

Jesus Remembered in 1 Peter?  
Early Jesus Traditions, Isaiah 53, and 1 Pet 2.21-25

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**1. Introduction: From the *ipsissima verba* to the Remembered Jesus**

Recent studies of the historical Jesus have shown something of a tendency to move away from the earlier (form-critical) focus on tradition-historical study of particular pericopae, and the associated concern to establish the authenticity and original wording of specific sayings or stories.<sup>1</sup> Richard Bauckham, for example, considers as “doomed to failure” form-critical attempts using criteria of authenticity to test “each saying or story individually... We simply do not have the means to sift the tradition, unit by unit, in this way, even if there may be a few cases in which it is possible. The results have been so disparate as to confirm that the method is fundamentally flawed”.<sup>2</sup> Dale Allison, similarly, expresses scepticism about our ability – and specifically the ability of the traditional criteria – to ascertain the historicity of recorded sayings or actions of Jesus: “I have lost my former confidence in anyone’s ability, including my own, to trace with assurance the history of most of the traditions.”<sup>3</sup> James Dunn, in the context of an argument for appreciating the essentially oral character of the Jesus traditions, comments that abandoning “the hypothesis of exclusive literary dependence

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<sup>1</sup> In his classic exposition of the form-critical approach to the synoptic tradition, Rudolf Bultmann describes the aim of his investigation as giving “an account of the history of the *individual units of the tradition*” (*The History of the Synoptic Tradition* [rev edn; Oxford: Blackwell, 1972], 3, italics original).

<sup>2</sup> Richard Bauckham, “Eyewitnesses and Critical History: A Response to Jens Schröter and Craig Evans”, *JNTS* 31 (2008) 221-35 (225). Similarly, Rafael Rodriguez concludes his recent study with the comment that “the programme of atomizing, decontextualizing and recontextualizing snippets of the gospel tradition in order to critically reconstruct the ‘historical Jesus’ has been exposed as culturally and historically inappropriate” (Rafael Rodriguez, *Structuring Early Christian Memory: Jesus in Tradition, Performance, and Text* [LNTS 407; London & New York, 2010], 224-25).

<sup>3</sup> Dale C. Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (Grand Rapids, MI/London: Baker/SPCK, 2010), 436.

means that *we will simply be unable to trace the tradition-history of various sayings and accounts so confidently*”.<sup>4</sup>

In part, this recent scepticism has been generated by the perceived failure of the earlier methods to yield the solid historical results they ostensibly promised. But it has also been driven, more positively, by attempts to grapple afresh with the implications of the oral transmission (and aural reception) of Jesus traditions and to take fully into account contemporary insights into the way human memory – both individual and social – works.<sup>5</sup> Needless to say, this does not mean that this new approach has led to greater consensus about what may and may not be claimed as aspects of an authentic and historically reliable portrait of Jesus: for some, the emphasis on eyewitness testimony and memories of Jesus serves to validate much more of the Gospel tradition than has sometimes been accepted,<sup>6</sup> while for others, the focus on memory, valuable as it is, calls for “a hermeneutic of suspicion towards that which is remembered” every bit as rigorous and sceptical as earlier form-critical studies had been.<sup>7</sup> Studies of memory have shown that recollection of events and utterances, even by eyewitnesses, is inevitably selective and interpretative, changing over time and shaped by a wider social setting, in which what communities value and approve decisively influences what is remembered.<sup>8</sup> Even autobiographical memory is

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<sup>4</sup> James D.G. Dunn, “Altering the Default Setting: Re-envisaging the Early Transmission of the Jesus Tradition”, *NTS* 49 (2003) 139-75 (172, italics original).

<sup>5</sup> Among many recent studies, see, for example, Samuel Byrskog, *Story as History – History as Story: The Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient Oral History* (WUNT 123; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000); Dunn, “Altering”; James D.G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003); Richard J. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006); Allison, *Constructing Jesus*; Rodriguez, *Structuring*. Needless to say, these studies differ considerably in how they assess the reliability of recorded memories of Jesus, how closely they associate these with original eyewitnesses, and so on.

<sup>6</sup> Notwithstanding their very significant differences in approach and results, this would characterise the works of Bauckham and Dunn.

<sup>7</sup> Alexander J.M. Wedderburn, *Jesus and the Historians* (WUNT 269; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 213 (see further 189-223). Similarly, David Catchpole, “On Proving Too Much: Critical Hesitations about Richard Bauckham’s *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*”, *JSHJ* 6 (2008) 169-181. Also expressing some scepticism about the extent of eyewitness testimony in the Gospels is Samuel Byrskog, “The Eyewitnesses as Interpreters of the Past: Reflections on Richard Bauckham’s, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*”, *JSHJ* 6 (2008) 157-168 (158).

<sup>8</sup> See Allison’s very valuable survey, with extensive bibliographical references; Allison, *Constructing Jesus*, 1-10. See also Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 319-57, who stresses more than

subject to the same selectivity and fallibility.<sup>9</sup> Narrations of the past are inevitably contemporary constructions, recollections shaped by present convictions and priorities.

In terms of the study of the historical Jesus and the early Jesus traditions, this means, as Dunn has emphasized, that what we have, right from the start, are records, impressions, of the *impact* Jesus made, which represent the way he was *remembered*.<sup>10</sup> In other words, we have nothing more direct or objective than these impressions of the remembered Jesus, which must also mean the constructed Jesus – a depiction shaped by evolving and communal perceptions of who he was, what was and was not important about him, though this does not then mean that these memories cannot be subjected to critical scrutiny.<sup>11</sup> (Even were we to have – *per impossibile* – Jesus’ own reflections on who he was, his recollections of what he did and said, these would still be subject to the same selective, constructive and interpretative tendencies.)

It also means, as Allison stresses, that the best approach to reconstructing a historical portrait of Jesus may lie in seeking broad impressions and coherent traditions, rather than attempting to validate or reconstruct the earliest form of specific sayings or stories – although such work will, let it be stressed, inevitably and rightly require the careful and detailed study of individual traditions and sayings. “Recurrent attestation” may be particularly significant in building up a coherent picture,<sup>12</sup> though it also requires caution, since inauthentic traditions

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Allison the potential reliability, even on points of detail, of eyewitness testimony. On the eyewitness as interpreter, see Byrskog, *Story*, 146-76.

<sup>9</sup> Allison, *Constructing Jesus*, 7-8 nn. 40-41.

<sup>10</sup> Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 130-33, 882-84. Cf. also Bauckham’s stress on “testimony” as the most appropriate category for the Gospel material (*Eyewitnesses*, 472-508).

<sup>11</sup> A point made especially by Wedderburn, *Jesus*, 189-223.

<sup>12</sup> See Allison, *Constructing Jesus*, 15-17; on “recurrent attestation”, cf. p. 20. There is some overlap here with the argument of Gerd Theissen and Dagmar Winter that we should abandon the criterion of dissimilarity and adopt a criterion of historical plausibility – which locates Jesus plausibly within the context of first-century Judaism and explains his influence on the developments evident in early Christianity – insofar as this criterion tends not to isolate a relatively small number of distinctive (“doubly dissimilar”) sayings as authentic but rather to identify broader aspects of Jesus’ teaching, action, and sense of identity as plausible in their socio-historical context. See Gerd Theissen and Dagmar Winter, *The Quest for the Plausible Jesus: The Question of Criteria* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002). Cf. also Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (London: SCM, 1998), 116-18, who

may simply be repeated. We should aim to establish a character outline, a profile of activities and themes, that seems to capture the memory of Jesus. For example, discussing the likely historicity of the tradition that Jesus went willingly to his death, Allison accepts that some traditions and sayings are most likely fictional (he mentions Luke's account of an appearance before Herod [Luke 23.8-12], and the saying "the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" [John 10.11]). But the authors of such fictional elements, Allison insists,

went about their creative work with a definite image of Jesus in mind, an image that they did not invent, an image they inherited from tradition. And what matters for my case is not the historicity of this or that item on my list but rather the list as a whole and the genesis of the traditional image, so widely attested.<sup>13</sup>

To some extent, such an approach blurs – though without obliterating – the distinction between "historical Jesus" and "early Jesus tradition", at least if the former is taken to imply something that is, at last, unvarnished, unedited, purely factual depiction, in contrast to the latter, in which layers of theologically motivated accretion have begun to be added. While we may indeed wish to make historical judgments about the veracity of aspects of any depiction of Jesus, all we have – and all we could ever have – are constructed and shared memories of his impact, which, insofar as they are preserved and passed on, constitute traditions. Even a description of Jesus recorded on the day he delivered a certain teaching, or performed a certain healing, even one recorded by Jesus himself, would inevitably be an interpretative and selective recollection shaped by theological (and other) convictions, as well as potentially by human error.

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summarise the criterion concisely: "Whatever helps to explain the influence of Jesus and at the same time can only have come into being in a Jewish context is historical in the sources" (116). A similar position is (independently) articulated by N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SPCK, 1996) 132: "Along with the much-discussed 'criterion of dissimilarity' must go a criterion of double similarity: when something can be seen to be credible (though perhaps deeply subversive) within first-century Judaism, *and* credible as the implied starting-point (though not the exact replica) of something in later Christianity, there is a strong possibility of our being in touch with the genuine history of Jesus."

<sup>13</sup> Allison, *Constructing Jesus*, 433.

This perspective also blurs the distinction between Jesus tradition and Christology, in the sense, at least, that early – and indeed historical – traditions about Jesus will unavoidably be infused with, and expressive of, convictions about his identity. These convictions establish parameters within which memories are selected, shaped and constructed. Impressions and recollections of the character, teachings, and actions of Jesus are inevitably shaped, *from the very start*, by emerging (and changing) perceptions of who he was.

## 2. Jesus remembered in 1 Peter?

What has all this got to do with 1 Peter, which, perhaps unsurprisingly, features remarkably little in studies of the historical Jesus? We may first note that studies of Jesus tradition in 1 Peter have tended to focus on the sayings, attempting to establish whether parallels of wording are sufficient to demonstrate knowledge and use of *verba Christi* on the part of the author of 1 Peter.<sup>14</sup> The value of such studies should not be underestimated. But, considering the direction of recent historical Jesus studies, outlined above, we might also ask the question: What kind of image of Jesus is presented in 1 Peter?<sup>15</sup> Do we find any kind of character

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<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., J. Pairman Brown, “Synoptic Parallels in the Epistles and Form-History”, *NTS* 10 (1963) 27-48; Ceslas Spicq, “La I<sup>a</sup> Petri et le témoignage évangélique de saint Pierre”, *ST* 20 (1966) 37-61; Merrill C. Tenney, “Some Possible Parallels between 1 Peter and John”, in R. N. Longenecker and M. C. Tenney (eds.), *New Dimensions in New Testament Study* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1974), 370-77; and esp. the debate between Robert Gundry and Ernest Best: Robert H. Gundry, “‘Verba Christi’ in 1 Peter: Their Implication Concerning the Authorship of 1 Peter and the Authenticity of the Gospel Tradition”, *NTS* 13 (1967) 336-50; Ernest Best, “1 Peter and the Gospel Tradition”, *NTS* 16 (1970) 95-113; Robert H. Gundry, “Further Verba on Verba Christi in First Peter”, *Bib* 55 (1974) 211-32. The findings are frequently related to debates about Petrine authorship; for example, Gundry sees the extensive echoes of *verba Christi* in 1 Peter as strong evidence of Peter’s authorship, while Best strongly rejects this conclusion. A somewhat broader investigation is presented by Gerhard Maier, “Jesu-tradition im 1. Petrusbrief?”, in David Wenham (ed.), *Gospel Perspectives, Vol 5: The Jesus Tradition Outside the Gospels* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 85-128. As well as investigating echoes of *verba Christi* in the paraenesis of 1 Peter (85-105), Maier also goes on to look at Jesus tradition in what he calls the “Kurzcatechismen” (1.18-21; 2.21-25; 3.18-22; see 105-19).

<sup>15</sup> My approach is also influenced by recent attempts to consider the *Petrusbild* constructed in the letter, an approach which, to some extent, cuts across established debates about the authorship of 1 Peter. See esp. Lutz Doering, “Apostle, Co-Elder, and Witness of Suffering: Author Construction and Peter Image in First Peter”, in Jörg Frey et al. (eds.), *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen* (WUNT 246; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 645-81. Of course, there is an obvious and major difference between assessing the authorial image (Petrine, or Pauline) constructed in pseudepigraphical letters and exploring the image of Jesus presented in such documents.

sketch, and if so, how is this presented and how does it correlate with the impressions we find in the Gospel traditions? In other words: To what extent is the portrait of Jesus in 1 Peter – which is, of course, to some extent constitutive of 1 Peter’s Christology<sup>16</sup> – informed by and reflective of early Jesus traditions?

To pose the question in this way immediately directs our attention to one passage in particular:<sup>17</sup> 1 Pet 2.21-25, though again we might note how little this passage features in the voluminous studies of the historical Jesus – a point that will hopefully become more significant as we proceed. Two observations about this passage have dominated its interpretation. One is its classification as an early Christian hymn, suggested by Hans Windisch and classically developed in a form-critical analysis by Rudolf Bultmann.<sup>18</sup> The second observation is the obvious and extensive use of Isaiah 53 in this passage.<sup>19</sup> Whether or not this passage uses traditional credal or hymnic material – a point on which recent commentators have shown some scepticism<sup>20</sup> – it is evidently an example of a detailed and sophisticated engagement with scripture. William Schutter, for

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<sup>16</sup> To ask about the “image of Jesus” clearly goes beyond strictly christological concerns, and asks about the characterisation of Jesus, depiction of his actions, events in his life, etc., though it includes much that is christological.

<sup>17</sup> Other passages, most notably 5.2-3, also exhibit points of contact, esp. with Mark 10.39-45 and par., as noted below.

<sup>18</sup> Hans Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe* (2nd edn., HNT 15; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1930 [1911]), 65, 70; Rudolf Bultmann, “Bekenntnis- und Liedfragmente im ersten Petrusbrief”, *Exegetica: Aufsätze zur Erforschung des Neuen Testaments* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1967 [1947]), 285-97 (orig. in *Coniectanea Neotestamentica* 11, in honorem Antonii Fridrichsen, Lund: Gleerup, 1-14). Bultmann’s work was taken up by M.-É. Boismard, *Quatre Hymnes Baptismales dans la Première Épître de Pierre* (LD 30; Paris: Cerf, 1961), 111-32; and Reinhard Deichgräber, *Gotteshymnus und Christushymnus in der frühen Christenheit. Untersuchungen zu Form, Sprache und Stil der frühchristlichen Hymnen* (SUNT 5; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), 140-43. More recently, see Sharon Clark Pearson, *The Christological and Rhetorical Properties of 1 Peter* (Studies in Bible and Early Christianity 45; Lewiston, NY, Queenston, Lampeter: Mellen, 2001), 115-51.

<sup>19</sup> For a brief overview, see Steve Moyise, “Isaiah in 1 Peter”, in Steve Moyise and Maarten J.J. Menken (eds.), *Isaiah in the New Testament* (London and New York: T & T Clark, 2005), 175-88 (182-84).

<sup>20</sup> E.g., J. Ramsay Michaels, *1 Peter* (WBC 49; Waco, TX: Word, 1988), 137; Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1996), 192-93; Reinhard Feldmeier, *The First Letter of Peter: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 167-68; John H. Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB37B; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 548-50, who suggests that the “extensive use of Isa 52-53 in 1 Pet 2:21-25 makes unnecessary the search for other sources underlying this passage, such as a pre-Petrine hymn or creed” (548) and explicitly retracts his “earlier acceptance of the hymnic theory” (549, with reasons listed on 549-50).

example, sees 2.21-25 as demonstrating a “peshar-like exegesis”, while Ramsey Michaels describes it as “a midrash on Isa 53.4-12”.<sup>21</sup> These two observations have therefore focused discussion of this passage primarily in terms of the author’s Christology and biblical exegesis,<sup>22</sup> though commentators have also noted the echoes of the Passion, offering various views on the extent and likely source of these echoes (see §5 below).<sup>23</sup>

It is not to be denied that the passage is indeed both richly christological and full of biblical material. These characteristics are also evident elsewhere in the letter, notably in 2.4-10, where there is an extensive and sophisticated exegetical engagement with scriptural texts.<sup>24</sup> Two other two key christological texts, 1.19-21 and 3.18-22, share with 2.21-25 a focus on Christ’s redemptive and sacrificial death (1.19; 3.18a), but otherwise focus on the more classically christological topics of preexistence and incarnation (προεγνωσμένου... φανερωθέντος, 1.20), death, resurrection, and exaltation (θανατωθείς... ζωοποιηθείς... πορευθείς, 3.18-19, 22; cf. 1.21). What distinguishes 2.21-25 from these other christological texts is its focus on the character and actions of Jesus during his earthly life, prior to and leading up to his death (resurrection does not explicitly feature in this passage). It is in 2.21-25 above all, then, that we find material relevant to an investigation of the impressions left by Jesus, indications as to the sort of character he was remembered to have been.

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<sup>21</sup> William L. Schutter, *Hermeneutic and Composition in 1 Peter* (WUNT 2.30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989), 143; see 138-44; Michaels, *1 Peter*, 137.

<sup>22</sup> As also in Paul J. Achtemeier, “Suffering Servant and Suffering Christ in 1 Peter”, in Abraham J. Malherbe and Wayne A. Meeks (eds.), *The Future of Christology: Essays in Honor of Leander E. Keck* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 176-88, who discusses, but rejects, the notions that this passage reflects either eyewitness testimony or depends on “the kind of traditions one finds in the passion account in the Gospels” (178). Nonetheless, Achtemeier sees the Passion as the “origin” for this passage; see below with nn. 73-74.

<sup>23</sup> So, for example, Reinhard Feldmeier describes the passage as “a remembrance of the Passion” (Feldmeier, *First Epistle of Peter*, 173).

<sup>24</sup> On which see esp. John H. Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy: An Exegetical Examination of 1 Peter 2:4-10 and the Phrase basileion hierateuma* (NovTSup 12; Leiden: Brill, 1966); also Ernest Best, “1 Peter II,4-10 – A Reconsideration”, *NovT* 11 (1969) 270-93; Richard J. Bauckham, “James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude”, in Don A. Carson and Hugh G.M. Williamson (eds.), *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), 303-17 (309-13); Klyne R. Snodgrass, “1 Peter II.1-10: Its Formation and Literary Affinities”, *NTS* 24 (1978) 97-106; Schutter, *1 Peter*, 130-38.

In the next section, then, I examine these verses, looking at the various facets of the *Jesusbild* they convey, and comparing them with those that are presented in the Gospel traditions. This should enable us to see how far the author may have known and depended on early Jesus traditions, and to reflect on the significance of what we find in this regard.

### 3. Scripture and Early Jesus Tradition in 1 Pet 2.21-25

This passage in 1 Peter forms a part – though in some sense a digression – within the household code material.<sup>25</sup> This set of instructions begins with the admonition to slaves in v. 18, and continues with teaching addressed to wives (3.1) and husbands (3.7). The extended depiction of Christ in vv. 21-25 presents a model for the behaviour of domestic slaves (*οἰκέται*), though one intended as a model for all the letter’s addressees.<sup>26</sup>

Verse 21 establishes the link between the conduct urged upon household slaves – commitment to doing good even when made to suffer – and the pattern of conduct exhibited by Christ, who serves as an example (cf. also 1 Pet 5.2-3). It also serves to introduce vv. 22-25. There is no direct quotation of Isaiah in this transitional and introductory verse, but use of Isaianic material is prominent in the following verses, where the character and conduct of Christ are described through an exegetical engagement with Isaiah 53.<sup>27</sup>

The influence of Isaiah 53 may possibly be evident in the headline phrase, Χριστὸς ἔπαθεν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, which probably reflects an established credal formulation: Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ (τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν) ὑμῶν/ἡμῶν (1 Cor 15.3; cf. John 11.50-51; 18.14; Rom 5.6, 8; 14.15; 1 Cor 8.11; 2 Cor 5.14-15; 1 Thess 5.10). The author’s choice of ἔπαθεν rather than ἀπέθανεν here reflects his general and

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<sup>25</sup> On which see esp. David L. Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive: The Domestic Code in 1 Peter* (SBLMS 26; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1981).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. John H. Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless: A Social-Scientific Criticism of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy* (2nd edn.; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1990 [1981]), 206; Elliott, *1 Peter*, 523.

<sup>27</sup> There may therefore be a somewhat similar pattern to that found in 2.4-10: vv. 4-5 serve to introduce the material in vv. 6-10, but “the OT passages of vv. 6-10 were not occasioned by the similar phraseology of vv. 4-5 and then added for substantiation; rather these OT verses provided the terminology and the thought for vv. 4-5”. Elliott, *Elect*, 48 (see 33-49); cf. also Bauckham, “James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude”, 310-11.

distinctive preference for the verb *πάσχω* (used twelve times in the letter),<sup>28</sup> favoured perhaps (at least in part, and particularly here) because it enables a closer link to be drawn between Christ's suffering and the suffering of Christians. Some have argued that Isaiah 53 stands behind this credal formula and its idea of vicarious death,<sup>29</sup> and Kelly Liebengood has recently suggested that verse 21 therefore "functions as the theme verse for the 'midrashic' activity (2.21-25)", with the Isaianic influence on the credal formula the initial impetus for the author's extended use of Isaiah 53 to describe the Passion of Jesus.<sup>30</sup> This is a complex issue for at least two reasons: one is the difficulty of determining whether Isaiah 53 is likely as a direct influence on the credal formula found in 1 Cor 15.3, given the lack of direct verbal connections;<sup>31</sup> the second is the uncertainty as to whether Isaiah 53 influences the Gospel traditions (whether historically authentic or not) in which Jesus interprets his death as a vicarious act (Mark 10.45; 14.24).<sup>32</sup> Direct influence of Isaiah 53 on the phrasing of v. 21 thus seems somewhat unlikely.

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<sup>28</sup> At 2.19, 20, 21, 23; 3.14, 17, 18; 4.1 (*bis*), 15, 19; 5.10.

<sup>29</sup> E.g., William R. Farmer, "Reflections on Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins", in William H. Bellinger and William R. Farmer (eds.), *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins* (Harrisburg, PA: TPI, 1998), 260-80 (263); Otfried Hofius, "The Fourth Servant Song in the New Testament Letters", in Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher (eds.), *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 163-88 (177-80).

<sup>30</sup> Kelly D. Liebengood, "Zechariah 9-14 as the Substructure of 1 Peter's Eschatological Program", (PhD thesis, University of St Andrews, 2010 [now forthcoming SNTSMS]), 84; see 83-87.

<sup>31</sup> In contrast to the firm confidence of Farmer and Hofius on this point (see n. 29) above, Morna Hooker sees only "one clear echo of Isaiah 53 in Paul, and that is in Romans 4:25". Morna D. Hooker, "Did the Use of Isaiah 53 to Interpret His Mission Begin with Jesus?", in Bellinger and Farmer (eds.), *Jesus and the Suffering Servant*, 88-103 (101).

<sup>32</sup> Contrast, e.g., the sceptical stance of Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament, Volume I* (London: SCM, 1952), 31 ("the synoptic predictions of the passion obviously do not have Is. 53 in mind"), Morna D. Hooker, *Jesus and the Servant* (London: SPCK, 1959), and Hooker, "Use of Isaiah 53", with the arguments in favour of such influence presented by Otto Betz, "Jesus and Isaiah 53", in Bellinger and Farmer (eds.), *Jesus and the Suffering Servant*, 70-87, and Peter Stuhlmacher, "Isaiah 53 in the Gospels and Acts", in Janowski and Stuhlmacher (eds.), *The Suffering Servant*, 147-62. Leonhard Goppelt, *A Commentary on I Peter* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 209-10, considers that "the oldest christological formula tradition on the meaning of atonement with regard to the death of Jesus, in, e.g., I Cor. 15:3 and Rom. 4:25, does not reach back, surprisingly, to Isaiah 53" (209). The *ὑπέρ* formula reflects the influence of Jesus' own words (Mark 14.24 par. and probably Mark 10.45 par.) which themselves reflect "an intuitive dependence on Isaiah 53" (209). Only later was "the formula... developed theologically with the aid of OT declarations" (210).

Indeed, the use of *πάσχω* in 1 Peter may point us more in the direction of the early Jesus traditions (whether or not these are in turn influenced by Isaiah 53), since the verb does not appear in Isaiah 53<sup>33</sup> but is used in the predictions of the Son of Man's suffering.<sup>34</sup> In Mark 8.31 and par. (Matt 16.21; Luke 9.22), the context of the prediction *δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν* makes it look most likely to be a post-Easter formulation, since it encompasses the essential credal elements, suffering, death, and (crucially) resurrection (as also in Mark 9.31, 10.33-34, and pars.).<sup>35</sup> The possibility of a pre-Easter prediction of suffering on the part of Jesus perhaps looks more plausible in the pericope about the return of Elijah, since there is no accompanying prediction of resurrection (Mark 9.12//Matt 17.12). This is also the case with the Lukan saying at Luke 17.25, appended to a Q saying about the dramatic future coming of the Son of Man (Matt 24.27//Luke 17.24). Yet whatever the case for a pre-Easter prediction of his suffering, which in some form at least remains a likely scenario,<sup>36</sup> it is clear enough that the early Jesus traditions soon incorporated the retrospective rationalisation of the necessity of the Son of Man's suffering and death, followed by his resurrection.

<sup>33</sup> In fact, *πάσχω* appears only infrequently in the LXX, and then mostly in (later) writings composed in Greek (2 Macc; 4 Macc; Wisd). Other uses are in Esth 9.26; Amos 6.6; Zech 11.5; Ezek 16.5; *Sir* 38.16; *Ep Jer* 1.33. See further W. Michaelis, *TDNT* 5.907-909.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Liebengood, "Zechariah 9-14", 85, who mentions Mark 8.31.

<sup>35</sup> On "the predictions of the passion" in Mark 8.31, 9.31, 10.33-34, etc., Bultmann comments, "can there be any doubt that they are all *vaticinia ex eventu*?" Bultmann, *Theology I*, 29.

<sup>36</sup> Many scholars, from diverse perspectives, defend the notion that Jesus most likely anticipated (in some form) his coming suffering, see, e.g., Wright, *Victory*, 553-611; Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 798-805; Maurice Casey, *Jesus of Nazareth: An Independent Historian's Account of his Life and Teaching* (London & New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 403-408; also H. Langhammer, "Jes 53 und 1 Petr 2,21-25: Zur Christologischen Interpretation der Leidenstheologie von Jes 53", *Bibel und Liturgie* 60 (1987), 90-98 (95). At the other extreme, some are entirely sceptical of such an anticipation on the part of Jesus, particularly those who tend to regard the majority of the Passion Narrative as fictional construction based on scripture, notably Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus?*; Burton L. Mack, *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988); cf. also Gerd Lüdemann, *Jesus After 2000 Years* (London: SCM, 2000), 691. Yet this is a complex question with various facets, and a wide range of texts that need consideration, as Ulrich Luz shows in a concise and valuable discussion: How far did Jesus anticipate suffering (given his deliberate decision to go to Jerusalem), regard this suffering as part of his vocation, and perhaps even understand his suffering and death as vicarious (here Mark 14.22-25 becomes especially significant)? At the very least, it seems highly likely "daß Jesus bei seiner Jerusalemreise die Lebensgefahr, in die er sich begab, klar gewesen sein muß" (Ulrich Luz, "Warum zog Jesus nach Jerusalem?", in Jens Schröter and Ralph Brucker [eds], *Der historische Jesus: Tendenzen und Perspektiven der gegenwärtigen Forschung* [BZNW 114; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002], 409-27 [419]).

Also significant is the fact that this first prediction of suffering in Mark 8 is immediately followed by Jesus' call to all who would be disciples to "take up their cross and follow" (ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθείτω μοι. Mark 8.34; par. Matt 16.24; Luke 9.23).<sup>37</sup> There are no precise verbal parallels to connect this particular passage to 1 Pet 2.21, though 1 Peter's use of ἐπακολουθέω is notable, echoing the distinctive use of ἀκολουθέω for discipleship in the Gospels. Indeed, outside the Gospels, only here and in Rev 14.4 do we find these verbs used to denote (post-Easter) discipleship of Christ.<sup>38</sup> More generally, it is worth noting how the verse in 1 Peter encapsulates concisely the connection set out in this tradition between Jesus' suffering and its significance as an exemplary pattern for discipleship. What this opening verse already suggests, then, is that, whatever the extent of any influence from Isaiah 53, there are several points of connection with the early Jesus traditions. Similar points of contact are also exhibited in 1 Pet 5.2-3 (cf. Mark 10.39-45 and par.); particularly notable is the use of κατακυριεύω in 5:3 and in Mark 10:42.

With v. 22 a series of clauses commences, each of which begins with ὅς, one of the features of this passage that has suggested a hymnic or credal source.<sup>39</sup> Here too the direct use of Isaiah 53 begins. Following the introductory pronoun, the remainder of the verse is an exact quotation from Isa 53.9 LXX, apart from the change from ἀνομίαν to ἀμαρτίαν. The content of this verse thus comes more or less entirely from Isaiah 53. The scriptural material, purposefully selected, makes essentially two points: that Jesus did not sin and, more specifically, that he did not use deceitful or treacherous speech. These points cohere with the author's parenetic agenda, both in his general concern that the readers finish with sin

<sup>37</sup> The phrase is identical in all three Synoptics, though Luke adds καθ' ἡμέραν.

<sup>38</sup> The use of ἀκολουθέω is concentrated in the Gospels, and ἐπακολουθέω is rare in the NT (4x). Cf. Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 205.

<sup>39</sup> The use of participles and relative pronouns in liturgical and credal materials was classically analysed by Eduard Norden, *Agnostos Theos. Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede* (4th edn; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1956 [1913]), 250-76, 380-87 (note the reference to the "Relativstil" in 1 Pet 2.21ff. on 385). Against this, it has been pointed out that the author of 1 Peter frequently uses relative pronouns as part of his own style – so, e.g., Thomas P. Osborne, "Guide Lines for Christian Suffering: A Source-Critical and Theological Study of 1 Peter 2,21-25", *Bib* 64 (1983) 381-408 (388); Michaels, *1 Peter*, 137; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 192; Elliott, *1 Peter*, 549. However, it is notable that only here and in 3.20 (also often identified as hymnic in character) does the nominative ὅς appear.

(4.1-3) and his particular focus on speech as one aspect of behaviour in which doing good rather than evil must be displayed (see esp. 2.1; 3.9-11, 15-17). Yet they may also reflect the influence of Jesus tradition generally and the Passion Narratives in particular.

The first of these points, that Jesus did not sin, is evidently an established facet of early christological confession as well as a general impression of the Gospel accounts (2 Cor 5.21; Heb 4.15; 7.27-28; 9.14; 1 John 3.5; cf. John 8.46).<sup>40</sup> It may possibly find some connection with the Gospel traditions in the conversation about eternal life with the rich man in Mark 10.17-22 and par. The questioner's description of Jesus as ἀγαθός (v. 17) is evidently taken as a designation appropriate only of God, which Jesus humbly deflects (v. 18; also Luke 18.18-19). Jesus' enigmatic reply could be read to imply his divinity, but also leaves itself open to the implication that Jesus is not himself "good". It is sufficiently awkward for Matthew to edit, such that the exchange is no longer directly concerned with the question of Jesus' goodness at all (Matt 19.16-17).<sup>41</sup> Whatever the significance of this pericope, the Passion Narratives in their various ways make clear the conviction that Jesus was innocent of any wrongdoing (Mark 14.55-56//Matt 26.59-60; Mark 15.14//Matt 27.23; Luke 23.4, 13-15, 41, 47; John 18.23; 19.4). Again, there are no direct verbal connections with 1 Peter, no basis for any specific tradition-historical connection. But we might find here in 1 Peter another indication of this widespread, if unsurprising, "remembered" conviction about Jesus: that he was a good man, an innocent man, who did not sin.

The second element is more specific and relates to Jesus' speech. While this may constitute a general characterisation of Jesus' entire ministry, entire life

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<sup>40</sup> Frank Matera, *New Testament Christology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 181, comments that "in each of its major christological passages 1 Peter suggests what later theology would call the 'sinlessness of Christ'".

<sup>41</sup> Matthew transposes the ἀγαθός in the address διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ to the subject of the question: τί ἀγαθὸν ποιήσω, and edits Jesus' reply so that it deals with the issue of what is good (περὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ), while retaining the monotheistic confession εἰς ἔστιν ὁ ἀγαθός. See the brief but helpful comments of W.D. Davies and Dale Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (vol 3; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 42. On the christological difficulties raised by the Markan text (which is followed in the *Textus Receptus* and Vulgate versions of Matthew), see Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8–20: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 511 n. 21; Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London & New York: Macmillan, 1959), 426-27.

even, as marked by integrity and decency of speech, the following verse (v. 23) makes clear that a specific focus on the Passion is more likely. Indeed, in v. 23 the echoes of Isaiah are much less apparent,<sup>42</sup> and the connections to the traditions about Jesus, specifically his Passion, more evident. Again the verse opens with the relative pronoun ὅς, followed here by three phrases, the first two of which follow a closely parallel structure and constitute a kind of “commentary on the last clause of v 22”.<sup>43</sup>

The two verbs in the first phrase, λειδορούμενος οὐκ ἀντελοιδόρει, clearly mirror one another: despite being slandered and insulted, Jesus refused to return such verbal abuse. While this characterisation may be an impression of Jesus’ conduct throughout his life (note the imperfect ἀντελοιδόρει)<sup>44</sup> the most likely and fitting context is the trial, when Jesus is recorded as having been falsely accused, mocked, and insulted, but as having maintained his silence (Mark 14.56-61; 15.3-5, 16-20, 29-32 and pars), a recollection also implicit in the use of Isaiah 53 in Acts 8.32-33.<sup>45</sup> Silence is not explicitly mentioned here in 1 Peter, perhaps simply because of the concise literary symmetry of the two verbs, and perhaps, as Michaels suggests, because the author does not want to present silence as a model, but rather wants to present the behavioural pattern of responding appropriately, with gentleness and blessing (cf. 3.9, 15-16; Luke 6.28; 1 Cor 4.12; *Diogn.* 5.15).<sup>46</sup> In any case, according to the Gospel accounts, Jesus did not

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<sup>42</sup> Though the influence of that chapter is probably still evident to some extent: Isa 53.7 refers twice to the Servant’s silence in the face of mistreatment (οὐκ ἀνοίγει τὸ στόμα [cf. στόμα in 1 Pet 2.22]); vv. 10-11 suggests that God’s will is to cleanse and remove from him his suffering (cf. παρεδίδου δὲ τῷ κρίνοντι δικαίως); and vv. 6 and 12 use παρεδίδωμι (παρεδόθη) to describe the servant’s ψυχὴ being handed over to death.

<sup>43</sup> Michaels, *1 Peter*, 145.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 201; Michaels, *1 Peter*, 145-46, who conveys this by translating “who would never insult in return... never threatened”. However, this may overinterpret the force of the tense, especially given the use of the imperfect for παρεδίδου, which is hardly likely to refer to consistently repeated action, but rather to the trial and its aftermath specifically.

<sup>45</sup> See further Eckhard J. Schnabel, “The Silence of Jesus: The Galilean Rabbi Who was More than a Prophet”, in Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans (eds), *Authenticating the Words of Jesus* (NTTS 28.1; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 203-57; Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave. A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, 2 vols. (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1994), 462-65, who is cautious about the historicity of the silence, but “wonders if a tradition of Jesus’ silence did not exist first, eventually to be compared to the Deutero-Isa and psalm passages” (464).

<sup>46</sup> Michaels, *1 Peter*, 146.

remain silent throughout his trial (Mark 14.62; 15.2 and par.) so this would be a less appropriate characterisation of his behaviour as a whole.<sup>47</sup> The phrase in 1 Peter, then, concisely and appropriately epitomises the character and conduct of Jesus, as it was remembered, through the course of his arrest and trial.

The second phrase, *πάσχων οὐκ ἠπειλεί*, broadens the scope to include physical suffering (*πάσχων*), to which Jesus' recorded response is that "he did not threaten" (*οὐκ ἠπειλεί*).<sup>48</sup> While this is, once again, an essentially verbal kind of (non)response,<sup>49</sup> we should not limit the implied scenario to one of verbal interchange. *ἀπειλέω* and its cognates can certainly convey the threat to act violently towards someone (as in Acts 9.1; cf. Acts 4.17, 21, 29; Eph 6.9). Some suggest the meaning here to be that Jesus did not respond to his tormentors by mentioning the judgment and punishment they would one day experience from God, unlike some Jewish and (later) Christian martyrs.<sup>50</sup> In view of 1 Peter's apparent "reluctance to fasten in detail on the fate of the ungodly", which would cohere with a similar restraint on the part of Jesus, this may be part of the picture.<sup>51</sup> However, it seems more likely that the point of the phrase is simply to stress Jesus' refusal to meet violence with violence.<sup>52</sup> The refusal to retaliate, whether verbally or physically, is the key point.

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<sup>47</sup> For a defence of the historicity of Mark 14.61-62, see James D.G. Dunn, "'Are You the Messiah?' Is the Crux of Mark 14.61-62 Resolvable?", in David G. Horrell and Christopher M. Tuckett (eds), *Christology, Controversy and Community: New Testament Essays in Honour of David R. Catchpole* (NovTSup 99; Leiden: Brill, 2000) 1-22; contrast Casey, *Jesus*, 440-41. Brown, *Death*, 465-80, offers a cautious analysis, concluding that Jesus did not openly admit his messiahship, but responded ambivalently to the question.

<sup>48</sup> On the imperfect tense used here, see n. 434 above.

<sup>49</sup> So Michaels, *1 Peter*, 146; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 200.

<sup>50</sup> See, e.g., Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 211 with n. 59; Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 111; Michaels, *1 Peter*, 146 ("Jesus renounced all such threats of final judgment"); 2 Macc 7.16-17, 19, 31, 34-36; *Mart. Pol.* 11.2; *Mart. Perp. & Felic.* 18.8; cf. also Polycarp *Phil* 2.1.

<sup>51</sup> Michaels, *1 Peter*, 182. Cf. 3.12, 16; 4.5, 18; also David G. Horrell, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude* (London: Epworth, 1998), 64-65. It is especially significant where the author chooses to end the quotation of Ps 33 LXX in 3.12.

<sup>52</sup> After all, the Gospels do contain plenty of instances, whether historically authentic or not, where Jesus does predict destruction and punishment for those who oppose him (Matt 12.34-37; 23.31-36; 24.45-51; 25.30, 46; 26.24; Mark 12.9-12; Luke 6.24-25; 16.22-23; 19.27, 43-44; 20.16-19; 22.22). This, plus the parallels to a stance of non-retaliation in Jewish sources (see n. 53 below), raise some questions about the strong contrast Goppelt draws between Jesus' stance and that of "the Jewish martyrs: They expected compensatory revenge for what befell them. But Jesus set in opposition to evil not recompense but unlimited forgiveness" (Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 212).

There are two obvious points of contact here with the early Jesus traditions. The first is with the (Q) teaching concerning non-retaliation (Matt 5.38-44; Luke 6.27-31), a teaching that finds a clear place in early Christian ethics, not least in the traditional paraenesis included in 1 Pet 3.9 (cf. Rom 12.17; 1 Thess 5.15).<sup>53</sup> The second is in the accounts of Jesus' arrest, where he rejects violence towards those who come out to seize him. It is interesting to note how the Markan account (Mark 14.46-48), which implies but does not recount any rejection of violence on Jesus' part,<sup>54</sup> is expanded in each of the three other Gospels in ways that make this renouncing of violence more explicit (Matt 26.51-55; Luke 22.48-53; John 18.3-11, 36).<sup>55</sup> Jesus was evidently remembered as someone who rejected violence and retaliation, and the development of the traditions reflects an impulse to make this more clear and explicit. As Justin Meggitt remarks:

the virtues that Jesus exhibited in the face of death, of both forbearance and submission to God, and his refusal to return violence with violence, seem to have been recurring motifs in the pictures of Jesus that emerge from these traditions and tell us something about the enduring impression his personality made on his followers.<sup>56</sup>

The same character profile is concisely but clearly conveyed here in 1 Peter.

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<sup>53</sup> See further Gordon M. Zerbe, *Non-Retaliation in Early Jewish and New Testament Texts: Ethical Themes in Social Contexts* (JSPSup 13; Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), 176-294; J. Piper, "Hope as the Motivation of Love: 1 Peter 3:9-12", *NTS* 26 (1980) 212-31 (218-23). The Jewish parallels to this stance should also be noted, e.g., Josephus, *Ant.* 2.5.1 (§60); CD 9.2-8; 1 QS 10.17-21; 11.1-2; *T. Benj.* 5.4; *2 En.* 50.3-4; *b. Šabb.* 88b; further Zerbe, *Non-Retaliation*, 34-173.

<sup>54</sup> Jesus makes no direct response to the cutting off of the high priest's servant's ear, but his words addressed to those who have come to arrest him, which immediately follow the recording of this incident, suggest that he does not need to be approached as someone who must be overpowered by force ("Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit?" [NRSV]).

<sup>55</sup> In Matthew and John, Jesus commands the disciple (identified as Simon Peter in John) to put away his sword (Matt 26.52; John 18.11) and then indicates (differently in each case) that he does not want to resist what is God's plan (Matt 26.54; John 18.11). In Matthew, Jesus declares that he *could* (but does not) ask the Father for legions of angels (presumably) to defend him, while in John, he has already caused all his pursuers to fall to the ground merely by uttering the divine *ἐγώ εἰμι* (John 18.5-6). Luke has Jesus utter the somewhat enigmatic *ἐἴτε ἕως τούτου* (probably with the sense, "no more of this" [ESV, NRSV, RSV]) and then heal the servant's ear (Luke 22.51).

<sup>56</sup> Justin J. Meggitt, "Psychology and the Historical Jesus", in Fraser Watts (ed.), *Jesus and Psychology* (London: DLT, 2007), 16-26 (24).

The final phrase of the verse, *παρεδίδου δὲ τῷ κρίνοντι δικάίως*, also offers some echoes of the Passion Narratives. The choice of the verb *παραδίδομι* may possibly have been influenced by Isa 53.6, 12. Yet the verb is also typically used in the depictions of Jesus being betrayed (e.g., Mark 14.10-11, 41-42, 44), in the declarations that God handed him over (Rom 4.25; 8.32), and in the almost formulaic references to Jesus' giving himself up (e.g., Gal 2.20; Eph 5.2). These various historical and theological perspectives are all reflected in the Passion Narratives: Jesus is handed over by his betrayer – most likely an historical reminiscence about the means by which the arrest came to take place. This is, however, depicted as something which is in the divine plan, what “must be” (cf. Matt 26.54; Mark 8.31; 14.36; John 18.11; Acts 1.16; 2.23), thus laying the theological foundation for the conviction that God handed him over. Jesus himself is also depicted as accepting this divine plan, and submitting himself to it, thus implying a sense in which he willingly handed himself over.<sup>57</sup>

In 1 Peter, the referent of *παρεδίδου* is unspecified, leading to a range of proposals (himself, his cause, the judgment itself, or his enemies). Most likely the referent is Jesus himself.<sup>58</sup> Some early interpreters, notably Clement of Alexandria (*Adumbr.*) reading *ἀδίκως* instead of *δικαίως*, took this in the sense that Jesus handed himself over to his earthly judge (Pilate is presumably meant).<sup>59</sup> But the judge is clearly God, who judges *δικαίως*, and to whom Jesus entrusted himself. The focus here is therefore not on Jesus' earthly betrayer but rather on Jesus' own disposition, which (like this passage as a whole) provides a model for suffering Christians (cf. 4.19). There is at least some parallel to this specific motif in the Gospel accounts, in the Lukan and Johannine words from the cross, where Jesus 'commits' (*παρατίθεμαι*) his spirit to the Father (Luke 23.46) or 'gives up' (*παρέδωκεν*) his spirit (John 19.30). But more broadly this depiction coheres with

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<sup>57</sup> On the multiple traditions, including, e.g., Mark 8.31-34; 9.31; 10.33-34; 10.45; 14.22-42; Luke 13.31-33; John 10.11-18; 19.10-11; Gal 1.3-4; 2.20, that record Jesus' assent to his death and acceptance of it as part of God's plan, see Allison, *Constructing Jesus*, 427-33.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. the remarks of Edward Gordon Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter* (2nd edn; London & Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1947 [1946]), 179-80.

<sup>59</sup> See Goppelt, *I Peter*, 212 n. 63.

the widely and variously attested conviction that Jesus willingly accepted his fate, perceiving it as part of the divine plan.

In v. 24 phrases from Isaiah 53 once again feature explicitly, at the opening and closing of the verse. The opening phrase, a combination of Isa 53.4 and 12, describes Jesus' vicarious accomplishment in 'bearing our/your sins'.<sup>60</sup> This is then elaborated in a distinctively Christian way, indicating specifically that it was in his body (σῶμα) on the cross (ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον) that this took place. ξύλον is not used frequently in this sense in the NT but it does appear in the formulaic ἐπὶ ξύλου, where it echoes Deut 21.22-23 and refers to the wood (of the cross) on which Christ was hung (Acts 5.30; 10.30; Gal 3.13; *Barn* 5.13; cf. also Acts 13.29).<sup>61</sup> The purpose of this vicarious act is elaborated in a phrase reminiscent of Pauline theology; since Christ has borne their sins, they can now die to sin and live for righteousness. But then the author returns to Isaiah 53, with the phrase οὗ τῶ μώλωπι ἰάθητε (taken from Isa 53.5). The word μώλωψ is particularly notable: it is used only here in the NT and is doubtless derived from Isa 53.5 (as also in *1 Clem.* 16.5; *Barn.* 5.2). It refers generally to a wound, welt, swelling, or bruise caused by blows (e.g., Gen 4.23; Ps 37.6; Isa 1.6) and is used specifically of the welt produced by a whip (*Sir.* 28.17).<sup>62</sup> It is especially appropriate in this context for two reasons: first, it was a kind of wound likely to be experienced by household slaves, for whom beatings were common (the parallel in *Sir.* 23.10 is especially notable, since it records the common knowledge that an οἰκέτης under constant scrutiny will not lack a μώλωψ [singular, as in Isa 53.5 and 1 Pet 2.24]).<sup>63</sup> Second, it recalls the specific punishments inflicted on

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<sup>60</sup> The majority of MSS and versions, including P<sup>81</sup>, 8, A, C, K, L, P, Ψ, 33, 1739, have ἡμῶν, while P<sup>72</sup>, B, 621, 1595, 1729 read ὑμῶν, a reading now supported by the Crosby-Schøyen ms 193 (in Sahidic Coptic), which adds a significant testimony to the early evidence favouring this reading. On the latter point, see Hans-Gebhard Bethge, "Der Text des ersten Petrusbriefes im Crosby-Schøyen-Codex (Ms. 193 Schøyen Collection)", *ZNW*84 (1993) 255-67 (262), and more generally on the difficulty of the text-critical decision here, Michaels, *1 Peter*, 134 n. i.

<sup>61</sup> All of the uses of ἐπὶ ξύλου (ἐπὶ ξύλου) in the LXX refer to execution by hanging someone from a tree (Gen 40.19; Deut 21.22-23; Josh 8.29; Esth 8.7). Gal 3.13 in particular shows this connection with Deut 21.23 and its language to have been made prior to 1 Peter (cf. also 11Q19 64.8-12).

<sup>62</sup> πληγὴ μάστιγος ποιεῖ μώλωπα. For further references, see BDAG, 663.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Selwyn, *First Epistle*, 181, who briefly notes both these points; Elliott, *1 Peter*, 536. Pace Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 214, and Michaels, *1 Peter*, 150, who comments that "[t]he language is only marginally more appropriate – if at all – for slaves than for any other group of believers". There is

Jesus, whose whipping is recorded in the Passion Narratives (Mark 15.15 and par.; John 19.1; cf. Matt 20.19//Luke 18.33). So, while the specific vocabulary is drawn from Isaiah 53, knowledge of the tradition that Jesus was whipped provides a reason to select this particular depiction of the Servant's sufferings.

In v. 25 it is the readers' conversion that is the focus of attention rather than the events of the Passion. The imagery of the people as straying sheep is once again clearly drawn from Isaiah 53 (v. 6), and the notion of God or leaders as shepherds is well established in the OT prophetic literature (cf. also 1 Pet 5.1-4). The specific link between wandering and returning may well have been suggested by Ezek 34 (esp. vv. 4 and 16; cf. also Jer 23.1-3). And, as Liebengood has recently argued, Zechariah's eschatological vision, with its depiction of the people wandering like sheep (10.2) and of their scattering due to the "striking" of Yhwh's shepherd (13.7), may also be a significant influence.<sup>64</sup> One thing that makes the points of contact with Zechariah particularly interesting is the evident influence of this prophetic text in the Passion Narratives.<sup>65</sup>

The well-established OT image of the people as lost sheep is found in various places in the Synoptic traditions. While it seems entirely likely that Jesus used sheep as a metaphor for people in parables and teachings, the instances where the specific designation of the people as lost sheep is placed on his lips – in Matthew's Gospel (10.6; 15.24) – look likely to be Matthean. The description of the people as "like sheep without a shepherd", found in Mark (6.34) and transposed to a different context in Matthew (9.36), is a narrator's comment not put into Jesus' mouth as such, though it remains significant as an early indication of the perceived relevance of this particular imagery. Already implicit in some of these cases is the notion that Jesus has come in the role of shepherd, an

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unlikely to be any direct influence of *Sir.* 23.10 here, as Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 202 n. 198, points out. But that does not make its indication that beatings and its resulting wounds were a common slaves' experience any less relevant to the interpretation of this passage.

<sup>64</sup> Liebengood, "Zechariah 9-14".

<sup>65</sup> On the echoes of Zech 9-14 in Mark's passion narrative, see Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (SNTW; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), 154-64; more generally, *idem*, "The Old Testament and the Death of Jesus: The Role of Scripture in the Gospel Passion Narratives", in John T. Carroll, Joel B. Green, *et al.*, *The Death of Jesus in Early Christianity* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 205-33.

identification that Leonhard Goppelt suggests is made explicit only in “relatively late strata of the NT”.<sup>66</sup> Yet Goppelt does not cite here what may be the most significant of such instances: the quotation by Jesus of Zech 13.7 immediately after the Last Supper, when he and the disciples have gone out to the Mount of Olives (Mark 14.27//Matt 26.31): “And Jesus said to them, ‘You will all fall away, for it is written, “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered”” (Mark 14.27; ESV). Here the identification of Jesus as the shepherd is clear, if not spelt out as such. While there is nothing implausible about the idea that Jesus himself reflected on scripture and its significance for the understanding of his mission, and perhaps predicted in advance that he would suffer (cf. above on v. 21), this particular citation is perhaps more likely to reflect the use of scripture in early Christian reflection on, and development of, the Passion Narrative traditions.<sup>67</sup> It provides a scriptural prophecy to justify and explain Jesus’ desertion by his disciples, as well as his death itself, seeing all this as part of the divine plan. The quotation is immediately followed by a prediction of the resurrection, identifying Galilee as the place where the risen one will go (Mark 14.28//Matt 26.32; cf. Mark 16.7//Matt 28.7). The text from Zechariah is significant not only in suggesting the identity of Jesus as the shepherd, but also, in an eschatological context, justifying the necessity of his death, linking his suffering to that of his people (sheep), and, like Isaiah 53, providing a broader scriptural vision in which restoration is accomplished through the affliction of God’s agent.<sup>68</sup> This biblical text, appropriated in the Passion traditions, may thus also be an influence here, directly or indirectly.

#### **4. Memories of Jesus and his Passion in 1 Pet 2.21-25**

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<sup>66</sup> Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 215, citing Heb 13.20, Rev 17.7, John 10.11-12.

<sup>67</sup> Maier, “Jesustradition im 1. Petrusbrief?”, 110, considers it likely that the earthly Jesus identified himself as “shepherd” and thus cautiously suggests “daß 1. Petr. 2,25 auf Jesus selbst zurückgeht”. This seems to me overconfidently expressed, though it is by no means impossible that the idea of Jesus as shepherd is an identification that goes back to his lifetime, whether it was made by Jesus himself or by his followers.

<sup>68</sup> For the argument that Zech 9–14 is important as a basis for 1 Peter’s eschatological programme, see Liebengood, “Zechariah 9-14”.

Following the detailed engagement, we must stand back from our passage and assess the extent of its depiction of Jesus' character and actions. While there are certain points at which these may reflect a general remembrance of his life and teaching as a whole – such as his “goodness”, his integrity in speech, and his rejection of violence – it is clear enough that it is the Passion in particular with which our passage finds particular connections.<sup>69</sup> To illustrate the extent of these connections, we may compare the findings from our passage in 1 Peter with those which Dale Allison derives from Paul. Allison's purpose is to show how much information concerning the circumstances of Jesus' death can be found in Paul's letters alone, information Allison then correlates with what is found in Mark and John. These are the items:<sup>70</sup>

- Jesus spoke in advance of his own death
- Jesus was handed over at night
- Jesus recited words over bread and cup, and interpreted his death as for others
- Jesus went to his death willingly
- Jewish individuals were implicated in Jesus' death
- Roman authorities were also involved in Jesus' death
- Jesus was crucified
- Jesus bled and was disfigured by torture
- Jesus was executed as an insurrectionist or royal claimant
- Jesus was buried

From our study of 1 Pet 2.21-25, the following items, relating to Jesus' character and conduct, the events leading to his death, and the perceived meaning of that death, have emerged. They are listed below in the order they occur in our passage:

- Jesus' death was for the benefit of others

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<sup>69</sup> As Maier, “Jesustradition im 1. Petrusbrief?”, 107, rightly comments, “1. Petr 2,21ff liefert... eine Reihe von Angaben, die in faszinierender Weise an die Passionserzählungen der Evangelien erinnern”.

<sup>70</sup> See the table in Allison, *Constructing Jesus*, 404. The detailed discussion of the Pauline evidence alone is found on 392-403.

- Jesus' suffering and death sets an example for disciples to follow.
- Jesus was without fault
- Jesus refused to respond in kind to verbal abuse
- Jesus refused to use violence
- Jesus was killed on a cross
- Jesus was whipped
- Jesus entrusted his fate to God, implying his acceptance of the outcome as God's will (cf. 4.19)
- Jesus was God's appointed shepherd

Some of these items relate primarily to the character of Jesus, others relate to the events of the Passion, still others reflect convictions about the identity of Jesus and the meaning of his death. Some are arguably historical, referring to actual events or actions, such as the whipping of Jesus, his refusal to use violence, and his death on a cross, while others are essentially interpretative in nature, not amenable to historical verification, such as the identity of Jesus as shepherd, and the view of his death as vicarious and salvific – though these too may be very old traditions, potentially from the time of the events with which they are associated. Needless to say, there is no necessary implication that Jesus himself saw his role or his death in this way. But what there does seem to be, encapsulated concisely in this short passage, is a character sketch and a concise Passion Narrative, both of which are expressed using a framework of phrases drawn from scripture. What is striking is how many elements of such a narrative are encapsulated in this short passage. The significance of this finding is less obvious than in the case of Paul, given the broad consensus about the early dating of the genuine Pauline letters relative to the Gospels.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, our final task is to assess the significance of the knowledge of early Jesus tradition reflected in 1 Pet 2.21-25.

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<sup>71</sup> Though arguments for a very early date for Mark, for example, continue to be presented, and would obviously have implications for the significance of the Pauline material as an early source for the historical Jesus. See, e.g., John A.T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1976), who argues for a “proto-Mark” written c. 45CE, with the final forms of the three Synoptics in the 50s or early 60s (116); James G. Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel: Insight*

## 5. Conclusions: Sources and Traditions – History Scripturalized?

The question, of course, is what all this reveals about the sources or traditions available to the author of 1 Peter and reflected in this passage. It is clear, as recent commentators have stressed, that the passage is fundamentally and obviously based on Isaiah 53; as such, its most evident source is scripture. This might lead us to conclude that exegetical engagement with scripture is sufficient to explain the author's depiction of Christ here, that is, that the depiction is essentially derived from a reading of Isaiah 53, a process akin to what John Dominic Crossan calls prophecy historicized. (For Crossan, this constitutes the claim that the development of the history-like Passion Narratives is fundamentally driven by reflection on scripture, and contains little genuine historical recollection about the trial, death, and burial of Jesus.)<sup>72</sup> However, there are strong reasons to doubt that this sufficiently explains the formulation of 1 Pet 2.21-25.

First, of course, we have to explain what drove the author to Isaiah 53 in particular, and to the selection of certain aspects of this passage. An historically informed sense of both the character of Jesus and the events of the Passion seems necessary to explain the particular choice of text. More specifically, some have suggested that the order of 1 Peter's citations from Isa 53.4-9, which does not follow the order of Isaiah 53, reflects rather "the order of the passion of Jesus, with vv. 22-23 reflecting the trial, and v. 24 the crucifixion".<sup>73</sup> Indeed, for Achtemeier, this point about order confirms that "[t]he passion is... the origin of

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*from the Law in Earliest Christianity* (JSNTSup 266; London & New York: T&T Clark, 2004), who argues for a date in the mid 30s to mid 40s.

<sup>72</sup> See John Dominic Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus? Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995) 1-13. Crossan expresses the first thesis of his book thus: "*the units, sequences, and frames of the passion narrative were derived not from history remembered but from prophecy historicized*" (4); he thus frames his book as a contrast to the approach of Brown, *Death*.

<sup>73</sup> Achtemeier, "Suffering Servant", 180; cf. Liebengood, "Zechariah 9-14", 85-86, though Goppelt and Jobes, whom Liebengood cites in support of this point, are actually making a somewhat different observation. Goppelt's point is that "[t]he three parts of the verse [23] reflect fundamental aspects of the Passion narrative *without* representing particular parts of the narrative" (Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 211, my emphasis; cf. Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter* [BECNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005], 194).

this passage [2.21-25], for the illumination of which the material from Isaiah 53 has been used".<sup>74</sup> It would seem precarious to build much on this, given that only a few phrases are picked out from Isaiah 53 and that their correspondence to specific events through the trial and execution of Jesus is limited, but such observations do support the notion that something other than engagement with Isaiah 53 drives the construction of this passage.

Second, there is the fact that a good deal of the substantive content of the passage, while undoubtedly structured around selected phrases from Isaiah 53, is not at all derived from this source. This applies most obviously to v. 23, in which echoes of Jesus' behaviour at his trial are particularly strong, but also to phrases elsewhere in the passage (notably in vv. 21 and 24). Goppelt suggests that:

The reference to the Passion [in 2.21-25] does not report the Passion but develops the kerygma of the Passion's significance. Even in v. 23 the author probably does not think about individual aspects of the Passion story but only about the general tenor of the Passion.<sup>75</sup>

But this surely underestimates the specificity of the elements included in 1 Peter's depiction and the various points of contact with the Passion Narratives.

What then is likely to have informed this scripturally expressed depiction of Jesus' suffering and death? What kind of relationship to the Gospel traditions and their sources is likely in this instance?

(1) There seems to me nothing that requires or even supports the suggestion that this passage directly reflects the experience of an eyewitness, as a number of (often somewhat older) commentaries suggest.<sup>76</sup> That possibility can scarcely be ruled out on the basis of this passage; but neither the aspects of Jesus' character and experiences, nor the language in which they are described

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<sup>74</sup> Achtemeier, "Suffering Servant", 180.

<sup>75</sup> Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 208, cf. also 211 (quoted in n. 73 above).

<sup>76</sup> E.g., Selwyn, *First Epistle*, 180; James Moffatt, *The General Epistles: James, Peter and Judas* (MNTC; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1928), 127; C.E.B. Cranfield, *The First Epistle of Peter* (London: SCM, 1950), 67; Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Epistles of Peter and of the Epistle of Jude* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987), 110; Maier, "Jesustradition im 1. Petrusbrief?", 108, who sees Peter as both author of 1 Peter (cf. 86) and as "Traditionsträger" of the narrative tradition that was recorded in the Gospels. More generally, Gundry, "Verba Christi", 347, considers that the "references to Jesus' suffering" in 1 Peter suggest that "the scene of the crucifixion had left an indelible impression on the author's mind".

(specifically in scriptural phrases and vocabulary), point particularly to eyewitness recollection. The passage lacks the kind of narrative detail or personal response that might suggest such a source, though even such characteristics would hardly prove the influence of an eyewitness report, since they can simply reflect efforts to achieve verisimilitude. The disciple and apostle Peter may indeed have been among the eyewitnesses whose testimony contributed to the formation of the Gospel tradition, and to Mark in particular,<sup>77</sup> but there seems no basis in this passage to conclude that Peter's own recollections were a direct influence on 1 Peter.

(2) There also seems to me little that would demonstrate any direct literary dependence on one or other of the Gospels;<sup>78</sup> as we have seen, precise verbal parallels are few. Once again, such knowledge is not ruled out by the content and characteristics of this passage – an overall assessment would require careful consideration of the parallels elsewhere in 1 Peter – but there are neither verbal connections nor specific references sufficient to imply such a literary relationship.

(3) It is more difficult to say whether the Jesus-tradition reflected in this passage represents an earlier, or a somewhat independent, stage of the tradition compared with that which eventually came to be fixed in the canonical Gospels, as Gerhard Maier argues,<sup>79</sup> given that the passage reflects only an outline

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<sup>77</sup> See further the discussions of Byrskog, *Story*, 269-99; Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 155-82.

<sup>78</sup> Connections between 1 Peter and Mark (perhaps based on the connection between Peter and Mark described by Papias) have been observed (see e.g., David L. Dungan, "The Purpose and Provenance of the Gospel of Mark according to the 'Two-Gospel' (Griesbach) Hypothesis", in Bruce Corley (ed.), *Colloquy on New Testament Studies: A Time for Reappraisal and Fresh Approaches* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983), 133-56; John H. Elliott, "Backward and Forward 'In His Steps': Following Jesus from Rome to Raymond and Beyond. The Tradition, Redaction, and Reception of 1 Peter 2:18-25", in Fernando F. Segovia (ed.), *Discipleship in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 184-209 (195-97); Thomas L. Brodie, *The Birthing of the New Testament: The Intertextual Development of the New Testament Writings* (New Testament Monographs 1; Sheffield: Phoenix, 2004), 189-95. Rainer Metzner, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums im 1. Petrusbrief* (WUNT 2.74; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), has argued for a direct literary connection with Matthew; for a critique, see John H. Elliott, "Review of Rainer Metzner, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangelium im 1. Petrusbrief*", *JBL* 116 (1997) 379-82.

<sup>79</sup> Maier, "Jesu-tradition im 1. Petrusbrief?", 119: "So würde noch einmal bestätigt, daß... die Jesustradition dieser Kurzkatechismen [the term Maier uses to designate 1.18-21; 2.21-25; 3.18-22] eine frühere Stufe der Tradition darstellt als das, was schließlich in den kanonischen Evangelien fixiert wurde."

knowledge of the key events of the Passion and of the character and behaviour of Jesus, clothed in the language of scripture. This passage does indeed present a kind of “Gospel *in nuce*”, as Maier suggests – or at least, a Passion Narrative *in nuce* – which could well have been based on knowledge of pre-Synoptic traditions concerning the suffering and death of Jesus, or on a knowledge of the Passion Narrative as variously depicted in the Gospels.<sup>80</sup> There are certain reasons to incline towards early tradition being adapted here: the distinctive use of ὄς (only in 2.22-24 and 3.22), which has often been taken to indicate credal or hymnic material;<sup>81</sup> the fact that the material ranges far beyond the specific point pertinent to the instruction to domestic slaves; and the likelihood that such material – not least given its scriptural formulation – might have a liturgical origin (see below). The use of early tradition in this passage would not of course require an early date for the letter as a whole.<sup>82</sup> But it would add to the value of this passage as a significant source for our constructions of the historical Jesus. 1 Peter may here preserve early traditions, perhaps independent of, even prior to, the Synoptic Passion Narratives, or at least in a form not directly derived from them. This compact account in 1 Peter thus adds something notable by way of “recurrent attestation” to our picture of key elements of Jesus’ character and the events of his trial and death.

(4) A particularly significant feature of this passage is the extensive and explicit use of Isaiah 53 to depict the Passion of Christ. As we have seen, the author’s depiction reflects knowledge of key points in the Passion Narrative and displays various points of contact with early Jesus traditions (e.g., in the linking of Jesus’ suffering and the path of discipleship). Yet what makes this passage so influential is the expression of this knowledge in a form derived so explicitly and extensively from Isaiah 53. Of course, there have long been scholarly arguments

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<sup>80</sup> Maier, “Jesustradition im 1. Petrusbrief?”, 119: “die heilsgeschichtlichen Kurzkatechismen [i.e., 1.18-21; 2.21-25; 3.18-22] Evangelien in nuce sind.”

<sup>81</sup> As noted above (see §2 with n. 20), this is a point on which many recent commentators have shown some scepticism, though they have been inclined to see the author of 1 Peter as one who adopts and adapts a wide range of early Christian traditions. On the significance of ὄς here, see n. 39 above.

<sup>82</sup> The findings of this study do not therefore, so far as I can see, imply or require any particular conclusion regarding the date (or authorship) of 1 Peter as a whole.

about how far back into the earliest traditions the connections with Isaiah 53 go. There seems little secure basis for the view that Jesus himself understood his role and mission in terms of the Servant of Isaiah 52–53.<sup>83</sup> Debate continues about how far Isaiah 53 influences early Christian understanding of the death of Christ (e.g., in Rom 4.25),<sup>84</sup> but what is indisputable is that the references to Isaiah 53 in the NT are infrequent, often brief or oblique, or undeveloped with regard to the passion and death of Jesus. Paul Achtemeier, for example, notes “the rarity with which it [sc. Isaiah 53] is applied to Christ in the New Testament” (citing Matt 8.17, Mark 10.45, Luke 22.37, Acts 8.32-33, Rom 4.25, and Heb 9.28).<sup>85</sup> As Achtemeier points out, even in Acts 8.32-33, the fullest such citation, where Isaiah 53 is clearly “understood to refer to Jesus, it receives no further explication. When Luke does come to describe the Passion, he ignores the Isaianic material”.<sup>86</sup> Similar points are made by Karen Jobes, who rightly comments that “it is only here [in 1 Peter 2] in the NT that Christ’s passion is discussed in terms of Isaiah’s prophecy of the Suffering Servant”.<sup>87</sup> According to Achtemeier, the hermeneutical move made in 1.10-12 – seeing the preexistent Christ present with the OT prophets, who bore witness in advance to the suffering of Jesus –

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<sup>83</sup> Influential criticism of this view was presented by Hooker, *Jesus and the Servant*. See, more recently, Hooker, “Use of Isaiah 53”; Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, who concludes that “a convincing case cannot be made that Jesus saw himself as the suffering Servant” (817). For the alternative view, see, e.g., Stuhlmacher, “Isaiah 53”, esp. 147-53.

<sup>84</sup> Contrast, e.g., the maximalist view of Hofius, “Servant Song”, with the more minimalist perspective of Hooker, “Use of Isaiah 53”, though she accepts Rom 4.25 as a “clear echo” of Isaiah 53 in Paul (101). Langkammer, “Jes 53”, sees the use of Isaiah 53 to reflect on the suffering of Jesus as a very early move (94-95).

<sup>85</sup> Achtemeier, “Suffering Servant”, 177. Similarly, Paul J. Achtemeier, “The Christology of 1 Peter: Some Reflections”, in Mark A. Powell and David R. Bauer (eds.), *Who Do You Say That I Am? Essays on Christology in Honor of Jack Dean Kingsbury* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 140-54 (147); Norman Hillyer, “The Servant of God”, *EQ* 41 (1969) 143-60 (159).

<sup>86</sup> Achtemeier, “Christology”, 147. Indeed, as Peter Doble has suggested, the Psalms may be a particular influence on Luke’s understanding of the “scriptural” basis for Jesus’ suffering. See Peter Doble, “Luke 24.26, 44—Song’s of God’s Servant: David and his Psalms in Luke-Acts”, *JSNT* 28 (2006) 267-83.

<sup>87</sup> Jobes, *1 Peter*, 192 (see 192-93). Jobes lists Matt 8.17, Luke 22.37, John 12.38, Acts 8.32-33, Rom 10.16 and 15.21 as the “six direct quotations of Isa 53 in the NT”, suggesting that “surprisingly only two of them are used in reference to Jesus”. However, notwithstanding the differences between these references and the depiction of Christ’s vicarious death in 1 Pet 2.21-25, it seems unconvincing to deny that Matt 8.17 and Luke 22.37 are used “in reference to Jesus”, and that they imply some perception of christological significance in Isaiah 53. Cf. David G. Horrell, *1 Peter* (NTG; London and New York: T & T Clark, 2008), 63-64.

“allowed our author to make the explicit connection between the passion of Christ and the description of the suffering servant in Isaiah 53 which to that point had eluded Christian proclamation, however obvious that connection may seem to us.”<sup>88</sup> This statement may somewhat underestimate the extent to which the christological significance of Isaiah 53 had been perceived prior to the writing of 1 Peter, especially if earlier tradition is presented in these verses, but what it rightly highlights is the uniqueness within the NT of 1 Peter’s explicit and detailed use of Isaiah 53 to depict the events of the passion and death of Christ.<sup>89</sup> Needless to say, the significance of that use of Isaiah 53 for the history of Christian theology – not to mention music, liturgy, art, and so on – can hardly be overemphasized.<sup>90</sup>

(5) If we ask where such a development – a “scripturalization” of the Passion Narrative – is likely to have taken place, then, as Mark Goodacre suggests, the most plausible answer would seem to be in a liturgical context, where recitation of the essential elements of the Passion story, and reading and reflection on the scriptures, took place.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, one might turn the question around and ask: Where else do we imagine the story of the Passion being recited

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<sup>88</sup> Achtemeier, “Suffering Servant”, 187. Similarly, Hooker, “Use of Isaiah 53”, 92: “Here... we at last find an example of Isaiah 53 being used in the way in which, as Christians, we *expect* it to be used. Is this perhaps *the* significant moment in the exegesis of the passage, when it was first interpreted of the *meaning* of Christ’s death?”

<sup>89</sup> Schutter, *1 Peter*, 143, concludes that “the author of I Peter depended importantly on an early Christian peshier-like exegesis of Is. 53 for his interpretation”, but stresses that the author also “seems to have advanced beyond the... uses of Is. 53 with which he might have been familiar... That the author may be presumed to be largely responsible for this development is clear from the fact that I Pet. 2.21–5 represents the most elaborate reorganization or rewriting of Is. 53, as it were, that survives from the early Church.” The issue of how much of 2.21–25 is traditional, and how much the author’s creation, is difficult to resolve. For subsequent uses of Isa 53, see, e.g., *1 Clem* 16.1–14; Melito, *Peri Pascha* 4, 71.

<sup>90</sup> See further John F.A. Sawyer, *The Fifth Gospel: Isaiah in the History of Christianity* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996).

<sup>91</sup> See Mark Goodacre, “Scripturalization in Mark’s Crucifixion Narrative”, in Geert van Oyen and Tom Shepherd (eds.), *The Trial and Death of Jesus: Essays on the Passion Narrative in Mark* (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 33–47, 42–45; cf. Mark Goodacre, “Prophecy Historicized or Tradition Scripturalized? Reflections on the Origin of the Crucifixion Narrative”, *Paper presented at the SBL Annual Meeting, Denver CO* (2001), 21–22. I am grateful to Mark Goodacre for providing me with a copy of this conference paper, some of which is (somewhat differently) presented in Goodacre, “Scripturalization”, 39–45. Cf. also David G. Horrell, “The Themes of 1 Peter: Insights from the Earliest Manuscripts (the Crosby-Schøyen Codex ms 193 and the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex containing P<sup>72</sup>)”, *NTS* 55 (2009), 502–22 (520–21).

and passed on, and formulated in concise and scripturalised form, if not in the early Christian meetings? Noting the evidence of 1 Corinthians 11, Goodacre notes that “we have liturgy as the context in which the retelling of the story appears”.<sup>92</sup> Drawing (cautiously) on the liturgical theories of Michael Goulder and Étienne Trocmé concerning “the annual celebration of the events of the Passion at the Jewish Passover, remembered as roughly the time of Jesus’ death”, Goodacre suggests that here “memory, tradition and scriptural reflection might well have combined from the earliest times”.<sup>93</sup> It may not be coincidental that 1 Peter was evidently soon regarded as a text especially appropriate to the context of the Easter Paschal celebrations, with their focus on the suffering of Christ and of his faithful people.<sup>94</sup>

Overall, what we find in 1 Pet 2.21-25, to use Goodacre’s felicitous phrase, is history and tradition “scripturalized”, that is, presented and expressed in the language of scripture.<sup>95</sup> More than has commonly been appreciated, the passage reflects knowledge of the Passion story, a remembered image of the character and conduct of Jesus, and exhibits a number of points of connection with the early Jesus traditions recorded in the Gospels. Such a depiction does not imply an eyewitness account nor detailed or literary knowledge of the Synoptic Passion Narratives. It does reflect significant (possibly early, even to some degree independent) awareness of key traditions concerning the character and conduct of Jesus during the events of the Passion. But it expresses this image and history of Jesus in the language of Isaiah 53, and as such not only formulates a passion narrative *in nuce* but also brings to the centre of Christian theology a particular scriptural text, which henceforth is definitively associated with the suffering of Christ.

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<sup>92</sup> Goodacre, “Scripturalization”, 42.

<sup>93</sup> Quotations respectively from Goodacre, “Scripturalization”, 45, and Goodacre, “Prophecy”, 22.

<sup>94</sup> See further Horrell, “Themes of 1 Peter”.

<sup>95</sup> See Goodacre, “Prophecy”; Goodacre, “Scripturalization”, 39-45. I have not made much attempt to distinguish history and tradition in this paper, partly for reasons of space and partly due to the difficulty of doing so – cf. the comments with which the paper began. Nonetheless, making such distinctions remains crucial in any quest for the historical Jesus, a quest the importance of which, despite all the difficulties that attend it, I would want to affirm.

In short, in 1 Pet 2.21-25, we encounter something of the historical Jesus, as remembered in early Jesus traditions, depicted in the language of scripture, and in a way that constitutes a central statement of the Christology of 1 Peter which in turn underpins the ethics of the letter. These various facets of the passage are blurred together. Jesus is here both remembered and at the same time scripturalised, in a way that would in turn make the story of his Passion yet more memorable.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> I am very grateful to David Catchpole, Lutz Doering, and Kelly Liebengood for their comments on a draft of this essay. I would also like to thank John Elliott for his probing and insightful response at the SBL conference where the paper was discussed. Needless to say, none of these people should be held responsible for any weaknesses or errors that remain.

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