

Robert L. Cavin

New Existence and Righteous Living

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Robert L. Cavin

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Colossians and 1 Peter in Conversation with
4QInstruction and the Hodayot

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible Commentary
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992
ABR	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
AnBib	Analecta biblica
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
ASNU	Acta Seminarii neotestamentici Upsaliensis
ATDan	Acta theologica Danica
BAGD	Bauer, W., W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the NT and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 2d ed. Chicago, 1979.
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BL	<i>Bibel und Liturgie</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CBR	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
CGTC	Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CUP	Cambridge University Press
DJD	<i>Discoveries in the Judean desert</i>
DSD	Dead Sea Discoveries
DSSSE	The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition. 2 vols. Grand Rapids, 1997
ÉBib	Études bibliques
EvQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
EDNT	Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament
EDT	Evangelical Dictionary of Theology
EJL	Early Jewish Literature
ExpT	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
Hermeneia	Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTS	Harvard theological Studies
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
JAAR	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism: Supplement Series
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JDT	<i>Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie</i>

JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism: Supplements Series
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
NCB	New Century Bible
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NTG	New Testament Guides
NTL	New Testament Library
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
NovT	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
OUP	Oxford University Press
PNTC	The Pillar New Testament Commentary
RBL	<i>Review of Biblical Literature</i>
RevExp	Review & Expositor
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation series
SBLBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
SBLSP	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers</i>
SDSSRL	Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SJT	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Sacra pagina
ST	<i>Studia theologica</i>
STDJ	Studies of the Texts in the Judean Desert
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
TB	Theologische Bücherei
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
THNT	The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>

Ancient texts are abbreviated in accordance with the *SBL Handbook of Style*

Chapter 1:

Introduction

1.1 Similarities

Colossians and 1 Peter have much in common. Firstly, both letters claim to be written by an ἀπόστολος of Christ (Col 1:1; 1 Pet 1:1), representing foundational documents of nascent Christianity. Secondly, the epistles share strikingly similar paraenesis. Going beyond their common *Haustafel*, a significant proportion of their content is devoted to paraenetic exhortation. In addition to related linguistic terms, the epistles' theological argumentation, in many ways, arrives at the same place regarding the desired behaviors and virtues of the recipients. Thirdly, robust christologies undergird the paraenesis and shape their respective understandings of believers' new existence. Fourthly, each epistle's "in Christ" theology is fundamental to the way they formulate their paraenesis and exhortations to holiness arising from that new existence. These similarities are fascinating in that both authors articulate the Christ-event and its impact (completed, ongoing, and future) upon those who profess πίστις that God has done something extraordinary, in and outside of history, in and through Christ, for and to them. Yet, despite similarities, distinguishing features exist. Such features can be observed in how each author works out the relationship between Christology and paraenesis. Especially important for this study is the understanding both authors reflect regarding the new existence and the means for righteous living.

The importance of Christology and paraenesis in Colossians and 1 Peter has been recognized for some time. However, much less attention has been given to how each author understands the new existence and its connection to the means for righteous living. Without question, the epistles are occasional documents, and the paraenesis resides within theological arguments addressing particular circumstances, related to the letter's occasion and theology.¹ The occasional nature of the epistles, rightly, is well studied. But, the degree to which theological constructs, apart from the recipients' needs, bear on the author's understanding of the new existence is less well understood.

¹ That context impacts theology and paraenesis, see Arnold, *Syncretism*, 7; Barclay, *Obedying*, 8; Bevere, *Sharing*, 11; Longenecker, "Suprahuman," 92.

1.2 Basis for the Comparison

The commonalities between Colossians and 1 Peter invite comparison. For example: prayers referring to the “hope” (ἐλπίς, Col 1:5, 23, 27; 1 Pet 1:3, 13, 21; 3:5, 15) of believers open both letters. This hope is an object in heaven described metaphorically as an “inheritance” (κληρονομία, Col 3:24; 1 Pet 1:4), “the glory already bestowed on Christ . . . that will be shared with his people.”² In each letter, believers are described as “elect” (ἐκλεκτός, Col 3:12; 1 Pet 1:1; 2:4, 6, 9), a reminder that they have been set apart by God whom they are to reverently “fear” (φοβέω, Col 3:22; 1 Pet 2:17).

As the elect people of God, they are now “holy” (ἅγιος, Col 3:12; 1 Pet 1:15, 16; 2:5, 9), both a status and the basis for exhortations to “put off” (ἀποτίθημι, Col 3:8–9; 1 Pet 2:1) certain behaviors. Using different verbs for “to clothe”, the letters exhort new attitudes and behaviors to “wear” (ἐνδύω, Col 3:12; ἐγκομβόομαι, 1 Pet 5:5). The putting off and on requires believers’ agency, namely “set your minds” (τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε, Col 3:2) and “prepare your minds” (ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὀσφύας τῆς διανοίας ὑμῶν, 1 Pet 1:13). Both letters exhort abandoning vices such as “evil desires” (ἐπιθυμία, Col 3:5; 1 Pet 1:14; 2:11; 4:2, 3) and “malice” (κακία, Col 3:8; 1 Pet 2:1, 16). Correspondingly, godly desires and traits are exhorted to be worn, i. e. “humility” (ταπεινοφροσύνη, Col 3:12; 1 Pet 5:5), “gentleness” (πραΰτης, Col 3:12; 1 Pet 3:16), “patience” (μακροθυμία, Col 1:1; 3:12; 1 Pet 3:20), “peace” (εἰρήνη, Col 3:15; 1 Pet 3:11), and “love” (ἀγάπη, Col 3:14; 1 Pet 4:8). Each author reminds his recipients that everything they do is to be for the Lord (Col 3:17, 23; 4:16; 1 Pet 2:22; 3:11, 12). In addition, the letters also contain a common *Haustafel* (Col 3:18–4:1, and 1 Pet 2:13–3:7).

The defeat of malevolent spiritual beings and forces figures prominently in Colossians, but it is also a theme in 1 Peter. Christ’s disarming of “the rulers and the authorities” (τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας, Col 2:10, 15) is quite similar to the “angels and authorities and powers” having been subjected to him (ἀγγέλων καὶ ἐξουσιῶν καὶ δυνάμεων, 1 Pet 3:22). Lastly, the recipients of each letter were believers living in Greco-Roman societies that valued syncretism³ and the *oikos*-model within the family.⁴

Neither Colossians nor 1 Peter refers to Israel or *nomos*. Every other Pauline epistle, on the other hand, refers in some manner to the nation of Israel, the Law, and/or Jew/Gentile discord which has resulted from the gospel. Ephesians, for

² Marshall, *Theology*, 367, 645.

³ Arnold, *Syncretism*, 137, 138.

⁴ Balch, “Household,” 27.

example, describes in considerable detail the changed socio-religious relationship between Jews and Gentiles as a result of the Christ-event.⁵ Colossians' and 1 Peter's silence on these matters sets them apart from Ephesians.⁶ This silence is especially noteworthy in 1 Peter considering its thoroughly Jewish language, hermeneutic, and use of the OT. This is not without precedent. In examining the genre of wisdom in the OT, "surprisingly, the nation of Israel is never mentioned in this literature."⁷ Similarly, then, Colossians and 1 Peter remain silent on Israel as they shape their respective theologies, lending weight to their selection as dialogue partners.

Does the common language point to literary dependence and/or common sources? Or did each independently develop their theology? Is 1 Peter drawing from a Pauline pool, a common tradition, or does it reflect a Petrine contribution?⁸ Or, is it possible that Colossians drew from 1 Peter? For Colossians priority, Horrell points to the fact that the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ (Col 1:2; 1:4; 1:28; 2:20; 3:1; 3:3; 1 Pet 3:16; 5:10; 5:14) occurs outside the Pauline or deutero-Pauline corpus only in 1 Peter, concluding that 1 Peter was influenced by a Pauline tradition. Others, like Herzer, argue that similarities reflect a common tradition.⁹ Selwyn, based on the wealth of parallels between the OT, Gospels, Acts, and NT epistles, concludes that 1 Peter drew from common oral and written traditions.¹⁰ Beare, in response to Selwyn, concluded instead that 1 Peter drew upon "a number of N.T. writings" as well as "several, if not all, of the epistles of the Pauline corpus."¹¹ In disagreement, Richard regards the writer of 1 Peter as "strikingly original and comparably creative in comparison to Paul."¹² Similarly, 1 Peter's unique purpose in 2:18–25 and its difference from that of Col 3:18–22 leads Jobes to question "any relevant evidence of literary dependence between Peter and Paul."¹³ Goppelt argues that 1 Peter reflects the early church of Palestine and is colored by

⁵ Cf. Eph 2:11–22. See Yee, *Jews*.

⁶ *Contra* Mitton, "Relationship" who argues that 1 Peter drew from Ephesians which drew from Colossians. However, 1 Peter's silence regarding Israel and the covenant marks it out from Ephesians.

⁷ See Dell, "Wisdom," 413. Also, Perdue, *Creation*. Recently, Perdue, *History*.

⁸ Horrell, "Reassessment," 60.

⁹ Noted by Horrell, "Reassessment," 34.

¹⁰ See Selwyn, *First Peter*, 365–466, who building on the work of Carrington, *Primitive* and referring to Hunter, *Predecessors* and Seeberg, *Katechismus*, divides parallels into four types: 1) influence of Silvanus, 2) baptismal catechism, 3) paranaetic/catechetical teaching, and 4) persecution forms.

¹¹ Beare, *First Peter*, 219.

¹² Richard, *Reading*, 4.

¹³ Jobes, *1 Peter*, 187.

similar traditions which shaped the Synoptic Jesus tradition.¹⁴ Insightfully, Goppelt notices “points of view from Jewish wisdom and apocalypticism” mixed together as 1 Peter draws on “a tradition going back directly to Palestinian origins,” independently shaped by the author.¹⁵ Elliott, noting that differences between 1 Peter and the Pauline writings are “numerous and striking,” concludes that none of the affinities between the epistles “can be shown to be the result of *direct literary borrowing*” but instead reflect “features typical of the early Christian proclamation and teaching in general.”¹⁶ E. Best argues that the presence in two epistles of “phrases and ideas which were common in early Christianity,” but which are used randomly and in differing ways suggests that the author supposedly borrowing did not have a copy of the other “in front of him as he wrote but had its words in his mind.”¹⁷ In light of the foregoing discussion, I raise the question of whether it is possible to reach a conclusion about literary dependence. Instead, might it be more prudent to ask at what level can this commonality be explained? One value of this study is that it does not depend on how Colossians and 1 Peter are related. It is not necessary to establish the precise relationship between the epistles (including date and authorship) because this study focuses, not on their shared material, which is extensive, but on their distinctive aspects with respect to one another.¹⁸ Like concentric circles, the epistles overlap

14 Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 30–34.

15 Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 36.

16 Elliott, *1 Peter*, 37–40.

17 Writing about Colossians/Ephesians, Best, “Relationship,” 76 makes a point applicable here.

18 Today scholarly opinions remain mixed regarding Pauline authorship of Colossians. This represents a shift as Moo, *Colossians*, 29 notes that “no early Christian doubted Paul’s authorship, and the letter to the Colossians was received into the developing Christian canon of Scripture with no apparent controversy.” Rightly, O’Brien, *Colossians*, xli, explains that this shift began with the study in 1838 by E. T. Mayerhoff who “claimed to have found in Colossians un-Pauline thoughts, evidences of disputation with the second century Cerinthus and dependence on Ephesians”; moreover, F. C. Baur and the Tübingen school claimed “evidence that the heresy combated in the epistle was second-century Gnosticism” disproving Pauline authorship. As I discuss in chapter 5, scholarship has rightly rejected a second-century Gnostic background for the “opponents” thereby removing the main support for a second-century *Sitz im Leben*. The salient factors to consider are: language and style; theology; and, the relationship of Colossians to Ephesians and Philemon. Analysis of these factors is beyond the scope of this work; however, see Smith, *Heavenly*, 6–16 for a thorough and cogent analysis along these lines.

Similarly, scholarly opinions remain mixed regarding Peterine authorship of 1 Peter. Bockmuehl, *Memory*, 30 notes that “the authorship of 1 Peter was never questioned in antiquity, and its attestation in patristic literature is widespread and early.” See also, Bockmuehl, *Remembered*. Rightly, Dubis, *Messianic*, 37 n. 1 traces the trend in recent scholarship towards pseudonymous authorship of 1 Peter as resting upon the following arguments: “(a) the refined

in many ways, for example, in the items discussed above, in their shared “story” of the Christ-event, and in their emphasis upon the necessity of πίστις in Christ for the removal of sins.¹⁹ However, it is their non-overlapping, distinctive ideas with respect to each other that merit investigation. Therefore, while readily acknowledging that Colossians and 1 Peter evidently share much in common (however this is to be explained), this sheds little light as to why such distinctive aspects exist. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore some of these distinctive ideas, seeking points of contact and precursors in EJJL.

Both letters contain some of the most theologically significant Christology in the NT. Colossians contributes understandings of Christ in ways found nowhere else.²⁰ Its presentation of his deity (1:19; 2:9), preexistence (1:15–17), agency in creation (1:16–17), headship over the church (1:18, 24; 2:19), and supremacy (1:18; 2:10) contribute to, arguably, the most highly developed Christology in the New Testament.²¹ This is especially evident in regards to its “realized” eschatology (2:12–13; 3:1). Every aspect of theology in Colossians is shaped by its Christology.²² 1 Peter too is christologically rich. Achtemeier regards 1 Peter as “one of the most thoroughly christocentric writings in the New Testament.”²³ The Christology of the NT would suffer immensely without these epistles.

style of Peter’s Greek and the LXX references which contrast with Peter’s Jewish upbringing (b) the presence of “Paulinisms” which, it is assumed, the apostle Peter would not include (c) the persecutions in 1 Peter reflecting a later date (d) the lack of personal reminiscences of Jesus’ earthly ministry (e) addressees living in a Pauline area, Asia Minor.” See Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 1–42, for a rich evaluation along these lines who concludes that “evidence to solve definitively the question of the authorship of 1 Peter remains unavailable.” Since Achtemeier’s and Dubis’ work, Jobes, *1 Peter*, 325–38 has demonstrated that the Greek in 1 Peter reflects “bi-lingual interference” in line with that of a second language speaker. Bockmuehl, *Memory*, 129 concludes that “while the usual arguments from language, style, and erudition clearly do make it seem unlikely that Peter himself put pen to paper, 1 Peter does not actually claim that he did, leaving plenty of scope for a mediated or ‘authorized’ authorship in whatever form.”

19 Other shared commonalities inviting comparison of these two texts include but are not limited to: (a) geographic vicinity, i.e. recipients reside in Asia Minor, (b) historical nearness, i.e. regardless of one’s view of authorship both epistles originate from the second half of the first century, (c) “diaspora” letters, i.e. significant proportion of Jews in audience, and (d) authors claim to be “apostles.”

20 Carson and Moo, *Introduction*, 529.

21 That the Christology in 1:15–20; 2:9–10,15 is further developed than the Synoptics, Gospel of John, and undisputed Pauline letters, see Dunn, *Colossians*, 36.

22 Barclay, *Colossians*, 79–80.

23 Achtemeier, “Suffering,” 176.

The letters connect Christology and paraenesis in unique ways. Barclay rightly argues for the christological theology of Colossians and the radical Christianization of behavior by which a new rationale reorients ordinary life, i.e. everything is to be done for the one Master, Christ, because believers are “in the Lord” (ἐν κυρίῳ) and thus serving Christ.²⁴ Believers’ “status as ἐν κυρίῳ gives them a new identity” and directs their moral behavior.²⁵ This new existence transforms their worldview; meaning and purpose now come from serving the Lord of creation who has redeemed them.²⁶ Colossians’ “realized eschatology” (Col. 1:13; 2:12; 3:1), then, serves as the basis for the ethical imperatives.²⁷ Christ’s cosmic victory and power extends to believers through their present union with him in his kingdom.²⁸

1 Peter, however, undergirds its paraenesis by elevating the pattern of Christ’s earthly life. Through construction of a salvation-historical metanarrative that serves as a motivational basis for ethical behavior,²⁹ 1 Peter uniquely emphasizes Christ’s righteousness in suffering persecution. This uniqueness is evident in 2:21–25 where Jesus is explicitly identified with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. Recent works by Richard and Tuñi, for example, have highlighted 1 Peter’s imitation theology which portrays Jesus’ suffering as an exemplary pattern.³⁰ Unlike Colossians, 1 Peter elevates Christ’s righteous suffering as God’s paradigm for believers because emulation of Christ’s *response* to suffering serves as an instrument of moral transformation (1 Pet 2:21).³¹ Oversimplifying for brevity, Colossians focuses on the supremacy of Christ and the believer’s resurrection with Christ, while 1 Peter presents Jesus’ earthly, righteous suffering and the call to imitate him.

Christology is so central to both epistles that the Spirit’s role recedes into the background. Colossians has only one direct reference to the Spirit (1:8). While the Spirit is the generative agent of love between believers and the one who unites believers together,³² the Spirit is eclipsed by the epistle’s christological emphasis. While the Spirit plays a more prominent role in 1 Peter (cf. 1 Pet 1:2,11,12; 3:18; 4:6; 14), including a description of the Spirit as consecrating (1 Pet 1:2) and resting on

²⁴ Rightly, Barclay, “Ordinary,” 47.

²⁵ Barclay, “Ordinary,” 45.

²⁶ Barclay, “Ordinary,” 47.

²⁷ O’Brien, “Letter,” 151.

²⁸ Arnold, *Syncretism*, 246.

²⁹ Rightly, Dryden, *Paraenetic*.

³⁰ See Richard, “Functional,” 121–39 and Tuñi, “Jesus”.

³¹ Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 199.

³² See Dunn, *Colossians*, 65–66; Cf. O’Brien, *Colossians*, 16; Barth and Blanke, *Colossians*, 166; Bruce, *Colossians*, 44; Fee, *Empowering*, 639.

believers (1 Pet 4:15), Marshall notes that 1 Peter has “no particular emphasis on the Holy Spirit.”³³

Through their rich and powerful christological argumentation, the epistles share many features, but each also contains highly significant, and unique, emphases regarding the new existence. Herein lies the impetus for the present study: Firstly, what are the distinguishing features in their respective views on the new existence? Secondly, how, within their distinctive “in Christ” theologies, does the author expect believers to carry out the paraenesis? And thirdly, are the differences *solely* related to the occasional nature of the epistles or might theological traditions, apart from contingent circumstances of the recipients, also be at play?

1.3 The Need for this Study

In Chapter 2, I will demonstrate that much work remains in grasping each epistle’s understanding of the new existence and the means to righteous living. No study has systematically analyzed this aspect of these epistles, traced their respective patterns of thought within Second Temple Judaism, and then compared them with each other.

The theology and Christology of each epistle is most often viewed as a response to the exigent circumstances and needs of the recipients. Therefore, the conventional starting point for analysis of Colossians centers on the “opponents” and the author’s response to their teaching. The starting point for analysis of 1 Peter centers on the circumstances of the suffering recipients and the ways in which the author attempts to console/encourage them. Much has been learned from these investigations and these contextual issues are, without a doubt, important and contributing factors to each epistle’s theology.

However, the extent to which each epistle’s theology reflects an *underlying* pattern of ideas within each author’s worldview is less well understood. I recognize that it is impossible to isolate and analyze an author’s theology in a hermetically sealed environment apart from the contextual circumstances which the author addresses. Yet, evidence exists which indicates that streams of traditions, factors other than the recipients’ needs, contribute to the theology within each epistle. EJL demonstrates that unanimity of opinion did not exist in Judaism. *4QInstruction* and the *Hodayot*, texts from EJL, demonstrate this fact and, as I will seek to show, provide a backdrop to the reflections within Colossians

³³ Marshall, *Theology*, 653.

and 1 Peter. These two specific Qumran texts were chosen for analysis because, as the investigation will demonstrate, they provide precedents, precursors, and parallels for the distinctive emphases under investigation in Colossians and 1 Peter.³⁴ Thus, they shed new light with which to interpret both epistles.

To the extent that the “in” Christ theologies of Colossians and 1 Peter correspond to the pattern of ideas in these early Jewish texts, the distinctive features identified may reflect different cognitive milieus in Palestinian Judaism. In this way, the authors of Colossians and 1 Peter express worldviews and theologies within EJL to address the needs of their recipients, demonstrating ways in which the cross-fertilization of *Judaisms* impacted Christian origins.³⁵

1.4 Method

Working within a broadly historical-critical framework, I will utilize a multi-disciplinary methodology to compare Colossians and 1 Peter,³⁶ attempting to synthesize and integrate various disciplines, not for the sake of multi-disciplinarity, but to bring to bear those methodologies which best illuminate the text. I will analyze each epistle paying close attention to three contextual levels, each

34 This study began with a recognition and a question. The recognition was that Colossians and 1 Peter share much in common, i.e. paraenesis and Christological argumentation underlying the ethical exhortations. Yet, the answers proffered by scholarship to account for distinctive theological emphases between the epistles (i.e., the non-overlapping areas of their respective theologies) demonstrated a lacuna in the literature. Simultaneous with analysis of each epistle's theology, a broad survey of Early Jewish Literature was undertaken. The Qumran texts selected for this study demonstrated great promise in providing precursors for some of the unique, non-overlapping aspects of each epistle's theology. The study proceeds along these lines to demonstrate that some of the distinctive aspects in Colossians are found in *4QInstruction* and some of the distinctive aspects of 1 Peter are found within the *Hodayot*. Thus, the chosen Qumran texts serve to illustrate the existence of distinctive theological streams of traditions within Judaism prior to the NT. This is not to say that the two Qumran texts are themselves completely unique and represent completely distinctive theological traditions within Judaism; they share much in common. Nor is it to say that the authors of the NT epistles under investigation drew exclusively from two distinct theological streams; both NT epistles share much in common with each other and with both Qumran texts (i.e., overlapping areas). The limited claim of this study is that when compared to one another Colossians and 1 Peter demonstrate unique theological patterns of thought in some areas; moreover, these distinctive patterns existed within the diversity of thought in EJL as exhibited by *4QInstruction* and the *Hodayot*.

35 On the diversity of views within EJL, see VanderKam, “Mapping,” 20.

36 As described by Porter, “Exegesis”.

built upon the other: (1) the context of discourse, (2) the context of the recipients, and (3) the cultural context.

The discourse level consists of textual criticism, language analysis (constructed meaning via lexemes and encoding), and discourse analysis (clauses, sentences, and larger speech units). At this level, I seek to understand the internal logic developed throughout the entire epistle. In the second context, I will pay close attention to the implied needs of the recipients which the author seeks to address. In the third level, the cultural context, I seek to understand the worldview and cognitive environment of the author and recipients, providing the basis to grasp meaning embedded in the author's terms and phrases.

1.5 Statement of the Thesis

The authors of Colossians and 1 Peter describe the new existence of the elect as they address and exhort the recipients in the midst of their contingent circumstances. Each author emphasizes different aspects of the new existence and the means to righteous living. I seek to detect these distinguishing aspects and locate antecedents for them in EJL thereby explaining why these NT authors address the recipients' needs in the manner that they do.

Since the "new existence" is a broad label, I will focus the investigation by attending to four inter-related questions.

- (1) How does the author view the σάρξ ("flesh") of the elect (anthropology)?
 - a. Is the "flesh" considered a "power" and/or viewed as subject to "powers"? Is the "flesh" changed in the new existence?
 - b. How are ἐπιθυμίαι ("desires") related to the "flesh"? Are "desires" less potent in the new existence?
- (2) How does the author articulate the *temporal* axis of salvation (eschatology)?
 - a. Is there an emphasis on salvation as realized or future?
 - b. Is eschatological judgment emphasized and/or imminent?
- (3) How does the author articulate the new existence *spatially* (cosmology)?
 - a. To what extent do the elect participate in the "heavenly" sphere?
 - b. Is the Spirit/Christ emphasized as "in" the believer?
- (4) By what means are the elect to live rightly (agency)?
 - a. Is there a means emphasized in the epistle?
 - b. Is there a connection between a means to live rightly and the author's view of the new existence?

Answers to these questions will address anthropology, eschatology, cosmology, and the believer's agency to provide a robust understanding of the new existence

and the means to live rightly. A question may arise as to whether it is necessary to investigate so many areas at one time. I recognize this invites complexity. However, these four areas, when analyzed together, provide a rich pattern of ideas that illuminate distinguishing features within each author's worldview and theology.

In this comparison, I am speaking in terms of *emphases*, not contrasts. For it is neither necessary nor fruitful to frame the questions as contrasts. For example, it is counterproductive to speak in terms of realized *versus* future eschatology with respect to Colossians and 1 Peter. This dichotomy obscures the fact that each epistle contains both elements. Instead, it is more fruitful to speak in terms of *emphasis*, and therein seek to ascertain why such an emphasis exists. To help answer the question "Why are there different emphases?" I will analyze *4QInstruction* and the *Hodayot*, texts from EYL. In relation to these two NT epistles, the *Hodayot* has not been dealt with sufficiently and *4QInstruction* has rarely been brought into the discussion.³⁷

1.6 Thesis Contribution

Firstly, this thesis is the only one I know of to compare Colossians and 1 Peter, demonstrating that *4QInstruction* provides possible antecedents to many of the distinctive emphases in Colossians and the *Hodayot* likewise for 1 Peter. Since both NT letters represent views by Jewish-Christians within nascent Christianity,³⁸ comparing the author's views against the backdrop of EYL contributes to a deeper understanding of how the diversity of thought in Second Temple Judaism impacted Christian origins.³⁹

Secondly, the study demonstrates the presence of distinctive worldviews and emphases within *4QInstruction* and the *Hodayot*. Thus, the study contributes a deeper understanding of the diversity in EYL including the variety of traditions within the library at Khirbet Qumran prior to the first-century CE.

³⁷ I note the dearth, and usually absence, of citations from *4QInstruction* in the index of ancient sources in Colossian commentaries.

³⁸ Thus, it is an *emic* perspective. See Simpson and Weiner, *OED*.

³⁹ See Westerholm, "Anthropology," 74 n. 13 who writes, "the extent and nature of Paul's distinctiveness would certainly emerge more clearly if we were able to include the views of other *Christian* authors from the period (many of whom, of course, were also Jews)." While this study does not assume Pauline authorship of Colossians, Westerholm's comment points to the value of comparative analysis.

Thirdly, this study demonstrates the exegetical payoff from interpreting Colossians in the light of *4QInstruction*, a text which has received scant attention by Colossian scholars.⁴⁰ The hermeneutics and theology in Colossians bear striking parallels to that in *4QInstruction*. Unique and contested phrases, such as “part of the lot of the saints in the light” (Col 1:12) and “fleshly mind” (Col 2:19), are rendered meaningful against this backdrop. By demonstrating that *4QInstruction* sheds light on Colossians, this study opens up an unexplored path for further investigations of this text from EJJL.

Fourthly, this study demonstrates the exegetical payoff from interpreting 1 Peter in the light of the *Hodayot*, a text providing striking antecedents to its hermeneutics and theology.⁴¹ Against the backdrop of a dualistic conception of the human person represented in the *Hodayot*, unique aspects of 1 Peter, such as the contested phrase “whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin” (4:1b), become intelligible when viewed as part of the author’s understanding that God may utilize innocent suffering as an instrument to subdue sinful desires within the elect.

Fifthly, this study demonstrates that the author(s) of the *Hodayot* invested the experience of involuntary and innocent suffering with positive value and meaning; therefore, the *Hodayot* may provide evidence prior to the NT of the view that innocent suffering positively impacts the interior of humankind.⁴²

⁴⁰ This is not to deny the exegetical payoff of interpreting Colossians in the light of the *Hodayot*.

⁴¹ This is not to deny the exegetical payoff of interpreting 1 Peter in the light of *4QInstruction*.

⁴² Contra A. E. Harvey who argues that Paul in 2 Cor 4 is the first, see especially chapter four in Harvey, *Renewal*.

Chapter 2:

Overview of Scholarship

Chapter Overview

This chapter will interact selectively with scholarly works that illuminate the relationship between the Christ-event, the new existence, and paraenesis in Colossians and 1 Peter.¹ Given the nature of the study (comparison of two NT texts plus breadth of topics under investigation), I must limit the overview. The goals are to highlight scholarly works on each epistle that: (1) map lines of inquiry, and (2) highlight distinctive descriptions of the new existence. Cumulatively, the overviews will illustrate opportunities for further research.

2.1 An Overview of Colossian Scholarship

2.1.1 Insights from Jewish Background Studies

Background studies illuminate the importance of EJL in interpretation of Colossians. Arnold demonstrates the belief in and fear of the στοιχεῖα (2:8,20) as personalized evil spirits in EJL,² a conclusion strengthened by I. Smith.³ He also shows that cultic and ritual practices in Judaism lay behind the author's polemics (2:16–18; 20–23).⁴ Sappington demonstrates that Colossians and the Jewish apocalypses share a common “referential background” including reference to a χειρόγραφον (2:14).⁵ He notes the spatial dualism in apocalyptic literature which depicts a contrast between the righteous heavenly realm and the wicked earthly realm.⁶ Bevere, building on this insight, correctly argues that “this ethical use of spatial terminology” in Colossians 3:1–9 “refers to a change, a transformation in the life of the believer.”⁷ Grasping the worldview and practices within Judaism illuminate the author's theology and its connection to paraenetic exhortations. But what is the best starting point in Colossian studies?

¹ By “Christ-event” I mean Jesus' passion, death, burial, resurrection, exaltation, and heavenly intercession, see Fitzmyer, “Justification,” 81.

² Arnold, *Syncretism*, 176–83.

³ Smith, *Heavenly*, 38.

⁴ Arnold, *Syncretism*, 195–218.

⁵ Understood as a “heavenly book,” see Sappington, *Revelation*, 208.

⁶ Sappington, *Revelation*, 57.

⁷ Bevere, *Sharing*, 152.

2.1.2 The Opponents: a Fascination of Scholarship

Scholars have long sought to uncover the identity of the teachers in the background at Colossae, even arguing correct interpretation hinges on first identifying the teachers.⁸ These shadowy figures have been variously called “errorists,”⁹ “opponents,”¹⁰ and “philosophers.”¹¹ I. Smith’s overview indicates the tremendous variety of scholarly interpretations.¹² The myriad of solutions on offer highlights two items. Firstly, a general consensus has emerged that the opponents’ teaching reflects elements in Judaism. Secondly, because the evidence prevents firm conclusions, the debate is far from settled. This raises the question of the impact of mirror-reading Colossians.¹³ If the author’s theology is viewed through the lens of the opponents’ “philosophy,” what then if that lens reflects poorly?

2.1.2.1 A Different Approach than Mirror-Reading

Is reconstruction of the opponents and their “philosophy” the best, or only, starting point? I argue that overemphasizing the “philosophy” may hinder grasping the author’s point, namely detailing the new existence *so that* believers “walk worthily.”

The impact of mirror-reading Colossians is illustrated through the debate over the interpretation of *θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων* (2:18). F. O. Francis translates the phrase as a subjective genitive, “worship which angels perform,” viewing the opponents as seeking to participate with the angels in worship of God in order to advance spiritually.¹⁴ Francis argues the errorists missed the sufficiency of redemption but did not denigrate Christ.¹⁵ Sappington, following Francis’ translation, similarly finds no error in the opponents’ Christology; therefore, he argues that the “hymn” (1:15–20) served a more general purpose than polemics.¹⁶ As I will discuss in Chapters 5 and 6, the author’s epistolary strategy of emphasizing the lordship of Christ in the “hymn” serves to placate fear of evil an-

⁸ Troy W. Martin, *Philosophy*, 205.

⁹ E.g., Sappington, *Revelation*, 173.

¹⁰ E.g., Bevere, *Sharing*, 28.

¹¹ E.g., Troy W. Martin, *Philosophy*, 11.

¹² See chapter two in Smith, *Heavenly*, 19–38.

¹³ See Barclay, “Mirror-Reading,” 253 on “problems” inherent to mirror-reading.

¹⁴ See Francis, “Humility,” 166 for the view that *ταπεινοφροσύνη* relates to fasting and rigors in conjunction with visionary transcendence, *ἐμβατεύων* refers to entering “the heavenly temple,” and *θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων* describes the errorists seeing the angelic worship of God.

¹⁵ See Francis, “Christological,” 193. In agreement, Rowland, “Visions,” 77.

¹⁶ Sappington, *Revelation*, 175–76.

gelic beings, a point missed by Sappington. C. E. Arnold, then, rightly argues that the opponents misunderstood the believers' victory over the hostile powers through union with Christ.¹⁷ But, Arnold insists this interpretation requires the phrase in 2:18 to be an objective genitive, "worship of angels."¹⁸ However, evidence from EJL demonstrates practices of both angelic worship of God and seer's veneration of angels.¹⁹ In addition, I. Smith's study has shown that a subjective genitive translation fits with understanding the στοιχεῖα as evil angelic beings. "Worship with the angels," in this scenario, is a heavenly ascent to escape the "earthly" sphere and the dominion of the evil powers.²⁰

The point is this: clarity regarding the opponents, and the phrases attributed to them, is lacking. Moreover, beginning with the opponents may influence the interpretation of the author's theology. Therefore, I will attempt to engage the author on his own terms, instead of through a particular foil, to grasp his view of the new existence.²¹

2.1.3 Behavior as a Main Concern: "Walk worthy" (1:10, 28; 2:6)

Meeks, like Hooker,²² questions whether the author of Colossians wrote primarily to address heresy which was creeping into the church.²³ While he risks missing the polemical thrust of 2:8–23, Meeks recognizes the overall shape and paraenetic character of the letter.²⁴ He correctly identifies the author's main concern as moral behavior (2:6) and raises the question of how Christology shapes the new existence and is thereby connected to paraenesis.²⁵

¹⁷ Arnold, *Syncretism*, 293–307.

¹⁸ See Arnold, *Syncretism*, 9, who extends argument by Williams, "Cult". That is worship of angels for apotropaic purposes and for help in every day matters. In agreement, Fee, *Christology*, 290 n. 3.

¹⁹ E.g., Tobit 11:14–15 (both recensions) alongside 12:16; *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (4Q400 2.1–2 and 4Q403 1 i.32–3), and *Asc. Isa.* 7:15, 21; 8:4–5, cited by Stuckenbruck, "Colossians," 121. Cf. Stuckenbruck, *Angel*, 119. Cf. Stuckenbruck, "Worship". See also, Rowland, "Visions," 75 nn. 16–17.

²⁰ Smith, *Heavenly*, 206.

²¹ As advised by Barclay, "Ordinary," 36 n. 3.

²² That the threat was non-specific, see Hooker, *Adam*, 121–36.

²³ Meeks, "Moral," 38.

²⁴ Meeks, "Unity," 210.

²⁵ See Meeks, "Moral," 39. Cf. 1:9–10; 28.

Sappington similarly finds obedience to the will of God as the author's main concern.²⁶ He points to the motif of revelation of the divine "mysteries" in EJJL as a key in grasping the worldview of Colossians,²⁷ and relates the function of revelation in apocalyptic writings and Colossians to exhortations for obedience amidst admonitions of coming judgment.²⁸ Bevere rightly notes that the paraenesis reflects "a fundamentally Jewish perspective on the moral life," that is "the idea that who one is as a person of God cannot be separated from how one lives."²⁹ Thus, identity as the elect people of God is inseparable from ethics, namely obedience to God.³⁰

In sum, a main purpose of the author is to articulate the new existence so that the elect "in Christ" grow in understanding of the revealed "mystery" in order to "walk worthily." This new existence arises from the Christ-event and provides the basis for carrying out the paraenesis. A question, though, is why the author explains the new existence in the manner that he does? I will argue in Chapter 6 that attention to *4QInstruction* demonstrates that the author draws from a similar cognitive milieu to do so.

2.1.4 The Christ-Event, the New Existence, and Paraenesis

Barclay rightly points to the "Christocentricity" of Colossians, a Christology that is "broad and confident in scope," whereby the author expects the "Christological cosmology" to shape believers' lives.³¹ I will now look at specific christological concepts informing the new existence and connecting it to the paraenesis.

2.1.4.1 Realized Eschatology and the New Existence

A unique aspect of Colossians concerns the author's "realized" eschatology. Sanders, as but one example, in analyzing the undisputed Pauline epistles, argues that "salvation," to Paul, is typically future or present but not yet complete.³² Therefore, Colossians' statements that believers have already been "transferred" (μεθίστημι 1:13; cf. 2:13–15) into Christ's kingdom is, to him, an in-

²⁶ Rightly, Sappington, *Revelation*, 180.

²⁷ See esp. chs. 2–4 in Sappington, *Revelation*, 55–149.

²⁸ Sappington, *Revelation*, 137.

²⁹ Bevere, *Sharing*, 30.

³⁰ Bevere, *Sharing*, 48–49.

³¹ Barclay, "Ordinary," 36.

³² Sanders, *Paul*, 449.

dication of its deutero-Pauline character.³³ T. Still helpfully provides a cogent corrective demonstrating the presence of “not-yet” elements in Colossians’ eschatology.³⁴ A possibility not adequately explored by scholarship is that the “realized” eschatology stems from the author’s own theological background accentuated to refute the opponents’ “philosophy.” I will argue that the author draws from the theological milieu of *4QInstruction* to debate with opponents reflecting other milieus in Judaism.

Another element of the author’s “realized” theology concerns believers’ anthropology after faith in Christ. Investigating the undisputed Pauline epistles, Westerholm compares Paul’s “pessimistic” view of humanity with views in EJL “to highlight distinctive features of Paul’s anthropology and to contextualize what he shares with others.”³⁵ A value of Westerholm’s study resides in its methodology. Similarly, I will analyze both NT authors’ anthropological views and situate them alongside views in EJL. A difference in my study is that I will focus on anthropology *after* faith in Christ as compared with views in EJL on the anthropology of the *righteous* elect.

2.1.4.2 The Story of “in Christ”

Fowl rightly identifies a “story” of Christ that emphasizes Christ’s superiority as the dwelling place of the fullness of deity.³⁶ He correctly notes that this “story” bears heavily on the ethical exhortations later in the epistle,³⁷ arguing that Paul uses the narrative to provide an explanation of reality and the community’s existence and identity.³⁸ Meeks, likewise, argues that Paul connects behavior to knowledge through a cosmic story.³⁹ However, Meeks focuses on the author’s development of believers’ “perceptions of what they ought to think and to do.”⁴⁰ While both Fowl and Meeks rightly highlight the Christ “story,” neither adequately addresses its impact on the cosmos and believers. To the Colossian author, the Christ-event fundamentally changes the cosmos and the elect, a thesis I will explicate in Chapter 5.

³³ See Sanders, *Paul*, 450 n. 12, accusing W. D. Davies, *Rabbinic*, 318 of putting too much emphasis on “realization of the eternal order” by accepting Colossians as Pauline.

³⁴ Still, “Eschatology”.

³⁵ Westerholm, “Anthropology,” 73.

³⁶ Fowl, *Story*, 152–54.

³⁷ Fowl, *Story*, 20.

³⁸ Fowl, *Story*, 200–201.

³⁹ Meeks, “Moral,” 40.

⁴⁰ Meeks, “Moral,” 44.