul.

[115] Coppens, "Spiritual Temple," 56.  Yulin Liu, *Temple Purity in 1-2 Corinthians* (WUNT 2/343; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 120.

[116] Philipp Vielhauer, *OIKODOME: Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament* (München: Kaiser Verlag, 1979), 74.

[117] On the conjunction of agricultural and architectural images in Paul and Qumran, see Vielhauer, *OIKODOME*, 74-75. Klinzing, *Umdeutung des Kultus*, 168.  Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 58.

[118] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 57-58.  R. J. McKelvey, *The New Temple: The Church in the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 98.

[119] For more on Paul's architectural language in the context of Roman temple building, see Jay Shanor, "Paul as Master Builder: Construction Terms in First Corinthians," *NTS* 34 / 3 (1988): 461-471.

[120] C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1968), 87.  Fee, *First Corinthians*, 139.

[121] Vielhauer, *OIKODOME*, 75.

hay, straw.[122]  At the eschaton, fire will test each it, to reward some, but destroy others (1 Cor

3:12-15).[123]

Paul then writes (3:16-17),
Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells  in you? If anyone
destroys God's temple, God will destroy him.  For God's temple is holy, and that temple you
are.

Οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ναὸς θεοῦ ἐστε καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν; εἴ τις τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ
φθείρει, φθερεῖ τοῦτον ὁ θεός· ὁ γὰρ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἅγιός ἐστιν, ὅιτινές ἐστε ὑμεῖς.

The Christians are not just any building; they are God's temple.[124]  Paul uses the term ναός to

name the temple.[125]  Though Paul does not specify *which* temple believers now embody, the fact

he describes it as "holy" and the dwelling place of God's spirit makes it clear that he is not

referring to any temple in general, but to the temple of the living God.[126]  The pneumatic

character of this temple is primary.  The active presence of God's spirit demands that the temple

of believers be kept pure and holy (ἅγιος).[127]  The holy presence of God can be dangerous; he

will destroy the one who destroys his temple.[128]

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[122] For more on these verse in Jewish literature, see Klinzing, *Umdeutung des Kultus*, 170-171.  Fee, *First Corinthians*, 140-141.  Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 311.

[123]  Vielhauer, *OIKODOME*, 76-77.

[124] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 146.

[125] ναός could be used to mean a temple or sanctuary generally, but it could also have a more restricted meaning to refer to the place where the image of a goddess was kept.  In Jewish sources, it could refer to entire temple precinct in Jerusalem, or to the curtain the separated the Holy of Holies from from the holy place.  BDAG, 665-666.  As Robertson and Plummer write, "As a metaphor for the Divine indwelling, the ναός, which contained the Holy of Holies, is more suitable than ἱερόν, which included the whole of the sacred enclosure (vi.19; 2 Chr. vi.16; Eph. ii.21).  To converts from  heathenism, the ναός might suggest the *cella* in which the image of the god was placed, Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1914), 66.

[126]  Indeed, there are clear continuities between what Paul says here and Jewish thought.  However, what he writes would also have been comprehensible to a gentile audience, see fn. immediately above.  On the temple as the resting place of God's spirit, see Liu, *Temple Purity*, 121-122.  Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 58.  McKelvey, *The New Temple*, 100-101.  Christfried Böttrich, ""Ihr seid der Tempel Gottes": Tempelmetaphorik und Gemeinde bei Paulus," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel, Community without Temple* (ed. Beate Ego, et al.; WUNT 118; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck),  411-425; 416.

[127] Liu, *Temple Purity*, 121. Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 59.

[128] Liu, *Temple Purity*, 122.

Paul reminds believers the church is founded on Christ.[129] The plural "in you" (ἐν ὑμῖν) and 'you' (ὑμεῖς) makes this explicit.[130] The church is therefore corporately responsible for living holy, morally pure lives. They are also all given the responsibility of testing whether the works of different teachers are building them up on the foundation of Christ.

There are several interesting similarities and differences between the expression of the community as temple theme here and its occurrences at Qumran. For example, both texts weave together analogies from agriculture and architecture, with special attention to the "foundation" (סוד/ θεμέλιος). Both describe the corporate community as a temple.

In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Paul discusses the complex relationship between the believers, their bodies, and God. Through the power of the resurrection, the bodies of the Corinthians have been joined to Christ (1 Cor 6:14-15). However, Corinthian men are joining their bodies to prostitutes (1 Cor 6:15-16). Paul writes,

> Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

Paul makes the striking statement that the one who is united to Christ "becomes one spirit with him."[131] The Corinthians should recognize that the indwelling of God's spirit in their bodies makes God's temple.[132] He continues in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20,

> Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

> ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν ἁγίου πνεύματός ἐστιν οὗ ἔχετε ἀπὸ θεοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἑαυτῶν; ἠγοράσθητε γὰρ τιμῆς· δοξάσατε δὴ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν.

A believer's body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.[133] The idea that a person's body could be God's temple has precedence in Philo.[134]

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[129] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 137.

[130] McKelvey, *The New Temple*, 101. Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 316.

[131] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 260.

[132] Böttrich, ""Ihr seid der Tempel Gottes"," 419.

[133] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 263-264. Coppens, "Spiritual Temple," 55.

[134] In *Dreams* 1.149, Philo writes, "Be zealous, therefore, O soul, to become a house of God," (σπούδαζε οὖ, ὦ ψυχή, θεοῦ οἶκος γενέσθαι). Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 112.

On the surface, the individual focus of 1 Cor 6 seems to be in tension with the corporate focus in 1 Cor 3.[135] In his compelling article, "Which 'Body' Is a Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)? Paul beyond the Individual/Communal Divide," Nijay Gupta argues that the situation is more subtle and complex.[136]

The phrase τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν is composed of a singular noun with a plural pronoun. Gupta argues that the dichotomy between individual and communal is a false one, and that it is broken down in part by the juxtaposition of singular and plural lexemes and imagery (for example, the leaven and yeast image in 1 Cor 5:6-8). "This singular/plural oscillation demonstrates the interrelationship of the individual and the whole. For Paul it is key to recognize that the foolishness, hardheartedness, or indiscretion of the one is volatile for the whole."[137] The individual body should not be elided in favour of purely communal readings. Rather, it is the appreciation that it is precisely the individual as an individual which has implications for the church as a whole. Gupta writes,

> Paul could not have chosen a better metaphorical domain than his somatic one to communicate the contagious potential of sexual immorality, in its capacity to have such a damaging effect on the whole matrix of relationship within which Christ, the community, and the individual are bound. When some scholars appeal to anthropology to explain the social dynamics of Paul's body metaphors, they recognize that this metaphor operates via the individual's reflection of the experience of each person as an embodied self.[138]

Thus, 1 Cor 3 frames the discussion in terms of the corporate community as temple, while 1 Cor 6 frames it in view of the individual. However, these frames are mutually reinforcing. The corporate community cannot be a dwelling place of God's spirit unless the individual members live holy lives. Conversely, the immoral actions of individuals have wider implications for the entire group since all are members of the one body of Christ.[139] In this way 1 Cor 3 and 6

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[135] Böttrich, ""Ihr seid der Tempel Gottes"," 419. Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 474. Coppens, "Spiritual Temple," 54.

[136] Nijay K. Gupta, "Which "Body" is a Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)? Paul beyond the Individual/Communal Divide," *CBQ* 72 (2010): 528-536.

[137] Gupta, "Which "Body"?," 533.

[138] Gupta, "Which "Body"?," 529.

[139] Böttrich, ""Ihr seid der Tempel Gottes"," 420.

resemble the ideology in so far as each individual member is responsible for maintaining the corporate holiness of the community.

In conclusion, Paul's use of community as temple language in 1 Corinthians is contextual: it addresses specific moral issues within the community. In 1 Cor 3, Paul uses the image of a building, built on Christ, the single foundation, to address the factionalism of the church. Though there are many builders, all are building on one foundation. In 1 Cor 6, Paul uses community as temple language to explain how the private actions of individual believers affect the entire community. Each believer's body is a temple indwelt by the Spirit of God. If all believers are one in Christ, then the infraction of a single believer against God's temple is an infraction that challenges the sanctity of the whole church.

### 5. 5. 2. 2   2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1: the Temple of the Living God

Paul uses community as temple language again in 2 Cor 6:14-18.[140]

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[140] Scholarly debate surrounds 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 on a number of fronts. Most pressingly, scholars have often identified 6:14-71 as an intrusion, or as a unit disconnected from the surrounding text, possibly from Qumran. This issue therefore has immediate implications for questions of Pauline authorship. For the present purpose, this chapter will not engage with complex questions of the structure of 2 Cor and issues of redaction or authorship. Instead, this chapter will work with the text in its present final form. Regardless of whether Paul was the author or not, this text has become a part of 2 Cor and has influenced countless Christian readers from a very early point. There is a lot of scholarly literature on this, for more information, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Qumrân and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor 6,14-7,1," *CBQ* 23 (1961): 271-280. Hans Dieter Betz, "2 Cor 6:14-7:1: An Anti-Pauline Fragment?," *JBL* 92 / 1 (1973): 88-108. Jerome Murphy O'Connor, "Relating 2 Corinthians 6.14-7.1 to its Context," *NTS* 33 / 2 (1987): 272-275. Paul Brooks Duff, "The Mind of the Redactor: 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 in its Secondary Context," *NovT* 35 / 2 (1993): 160-180. Michael Goulder, "2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 as an Integral Part of 2 Corinthians," *NovT* 36 / 1 (1994): 47-57.

**Table 5-1. 2 Cor 6:14-7:1**

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Do not be mismatched with unbelievers.  For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity?  Or what fellowship has light with darkness?  What accord has Christ with Belial?  Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,

      "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God,

      and they shall be my people.

Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord,

      and touch nothing unclean;

      then I will welcome you,

      and I will be a father to you,

      and you shall be my sons and daughters,

      says the Lord Almighty."

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.

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Μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις· τίς γὰρ μετοχὴ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἀνομίᾳ, ἢ τίς κοινωνία φωτὶ πρὸς σκότος; τίς δὲ συμφώνησις Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελιάρ, ἢ τίς μερὶς πιστῷ μετὰ ἀπίστου; τίς δὲ συγκατάθεσις ναῷ μετὰ εἰδώλων; ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐσμεν ζῶντος, καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι

    ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω

    καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεὸς καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονταί μου λαός.

  διὸ ἐξέλθατε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν

    καὶ ἀφορίσθητε, λέγει κύριος,

    καὶ ἀκαθάρτου μὴ ἅπτεσθε·

    κἀγὼ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς

    καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῖν εἰς πατέρα

    καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μοι εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας,

  λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ.

  Ταύτας οὖν ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, ἀγαπητοί, καθαρίσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ.

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This discussion of the community as temple comes in the midst of the warning not to be unequally yoked to an unbeliever.  For Paul, such a marriage is a union of righteousness to iniquity, of light to darkness, even of Christ to Belial. Paul piles up a series of antitheses to stress the complete incongruity of such a union.  Paul begins with the simple, moral duality of righteous/iniquity, and moves to the opposing language of light/dark.  The final pair is the contrast of Christ with Belial.  From an early time scholars noted the similarity of these pairs, and other features of the unit, with the ideology found at Qumran.[141]

Though Belial appears in the Scriptures and literature from the Second Temple period, it seems that the most relevant parallel to 2 Cor is in the *War Scroll* (1QM).[142]  In 1QM, the "sons

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[141] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 49-56.  Fitzmyer, "2 Cor 6,14-7,1," 273-276.

[142] The origin and significance of Belial is debated.  Belial is mentioned in the Scriptures, see for example Deut 13:14(13); Jud 19:22; 1 Sam 1:16; 2:21; 25:25; Prov 16:27.  He is also appears in Second Temple literature such as Jubilees, where Belial arguably is used for the first time as a proper name (1:20; 15:33), the Sibylline Oracles ((3.63-

of light" make war against the "sons of darkness" (col. 1.1).[143] The "army of Belial" will make war against those who have been exiled to the desert, "the sons of Levi, the sons of Judah, and the sons of Benjamin" (col. 1.2). At the eschatological battle, "wickedness will be defeated" and "there will be no escape for the sons of darkness" (col. 1.6-7). It is striking that the three antitheses named in 2 Cor. are represented in 1QM. Members are diametrically opposed to the non-members, a point with which Paul would concur, though he does not use the military language of 1QM.

It is in this context of extreme antitheses that Paul deploys temple language. Holiness and idolatry are diametrically opposed; idolatry defiles holy space.[144] In a similar way, Paul explains that union with an unbeliever also defiles believers, who are temples of the living God.[145] The idols are not physical idols, but, like the temple, they are the spiritual idols of sin which defile holy space.[146] Paul substantiates his argument with a catena of scriptural allusions and quotations (Lev 26:11-12, Ezek 37:27, Isa 52:11, and 2 Sam 7:14).[147] Paul's quotations are connected by the theme of the indwelling presence of God.[148] Just as God's presence dwelled in the Jerusalem

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74), Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs (T. Reub 4:8, 11; T. Dan 1:17; T. Benj. 6:1; 7:1), and the Dead Sea Scrolls (for example, 1QS 1:18, 23-24; 2:19; 4Q 177 col. 3 ln. 8; 4Q491 I 6). Otzen, "בְּלִיַּעַל," in *TDOT 2/15* (ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 131-136. Fitzmyer, "2 Cor 6,14-7,1," 275-276. Ryan E. Stokes, "Belial," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 435-436. Michael Mach, "Demons," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 189-192.

[143] The language of the "sons of light" and "sons of darkness" permeates 1QM. God is described as light, "and in the time God, his exalted greatness will shine for all the et[ernal] times, for peace and blessing, glory and joy, and length of days for all the sons of light," (1QM col. 1 ln. 8). God's light is reflected in the sons of light. For example, in col. 1 alone see ln. 3, 7, 9-11, 13, 16.

[144] Fitzmyer, "2 Cor 6,14-7,1," 277.

[145] Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 213.

[146] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 51.

[147] More distantly, Ex 25:8; 29:45; Jer 31:1, Ezek 20:34-41, 2 Sam 7:8, and Isa 43:6 might also be alluded to. Cf. G. K. Beale, "The Old Testament Background of Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5-7 and its Bearing on the Literary Problem of 6.14-7.1," *NTS* 35 / 4 (1989): 550-581; 570-572. James M. Scott, "The Use of Scripture in 2 Corinthians 6.16c-18 and Paul's Restoration Theology," *JSNT* 56 (1994): 73-99.

[148] In Lev 26:11-12, God declares, "And I will make my abode among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people." Likewise in Ezek 37:27, "My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (cf. Exod 25:8; 29:45). Scott, "Use of Scripture," 76. Albert L. A. Hogeterp, "Community as a Temple in Paul's Letters: The Case of Cultic Terms in 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1," in *Anthropology & Biblical Studies: Avenues of Approach* (ed. Louise J. Lawrence and Mario I. Aguilar; Leiden: Deo, 2004), 281-295; 288-289. Böttrich, ""Ihr seid der Tempel Gottes"," 418. Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 50. Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 213.

temple, so now does his presence reside in believers.[149]  Isaiah 52:11 says, "Therefore come out

from them, and be separated from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean."  The call to

separation and avoidance of contact with the unclean fits the metaphor of the community as

temple, where holiness must be protected.[150] The conceptual grid of holiness and defilement is

therefore mapped onto the ethical lives of believers.

Paul concludes the catena with the verses on the adoption of believers are God's sons and

daughters.  All those who believe now in some sense fulfill the Davidic, messianic expectation of

2 Sam 7.  Through the work of Christ, the Messiah, all believers are now God's sons and

daughters, and God has become their father.

The purpose of the catena is given in 2 Cor 7:1. Believers are called to cleanse themselves

"from every defilement of the body and spirit" and to "make holiness perfect in the fear of God."

The language of cleansing, defilement, and holiness grows out from the metaphor of the

community as temple; because believers are the temple of the living God, they are called to live

holy lives in body and spirit.

### 5. 5. 2. 3   Ephesians 2:19-22: Christ the Foundation of the Temple

In Ephesians, the author describes the unity of the church, namely of Jews and Gentiles, with

cultic and body metaphors.[151]  Both Jews and Gentiles are dependent on the work of Christ

(2:16).[152]  Christ acted to wash and cleanse the church; making her "without spot or wrinkle or

any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish" (5:26-27; 1:3).  As in 1 Corinthians,

the cleansing and purifying work of Christ is the means by which believers have become the

temple of God.  Cleansed with his blood, the church is now the "household of God" (οἰκεῖοι τοῦ

θεοῦ, 2:19).  Those who believe have been moved from their old family alliances into a new

family, the family of God.[153]  The division between Jew and Gentile has been overcome by the

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[149] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 52-54.

[150] Fitzmyer, "2 Cor 6,14-7,1," 278.  Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 214.

[151] McKelvey, *The New Temple*, 108-109.  Schüssler Fiorenza, "Cultic Language," 173.

[152] Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians* (WBC 42; Waco: Word, 1990), 124-125.  McKelvey, *The New Temple*, 110-111.

[153] Gärtner, *Temple and the Community*, 62-63.  Vielhauer, *OIKODOME*, 117.

work of Christ.  The old markers of Jewish identity, such as circumcision, are no longer a primary identity forming element and no longer separate Gentiles from God.[154]  The "Gentiles in the flesh," who were far, have been brought near (2:11, 13, 17).

In Ephesians 2:19-22, the author uses the combination of christology and architectural language to describe the edification of builders into a spiritual temple of God.[155]  He writes in 2:19-22,

> So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is held together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of the God in the Spirit.

> Ἄρα οὖν οὐκέτι ἐστὲ ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι ἀλλ᾽ ἐστὲ συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐν ᾧ πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη αὔξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πνεύματι.

Believers are now part of the household of God, "built on the foundation of the apostles," but Christ is the cornerstone (ἀκρογωνιαῖος) upon whom "the whole structure is joined together."[156]  However, this is not an ordinary building; it is a building that grows (αὔξει).[157]

As in 1 Corinthians 3, the image here is predominately a corporate image, but it is a corporate image that depends on the participation of all of its members.[158]  Believers are the body of Christ, and as they are being built up they are being formed into the temple of God, "the dwelling place of God in the spirit."[159]  As a temple, believers must maintain the level of moral holiness appropriate for a temple because God's spirit dwells in them.

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[154] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 135.  Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 238.

[155] McKelvey, *The New Temple*, 112.

[156] Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 215.  McKelvey, *The New Temple*, 114-115.  Vielhauer, *OIKODOME*, 117-118.

[157] Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 215.  McKelvey, *The New Temple*, 115-116, 118.

[158]  This ecclesiology grounds the letter's moral instructions.  For example, cf. 3:6; 5:3-14, 21-32.

[159] Wardle, *Jerusalem Temple*, 215-216.

In contrast to 1 Peter, the description of believers as a temple in Ephesians is completely inward looking.  The metaphor does not contrast members with non-members.  In 1 Peter, Christ is a living cornerstone, but he is also "a stone that will make people stumble and a rock that will make them fall."  In 1 Peter, the implications for those who do not believe are spelled out.

In conclusion, the theme of community as temple appears in the Pauline and deutero-Pauline letters.  In these letters, the theological purpose is deeply connected to practical, ethical exhortation: the indicative is linked to his imperative.  While 1 Peter shares many similar features, the author of 1 Peter takes this theme in new directions.

### 5.6     1 Peter 2:4-5: Living Stones

I will now explore the community as temple theme in 1 Peter in order to appreciate both its continuity with what came before in Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity, but also its distinctive theology.  This section will have two related foci.  First, this chapter will study the corporate descriptions of believers and non-believers in order to evaluate the use of familial, ethnic, and national language in 2:4-10.  This section will argue that the familial and ethnic language in 2:4-10 is grounded on the work of Christ, which has caused all believers to be begotten into the family of God.  This analysis will also show the author's concern to highlight the dichotomy between those who believe and those who do not, and further, that this dichotomy is focused on Christ.

Therefore, secondly, this section will pay special attention to the portrayal of Christ in these verses.  Christ is paradigmatic for believers; as the source and exemplar of their life.[160]  Believers live *because* Christ lives, but they are also called to live *as* Christ lives.  They will be rejected by the world, as Christ was, but they will be honored by God as Christ was.  In order to track the respective depictions of Christ and believers, this section will pay careful attention to the series of metaphors in 2:4-10.

1 Peter 2:4-5 says,

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[160] Paul S. Minear, "The House of Living Stones: A Study of 1 Peter 2:4-12," 34 (1982): 238-248; 241.

πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι λίθον ζῶντα ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδεδοκιμασμένον, παρὰ δὲ θεῷ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον, καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

By coming to him, a living stone, which was rejected by humans but which is a valuable and chosen stone in God's sight, you yourselves, as living stones, are also being built into a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus the Christ.[161]

The participle προσερχόμενοι can have either imperative or indicative force, though the indicative has rightly gained the most support among commentators because the main verb (οἰκοδομεῖσθε) also has indicative force.[162] In 1 Peter 2:4-5, believers are described as "living stones" (ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες) who are being joined to Christ the living stone (λίθον ζῶντα, 2:4). The stone language thus grounds two axes: the vertical and the horizontal. Vertically, because believers are connected to Christ, the living stone, they are now themselves becoming *like* living stones.[163] However, this has social, horizontal effects. Believers' experience of rejection by men and acceptance by God mirrors Christ's experience of human rejection and divine acceptance.[164] These horizontal and vertical axes introduce the main themes for 2:4-10 and serve as a framework in which the following metaphors of stone, temple, priesthood and nation are developed.

As Elliott and others have shown, 2:4-5 contains many of the key words and themes of the latter part of the unit of 2:4-10.[165] The stone language in 2:4 hints at the stone, temple and

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[161] Translation by Dubis, *I Peter*, 36.

[162] Dubis, *I Peter*, 45-47. Cf. Elliott, *I Peter*, 409. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 153-154. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 97. The following advocate an imperative reading, Goppelt, *I Peter*, 137, 140. Minear, "House of Living Stones," 240.

[163] The ὡς indicates the metaphorical nature of believers' status as a stone. It is metaphorical in two degrees. The first is that believers' status as a stone is qualitatively different from Christ's. Believers' status as stones is dependent on and subsidiary to Christ's prior status as a stone. However, and secondarily, Christ is also metaphorically a stone. Believers' status as living stones thus stands at one level of remove from the primary metaphor. For more, see fn. 175 below. Also, Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 152. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 95.

[164] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 150. Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 134.

[165] Elliott, *I Peter*, 407-408. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 149-150. Ernest Best, "I Peter II 4-10—A Reconsideration," *NovT* 11 (1969): 270-293; 271. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 98. However, Elliott goes too far by arguing that 2:4-5 serves as a midrash on the latter verses and has not been followed by later commentators and scholars.

architectural language developed in 2:5-8.[166]  There, Christ is identified as the cornerstone, but here he is only identified as a "living stone," as are believers.[167]

Due to the influence of Deut 32:18, this rock/stone language can have overtones of ethnic continuity in Jewish literature.[168]  Indeed, this verse inspired a lively history of interpretation which highlighted the importance of ethnic continuity with the covenant and the patriarchs.  The first example of the exegetical legacy of Deut 32:18 is found in Isaiah 51:1-2, a connection frequently noted by the rabbis.[169]

> Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
> you who seek the LORD:
> look to the rock (אֶל־צוּר; εἰς τὴν στερεὰν πέτραν) from which you were hewn (חֻצַּבְתֶּם; ἣν ἐλατομήσατε),
> and to the quarry (אֶל־מַקֶּבֶת בּוֹר; εἰς τὸν βόθυνον τοῦ λάκκου) from which you were dug (נֻקַּרְתֶּם; ὂν ὠρύξατε).
> Look to Abraham your father,
> and to Sarah who bore you;
> for he was but one when I called him,
> that I might bless him and multiply him.

In these verses, the Lord commands Israel to look to Abraham and Sarah, the patriarch and matriarch par excellence.  Rock imagery serves as the source domain for the target domain of ethnicity.[170]  The parallelism compares Abraham to a rock and Sarah to a quarry where they take

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[166] Elliott, *I Peter*, 409.

[167] Plumpe has argued for parallels based on Greek and Latin sources of "living rock." However, these parallels are too remote to be convincing.  Instead, the "living" attribute of the rock comes from Peter's own theology.  J. C. Plumpe, "Vivum Saxum, Vivi Lapides: The Concept of "Living Stone" in Classical and Christian Antiquity," 1 (1943): 1-14.

[168] Deut 32:18, "You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth." For more on Deu 32:18, see §2.3.1, "This Day I Have Begotten You:Evidence from the Hebrew Scriptures," 59f; and §4.3, "Cross-Gender Imagery: Feminine Men, Maternal God," 147f.

[169] *Pesig. Rab Kah*. 5.2 par *Pesig. Rab* 15.2 (Deut 32:30 with Isa 51:1); *Gen. Rab*. 44.21, sources from Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter*, 153.  Bockmuehl also notes that the 13th century "midrash thesaurus" *Yalqut Sim'oni* reproduces a tradition which connects Isa 51:1-2 with Num 23:9 on the basis of the link work πέτρα, though this seems much too late to reflect Second Temple or early Christian tradition, see *The Remembered Peter*, 153.

[170] Cf. Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter*, 152-153.  Also, as noted by Bockmuehl, other patriarchs are designated rocks based on Num 23:9, which was often read in conjunction with Isa 51:1-3. References from Bockhmuehl, *Tanh.* Balaq 19 (114), ed. Buber 4.143 (also noted by Rashi *ad loc.*); *Tg. Ps.-J.* and *Tg. Neof.* Num 23:9; *Mek.* Beshallah I, ed. Horowitz/Rabin p. 179; *Pesiq Rab.* 12.5, etc. Also, Vielhauer, *OIKODOME*, 12-13.

on the roles as mother and father of Israel.[171]  The addressees are to remember that this is the stock from which they have come.[172]  Abraham was a single individual, but God made him into the nation of Israel (cf. Eze 33:24).

Pseudo-Philo develops Isa 51:1-3 when Joshua reports the LORD's words to the people (LAB 23:4),

> The LORD says this: 'There was one rock from which I quarried out your father.  And the cutting of that rock bore two men whose names are Abraham and Nahor, and out of the chiseling of that place were born two women whose names are Sarah and Melcha.[173]

Pseudo-Philo expanded Isaiah's language to include Nahor and Melcha.  Later on, Joshua reports how Abraham asked God, "How will I have offspring from that rock of mine that is closed up?" (LAB 23:6).  Abraham's "closed up" rock eventually produces Isaac, and so the rest of the nation.  Joshua's speech motivates the people to respond and accept their covenant obligation of faithfulness.  In LAB, the patriarchs embodied the faith Israel is now called to emulate.  Pseudo-Philo thus expanded the imagery of Isa 51:1-3 to highlight Israel's connection to her patriarchs and matriarchs as motivation for faithful behavior in the present.

In some texts from Qumran, the sectarians use the language of stones to describe their community. In 4QpIsa[d] (4Q164), the pesharist applied Isa 54:11-12 to the community.[174]  As in 1QS, the hierarchy of the community is reflected in the architectural metaphors.  Texts like Isa 51:1-3, LAB 23:4, and 4QpIsa[d] via Isa 54:11-12 show that stone language without overt temple symbolism was applied to groups of people, such as ethnic Israel or the eschatological vision of the Qumran sectarians. It is not difficult to suppose that such stone/rock imagery was easily combined with temple language.[175]

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[171] For an alternative translation and interpretation, see J. Gerald Janzen, "Rivers in the Desert of Abraham and Sarah and Zion (Isaiah 51:1-3)," *HAR* 10 (1986): 139-155.

[172] As Bockmuehl notes, this is an image of *source,* Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter*, 152.

[173] Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter*, 152.

[174] Cf. §5.4.1, "Community as Temple in the Serekh ha-Yaḥad," 174f.  Also, Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 151, 155. Goppelt, *I Peter*, 138.

[175] 1 Peter 2:4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 use the term λίθος. Early Christian traditions such as those in Mat 16:18, Mk 3:16, Jn 1:40-42 link him to πέτρα/πέτρος.  Those λίθος and πέτρα/πέτρος are different, it is not difficult to see how the two may have been used to take advantage of early Christian traditions about Peter and early Christian texts about Christ as the λίθος.

In 1 Peter, the stone language in verse 4 anticipates the coming temple imagery.[176] The stone language in verse 4 may also anticipate the ethnic identity construction in 2:9-10. Just as in Isa 51:102 (and later LAB) Jews were called to remember the rock from which they were hewn and the quarry from which they were dug (via Deut 32:18), so are believers called to be living stones after the model of Christ, the living stone, through whom they have been divinely begotten. In 1 Peter 2:4, the description of both Christ and believers as stones closely aligns believers with Christ. They are like stones dug out of the same quarry. What is true for Christ is true, in an analogous way, of believers.[177]

Verse 4 thus introduces the pivotal, central antithesis in this unit between believers and non-believers.[178] Christ is the fulcrum between these groups.[179] Christ's dual status of being rejected by men but at the same time chosen by God is reflexively applied to believers who are "like living stones," ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες.[180] The rejection here anticipates this theme in vs. 7-8 (Isa 28:16; Ps 118:22).[181] Rather than focus on their human rejection, the author's goal is to strengthen believers' group identity by re-directing their attention to their divine election.[182]

In verses 4-5, the author blends the language of οἶκος and temple to move from the semantic domain of the household to cult.[183] Having used domestic and familial language throughout the letter by, the author makes his transition into cultic language with the phrase οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικός, "being built up into a spiritual house." Believers are being built up as "a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." Having moved

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[176] Vielhauer, *OIKODOME*, 137.

[177] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 135.

[178] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 150.

[179] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 34.

[180] Goppelt notes that the ὡς indicates an analogous, or "transferred" relationship, Goppelt, *I Peter*, 139. Also, Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 154-155. Elliott, *I Peter*, 413. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 159. Vielhauer, *OIKODOME*, 138,140. Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 135.

[181] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 99. Elliott, *I Peter*, 409-410.

[182] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 152-154.

[183] See §5.2-3, 167ff. Also, Martin, *Metaphor and Composition*, 185-186. Bigg, *St. Peter*, 128. Kelly, *Epistles of Peter*, 89-90.

from household language to cultic language by means of οἶκος, the author piles up the cultic imagery: holiness, priesthood, and acceptable sacrifices.

The phrase οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικός describes the identity of believers who are being built into a "spiritual house."[184] The verbal alliteration of οἰκοδομέω and οἶκος πνευματικός alerts the reader to the significance of this theologically loaded pun. The adjective πνευματικός is replicated in the πνευματικὰς θυσίας. The kind of house believers are reflects the kind of sacrifices they are to offer: both are to be infused with the spirit.[185]

These sacrifices are not explained in further detail; but it seems best to leave them open-ended. That is, they reflect the totality of a life lived in accordance with the holiness of God and the message of the gospel.[186] Unlike what we find in the Community Rule, these sacrifices do not achieve atonement; only the work of Christ has done this.[187] Rather, this language functions as part of the larger, cultic metaphor describing Christian identity. These metaphors are an invitation to believers to enter fully into their new Christian identity. The author is less concerned about creating a coherent alternative reality than he is about providing believers with a set of mutually reinforcing images of their new status as Christians. The author is not bothered by layering up the metaphors of stones, sanctuaries, and offerings. For him, all of these metaphors communicate true theological realities that could not be communicated in a more direct way.

As a spiritual house, believers are called to be a holy priesthood, εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον. The εἰς clause is telic here, as it often is in the letter.[188] The priesthood imagery may also be undergirded by divine regeneration. The Jewish priesthood during the Second Temple period was a

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[184]Though οἰκοδομεῖσθε could be an imperative, many translations (KJV, ESV, NET, NIV) and commentators rightly read it as a passive indicative verb, see for example, Vielhauer, *OIKODOME*, 140. Dubis, *I Peter*, 47-48. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 100. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 155.

[185] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 157. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 101. Dubis, *I Peter*, 48. Bigg, *St. Peter*, 129. Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 161.

[186] Elliott, *I Peter*, 422. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 161.

[187] For more, see §5.4.1, "Community as Temple in the *Serekh ha-Yaḥad*," 174f. See also, Best, "I Peter II 4—10," 284, 288. Schüssler Fiorenza, "Cultic Language," 171, 175.

[188] For more, see pg.85 below. Dubis, *I Peter*, 48. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 156. Elliott, *I Peter*, 160.

hereditary institution which, by its very nature, only involved a minority of the Jewish people. However, through their regeneration, believers are begotten into the membership of a spiritual priesthood whose earthly counterpart would never have been within their reach. Now, through their new identity, those who believe embody the temple of God and serve as his priests, sending up acceptable offerings through Jesus Christ.

The word ἱεράτευμα is very uncommon, as Elliott has shown.[189] It does not appear in any pre-Christian Greco-Roman literature except for the Septuagint (Exod 19:6; 23:22; 2 Macc 2:17) and Philo where he is alluding to Exod 19:6 (*Sobriety* 66; *Abraham* 56).[190] Elliott has shown that "τὸ ἱεράτευμα thus denotes 'the community of those functioning as priests,' 'a body of priests.' This suggests the meaning 'a body with a priestly charge' rather than the more general 'a priestly community.'"[191] The purpose of this priesthood is to offer up (ἀνενέγκαι; from ἀναφέρω) spiritual sacrifices (πνευματικὰς θυσίας). The verb ἀναφέρω is used to describe the actions of a priest or worshipper bringing a sacrifice to an altar.[192]

In 1 Peter, the "spiritual sacrifices" are not specified, though many commentators see a connection between verse 5 and verse 9. Thus, the spiritual sacrifices involve declaring "the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."[193] This is possible, but there are not enough links between verses 5 and 9 to make this obvious. The only piece of shared language between verses 5 and 9 is ἱεράτευμα. However, verse 9 may still be relevant since it is the only place in verses 4-10, besides the offering of spiritual sacrifices in verse 5, where believers are called to *do* something. It seems best to argue that the spiritual sacrifices are open-ended.

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[189] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 64, 96-101.

[190] Elliott also notes that it occurs in Greek Fragment 67, relating to the T. of Levi 11:6. Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 64, 96-101.

[191] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 68.

[192] Gen 8:20; Lev 14:20; Isa 57:6; Bar 1:10; 1 Macc 4:53; 2 Macc 1:8; 1 Esd 5:29. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 160-161. Elliott, *I Peter*, 421.

[193] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 19-23. Elliott, *I Peter*, 295. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 156-158. Against, see Best, "I Peter II 4—10," 287, cf. 277.

The sacrifices are further described as "acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, " following standard conventions for describing proper sacrifice.[194] The key point is that these sacrifices are acceptable *through Jesus Christ*.[195] Through him, believers have been begotten anew, reared with spiritual milk, and are now able to offer spiritual sacrifices befitting their status as a spiritual priesthood.

### 5.7    1 Peter 2:6-8: For it stands in Scripture

The quotations of Isa 28:16, Ps 118:22 and Isa 8:14-15 expand the meaning of verses 4-5 and advance the unit forward.[196] The subunit begins with a quotation formula (διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ), followed by the first quotation (Isa 28:16).[197] After quoting Isa 28:16, the author makes several observations in a sentence beginning with the postpositive οὖν before using these observations as a segue into his next two quotation (Ps 118:22 and Isa 8:14-15).[198] Key words link these quotations together.

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[194] For example, Ps 19:14; 1QS 8:9-10; 9:3-7; CD 11:8-21; Rom 12:1; Rom 15:15-16; Phil 4:18; Heb 13:15-16. Best, "I Peter II 4—10," 281.

[195] Jesus is the means by which these sacrifices are possible, though he himself is never described as a priest in 1 Peter. Elliott, *I Peter*, 421. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 157.

[196] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 149-150. Best, "I Peter II 4—10," 271.

[197] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 160. However, as Michaels notes, the causal force of the conjunction is weakened when διότι is used to introduce Scripture quotations, Michaels, *1 Peter*, 102. Though this section is a subunit in itself, it is intimately connected to the entire segment of 2:4-10.

[198] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 104.

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| ⁶ διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ·<br>      ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Ζιὼν <u>λίθον</u> ἀκρογωνιαῖον<br>         <u>ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον</u>,<br>         καὶ <u>ὁ πιστεύων</u> ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ. | ⁶ For it stands in scripture:<br>   "Behold, I am laying in Zion a <u>stone</u>, a cornerstone chosen and <u>precious</u>, and <u>he who believes</u> in him will not be put to shame." | -Isa 28:16 |
| ⁷ὑμῖν οὖν ἡ <u>τιμὴ</u> <u>τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, ἀπιστοῦσιν</u> δὲ | To you therefore <u>who believe</u>, is <u>the honor</u>, but for those <u>who do not believe</u>, | |
| <u>λίθος</u> ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας<br>      ⁸ καὶ | "The very <u>stone</u> the builders rejected has become the head of the corner,"<br>⁸ and | -Ps 118:22 |
| <u>λίθος</u> προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου·<br>      δι προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἀπειθοῦντες εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν. | "A <u>stone</u> of that will make men stumble, a <u>rock</u> that will make them fall;"<br><br>   for they stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. | -Isa 8:14-15 |

The key words λίθος, ἐκλεκτός, and ἔντιμος from Isa 28:16 link the quote back to verses 4-5, Christ, the living stone (λίθον ζῶντα) was rejected by men, but in God's sight is elect and precious (ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον).[199]  Christ's status as stone is mirrored by believers in verse 5, who are likewise described as living stones (λίθοι ζῶντες).

Isaiah 28:16b continues, "and he who believes on him (ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ) will not be put to shame."[200]  Implicit is the notion that those who do not believe *will* be put to shame.  The key words ἔντιμος and πιστεύω link the quotation of Isa 28:16 to the author's interpretive refrain in verse 7.[201]  The author says that honor (ἡ τιμή) is for those who believe (τοῖς πιστεύοσιν).[202]  He explains the ramifications for those who do not believe (πιστεύουσιν) with the quotation of Ps

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[199] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 160.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 103.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 425-426.

[200] I have translated "believe on" to mimic the Septuagint, even though this phrasing is awkward in English.

[201] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 138.

[202] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 160-161.  Dubis, *I Peter*, 51-52.  Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 164.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 104.

118:22, the stone (λίθος) the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. The term λίθος serves as the key word which links these quotations together, a connection the author takes advantage of to contrast the two responses to the stone.

The fate of those who reject the stone is spelled out with the quotation from Isa 8:14-15: they will stumble and fall. Peter explains, "they stumble for they disobey the word, as they were destined to do." The stone brings life to those who believe and destruction to those who do not. These quotations illustrate the stark duality created by the stone.[203] Achtemeier called this contrast "the basic polarity of the passage."[204] The verb τίθημι functions as an inclusio to the catena by contrasting Christ, the stone in Zion set (τίθημι, 2:6) by God, with the fate of those who do not believe, as they were appointed (ἐτέθησαν, 2:8).

The strong contrast between these two positions reinforces believers' commitment, identity, and motivation. They have already been begotten anew into the life of the living stone. Those who believe were destined to believe, those who do not were destined to reject this message (1:2; 2:8).[205] There is no middle ground. The finality of the fate of those who disbelieve reinforces the identity of those who do. This duality extends over the current status of each person (believe/disbelieve), their response to Christ the corner stone (obedience/rejection), and their final end, which, for believers, reaches its crescendo in the final subunit, verses 9-10.

### 5.8    1 Peter 2:9-10: The People of God

In verses 9-10, Peter reaches the climax of his statements on Christian identity. In these two verses, the themes of regeneration, growth, and corporate identity reach their fulfillment in the people of God. The author combines his theology of Christian identity with the titles of ethnic Israel to construct a new identity for believers. 1 Peter 2:9-10 says,

> ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτόν, βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα, ἔθνος ἅγιον, λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ φῶς· οἵ ποτε οὐ λαός, νῦν δὲ λαὸς θεοῦ, οἱ οὐκ ἠλεημένοι, νῦν δὲ ἐλεηθέντες.

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[203] Goppelt, *I Peter*, 144.

[204] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 150.

[205] For more on election, see Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 141-147.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were no people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy.

The unit begins "but you," (ὑμεῖς δέ), which signals both the continuity with the previous section but also its distinctiveness.[206]  Verses 6-8 focused on those who reject Christ.  Now, in contrast, the author returns to the identity f those who accept him.[207]  To do this, he applies traditional Israelite epithets to them.  Eberhard Schwarz, in his work on Jubilees, studied the three designations of Israel as holy people, chosen people, and God's special possession as central markers of identity Jewish.[208]  It is striking, as Horrell has observed, that all three of these epithets appear in 1 Peter.[209]

These three themes are central to Jubilees, but are also clearly articulated in 1 Peter 2:9-10 where the author echoes Exod 19:5-6.[210]  God directs Moses to say to the people of Israel (Exod 19:5-6),

Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples (λαὸς περιούσιος ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν); for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα καὶ ἔθνος ἅγιον).[211]

The Sinai narratives are pivotal for the nation of Israel.  At Sinai, God and Israel are joined together in a covenant.  In 1 Peter, the author uses these statements from Exodus to transfer Israel's epithets to the body of Christian believers.

The author also incorporates allusions to Isa 43:20-21, Mal 3:17, and Hos 1:6,9.  In 1 Peter 2:9-10, the first and last epithets come from Isa 43:20-21("chosen race" and "God's own

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[206] This phrasing may also be inspired by Exod 19:6, which also begins, "ὑμεῖς δὲ", cf. Elliott, *I Peter*, 434-435. Contr. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 108.  Also, Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 140.

[207] Elliott, *I Peter*, 435.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 163.

[208] Schwarz, *Identität*, 53-57.

[209] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 139.

[210] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 139-140.

[211] On the translation of Exod 19:6 from Hebrew into Greek, see Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 3-76. Cornelis G. den Hertog, "Die griechische Übersetzung von Exodus 19:6 als Selbstzeugnis des frühhellenistischen Judentums," in *The Interpretation of Exodus: Studies in Honour of Cornelis Houtman* (ed. Riemer Roukema; Leuven: Peeters, 2006),  181-191.

people") and the middle two from Exod 19:6 ("royal priesthood" and "holy nation").[212] Through the use of these texts, which will be discussed more below, he describes Christian identity in terms of Israel, the people of God.  Intriguingly, he does not address the question of how believers relate to ethnic Israel.  Instead, he transfers the names and descriptions of Israel to believers "without remainder."[213]

What is significant is not only the ethnic terminology of 2:9, γένος, ἔθνος, and λαός, but also the combination of these terms with the adjectives that modify, limit, and define what kind of ethnic group believers are to be.  Christians are not just any kind of γένος, they are a chosen γένος.  The same follows for ἔθνος and λαός.  Christian identity has many of the markers of ethnic identity, but this is a special kind of ethnic identity seen through the prism of election, holiness, and divine relationship.

### 5. 8. 1  A Chosen Stock: γένος ἐκλεκτόν

The author begins verse 9 by saying, " but you are a chosen stock" (ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτόν). This wording may be inspired by Isa 43:20, where God says that he will give waters in the desert to "my chosen people (τό γένος μου τὸ ἐκλεκτόν)."[214]  Even if the wording is inspired by Isa 43:20, the use of γένος here is striking as an ethno-racial appellation of Christian identity.  As Horrell writes of 2:9, "This is the only New Testament text in which the term γένος – an influential label for the people of Israel, especially in the literature near to the New Testament period – is applied to the Church."[215]

The noun γένος is derived from the verb γίνομαι (γίγνομαι).[216]  As such, γένος takes over many of the meanings of γίνομαι, namely "to come into being through process of birth or natural production, *to be born*, *be produced*."[217]  The LSJ broadly defines γένος as race, stock, or kin.[218]

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[212] Elliott, *I Peter*, 435.  Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 38-43.

[213] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 69.

[214] Elliott, *I Peter*, 435.  Kelly, *Epistles of Peter*, 96.  Bigg, *St. Peter*, 134.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 163.

[215] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 144.

[216] LSJ, 349.  Moulton, *Grammar,* Vol. II pg. 108.  Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik,* Bd. 1. pg. 215.

[217]Emphasis original, BDAG, 196-197. Cf. Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 35.

It can have narrower meanings of offspring (individual or collective), race, and species, such as classes of animals, fish, and plants.[219] A similar range of meanings is found in the Septuagint.[220] To be part of a γένος is to be in a group defiled by common descent (shared ancestry) and kinship.[221] What joins most of these usages together is membership in categories defined by birth.

As Jonathan Hall writes, "*Genos*, then, can be seen as both the mechanism by which one's identity is ascribed (i.e. birth), as well as the collective group in which membership is thought to be ascribed by birth."[222] After studying the occurrences in Josephus where someone is described as a Ἰουδαῖος τὸ γένος, Shaye Cohen concludes that this phrase should be translated "Judean by birth."[223] He continues, "The difficult part of this phrase is not τὸ γένος, for whether it is translated "by birth" or "by nation" its meaning is more or less the same."[224] Daniel Schwartz makes a similar argument on the language of priestly descent in Josephus.[225] Schwartz concludes that men who were descended from Aaron were all potentially priests, but only those who practiced as priests could be called priests without qualification. A man who was born into a priestly family, but, for whatever reason, did not serve as a priest was identified by Josephus as a priest by descent.[226] To be part of a γένος means to be part of a race, ethnicity, or sub-group, such as the priesthood, that can usually only be entered by birth.

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[218] LSJ pg. 304. Derivatively, it can also means offspring, posterity, race, clan, house family, age, and generation, to name a few.

[219] For example, for γένος as an single descendant, see Iliad 19.124. For offspring collectively, Thucydides, I. 126. For race of men, see Iliad 12.23. For race of mules, Sophocles, *Antigone* 342. For further examples of γένος as species of birds, fish, and vegetables, see LSJ pg. 344. See also Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 35.

[220] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 137.

[221] For example, Hall writes, "Thus while *ethnos* can e substituted frequently for *genos*, it is the latter term which has the more specialized meaning, with its focus on the notion (however fictive) of shared descent," *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity,* 36. One of the few commentators to notice this is Goppelt, *I Peter*, 148. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 163.

[222] Hall, *Ethnic Identity*, 35.

[223] Cohen, "ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΣ to ΓΕΝΟΣ," 36.

[224] Cohen, "ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΣ to ΓΕΝΟΣ," 36.

[225] Schwartz, "Priestly Descent."

[226] *Ant*. 10.79-80. Further, Schwartz writes, "Very frequently, Josephus indicates a person's descent (γένος) when it explicitly or implicitly conflicts with something else told of him." Schwartz then lists several examples from

In Second Temple Judaism, to be part of the γένος of Israel *usually* meant perceived common ancestry and putative descent from the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This is seen in the Septuagint where the majority of uses for γένος designate the people of Israel.[227] As John Barclay observes, the existence of conversion and apostasy in Second Temple Judaism demonstrates the permeability of Jewish identity from a certain period onwards in certain sectors of Judaism.[228] Being Jewish, therefore, was not merely a question of descent only. However, it is also true to say that for the *majority* of people who self-identified as Jews, this would imply a combination *first* of birth into a Jewish family and *then* maintenance through righteous conduct.

This is seen poignantly in the Testament of Job 1:5-6, the only other Greek occurrence of the phrase γένος ἐκλεκτόν in Jewish literature, where the categories of entrance by birth are contrasted with membership by righteous living.[229] Job says to his children,

I am your father Job, fully engaged in endurance. But you are a chosen and honored race (ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον) from the seed of Jacob, the father of your mother. For I am *from the sons of Esau*, the brother of Jacob, of whom is your mother Dinah, from whom I begot you.[230]

In this opening to the Testament, Job reminds his children of their lineage. Job is descended from Esau and not from Jacob; his merit comes not from descent but from his patient endurance of suffering. His children, on the other hand, are "a chosen and honored race" because they descend, through their mother, who is of the seed of Jacob, as Job goes out of his way to emphasize (ἐκ σπέρματος Ιακωβ τοῦ πατρὸς τῆς μητρὸς ὑμῶν). Through Job's wife, his children are part of the γένος of Israel. Job, on the other hand, has achieved his membership through his righteousness.

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Josephus were Jews by birth are described as living throughout the Diaspora or as servants of Gentiles. See Schwartz, "Priestly Descent," 131.

[227] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 137. Horrell lists as examples Exod 1:9; 5:14; Josh. 4:14; 11:21; Isa 22:4; 42:5; 43:20; Jer 38:1, 35, 37; 1 Esd 1:32; Est 3:13; 6:13; Add Est 8:21; Pss Sol 7:8; 17:7. Cf. Elliott, *I Peter*, 435.

[228] Barclay, *Mediterranean Diaspora*, 402-405.

[229] It is possible that the exact wording of this phrase is due to Christian interpolation. However, even if the wording of the phrase was reworked, the questions of heredity, genealogy, and ancestry control the context of this passage. Elliott, *I Peter*, 435.

[230] Greek text, S. P. Brock, *Testamentum Iobi* (PVTG 2; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 19. Translation, R. P. Spittler, "Testament of Job" ( in Charlesworth, *OTP* vol. 1; Peabody; Hendrickson, 2009), 829-868.

Another striking, but somewhat different parallel is found in Pliny the Elder's well-known comments on the Essenes.  In *Natural History* 5.73, he writes,

> On the west side of the Dead Sea, but out of range of the noxious exhalations of the coast, is the solitary tribe of the Essenes, which is remarkable beyond all other tribes in the whole world, as it has no women and has renounced all sexual desire, has no money, and has only palm-trees for company.  Day by day, the throng of refugees is recruited to an equal number by numerous accessions of persons tired of life and driven thither by waves of fortune to adopt their manners.  Thus through thousands of ages (incredible to relate) *a race in which no one is born lives on forever* (Ita per saeculorum—incredibile dictum—gens aeterna est in qua nemo nascitur!): so prolific for their advantage is other men's weariness of life![231]

Pliny recounts that the "*gens*" of Essenes are "remarkable" because they do not include women and renounce all sexual desire.[232]  They do not reproduce by normal means.  Instead, men "tired of life" join the community "to adopt their manners."  Pliny uses ethnic language to describe the voluntary community of the Essenes.  He concludes that the "a race in which no one is born lives on forever."  Like 1 Peter's Christians, Pliny's Essenes are a community defined by their beliefs and way of life.  No one can be physically born into either community.  However, the author of 1 Peter extended his metaphor to regeneration, but Pliny did not.

In 1 Peter 2:9, the appellation of believers as γένος ἐκλεκτόν evokes their divine generation described in 1:3-5 because γένος is closely related semantically and lexically to γεννάω.[233]  It is therefore striking that the readers of 1 Peter are reminded that those who have been begotten anew in 1:3 (ἀναγεννάω) are now the γένος ἐκλεκτόν in 2:9.  Divine regeneration is the presupposition and foundation for Christian ethnic identity.  Together, 1:3 and 2:9 bookend 1 Peter 1:3-2:10 by framing the unit in terms of membership in a group defiled by procreative

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[231] *GLAJJ* #204, 472.

[232] There is separate, related question of whether Pliny recognized that the Essenes where Jewish.  Stern writes, "Did Pliny or his source think of the Essenes as a special gens, separate from the Jewish nation though geographically  included in Judea (note the words that follow: "et hactenus Judaea est")?  This view is perhaps echoed by Josephus who finds it necessary to emphasize that the Essenes are Ἰουδαῖοι μὲν γένος (*BJ*, II, 119), " *GLAJJ*, 480.  Based on the fact that Pliny never speaks positively of the Jews, Robert Kraft argues that "based on the available information in Pliny, there is little reason to believe that that he thought of the 'Essenes' as Jewish, and some reason to think that he did not make such a connection," Robert A. Kraft, "Pliny on Essenes, Pliny on Jews," *DSD* 8 / 3 (2001): 255-261; 260.  Kraft also points out that this would explain why Philo and Josephus clarify that Essenes are Jewish (Philo, *Good Person*, 75; Josephus, *War* 2:119), Kraft, "Pliny on Essenes," 260.

[233] LSJ defines γεννάω as a "causal of γίνομαι (cf. γείνομαι), mostly of the father, *beget,* ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ S. El. 14.12…" LSJ, 344. Ref. to Sophocles, *Electra.*  Cf. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 163-164.

work of the Father through the resurrection of the Son. Believers have been begotten anew through the resurrection of Christ which grounds their corporate identity as God's chosen γένος.

Both elements in the phrase are significant: believers are not just a γένος, they are γένος ἐκλεκτόν. Election is anchored in 1 Peter 2:6 by the use of Isa 28:16, where the cornerstone is "chosen and precious" (ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον) is interpreted as Christ. Christ's election is anticipated in 2:4 where Christ is described as "chosen and precious" (ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον). Believers' election is grounded in Christ's prior election before God.[234] It is on the basis of Christ's election that believers are addressed first, before any other label or term, as "elect" (ἐκλεκτοῖς) in the prescript in 1:1.[235] The theme of election reaches its peak in 2:9 when believers' relationship with the rejected and elected Christ brings about their formation into an elect stock before God. This election is the converse of who do not believe the word (3:1); they have been foreordained for stumbling (2:8).[236] However, as 3:1 clarifies, of which more will be said below, it is not apparent in time which group a person will ultimately belong to. In other words, there is always the potential for those who disbelieve in the present to believe in the future. Election in 1 Peter is ultimately seen from God's perspective. Belief is a marker of those who have been begotten anew, but un-belief may or may not be a final state.

The strong antithesis running through 2:4-8 is silent, or at best implied in verses 9-10. The regeneration of believers into a "chosen race" is not a necessarily exclusive designation. It is potentially permeable. Unlike many ethnic groups, which usually require physical birth for entry, membership in Christian ethnic identity is potentially open to all because the means of regeneration is Christ's resurrection. While this is open to all, not all are ultimately elected to take part, but this knowledge is beyond the epistemic access of believers. As the letter will make clear in chapter 3, believers are to live good lives so that those who are potential believers may become so in actuality.

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[234] Elliott, *I Peter*, 435.

[235] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 108. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 163.

[236] Elliott, *I Peter*, 447-448.

### 5. 8. 2  A Royal Priesthood: βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα

The author further describes Christians as a "royal priesthood" (βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα), language taken directly from Exod 19:6 (cf.23:22 LXX).[237]  Though Elliott has argued for the phrase to be treated as two substantives based on the text's reception history (see below), his arguments are not persuasive.[238]  Instead, most scholars correctly follow the pattern in 1 Peter of seeing here a noun (ἱεράτευμα) accompanied by an adjective (βασίλειον).[239]  The adjective βασίλειον means "pertaining to a king, *royal*."[240]  In 1 Peter 2:9, it modifies the rare term ἱεράτευμα, which most scholars have accepted, with Elliott, as referring to a "body of priests."[241]

The question that concerns this study is rooted in the text of Exod 19:6 itself, where the hereditary categories of royalty and priesthood are applied metaphorically to the nation of Israel.[242]  Not all Israelites are priests, but they are all nationally holy and in some way relate to the rest of the world as priests.[243]  Indeed, Exod 19:6 is not concerned with the levitical priesthood, but with the priestly role of Israel as a nation.

The priestly role of the nation of Israel is illustrated by the Exodus narrative itself.  Exodus recounts the narrative of the liberation of Israel from slavery in Egypt and the conflict between Pharaoh and Moses, who is "like God" to Pharaoh (Exod 7:1).  The competition between God and Pharaoh is illustrated clearly in the words Moses is to say to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD, Israel is my first-born son, and I say to you, 'Let my son go that he may serve me'; if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay your first-born son" (Exod 4:22-23).[244]  God sends the plagues

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[237] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 50. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 164.

[238] For his arguments on the substantive reading of βασίλειον, see Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 50-128, 149. Elliott, *I Peter*, 435-437.  Also, Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 165-166. Contr. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 164-165.  Goppelt, *I Peter*, 149.  Bigg, *St. Peter*, 134.

[239] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 164-165.

[240] BDAG, 169.

[241] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 64-70.

[242] The textual history of Exodus is complex, cf. Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 51-52.

[243] den Hertog connects Israel's vocation with the promise given to Abraham in Gen 12:1-3, den Hertog, "Übersetzung von Exodus 19:6," 183.

[244] Thomas B. Dozeman, *Commentary on Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 153-154.

upon Israel to show Pharaoh who is King, indeed, who is God.[245]  As Exod 4:22-23 shows, God

regarded Israel in some sense as his first-born son.[246]  In this sense, Israel as a nation is royal

because the nation is God's son and God is the true king.  In Exod 4:23, the elements of both

divine sonship and priesthood are present *in nuce* when God declares that he says, "Let my son

go that he may serve me."  The theme of service to God, namely national, sacrificial worship, is

strongly present in the Exodus narrative.

Moses first exhorts Pharaoh not for the permanent release of Israel from slavery, but for a

respite during which Israel can offer sacrifices to God.  For example, in Exod 3:18, Moses is

instructed to say, "The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, we pray you,

let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God"

(cf. Exod 5:1, 3; 7:16; 8:1, 20, 26; 9:1, 13; 10:3, 9, 25-26).  In these texts, the entire nation is

obliged to be present.  Thus, while there is a clearly a distinction between priests and non-priests,

the language in the texts cited above provides some of the rational behind the appellation of the

title "kingdom of priests"(מַמְלֶכֶת כֹּהֲנִים)/ "royal priesthood" (βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα) to the nation

of Israel in Exod 19:6.  In this way, there is a fine balance between the maintenance of priestly

families, but at the same the recognition that all Israel is somehow to be present or responsible

for authentic sacrificial worship.  Thus, the narrative texture of Exodus explains how Israel is

both "royal" and "priestly."

In 1 Peter 2:9, the meaning of Exod 19:6 colors the phrase βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα.  Yet, at the

same time it cannot be denied that the context of 1 Peter 2:4-10 provides its own contextual

resonances.  The author has woven the allusions to Exod 19:6 into his text in a way that

demonstrates his own internalization of these ideas and concepts, and further, that he is using

them towards his own ends.  This is emphasized by the fact that the author uses Exod 19:6 and

Isa 43:20-21 without introducing them with a quotation formula.  Instead, they are woven

seamlessly into his climactic statement of Christian identity.

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[245] van Ruiten, "Divine Sonship in the Book of *Jubilees*," 99.

[246] van Ruiten, "Divine Sonship in the Book of *Jubilees*," 99. See also Hos 11:1 and Gupta, "Cultic Imagery in 1 Peter," 66.

It is also worth noting that both the monarchy and the priesthood were usually understood as hereditary institutions, however qualified that may have been during the Second Temple period. Of course, the Davidic monarchy had long since disappeared, but Jews and Christians were well aware of the hereditary nature of power, as the Maccabean and Herodian dynasties illustrate. Though the boundaries were permeable, Jewish priesthood was still a hereditary institution located within particular priestly families.[247] However, as the history of the Second Temple demonstrates, the boundaries of who could function as a priest were becoming quite permeable (perhaps too much so in the opinion of some Jews as evidence from Qumran suggests).

What is significant for interpreting 1 Peter 2:9 is the observation that the author appropriates the phrase βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα from Exod 19:6 and applies these titles to believers. Even in Exodus, the application of hereditary labels to the entire nation of Israel is striking. It is no less striking that these labels are applied to Christians in 1 Peter, especially since the application of this epithet was uncommon in Second Temple Jewish literature.

John Elliott and Daniel Schwartz have both surveyed the textual tradition and early Jewish usage of Exod 19:6.[248] In the textual tradition of Exod 19:6 (cf. LXX Exod 23:22), the two terms in the phrase מַמְלֶכֶת כֹּהֲנִים appear as substantives in the Targums, Jub 16:18; 33:20, Philo (*Sobr.* 66; *Abr.* 56), 2 Macc 2:17 and perhaps the LXX (as Elliott has argued), though this is disputed (cf. Rev 1:6; 5:10; 20:6).[249] The same is found in the Aramaic, Syriac (Hexapla), and the Peshitta.[250] Apart from these appearances, Exod 19:6 does not appear in any other literature from the Second Temple period. It does not occur at all in Josephus, nor in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[251] However, in the texts in which it *does* appear, it plays an important role (see §5.8.3

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[247] Schwartz, "Priestly Descent," 129-135.

[248] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 50-128. Daniel R. Schwartz, *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (WUNT 60; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), "'Kingdom of Priests'- A Pharisaic Slogan?" 50-80.

[249] The only possible reference to Exod 19:6 in the Hebrew scriptures is at Isa 61:6, though Elliott calls this link "tenuous," Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 59-63. Cf. Schwartz, *Studies*, 58-59. For scholarly perspectives on the LXX, see A. van der Kooij, "A kingdom of priests: Comment on Exodus 19:6," in *The Interpretation of Exodus: Studies in Honour of Cornelis Houtman* (ed. Riemer Roukema; Contributions of Biblical Exegesis & Theology 44; Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 171-179; 173-174. den Hertog, "Übersetzung von Exodus 19:6," 183-184.

[250] Schwartz, *Studies*, 59.

[251] Schwartz, *Studies*, 61. There is one fragment that has some suggestive vocabulary, but this is probably a reference to T. Jud 21:1-2 rather than Exod 19:6.

below).  Schwartz concludes, "In summary of our survey of the ancient sources, we may say that the promise or demand that the Jewish people be a 'kingdom of priests' does not appear to have interested Palestinian Judaism of the Second Temple or rabbinic periods."[252]

The fact that the author applies a relatively uncommon Jewish epithet to describe Christian identity is more striking in this light.  This significance is intensified in the context of 1 Peter in which the author describes how Christians have become a γένος based on their divine siring.  By describing Christians as a γένος, the author has already applied ethnic categories to believers, categories that are based on common descent and kinship.  The application of hereditary categories is continued here by the use of a relatively uncommon phrase from Exod 19:6.

As Christians, believers are members of a group that is described in hereditary terms.  That is not to say that 1 Peter constructs a priesthood or monarchy akin to Jewish models.  Rather, through the extended metaphor of ethnic identity, the author uses hereditary categories to underline the significance of Christian identity to believers.  Through Christ, believers are granted access to God, like the access to God possessed by a priest.  As a holy priesthood, believers are called to offer up "spiritual sacrifices" broadly conceived.  Because these categories function as invitation into greater self-understanding, the recipient of the letter is called to understand himself in these terms, and to see his entire life as a priestly offering to God.  Unlike physical categories, these categories of membership are based instead on the gracious action of God and the obedient response of believers.

### 5. 8. 3  A Holy Nation: ἔθνος ἅγιον

As Horrell and Brooke note, the term ἔθνος is usually a term applied to those outside Israel in the LXX and other Jewish literature.[253]  The use of ἔθνος  in the phrase ἔθνος ἅγιον, taken from Exod 19:6 (23:22), is an unusual application of the term to Israel.  The phrase ἔθνος ἅγιον also appears in Exod 23:22, an addition not found in the MT or in Wis 17:2.[254]  Apart from this, its

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[252] Schwartz, *Studies*, 66.

[253] Horrell, "'Race', 'Nation', 'People'," 137, 139.  George J. Brooke, "Laos: A Biblical Perspective for a Theology of "The People of God"," *Modern Churchman* 32 / 3 (1990): 32-40; 33.

[254] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 64 n.65.  Schwartz, *Studies*, 59 n.57.

only other appearance is in Philo's *Abr*. 56.[255]  Earlier in *Abraham*, Philo discussed the first triad

of men: Enosh, Enoch, and Noah (7-46).  This triad anticipates the better triad of Abraham, Isaac

and Jacob (*Abr*. 48).  Noah is a bridge figure because he spans the world before the deluge and

the new world afterwards.  He receives two gifts from God, the first is that he and his family

survive the flood, the second is that he should be "the founder of a new race of men" (46, τὸ

πάλιν ἀρχηγέτην αὐτὸν ὑπάρξαι νέας ἀνθρώπων σπορᾶς).  In *Abraham* 56, Philo writes,

> There is another thing which we must not fail to know: while Moses represented the first man, the earthborn (τὸν γηγενῆ), as father of all that were born up to the deluge, and Noah who with all his house alone survived that great destruction because of his justice and excellent character in other ways as the father of the new race (καινοῦ γένους ἀνθρώπων) which would spring up afresh, the oracles speak of this august and precious trinity as parent of one species (ἑνὸς εἴδους) of that race, which species is called "royal" (βασίλειον) and "priesthood" (ἱεράτευμα) and "holy nation" (ἔθνος ἅγιον).

Philo does not interpret Exod 19:6.  Instead, after this allusion he begins a discussion of the name

"Israel" and its meaning of "He who sees God" (57).  However, Philo may have been attracted to

the use of Exod 19:6 because the three substantive elements of kingdom, priesthood, and holy

nation fit well with the triad of patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who symbolize the virtues

of Teaching, Nature, and Practice (52-54).[256]  Having identified the patriarchs, Philo gestures

briefly towards the people which will spring from them through the new race of men founded by

Noah.

As Chapter 4 above has shown through the studies on Ezra 9:2 and Jubilees, the corporate

holiness of Israel was a significant theme in some strands of Second Temple Judaism.  In Ezra

9:1-2, the prophet laments that "the people of Israel and the priests and the Levites" (ὁ λαὸς

Ισραηλ καὶ οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ οἱ Λευῖται, LXX 2 Esd 9:2) have not separated from the nations "so that

the holy race seed has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands" (καὶ παρήχθη σπέρμα τὸ ἅγιον

ἐν λαοῖς τῶν γαιῶν).[257]  As the passage makes clear, there are still clear distinctions between the

people of Israel, priests, and the Levities.  However, even though not all Israelites are priests or

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[255] Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 98-101.

[256] On the translation of βασίλειον as "royal" rather than "kingdom," see Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*, 100.

[257] For extensive treatment of this text, see above § 3.2.4 "Holy Seed: Corporate Israel," 102f.

Levites, all Israelites are holy, or, "holy seed" (σπέρμα τὸ ἄγιον).  What is holy must be kept

separate from what is profane; therefore holy Israel must separate from mixed marriages with

profane women.

The national holiness of Israel was also a central tenet of Jubilees.[258]  As shown in §4.3.1.2

above, the author of Jubilees took Exod 19:3-6 very seriously: because Exod 19:3 is addressed to

"the house of Jacob," which is "the people of Israel," the epithets of Exod 19:6 could not come to

fulfillment until the twelve sons of Jacob, "the house of Jacob," have been born.[259]  It is not

accidental, then, that Jubilees explicitly alludes to Exod 19:6 in two places (Jub 16:18 and 33:22)

where the theme of the national identity of Israel as God's chosen people is present.

> In Jub 16:17-18, the angelic visitors speak to Abraham about his descendants,
> All the descendants of his sons would become nations and would be numbered with the
> nations.  But one of Isaacs' sons would become *holy progeny* and would not be numbered
> among the nations, for he would become *the share of the Most High*.  All his descendants had
> fallen into *that (share) which God owns* so that they would become *a people whom the Lord
> possesses* out of all the nations; and that they would become a *kingdom*, a *priesthood*, and a
> *holy people*. (emp. added)

Isaac is the "holy progeny," or better, "holy seed."  From him will come the holy people

described in the elaborate references to Exod 19:6.  The author emphasizes that this people will

belong to God as his own possession.  The holiness of this people is therefore bound to the

holiness of God himself.

In the retelling of Reuben's rape of Bilhah in Jub 33, the author concludes the narrative with a

restatement on the significance of the maintenance of Israel's corporate holiness, with special

attention to sexual morality.

> No sin is greater than the sexual impurity which they commit on the earth because Israel is a
> *holy people* for the Lord its God.  It is *the nation which he possesses*; it is a *priestly nation*; it
> is a *priestly kingdom*; it is *what he owns*.  No such impurity will be seen among the *holy
> people*.

In Jub 33, one of the author's primary concerns is with the example of Reuben and Bilhah, since

both of them live after this sin has been discovered (33:15).  The author carefully explains that

this was so because the violated commandment had not yet been given (33:16).  Now that the

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[258] For full treatment of theology, holiness, and priesthood in Jubilees, see above §3.3.1-6, 107ff.

[259] Hayward, "Sanctification of Time," 160-161.  Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 18.

law has been given, all Israel is to know that this is a capital offense, a point which he repeats several times (33:13, 14, 17, 18).  Sexual sin among the Israelites was doubly problematic because it compromised both the holy relationship between God and his people and because it had the potential to affect future generations of Israelites.  The holy status of Israel required national responsibility and participation.  Elsewhere, Jubilees applies laws pertaining to the priesthood to the whole nation (see Jub 30:6-10; based on priestly law in Lev 21:9).[260]

The author of 1 Peter describes Christians as a "holy nation."  The author of 1 Peter does not connect Christians' status as a "holy nation" to any particular ethical exhortation, such as endogamy.  Earlier in the letter he exhorted Christians to be holy as God is holy (1:15-16; Lev 19:2).[261]  Otherwise, his exhortation is often broad, such as the call to do good (2:15, 20; 3:6, 17; cf. 2:12, 14; 4:19) and not evil (3:17; cf. 2:1, 12, 14, 16; 4:15).

Unlike in Ezra and Jubilees, where Exod 19:6 was used to justify endogamy, the author seems to give special instruction to wives in marriages with a non-believing spouse.[262]  In sharp contrast with the Jewish tradition in Ezra and Jubilees, the author exhorts Christian wives to be submissive and obedient to their unbelieving husbands who "do not believe the word" (3:1).  The description of these people as those who do not believe the word echoes 2:8.  There is an implied contrast based on belief and unbelief, and between those who are part of the holy nation and those who are not, yet, Christian wives are called to remain married and be good spouses.

In Ezra and Jubilees, the holiness of the nation was a hereditary concern: improper marriages compromised national holiness.  In 1 Peter, Christians are members of an ethnic group defined experientially by belief but ultimately by divine election.[263]  In this way, there is no hereditary nature of Christian ethnicity that must be protected.  Because Christian ethnic identity is not something that is achieved by physical birth, it is not something that can be protected by social

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[260] See above §3.3.1.4, "Separation from Gentiles," 115f.

[261] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 165.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 109.

[262] That the husbands are unbelieving is made clear by the fact that they are disobedient to the word (3:1; cf. 2:8; 4:17), and because of the possibility that the behaviour of the wives may win over their spouse (3:1).  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 208.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 157.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 557-562.  Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 178-180.

[263] Elliott correctly writes, "it is now through faith rather than biological membership in the house of Jacob that admission is gained to the elect and holy people of God," *1 Peter*, 447.

mechanisms that delineate marriage, procreation, and practices like endogamy. Because membership is defined by the belief as the outworking of divine election, membership in Christian ethnic identity is not something Christians can pass on to their children the way other forms of ethnic descent were passed on from one generation to the next. In 1 Peter, Christians are a holy nation, but this is a form of holiness that is voluntarily entered and maintained.

At the same time, the motivation for good behavior among Christian wives is the fact that their husbands who currently disobey the word "may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives" (2:1). The unbelieving husbands may yet experience conversion, baptism and entry into the holy nation. Because only God has epistemic access to the ultimate fate of each person, believing wives should live harmoniously with their husbands so that they might also become Christians.

### 5. 8. 4 A People for God's Posession: λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν

The title of believers as λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν alludes to Exod 19:6 and Isa 43:21, though it is closer textually to Isa 43:21 (cf. LXX Exod 23:22).[264] Similar epithets occur in Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18 and Mal 3:17.[265] In Deuteronomy, this title is linked with the appellation of Israel as a holy nation (Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18).[266] For example, "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his own possession (μοι λαὸς περιούσιος), out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth." In Exod 14:1, God grounds these statements of Israel's identity on her filial status, "You are the sons of the LORD your God." If Israel is to be God's special people, she must be holy because God is holy (Lev 19:6).

In Jubilees, God says on the sixth day of creation,
I will now separate a people for myself from among the nations. They, too, will keep sabbath. I will sanctify the people for myself and will bless them as I sanctified the sabbath day. I will

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[264] Exod 19:6, "λαὸς περιούσιος ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν"; Isa 43:21, "λαόν μου, ὃν περιποιησάμην τὰς ἀρετάς μου διηγεῖσθαι." A similar sentiment is found in Mal 3:17, "They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, my special possession (εἰς περιποίησιν) on the day when I act, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him." Cf. Elliott, *I Peter*, 439. Goppelt, *I Peter*, 149. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 166-167. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 109.

[265] For similar phrases in the NT, see Tit 2:14; also Acts 20:28; 1 Thess 5:9. Cf. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 167. Elliott, *I Peter*, 439. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 109.

[266] In fact, λαὸς is most often a term for Israel, it is an insider term, whereas ἔθνος was used for the Gentile nations. For a good survey of the word in Jewish and Christian usage, see Brooke, "People of God," 33.

sanctify them for myself; in this way I will bless them. They will be my people and I will become their God.

He continues, "I have chosen the descendants of Jacob….I have recorded them as my first-born son and have sanctified them for myself throughout the ages of eternity" (Jub 2:20).[267] In Jub 2:21, the author summarizes that God "sanctified them for himself as a noteworthy people out of all the nations." With holiness and election, the theme of Israel as God's special, chosen people reoccurs throughout Jubilees (Jub 15:29-34; 19:18; 22:9, 29).

The other epithets for Israel are encapsulated in this appellation. First, Israel's status as God's people necessarily involves divine choice, or election (Deut 7:6; 14:2; Jub 2:20; 1 Thess 5:9). [268] God did not need to choose Israel, or any people at all. Yet, he chose Israel for himself out of all the nations of the world. Second, the status of being God's people necessarily implies being a holy people (Exod 19:6; Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:19; Jub 2:19-22, note God's repeated action of sanctification in the Jubilees passages quoted above; cf Tit 2:14).[269] God's intrinsic holiness demands that his people also be holy.[270] Finally, in the biblical texts, an antithesis or distinction appears in some texts between Israel and the rest of the nations of the world (Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:19; Jub 2:19, 20, 21).[271] In 1 Peter 2:4-10, the themes of election, holiness, and distinction from other peoples are emphatically present.[272] The themes of election and holiness transfer smoothly, while the theme of distinction has called for more nuance. Christian believers are strongly contrasted with those who disbelieve. However, as the previous section showed, this contrast is not necessarily a permanent one. Those who disbelieve now may come to believe in the future. If so, then they will move from their current stumbling into a life of divine election, holiness, and membership in God's people.

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[267] Cf. § 3.3.1.2, "The Election of the Descendants of Jacob," 111f.

[268] For more on divine election in Jubilees, see Jub 15:29-34; 19:18; 22:9, 29. For more references to election in other literature from Second Temple Judaism and the NT, see Elliott, *I Peter*, 445-446.

[269] Brooke, "People of God," 37-38.

[270] Gupta, "Cultic Imagery in 1 Peter," 67.

[271] Cf. Brooke, "People of God," 37-38.

[272] Elliott, *I Peter*, 444-446.

The unique contribution of the phrase λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, as Michaels rightly observes, is that this is the only title that looks forward to the future.[273]  As George Brooke has shown, appearances of the language of the people of God in the Hebrew scriptures often have a future orientation because they are grounded on divine promises.[274]  This point is made more clearly by noting that the author has adapted the appearance of this phrase as it appears in Exod 19:6 and Isa 43:21 by adding a telic εἰς, which does not appear in either source text.[275]  The use of the telic εἰς here reprises the string of telic εἰς clauses found in 1:3-5 which describe the meaning of believers' divine regeneration.[276]  As with divine regeneration, the formation of God's people is both a present reality and a future hope.


### 5. 8. 5  Now You are God's People

The unit concludes with a statement on the intended actions of God's people in 2:9b with a refrain based on Isaianic language and a concluding statement on the Christian identity in 2:10 inspired by Hosea.  The author uses the language from Isaiah and Hosea to conclude his declaration of Christian corporate identity.

In 2:9b, the author writes believers have become a people "that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into (εἰς) his marvelous light."[277]  The author has reworked language from Isa 43:21(τὰς ἀρετάς μου διηγεῖσθαι) and Isa 42:12 (δώσουσιν τῷ δόξαν, τὰς ἀρετὰς αὐτοῦ ἐν ταῖς νήσοις ἀναγγελοῦσιν).  What is noteworthy here is that the latter part of the verse uses the dualistic nature of light and darkness.[278]  Believers have made the transition from their previous darkness to God's divine light.  It is interesting to map this theme

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[273] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 109-110.  Also noted by Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 166.

[274] Brooke, "People of God," 38.

[275] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 109-110.

[276] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 166.

[277] The εἰς clause is telic here, but there is some question over whether this is a present or future reality. Michaels argues for the future sense, *1 Peter*, 112.  However, the fact that νῦν appears twice in v. 10 strongly suggests a present reality is meant.

[278] Elliott, *I Peter*, 440-441.  Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 166-167.  Kelly, *Epistles of Peter*, 100. Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 168. Goppelt, *I Peter*, 150.

onto the language of generation, ethnicity, and the duality of human groups based on divine election.

In 2:4-10, the opposition between those who believe and those who disbelieve is an effect of God's prior divine election being made evident in time. Human beings can ultimately be divided into two groups, those who obey the word and walk in his light, and those who disobey the word and walk in darkness.[279] It is the calling of God which brings people out of darkness into light. All people began their lives in darkness, but at some point those who believe received the gospel, were baptized, and brought into the fellowship of believers. The letter speaks of this prior existence when the author reminds believers that "you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from fathers (πατροπαραδότου)…with the precious blood of Christ" (1:18-19b).[280] Now, believers have been called out of that old way of life; they have been called to holiness (1:15) and called to blessing (3:9).

The duality between God's people and all other peoples is taken to its furthest extremity in 2:10 when those who are God's people are contrasted with those who are no people at all. What is striking is that this theologically loaded statement groups all other ethnic and national groups into a non-entity, a non-entity which once included all those who now believe.

οἵ ποτε *οὐ λαός*, νῦν δὲ λαὸς θεοῦ, οἱ οὐκ ἠλεημένοι, νῦν δὲ ἐλεηθέντες.

> Once you were no people but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy.

1 Peter 2:10 is broken into two parallel parts that have the structure "once not X, but now X." This parallelism is made clear by the mirroring of the articles and the doubling of the phrase νῦν δέ. As with the telic εἰς immediately before, the double appearance of νῦν emphasizes the present aspect of this reality.[281] The clear parallelism indicates that both parts interpret one another: becoming a people is intimately connected with receiving mercy.[282]

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[279] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 113.

[280] Michaels, *1 Peter*, 111.

[281] Elliott, *I Peter*, 441-442. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 168.

[282] Elliott, *I Peter*, 442.

Verse 10 is clearly inspired by Hos 2:23 (LXX 2:25, together with Hos 1:6-8).[283]  Hosea 1:6-8 tells of the prophet Hosea's two children by Gomer.  Following the Lord's instruction, Gomer's first daughter is named "Not Pitied" (לֹא רֻחָמָה; Οὐκ-ἠλεημένη) "for I will have no more pity on the house of Israel, to forgive them at all."  Gomer's next son is called "Not My People" (לֹא עַמִּי; Οὐ-λαός-μου), "for you are not my people and I am not your God."  However, the prophet continues in 1:10 (LXX 2:1),

> Yet the number of the people of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which can be neither measured nor numbered; and in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," it shall be said to them, "Sons of the living God" (υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος).

The shame of the children born by a mother of harlotry is overcome in words that echo God's promises to Abraham.  Even more, the prophet goes beyond those promises by declaring that Gomer's children will be called "sons of the living God" (υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος).[284]  Though the author of 1 Peter does not directly quote Hosea 1:10 (LXX 2:1), the verse's themes are represented in the letter's regeneration theology.  Because they have been begotten anew, believers are sons of the living God, an adjective the author of the letter thrice associates with Christ (1:3, 23; 2:4).  The prophet later declares, "And I will have pity on Not pitied, and I will say to Not my people, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'Thou art my God' " (Hosea 2:23; LXX 2:25).  The passages about Not Pitied and Not My People are ones of redemption, here redeeming the symbolically named children born into harlotry as the people of God.

In 1 Peter, this verse works no less powerfully by drawing those born into darkness into the united people of God.  Before their conversion, those who are now believers had nothing in common. Separated by geographical, social, and ethnic barriers those who are now Christians were once "no people."[285]  But now, through the work of God through Christ's life, death, and resurrection, God has acted to regenerate those who believe into a new people, "God's people."

Just as with the titles γένος ἐκλεκτόν, βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα, ἔθνος ἅγιον, and λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, the adjoining language is necessary to qualify the meaning of λαὸς θεοῦ, "God's

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[283] Elliott, *I Peter*, 441-442.  See also Rom 9:25-26. 111

[284] Kelly, *Epistles of Peter*, 101.  Michaels, *1 Peter*, 112.

[285] Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 167.

people." What does it mean to be God's people? Hosea, and the author of 1 Peter, by derivation, explain that to be God's people means to be a people defined by mercy. "Once you had received no mercy (οἱ οὐκ ἠλεημένοι) but now you have received mercy (ἐλεηθέντες)." Mercy is what makes his people a people rather than no people.

In 1 Peter, the theme of mercy is structurally and theologically important because its only occurrences in the letter are in 1:3 and twice in 2:10.[286] In this way, the theme of mercy bookends the entire unit of the letter together in a way that specifically draws divine regeneration into the ethnic formation of the people of God.[287] Believers have been rebegotten through God's great mercy, the full outworking of which is the creation of a people from those who were no people. Mercy thus occurs at the beginning of the regenerative process and is the means by which it is brought to completion. By repeating it here, the author draws together the origin of divine regeneration with its final goal, the establishment of the people of God. The statements of Christian identity in 2:9-10 are the theological crescendo of the themes begun at the very beginning of the letter in 1:3.[288] Because believers have been begotten anew through mercy, they are now by God's mercy a people of his own possession.

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[286] Feldmeier, *First Peter*, 142.

[287] Elliott, *I Peter*, 443-444.

[288] Elliott, *I Peter*, 443.

### 5.9       Conclusion

1 Peter 2:4-10 is rich in its theology and use of scripture. There is also a close connection between 2:4-10 and 2:1-3. Both 2:1-3 and 2:4-10 are concerned with the growth and the formation of believers. In 2:4-10, the author weaves together domestic, cultic, and ethnic Source Domains to describe the Target Domain of Christian identity.

Verses 4-5 introduce the unit, 6-8 focus on those who do not believe, and 9-10 conclude the first half of the letter with a series of epithets describing Christian identity in ethnic and national terms. These verses are also closely connected to the themes the author was developing in the preceding units. Most importantly, the theme of divine regeneration in 1:3 reaches its climax with the establishment of the people of God in 2:9-10.

Because some of this language describes the believers as a temple, part of this chapter focused on the community as temple theme in the Dead Sea Scrolls and elsewhere in the New Testament. The idea that a community could embody God's temple does not exist in the Hebrew scriptures. It first appears in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Interestingly, though the concept of the community as temple seems to have fueled many of the yaḥad's rituals and regulations, it is not directly discussed in many texts. The two texts in which it appears most prominently are the Community Rule and 4QFlorilegium.

Column 8 of the Rule describes a group of "twelve men and three priests" who collectively represent the nation of Israel and three priestly families. Though this is a difficult text, it seems that the Temple was mapped onto the entire community. An elite, inner group represented the Holy of Holies, while the entire community as a whole represented the Temple more broadly. By embodying the Temple, the community sought to "preserve faithfulness in the land…in order to atone for sin" (1QS 8:3). The community's Temple embodiment was efficacious to the point of atoning for sin. Thus, the Rule does not take this Temple embodiment metaphorically: the community believed that they functioned in place of the Jerusalem Temple. The Rule curiously makes use of Isa 28:16, a text that is also important in 1 Peter. Finally, the Rule is characterized by a stark anthropological dualism that separates the righteous from the wicked; there is no middle ground.

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In 4QFlorilegium, the community as temple ideology is expressed somewhat differently. Through his interpretation of 2 Sam 7:10-14, the author describes three temples; the final one is identified as the מקדש אדם (1.6). The community thus served as an embodied, substitute temple for a limited amount of time as a response to the defilement of the First and Second Jerusalem Temples. In some way, the text suggests, the community's embodiment of the temple is a sanctuary of Adam where Eden is in some way evoked or restored.

Until God acts to inaugurate the eschaton, the community will offer "מעשי תודה", or "works of thanksgiving." However, it also seems likely that this phrase is intended to evoke the related phrase "מעשי תורה", or "works of the Law." The community could thus understand a close relationship between their obedience to the law and their offerings of thanksgiving.

By comparison, the author of 1 Peter does not expect his recipients to see themselves as a replacement for the Jerusalem Temple as the yaḥad did. Instead, in 1 Peter, this cultic metaphor is a way for believers to understand the theological reality of their status before God, with each other, and in relation to the world. For this reason, the author of 1 Peter does not map the hierarchy of the temple onto believers as the Rule does or transfer the ritual purification systems of the temple to the believers. Believers are called to be holy, but they are not called to live according to priestly standards of holiness as outlined in levitical halakah. Because the community as temple language is metaphorical in 1 Peter, it applies to all believers equally. This metaphorical quality allowed the author a level of creative and flexible engagement with community as temple language that was not available to the yaḥad, on which the efficacy of atonement rested. In 1 Peter, all believers are called to live holy lives and to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God through Christ, broadly conceived.

The theme of the community as temple appears elsewhere in the New Testament. These traditions may go back to Jesus' claim to destroy the temple and raise it up again in three days (Mk 14:58/Mt 26:61; Mk 15:29/Mt 27:14; Jn 2:19-22). John 2:19 explains that Jesus spoke of his body. It seems very possible that early Christians understood Jesus' body as a temple. In time, as they appropriated what was true of Christ to themselves, eventually understanding themselves, or more properly the church, as a temple-like community. In several places, Paul

also uses community as temple language (1 Cor 3:1-17; 6:12-19; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1; and Eph 2:19-22).  Paul tailors this language to fit the needs of each letter's recipients.

In 1 Peter, I first argued that οἶκος in 2:5 is intentionally polyvalent.  This word is the means by which the author transitions from the Source Domains of family and house/household to that of temple and cult.  The author then uses a collection of cultic phrases to describe believers as a "spiritual house" and as a "holy priesthood" that offers up spiritual sacrifices of God through Christ.

The author uses several different metaphors to describe Christian identity: believers are a "spiritual house", or temple, and a holy priesthood.  Each aspect of the image contributes to this identity.  The author is creatively engaging with this language.  He intends the recipients of his letter to embrace this identity and live into it.  In this sense, the goal of these images to is fortify Christian identity in the face of adversity.  Several key conclusions are observed.

First, Christ is the exemplar and paradigm for believers: what was true for Christ will also be true, in a qualified way, for them.  He was rejected by men just as they are, but just as he was precious to God and gloried, so also will they be.

Second, the stone language in 2:4-5 anticipates the catena of scriptural texts in 2:6-8 (Isa 28:16; Ps 118:22; Isa 8:14).  However, it is also possible that stone language had ethnic overtones that anticipate the ethnic identity language in 2:9-10.  The reception of Deut 32:18 in Isa 51:1-2 strongly supports this argument, as does the reception of both texts (Deut 32:18 and Isa 51:1-2) in LAB.

In Isa 51:1-2, Abraham is identified as the rock from which Jews were hewn, and Sarah is the quarry from which they were dug.  LAB 23:4 extends this by including Nahor and Melcha in the scriptural allusion (cf. LAB 23:6).  The language of rock and quarry in these texts has clear overtones of descent, heritage, and genealogy.  The Jews in these texts are called to remember the stock that they have come from.  Such ethnic overtones may be present in 1 Peter.  If so, they would anticipate the ethnic identity construction in 2:9-10.  In 1 Peter, believers, as living stones, are described with the language of Christ, the living stone.  If these overtones are present,

believers are called to remember that they dug from the quarry and hewn from the same rock as Christ; what is true of him will, in an analogous way, likewise be true of them.

The priesthood language may also be understood as an effect of divine regeneration. In the Second Temple period, priesthood was a hereditary institution from which even most Jews were excluded. The author of 1 Peter nevertheless identifies all believers as a "holy priesthood." By doing so, he applies a hitherto, restricted category to all believers.

1 Peter 2:6-8 is an intricately constructed text which weaves together quotations of Isa 28:16, Ps 118:22, and Isa 8:14 with a series of key words (namely, λίθος, ἐκλεκτός, ἔντιμος/ τιμη, and πιστεύω). The section also includes a number of explanatory glosses that clarify the author's use of these passages. One of the most salient features of these verses is the stark contrast between believers and un-believers. Indeed, unbelievers are foregrounded in verses 6-8.

The author returns to the identity of believers in 2:9-10 where he applies a series of Israelite epithets to them. The final sections of this chapter examined each of these epithets individually in order to analyze how they contribute to the formation of Christian corporate identity. The first and last epithets come from Isa 43:20-21("chosen stock" and "God's own people") and the middle two from Exod 19:6 ("royal priesthood" and "holy nation").

The very first of these titles is γένος ἐκλεκτόν, inspired by Isa 43:20-21. The noun γένος is derived from the verb γίνομαι, namely, "to come into being through process of birth or natural production, *to be born*, *be produced*." The noun takes on many of these meanings. It is significant that the first epithet attributed to believers is one that is usually connected to the idea of membership by birth. One is a member of a γένος because one has been begotten or born into it. The verb γεννάω is the causal form of γίνομαι. Thus, the divine regeneration of believers in 1:3 is closely linked semantically and conceptually with the epithet γένος ἐκλεκτόν in 2:9.

It is curious that the only other use of appearance of the phrase γένος ἐκλεκτόν (besides quotations or allusions to 1 Peter) is in the Testament of Job 1:5-6 where Job is specifically concerned with issues of descent, heredity, and group membership. He contrasts his children's hereditary membership in Israel with his membership which was earned through the patient endurance of suffering.

In studying these Petrine titles, it is important to study both the noun and the adjective. In each case, the accompanying adjective defines what kind of people believers are to be. 1 Peter 2:9 thus explains that believer are a "chosen stock." Election is an important theme in the letter. 1 Peter 2:6, quoting Isa 28:16, roots believers' election in Christ's election. Believers are also addressed as elect at the very beginning of the letter in the prescript (1:1). Believers' election operates at several levels: it unites them with Christ and it unites them with one another. Believers are not only elected as individuals, but they are part of a "chosen stock." As such, they are part of a new group that is not defined by physical generation, but by divine regeneration.

The second epithet, "a royal priesthood," is taken from Exod 19:6 (cf. 23:22 LXX). This chapter argued that even though the phrase is lifted from Exodus, the Exodus narrative sheds light 1 Peter. In Exodus, God summons the entire nation to go out into the wilderness to offer sacrifices (Exod 5:1, 3; 7:16; 8:1, 20, 26; 9:1, 13; 10:3, 9, 25-26). Not all Israelites were priests, but all of them were required to be present while sacrifices were offered. The Exodus narrative itself thus fills out some of the meaning of the phrase "kingdom of priests." In a similar way, all believers have a corporate, priestly identity and are called to live a holy life. This epithet also connects with the cultic imagery used earlier in 2:5. As a holy priesthood, believers are called to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

It is noteworthy that Jewish references to Exod 19:6 were relatively uncommon. Jubilees refers to it twice (Jub 16:18; 33:20), it also appears in a few other places (*Sobr*. 66; *Abr*. 56; 2 Macc 2:17; cf. Rev 1:6; 5:10; 20:6). The relatively uncommon nature of this phrase highlights its distinctiveness in Jubilees and 1 Peter; in both texts it plays an important role. Categories of birth, generation, and hereditary are central to both. In Jubilees, this means that strict social barriers must be erected to protect Jewish identity. No such barriers are raised in 1 Peter because Christian ethnic identity is something that comes directly from God through divine generation.

The third epithet, taken from Exod 19:6, is ἔθνος ἅγιον. In the LXX and other literature, ἔθνος usually referred to outsiders, though in Exod 19:6 it is attributed to Israel. The only other reference to the phrase in Second Temple literature appears in Philo's *Abr*. 56. Philo does not common on the title.

However, even though the title itself does not appear in other Jewish literature, the concept of national holiness was vitally important to Ezra and the author of Jubilees. As earlier chapters demonstrated, both of these texts are deeply concerned with the national holiness of Israel, and this manifests itself most clearly their concern to prohibit exogamous marriage. Though 1 Peter commands believers to be holy (1:15-16), the author does not call believers to maintain strict social boundaries as Ezra and Jubilees do. Instead, the ethical exhortations in 1 Peter are generally broad, such as the call to do good (2:15, 20; 3:6, 17; cf. 2:12, 14; 4:19) and not evil (3:17; cf. 2:1, 12, 14, 16; 4:15).

In sharp contrast to Ezra and Jubilees, the author of 1 Peter gives specific advice to Christian wives of unbelieving husbands. He advises them to stay with their husbands and be good wives, so that they might be a witness through their good example (3:1-2). In Ezra and Jubilees, the holiness of Israel was hereditary. Members were members because they were born into it, there was no conversion or proselytism. In 1 Peter, on the other hand, believers are part of the holy nation of Christ-followers because they have been divinely regenerated by God. Because God himself is the spiritual father of each believer, Christian identity cannot be passed on to children (or defiled) the way that physical heredity can be. Unlike the definition of what it meant to be "Jewish" given by Ezra and Jubilees, Christian membership was open-ended and available to those who were not currently members.

The final title is λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν. Many of the elements of the previous epithets are consolidated in this title (divine choice or election, holiness, distinction from the other nations of the world, etc.). The unique contribution of this title is that it looks forward to the future. The telic εἰς, a repeated element in 1:3-5, appears again here. This title points forward to the fulfilment of divine promise. The people who were divinely begotten are now God's people, but they also look forward to the fulfilment of God's promises.

The unit concludes in 2:10 with clear allusions to Hosea. The dualism of the passage contrasts light with darkness, and finally, those who are God's people with those who are "no people." The letter also contrasts those who have received mercy with those who have not received mercy. The reference to mercy is very significant because it concludes the first half of

the letter, but also because it links back to the only other appearance of mercy in 1 Peter at 1:3. It was through God's great mercy that believers were begotten anew. Now, it is the defining characteristic of God's chosen people, those who were called out of darkness into his marvellous light. The reference to mercy thus cements the importance of divine regeneration for the ethnic identity construction of believers. The establishment of God's people is the end goal towards which believers' divine regeneration was oriented.

# Chapter 6    Conclusion

## 6.1    Introduction

Divine regeneration lies at the heart of 1 Peter 1:3-2:10: believers are begotten of God into the people of God (1:3, 2:10).  It is the foundation upon which the author constructs his theology of Christian ethnic identity.  When a person is physically born, she is brought into a network of familial relationships, social customs, ethnic and national membership and accepted value systems.  The same is true with divine regeneration.  When each Christian is begotten anew into a spiritual family and nation, she is called to live a holy life with a reconfigured set of values, the foremost of which is love (1:8, 22; 2:17; 4:8 x2; 5:14).[1]  The author uses this extended metaphor from family life to completely redefine believers' identity around Christ.  To this end, he made extensive use of Jewish and early Christian traditions, yet he has reconstructed this tradition for his own purposes.

In this conclusion, the major findings of this thesis will be summarized and synthesized.  In §6.2, "The Architecture of Divine Regeneration: Structure and Metaphor in 1 Peter," the dynamics of metaphor will be reviewed to highlight the integrity of the Petrine divine regeneration metaphor.  Following this, the results of Chapters 2-4 will be surveyed in §6.3, "Divine Parentage: Begotten of God, Nursed to Salvation."  In §6.4, "A Chosen People: Categories of Corporate Belonging," the results of Chapter 5 will be summarized.  After these summaries, §6.5, "Tend the Flock: The People of God in 2:11-5:11," will consider some of the implications of this study for the rest of 1 Peter.  Finally, §6.6, "Petrine Regeneration and Christian Identity" will sketch some of the wider implications of this study and its scope for future research.

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[1] "Having purified your souls for obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart" (1:22). "Above all hold unfailing your love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins" (4:8).

**6.2     The Architecture of Regeneration: Structure and Metaphor in 1 Peter**

The divine regeneration image is clustered in 1 Peter 1:3-2:10, but its influence colors the entire letter. 1 Peter's epistolary frame (1:1-2; 5:12-14) infuses the standard letter conventions with the theologically charged language of the letter body. The epistolary frame highlights the themes of election, sanctification, and obedience, all of which play a role in the reorientation of believers' identity and the formation into the people of God.

In the prescript, believers are addressed as "exiles in the Diaspora" (1:1). In the closing, they are greeted from "She who is in Babylon who is also chosen" (5:13). The recurrent themes of exile and diaspora presuppose nationality: there can be no national diaspora without national identity. The author explains at the beginning of the letter body that this national identity begins with divine re-begetting. Divine regeneration therefore operates at the individual and corporate level. Individually, a believer forsakes his previous familial and corporate identities to become a follower of Christ. Corporately, Christian identity means being part of a nation in exile. One of the author's goals is to give Christians a realistic idea of what their identity means theologically and socially and to provide them with strategies for living in their diaspora existence.

The rebegetting of Christians by divine mercy appears at the very beginning of the letter's eulogy (1:3). This primary placement at the very head of the letter signals its importance for what follows (Chapter 2). The extended metaphor proceeds from regeneration with imperishable seed (1:3, 23, Chapter 3), to believers' infancy as newborn babes (2:1-3, Chapter 4), through their corporate growth to culminate in the achievement of a new people, the people of God (2:4-10, Chapter 5). God's mercy bookends the unit as the means by which regeneration is achieved and the reality that sustains the people of God (1:3; 2:10).

The second half of the letter body stretches from 1 Peter 2:11-5:11 and contains a series of theological and ethical teachings. Though the theme of divine regeneration is not discussed in the latter part of the letter, the constructed identity of believers as the people of God undergirds this material, towards which a few gestures will be offered below (§6.5).

The entire letter is thus grounded on the controlling metaphor of the people of God. The argument of this thesis is that the divinely begotten origin of this people is fully integrated into

this controlling metaphor. An appreciation of how metaphors work has demonstrated the theological and social importance of metaphorical language to communicate new theological realities that could not be expressed in equivalent prose. In 1 Peter, the metaphor of regeneration functions as invitation for believers to redefine their identity around the resurrection of Christ.

In 1 Peter 1:3-2:10, the author maps the images of generation, birth and growth onto the overlapping narratives of Christ and his followers. Through this extended and complex metaphor, believers are invited to read their personal narratives into the divine narrative of salvation. The narrative of Christ's suffering and resurrection is at the same time the source of believers' regeneration and the model for their life in the people of God. The resurrection of Christ is the beginning of believers' new existence, but this new existence must happen individually for each person through the acceptance of the preached word. Each stage of the regeneration metaphor in 1 Peter thus operates at multiple levels, by merging the narratives of Christ and the believer and by uniting the individual narratives of believers with the corporate narrative of the church.

### 6.3     Divine Parentage: Begotten of God, Nursed to Salvation

God the Father is first introduced in the epistolary opening (1:2) and in the eulogy, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy has begotten us anew…." (ὁ κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς, 1:3a). Though obscured by English translations ("born again," etc.), the image is solidly paternal (cf. 1:17, 23).

The language of God's fatherhood for individuals was current in the Second Temple period and was prominent in early Christianity. Even the language of God as begetter appeared in some canonical and Second Temple Jewish texts. Yet, this language does not play as prominent a role in Jewish literature as it does in early Christian texts. The Johannine and Petrine authors used preexistent Jewish material, but in a way that went far beyond any previous deployment of such language in the Scriptures or contemporary Jewish literature.

Narratively and theologically, the author of 1 Peter employed a dual chronology for the regeneration. At one level, the regeneration of all believers is linked with the resurrection of

Christ (1:3). In 1 Peter 1:3-5, this regeneration is developed through a series of prepositional phrases that clarify its significance. Divine regeneration leads to a living hope, an inheritance, and salvation (1:3-5). While the first of these is a preset reality, the second two look forward to eschatological fulfillment.

At another level, regeneration happens for the individual "through the living and abiding word of God," the preaching of the gospel to each person (1:22-25). By describing regeneration in terms of both the resurrection and believers' personal narrative, the author has superimposed the former narrative on top of the latter: believers are to connect the beginning of their new identity in the people of God with the event of Christ's resurrection from the dead. At the point of regeneration, these two narratives coinhere: the christological and the personal merge. The resurrection thus serves as the paradigmatic event for all Christian corporate identity, but also as the defining moment in the life of each believer.

The author specifies that believers have been begotten anew "not of perishable seed but of imperishable (οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς ἀλλ' ἀφθάρτου)" (1:23). The seed idiom evokes associations of heritage, genealogy, covenant, and posterity. In the Scriptures, God uses seed language in his promises to Abraham, Levi, and David, the founding fathers of the nation, the priesthood, and the monarchy. With the exception of some metaphorical Philonic texts, the special seed in Jewish literature is always fully human, albeit invested with divine promise. Philo is a special case since his writings are influenced by the Stoic teaching of the *logos spermatikos*.

By extending the metaphor of divine procreation to imperishable seed, the author of 1 Peter has drawn attention to two things: first, the imputation of divine qualities to believers; second, the distinction in kind between believers and the rest of humanity. Both of these points spring from the fundamental notion of what a seed is: a seed determines the *kind* of thing something is. Mortal seed produces mortal people, divine seed produces divine people. By their regeneration, believers have not only been begotten anew, but they have been begotten anew as a different *kind* of being. It is perhaps not surprising that the seed idiom is used in texts which advocate a separation between Israel and all other peoples.

In Ezra and Jubilees, Israel's election is grounds for separation from other peoples. In these texts, Israel is understood as a people endowed with a heavenly, divine holiness. This ideology of separation and election is most strongly seen in their responses to the problem of exogamy. They use the language of holy seed to enforce Israel's separation from all other nations. Israel is holy seed, and holy seed cannot be mixed with the profane lest it become defiled. This is a helpful parallel in so far as it identifies a group as having a corporate holiness due to divine investiture. Yet, the parallel breaks down over the nature and maintenance of this holiness. In Ezra and Jubilees, the authors are concerned with maintaining the ethnic homogeneity of Israel. Because exogamy threatens this holiness, intermarriage must be avoided at all costs. The holy seed that must be protected is human seed. In 1 Peter, the holy seed comes directly from God through the gospel. Because it comes through the gospel, it cannot be maintained or compromised by physical marriage and procreation. Christian identity is different in this way from other ethnic identities because it is not connected to physical birth. It can only be secured by spiritual begetting of divine seed.

The choice of adjective in 1:23 is also intentional: the imperishable seed of regeneration corresponds to their imperishable inheritance (εἰς κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον, 1:4). The means of redemption corresponds to the kind of life it produces. The immortal life of the resurrection now indwells believers (1:24-25; cf. 5:4). Believers were redeemed "not with perishable things such as gold or silver, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1:18-19a).

Conversely, the immortal seed stands in stark contrast with the morality of human life, as the quotation of Isa 40:6-8 makes abundantly clear (1:24-25). Believers used to live "in the futile ways inherited from your fathers (ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ὑμῶν ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου)" (1:18), but they have now been begotten out of this old way of life into a new form of being. However, they must continue to live among those whose ways they have left behind.

The author extends his parental language in 2:1-3 to the maternal imagery of nursing. As Cynthia Chapman has argued, milk can be depicted as a kinship-forging substance. In the Scriptures, breastfeeding and breast-milk are signs of membership and in-group status. The narratives of Sarah nursing Isaac, of Jochebed and Moses, and Ruth and Jesse bear this out. In

the rabbinic period, images of Sarah breastfeeding the nations are held up as a symbol of proselytism. Breastfeeding itself marked membership in a family and a culture. In 1 Peter, all believers are corporately fed on the same milk, making them "milk siblings."

The author of 1 Peter also applies this maternal imagery to the God the Father. In the Scriptures, there are some examples of the application of female imagery to a masculine subject, a few examples are also found in the Hodayot and the New Testament. However, Jewish attribution of maternal metaphors to God was rare. Though Paul uses maternal language of himself, such language of God is nearly non-existent in the New Testament.

However, Jewish and ancient Greco-Roman sources said a great deal about the importance of the quality of the milk. Greco-Roman sources offer guidance on the selection of a wet-nurse since the moral qualities of the woman can be transferred to the infant. Likewise, the adjectives which describe the milk in 1 Peter are important: they suggest what kind of people the believers should become as a result of their nurturance on divine milk. Appropriately, the milk imagery comes at a point in the letter where the author integrates moral exhortation into his extended metaphor of divine regeneration.

Since believers have been called out of vice (2:1), they are called like newborn babes to crave the pure "worldly" milk so that they might grow into salvation ( ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν, 2:2). Through numerous verbal repetitions, the author links believers' growth with their regeneration. It is striking how much of this reprises language from earlier in the letter: "newborn" (ἀρτιγέννητα) orally evokes "rebegotten" (ἀναγεννήσας, 1:3; ἀναγεγεννημένοι, 1:23); the word was the means of their regeneration is the word that now sustains them (1:23-25); believers' new desires replace their old, sinful desires (1:14; 2:11; 4:2-3); and finally, the goal of salvation (identically stated in 1:5). The preaching of the word is thus the source of their regeneration and the means of their continued growth toward salvation. The key element here is growth, which will serve as the thematic link between 2:1-3 and 2:4-10.

In this image, God is not explicitly depicted as a mother, but the imagery maps the intimate relationship between a mother and her child onto the relationship between believers and God.

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By reminding believers that they have tasted the kindness of the Lord, the passage hints that Christ is the milk that believers crave. This maternal imagery counterbalances the paternal language in 1 Peter 1. Though it is not dominant, it is suggestive. It points back to the reality that all of this language is a symbolic way of describing an indescribable reality: the reality that God who is neither male nor female has acted to save his people, and that this salvation is in some small way analogous to actions of human parents who bring children into the world, care for their needs, and guide them towards adulthood. The parental aspects of God's being are united by the word which functions in both the paternal and maternal pieces of the metaphor.

Via paternal and maternal images, the author of 1 Peter has painted a complex portrait of what it means for diverse people to become members of one divine people. Each facet of this imagery contributes to the development of this controlling metaphor. The aspects of divine begetting, with imperishable seed, and finally believers as newborn infants craving the word bring together the multivalent dimensions of familial, social, and ethnic identity. Ethnic identities are built up of family units, grounded on the interrelationships of the family members. Ethnic groups are then embodied through ties based on common descent and putative kinship. The author of 1 Peter thus establishes common identity within the divine family unit and then extends this identity beyond the family unit to the establishment of corporate, ethno-national identity in 2:4-10.

## 6.4      A Chosen People: Categories of Corporate Belonging

The theme of growth links 2:4-10 with 2:1-3. In 2:4-10, the author reaches the theological pinnacle toward which his theological metaphors have been building. Those who were just described as nursing babes are now described as living stones who are being built into a spiritual house. In these compact verses, the author weaves together scriptural quotations and allusions to make his definitive statements on Christ, those who disobey, and those who obey and believe.[2] Just as in 1:3, Christ is the fulcrum on which identity is defined, for stumbling or for salvation.

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[2] The author uses Isa 28:16, Ps 118:22, Isa 8:14-15, Isa 43:20-21, Exod 19:6 (23:22 LXX), and Hos 2:23 (cf. Hos 1:6, 9; Mal 3:17).

In these verses, the author mobilizes a series of images and language clusters to characterize Christian corporate identity in sacerdotal, national, and ethnic terms. In 2:4-5, Christ the living stone is the model for believers who are like living stones. The parallel language of Christ and believers as the same kind of rock (by virtue of the fact that both are "living") may have ethnic overtones. In Scriptures and other Jewish literature, Abraham is described as a rock and Sarah a quarry (Isa 51:1-2; LAB 23:4, 6). Their descendants are hewn from them. Thus, the rock/quarry imagery draws attention to the hereditary continuity between ethnic Jews and their ancestors. For 1 Peter, this tradition intensifies the continuity between Christ and the believers who derive their identity from him. The rock language in 1 Peter 2:4-8 therefore highlights the correlated relationship between Jesus and his followers on one side, and the opposition of the world on the other.

In 2:5, Christians are depicted as living stones that are being built into a "spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood" (οἶκος πνευματικὸς εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον). The metaphorical nature of this language is evident both in the polyvalency of "house" (both house and temple) and in the layering of images (believers as temple and priesthood).

The image of the community as God's temple is similar to traditions from the Dead Sea Scrolls, particularly the Community Rule and 4QFlorilegium, and early Christian texts. The Community Rule and 4QFlorilegium both describe the community as temporarily fulfilling the functions of the Jerusalem temple temporarily. Using Isa 28:16, the Rule maps the graded holiness of the temple onto the community, the priests correspond to the Holy of Holies and the laity to the Temple courts. Symbolically, all Israel is represented by the twelve men and three priests, who collectively represent the twelve tribes and Israel's priestly families. Importantly, one of the key functions of the community is to achieve atonement for the land.

1 Peter also develops a community as temple ideology with recourse to Isa 28:16. However, the differences between 1 Peter and the Rule result from the ontologically different status these ideologies have. In the Rule, the community is an actual substitute for the temple: they achieve real atonement. Metaphors are means of understanding one thing in terms of another. In the Rule, there is no transference of meaning: the community is the temple. In 1 Peter, the

community as temple ideology is the source domain for the Christian self-understanding, the target domain. Therefore, the author of 1 Peter is not concerned to delineate a strict hierarchy of status among believers, or to specify the means by which atonement is achieved. All believers are equal in this metaphor. The author does not include Christ in this cultic metaphor because Christ's actions were not metaphorical. The metaphorical status of verses 2:4-5 allows the author the freedom to mix metaphors and pile images on top of one another. Because he is not concerned with achieving atonement, he has a level of flexibility not enjoyed by the author of the Rule for whom the efficacy atonement depended on strict obedience to set procedures.

In 4QFlorilegium, the author distinguishes between three temples: "the sanctuary of the Lord" (מקדש אדני, I.3), "the sanctuary of Israel" (מקדש ישראל, I.6), and "the sanctuary of man/men/Adam" (מקדש אדם, I.6). The "sanctuary of Israel" refers to the First and Second Temples which were defiled. At the end of days (באחרית הימים), God himself will build "the sanctuary of the Lord" from which problematic categories of people will be excluded. In the meantime, the community will be "the temple of man/men/Adam" (מקדש אדם).

There are interesting differences between 4QFlor and the Rule. For example, 4QFlor does not mention atonement. Instead, it says that "the temple of man/men/Adam" (מקדש אדם) will offer up "works of thanksgiving" (מעשי תודה). Just as there is a pun on "the temple of man/men/Adam," there is probably a pun on the "works of thanksgiving" (מעשי תודה) evoking the phrase "works of the law/Torah." The sacrificial "works of thanksgiving" may imply that fulfilling "works of the law/Torah" were seen by God as acceptable sacrifices by his interim, human temple. Unfortunately, 4QFlorilegium is too brief to reach any further conclusions about what the author thought about this temple. What is significant for comparisons with 1 Peter is that 4QFlorilegium depicts a community functioning as an interim temple and offering acceptable sacrifices, but not explicitly sacrifices which achieve atonement.

However, 4QFlorilegium looks forward to a future temple. There is no such expectation in 1 Peter. First Peter contains a developed eschatology, but the cult does not figure in it. Subtly, by reason of omission, the author has elided the physical temple; its significance now lies primarily as the source domain to transfer meaning to the target domain of Christian identity. This is not

unexpected, perhaps, in a letter written in all likelihood after the fall of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 C.E. when physical sacrifices were no longer a possibility.

It is also significant that the author addresses Christians as a "holy priesthood" (ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον, 2:5). The author of the Rule maintained a distinction in status between priests and laity. In 1 Peter, there is no such distinction: all believers are a "holy priesthood." This complements the author's construction of a theological ethnicity for Christians because the priesthood was a hereditary category. Only eligible males from specific families could function as priests. Women were entirely excluded from Temple service. In 1 Peter, prior markers of identity such as membership in familial, ethnic, or national groups, and sex do not disqualify a person from participation in God's holy priesthood. All Christians are instead able and expected to "offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους θεῷ διὰ Ἰσοῦ Χριστοῦ).

Christian identity construction reaches its culmination in 2:9-10. Each of the epithets in these verses contributes to Christian ethno-national identity. Gathered from Isa 43:20-21, Exod 19:6 (23:22 LXX) and Hos 2:23 (cf. Hos 1:6, 9; Mal 3:17), the author applies titles of Israel to believers. Curiously, he does not explain how ethnic Israel fits into this schema. For the author, Christians are to understand themselves as the people of God and to read their personal histories into the history of Israel and God's narrative of salvation.

For each title, appreciation of both the noun and the qualifying adjective are necessary to discern how the author qualifies ethnic and national identity through a theological lens. For example, in the very first title, "chosen stock" (γένος ἐκλεκτόν, Exod 19:6), the adjective ἐκλεκτόν (chosen, elect) defines what kind of γένος (stock, race) Christians are. The primary place of this title underscores its significance: divine regeneration ushers believers into an "elect stock."

The first element, γένος, means "race, stock, or kin." Derived from γίνομαι, it evokes categories of membership defined by birth. Semantically, it is closely related to ἀναγεννάω (1:3, 23). Those who have been begotten of God are now God's chosen stock. Therefore, divine regeneration is a fundamental predicate of Christian ethnic identity. However, this γένος is also

defined by election.  In 1 Peter, Christ's election is foregrounded (2:6; cf. Isa 28:16).  Believers' election thus rests on the prior election of Christ.  This election is now the primary to their identity as chosen by God but rejected by the world, witnessed by the fact that election is the first appellation of the addressees in the epistolary prescript (1:1).

The title βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα, from Exod 19:6, is uncommon in Jewish sources from the Second Temple period.  However, it appears twice in Jubilees (16:18; 33:20) where it is used to make a powerful statement on the corporate sanctity of Israel.  In 1 Peter 2:9, it makes a similarly powerful statement but in a context that calls for a radically different social strategy than that of Jubilees.  Christians are not supposed to separate from society; instead they are repeatedly called to do good so that their behavior might serve as a witness to their unbelieving family members and neighbors.[3]

The significance of believers as a priesthood (ἱεράτευμα) has been discussed above.  The adjective βασίλειον explains that believers are to be a royal priesthood because they serve God.  This reminder of God's universal kingship and status of creator (4:19; cf. 2:13) was an important corrective to those living in the Roman empire under imperial power.

The next title, "a holy nation" (ἔθνος ἅγιον) is also taken from Exod 19:6.  In 1 Peter, the Christian ἔθνος is called to be holy because God is holy (1:15-16; Lev 19:2).  Believers are called to be a people defined by corporate and individual holiness.  The final title "a people of his possession" (λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν; Exod 19:6; Isa 43:21 cf. Mal 3:17) encapsulates the themes of election, holiness, and eschatological fulfillment.  Believers' are God's people because he has chosen them.  They are now called to live holy lives that look forward to the future fulfillment of God's promises, salvation and the reception of their imperishable inheritance.  Though they are currently suffering, God will one day reclaim his own.  This title then consolidates much of the letter's regeneration theology: God's actions have established his holy people, sustain them, and will eventually bring them their promised inheritance.

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[3] For more see below.

In 1 Peter 2:10, the author concludes his construction of Christian ethnic identity with two sets of parallel language from Hosea reminding believers that those who were once no people have become God's people and that this people is defined by God's mercy.  These statements effectively consolidate the author's message.  Written to a geographically, socially, and ethnically diverse group of believers, the author describes their collective former identities as "no people."  Since their obedience to the word, they have become the people of God.  This people is completely defined by God's merciful and salvific action through Christ which is the means by which their divine regeneration was made possible (1:3).

### 6.5    Tend the Flock: The People of God in 2:11-5:11

As members of a Christian ethnicity, believers have been begotten into a diaspora, a nation of people scattered in exile throughout the world.  This complete upheaval in believers' identity triggered a fundamental disjunction between them and the rest of society, especially through the fault lines of their prior familial, social, and civic relationships.  In this final section, I would like briefly to sketch out some ways in which the theology in 1:3-2:10 informs a reading of 2:11-5:14.  Much more could be said, but I will limit my comments to three areas: the theologically grounded solidarity among believers, appropriation of biblical narratives as personal narratives, and finally the emphasis on conforming to the example of Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-2:10 established a framework for imagining Christian identity in terms of a family and an ethno-national group.  With this in mind, the rest of the letter's familial language is infused with this theological investiture.  Believers are called to love the brotherhood (τὴν ἀδελφότητα ἀγαπᾶτε , 2:17), an exhortation echoed later in the letter (φιλάδελφοι, 3:8).[4] Husbands are called to live considerably with their wives because they are joint-heirs (συγκληρονόμοις, 3:7).  Believers are reminded that judgment will begin with the household of God (τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ, 4:17).  The believers in Asia Minor are reminded that their suffering is shared by the brotherhood throughout the world (ἀδελφότητι, 5:9).  Finally, the epistolary prescript notes that the letter was sent through Silvanus, a faithful brother (τοῦ πιστοῦ

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[4] For arguments on φιλάδελφοι having imperative force or an implied imperative verb, see Dubis, *I Peter*, 97-98.

ἀδελφοῦ, 5:12). This familial language, which was common among early Christians, is nevertheless endowed with new theological significance in 1 Peter.

Believers are also invited to read their current lives into the scriptural narratives.  The author writes in his exhortation to Christian wives that they will be like Sarah if they obey their husbands (3:6). "And you are now her children if you do right and let nothing terrify you" (ἧς ἐγενήθητε τέκνα ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι καὶ μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν πτόησιν, 3:6b).  Because believers have been begotten into God's people, they should understand themselves as the spiritual descendants of the patriarchs.  In 3:20-:22, the author explains that believers' situation is analogous to that of Noah.  Just as Noah was saved through water, believers will be saved through baptism.

The solidarity of believers is conversely marked by an acute awareness of believers' alienation from society.  In 2:11, the author addresses them as aliens and exiles (παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους).  Though the strong duality between believers and unbelievers is maintained, believers are called to do good to those around them to keep the door to conversion open.[5]  They are exhorted to maintain good conduct and to be a blessing (τοὐναντίον δὲ εὐλογοῦντες, ὅτι εἰς τοῦτο ἐκλήθητε, ἵνα εὐλογίαν κληρονομήσητε, 3:9).[6]  Yet, the author knows that his addressees will suffer.[7]  If they are reproached for the name of Christ, they are blessed (4:14).  A believer who suffers as a Christian (ὡς χριστιανός, 4:16) should not be ashamed but "under that name (ἐν τῷ ονοματι τούτω) let him glorify God."[8]  As Horrell has shown, having a proper name is important for the definition of an ethnic group.[9]  Here, Christians have reclaimed an etic label and re-appropriated it as a mark of pride.[10]

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[5] For being a witness, see 2:12, 15; 3:1, 13, 16.

[6] For doing good, see 2:14, 15, 20; 3:6, 11, 17; 4:19.

[7] See 2:20-24; 3:13-17; 4:1, 4, 12-16, 19; 5:9-10.

[8] I here follow the NA[27] because this is the stronger textual reading, supported by P[72], ℵ, A, B, Ψ and others etc. against the NA[28], supported by P, minuscules, and the Byz tradition.

[9] Horrell, "The Label Χριστιανός " 164-210.

[10] Horrell, "The Label Χριστιανός " 207-210.

To suffer "as a Christian" (ὡς χριστιανός) means to suffer according to the pattern of Christ. Through the movements from begetting to divine people-hood, believers have been defined at every stage by the work of Christ: his suffering, resurrection, and future glory. Just as they were conformed to his example in 2:4-5, they will conform to his pattern (ὑπογραμμόν, 2:21) in their suffering.[11] However, they can hope that just as Christ was vindicated to glory, so also will they be vindicated to their unfading crown of glory (τὸν ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον, 5:4). The extended divine regeneration metaphor lays the groundwork for this process of growth. Because they are a people begotten out of resurrected glory, they are a people who will one day enter this glory as God's chosen possession. In conclusion, the divine regeneration metaphor is at the heart of 1 Peter. In the first half the letter, believers' identity is begun at their divine begetting and fulfilled in the people of God. In the latter half of the letter, this theological identity undergirds the letter's ethical exhortation.

## 6 . 6　　　Petrine Regeneration and Christian Identity

This study has examined the Petrine regeneration metaphor in detail. This metaphor is a complex, provocative, and unique Petrine contribution to early Christian theology. This section will briefly reflect on some of the ways that this study can impact New Testament studies and open up new areas of investigation.

First, this study has used a multifaceted methodology that integrated metaphor and ethnic theory with robust historical-critical investigation of primary sources in Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity. In particular, metaphor theory was shown to be a very rich methodological tool for analyzing imagery with potent symbolic value. Further such attention to the depth of metaphor has the potential to yield new insights in Jewish and Christian literature. It would be worthwhile to return to some of the texts surveyed in this study to investigate their use of metaphor more fully.

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[11] See also 2:21-24; 3:18; 4:1, 13, 16.

Second, the topic of Christian ethnic identity in the New Testament and other early Christian literature is far from exhausted, especially within Pauline studies. A deeper look at the relationships between Paul's perhaps veiled construction of Christian ethnic identity and 1 Peter would potentially shed some light on the development of early Christian theology. This could include a fresh look at Pauline imagery, theology, and use of Scripture. It would also be interesting to compare these developments in early Christianity with the changes that were taking place in Judaism in first three centuries.

Third, this study has shown the importance of paying careful attention to the gendered aspects of metaphor. This study's attention to the paternal and maternal imagery in 1 Peter has shown that texts from Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity could playfully, and theologically, manipulate gendered imagery and language for rhetorical and theological effect. Greater attention to the use of gendered aspects of imagery and language in Second Temple and New Testament studies could yield some very interesting results.

These types of investigations have the potential to shed new light on 1 Peter's place within the canon. In particular, this study has shown that 1 Peter shares interest in the theme of divine regeneration uniquely with the Johannine literature, though very little work has been done on this relationship. There is scope for a study on the shared linguistic, conceptual, and theological material in these texts. Such a study would provide new dimensions for studying 1 Peter's place in relation to other New Testament documents.

Finally, this study has sought to delve into one epistle's strategy for articulating Christian identity. As early Christians strove to find appropriate language to describe themselves, the author of 1 Peter selected ethnicity concepts that highlighted some aspects of Christian identity, but overshadowed others. It would be worthwhile to compare the ways that this strategy sits with other linguistic and theological strategies for describing Christian identity.

Scholars, such as Selwyn and Elliott, have proposed that the regeneration motif in 1 Peter may be connected to proselyte traditions preserved in rabbinic literature.[1]  For example, Randall Chesnutt cites the oft-repeated rabbinic proposition, "One who has become a proselyte is like a child newly born" (*b. Yeb*. 22a; 48b; 62a; 97b; *b. Ber*. 47a; *Ger* 2.6).[2]  Before exploring the similarities and possible connection between 1 Peter and the rabbinic material, it will be helpful to lay out a few methodological guidelines.

 In previous generations, rabbinic material was taken at face value for its historical claims and rabbinic traditions were compared with New Testament texts without any methodological qualification.  Since the rise of modern critical study of the rabbinic literature, pioneered by Jacob Neusner and others, scholars have become more aware of the difficulties involved.  In an overly-corrective response, many New Testament scholars now avoid interacting with rabbinic material at all.  However, with some methodological prudence, the rabbinic material can be used responsibly.

 In order to appraise the value of a particular rabbinic text, several considerations must be made.  First, though it is notoriously difficult to date rabbinic literature and the traditions it contains, a basic distinction between Tannaitic and Amoraic literature can, and should, be made.  Tannaitic literature is more likely to contain early Jewish traditions.[3]  Similarly, Amoraic literature is more likely to contain early traditions than Saborian literature, etc.  Günter Stemberger writes,

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[1] Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 306-307.  Elliott, *I Peter*, 332-333.  Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt."

[2] Randall D. Chesnutt, *From Death to Life: Conversion in Joseph and Aseneth* (JSPSup 16; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 174. The rabbinic references are taken from Chesnutt.  Also see Selwyn, *St. Peter*, 306. Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt," 46-50.

[3] Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (trans. Markus Bockmuehl; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992).  By contrast, Neusner strongly argues, "We cannot now assign determinate dates to a single document of rabbinic literature; unless we simply determine to accept at face value all of the attributions of sayings to named authorities and the history of all stories told about them, we also do not know what to make of the persistent and ubiquitous practice of assigning sayings to specific ages," Jacob Neusner, *Introduction to Rabbinic Literature* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), esp. Appendix 1, "Dating Documents," 651; 651-668.

Similarly self-evident, but not always observed, is the fact that Tannaitic texts must take absolute precedence over later texts in the reconstruction of historical facts or ideas of the Tannaitic period, even where a later source cites a statement in the name of a Tanna or as a *baraita*.[4]

Therefore, the following evaluation of rabbinic literature will use the classification of Tannaitic, Amoraic, Saborian, and Geonic periods to estimate each text's probability of containing early material.[5] In our case, Tannaitic literature is more likely to contain traditions which shed light on the religious climate in which 1 Peter was written. With regards to rebirth and proselytism, the relevant material comes from the Amoraic period, which adds several degrees of separation from the religious milieu of 1 Peter. Four texts come from *Yevamot*, one from *Berakhot*, and one from the minor tractate *Gerim*. All of the evidence for this tradition is embedded in Amoraic material. Other relevant material occurs in *Genesis Rabbah* and *Song of Songs Rabbah* which are slightly earlier.[6] Any conclusions must be made with caution.

Second, along with the approximate dates of the text, the literary types and genres of text should be considered. Alon Goshen-Gottstein writes, "Each category of data must be studied in its own right, and only then can a larger synthetic presentation be attempted."[7] For example, in Goshen-Gottstein's case, he distinguished between material in parables and liturgical formulae. A similar sensitivity will be important here. For this study, most of the relevant texts are halakhic. This should be kept in mind when they are held up for comparison with 1 Peter.

To return to the texts at hand, the metaphor of the proselyte and the child appears in the following Talmudic texts *b. Yeb*. 22a; 48b; 62a; 97b; *b. Ber*. 47a; *Ger* 2.6. This comparison operates at several levels. First, the comparison with a newborn highlights the proselyte's new beginning and innocence. A newborn enters the world innocent of sin. In the same way, when a proselyte enters Judaism, his or her old transgressions are left behind when he or she enters the

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[4] Stemberger, *Introduction*, 47.

[5] This dissertation will use the following chronology: the Tannaitic period begins extends from the period of Hillel and Shammai to 200-220 C.E.; the Amoraic period stretches from 220 – 500 C.E; the Saborian period from 500-650, and the Geonic from 650-1050. For more on these divisions, see Stemberger, *Introduction*, 7.

[6] *Gen. Rab*. probably dates to the early fifth century, *Song of Songs Rab*. probably to the sixth. Stemberger, *Introduction*, 279-280, 315.

[7] Alon Goshen-Gottstein, "God the Father in Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity: Transformed Background or Common Ground?," *JES* 38 / 4 (2001): 470-504; 473.

Jewish community.[8]  Second, the metaphor emphasizes the distinction between the proselyte's old existence and his new life.  As Sjöberg puts it, the proselyte undergoes "eine reale Veränderung seiner Lebenssituation."[9]  His previous relationships and family ties are broken off. Chesnutt summarizes these points by drawing them together into a legal context, "Since one is like a newborn child, he or she is neither accountable for former transgressions of the Law nor bound by former family ties. Legally the person has no prior existence."[10]  As Chesnutt explains, the significance of conversion has legal, social, and theological dimensions.  A proselyte's entrance into the community signals his departure from his former life and the beginning of his new life with God and his chosen people.

In the rabbinic material, this metaphor is used to clarify legal disputes.  For example, the rabbis use this metaphor to determine whether a proselyte's child from his previous life as a pagan "counts" as his firstborn with regard to inheritance and priestly redemption charges.[11]  The same metaphor is used to determine which relationships fall under the laws of forbidden marriages and other similar halakhic debates.[12]  This metaphor is often connected with new creation.  This connection between new life and new creation is found in some other rabbinic literature.[13]  *Gen. R*. 39.4 explains, "When one brings a heathen near, it as if he had created him."[14]

The status of new creation is more about the legal status of the convert, the symbolism of the rite itself does not depict the conversion as a type of rebirth.  This is argued strongly by Erik Sjöberg who emphasizes the metaphorical nature of this statement, "Der Proselyt *gleicht* einem Neugeborenen. Es wird nicht gesagt, dass er neugeboren *ist*" (emph. original).[15]  This is

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[8] Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt," 46.

[9] Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt," 49.

[10] Chesnutt, *Death to Life*, 174.

[11] *b. Yeb* 62a.

[12] *b. Yeb* 22a.  Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt," 47-48.

[13] Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt," 53-85.

[14] Chesnutt, *Death to Life*, 174.

[15] Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt," 45.

significant because the metaphor is operative for the proselyte himself; circumcision and proselyte baptism are not conceptualized as rites which symbolize birth or rebirth.[16]  This observation is relevant for Petrine studies since most scholars have overemphasized the significance of baptism for the letter, of which more will be said later.  What is significant is that the proselyte himself is compared to an infant.  Circumcision and baptism are signs of entrances into the covenant, but they do not themselves constitute a rebirth.  Nowhere in any of the metaphors of the proselyte as a newborn is his entrance into the community marked with rites of birth or rebirth.

Elsewhere in the rabbinic material, Israel is depicted as a newborn at Sinai (*Midr. Cant. Rab.* VIII. 2).   The midrash explains, "I would bring thee into my mother's house: this is Sinai. R. Berekiah said: Why is Sinai called my mother's house? Because there Israel became like a newborn child."  This midrash is enlightening because it uses the imagery elsewhere used of the proselyte to describe Israel at Sinai.  The experience of Israel at Sinai and that of the proselyte are reflected in one another.  When a proselyte joins Israel, he enters the community, so to speak, at Sinai.  His personal story converges with Israel's at the mountain of God.

This midrash shows that the metaphors of a newborn child can be used of proselytes and of Israel.  It cautions against distancing the legal aspects of proselytism too far away from the narrative of Israel.  The relevance of this midrash for 1 Peter comes to the fore when the same questions of community and identity are asked of the letter's recipients.  Is the language of rebirth in 1 Peter used because of its resonances with Jewish proselyte traditions?  Is it used to describe the new status of gentile converts within the believing community?

1 Peter does not appear to be consciously using proselyte traditions.[17]  As with the influence of the mystery religions, it is possible that some of this language was "in the air" and that had an indirect influence on the letter.  However, there are several reasons for regarding the influence of rabbinic proselyte traditions on 1 Peter as minimal.

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[16] Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt," 46, 49-50.

[17] See also Seland, *Strangers in the Light: Philonic Perspectives on Christian Identity*, "Paroikos kai parepidemos: Proselyte Characterizations in 1 Peter?" 39-78.

First, it should be remembered that all of the available evidence for the metaphor of the proselyte as a newborn comes from Amoraic literature. Though the language of conversion in *Joseph and Aseneth* bears some resemblance to what is found in the Talmudic texts, it must be kept in mind that several hundred years separate these witnesses. Further, the language of *rebegetting,* which is primary for 1 Peter, as opposed to rebirth, does not occur in either *Joseph and Aseneth* or the Amoraic literature. It is a different conceptual image.

Second, the function of this language is different. In rabbinic material, metaphor functions to create a legal fiction in order to answer halakhic questions. The comparison between proselytes and newborns is never developed beyond this premise because there is no need to do so. It has no homiletic or pastoral import. By contrast, 1 Peter expands the language of believers' regeneration for the pastoral benefit of the recipients. After believers have been rebegotten, the letter explores how they grow up to become God's mature children and heirs. No development of this kind occurs for proselytes in the rabbinic material. The metaphor is not meant to encourage proselytes. Its function is purely to answer legal questions.

Finally, *Gerim*, the rabbinic tractate on proselytes, specifies, "Just as Israel were initiated into the covenant by three precepts, so proselytes are initiated by circumcision, immersion and a sacrifice" (Ger. II, rule 5). The tractate continues, "[The omission of] the first two debars him [from becoming a proselyte], but [the omission of] the third does not debar him." To this, R. Eliezar b. Jacob disagree, arguing that all three disbar. In any event, it seems certain that each of the three initiation rites, circumcision, immersion, and sacrifice were important, though to varying degrees, based on circumstantial factors such as the sex of the proselyte, the feasibility of Temple worship, or the local rabbi's conviction.

If 1 Peter were intentionally drawing on the proselyte tradition, then one would expect to find prominent references to all three of the initiation rites, but this is not the case. Circumcision is not mentioned at all in 1 Peter. Baptism is discussed, though not until 1 Peter 3:21. Sacrifice does appear: references to Jesus' sacrificial death, the sprinkling of blood, and spiritual sacrifices are peppered through the letter (1:2, 18-19; 2:5). Of these, the strongest case could be made for 1:1-19 where Jesus' blood is means by which believers are "ransomed from the futile ways

inherited from your father." However, this evidence alone is unconvincing. In conclusion, despite some surface similarities, the letter of 1 Peter is not directly interacting with or using proselyte traditions as they have been preserved in rabbinic literature.

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