The Identity of “Horn” in Psalm 148:14a:
An Exegetical Investigation in the MT and LXX Versions

ANDREW J. SCHMUTZER AND RANDALL X. GAUTHIER
MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH

This article compares the MT and LXX versions of Ps 148:14a to understand better the identity of “horn” within the set phrase “to raise a horn.” The commentators are largely divided between literary-metaphorical and historical-literal interpretations, leaving the English translations with a confusing array of options. Analysis suggests that “to raise a horn” conveys elements common to both “metaphorical” and “literal-historical” usage with military significance. Particular attention is given to the syntactical significance of vv. 13–14 of Ps 148. Analysis concludes with the Final Doxology (FD) of the Psalter (MT: Pss 146–50; LXX 145–50), where it is argued that the sociopolitical reality of exile and Diaspora returns complements the militaristic theme of 148:14a, evidenced from the surrounding FD. The identity of “horn” in this set phrase describes the judgment of Israel’s enemies while simultaneously proclaiming Israel’s restored reputation on an international scale.

Key Words: MT, LXX, Final Doxology, collocation, horn, translation, judgment, deliverance, Diaspora, γόν, κέρας, ψάφο

INTRODUCTION

If there is a crux interpretum in Ps 148, it is the nature of “horn” (MT = שְׁלֹחֶן, LXX = κέρας) in v. 14a. Its identity is perplexing enough for H.-J. Kraus to conclude: “There is hardly an answer to the question as to what specifically, is being referred to.”1 A fresh analysis is needed for at least two reasons. First, the dominance of “genre-analysis” in psalms scholarship has given way to “shape-analysis,” with its focus on intertextual relationships and canonical contour.2 In this way, approaches that search out particular

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themes within literary units are opening up new vistas of study. Similarly, “horn” in Ps 148 needs to be reread within the closing flourish of halêlâ-ŷâh psalms (146–50 [LXX 145–50]) or Final Doxology (FD). But second, “horn” at the close of Ps 148 is also situated within a complex tricolon, and an analysis of “horn” must also acknowledge afresh the specific literary structures surrounding v. 14 as well as the rhetorical placement of v. 14 itself.

Our reassessment of “horn” analyzes three key areas. These include linguistic and theological approaches and the inevitable struggle of the English translations. Second, understanding the identity of “horn” in Ps 148 is really a matter of understanding the phrase “to raise a horn.” Third, we will analyze the syntactical complexion of the closing tricolon itself (v. 14). Throughout our study the LXX will be analyzed alongside the MT. Listening to the “plural voice” of both the MT and LXX, our aim is to achieve a more holistic use of these two versions.

This study argues that “horn” in Ps 148:14a should be contextually read as a collocation (“to raise a horn”) of military significance, one understood against a postexilic backdrop evident in the final halêlâ-ŷâh psalms (146–50 [LXX 145–50]). In Ps 148:14, both deliverance and protection are procured when God “raises a horn.” The phrase reflects Israel’s restored reputation, her protection from warring nations.

**DIVERGENT VIEWS OF “HORN” (148:14a)**

A survey of the literature addressing “horn” (Ps 148:14) brings perspective. Our study briefly considers the commentators, some current scholarly proposals, and the variance among English translations.

Interpretive opinions differ widely based on the interpreter’s (1) interaction with the socioreligious setting, (2) use of a didactic or prophetic rubric, and (3) application of the Psalter’s editorial shaping. Overwhelmingly, psalms scholarship is agreed on a postexilic date for Ps 148 and the broader unit of halêlâ-ŷâh psalms (146–50), regardless of any preredactional origin.

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4. Defined by context, a collocation can contain several words. Closely related, an idiom cannot be deduced from the meaning of its parts and is a relatively fixed expression (*Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002], vii–viii).

The views of “horn” divide into two broad categories: (1) literary-metaphorical and (2) historical-literal. Beyond these general groups, several subcategories emerge. Under metaphorical, the most common view is that “horn” in Ps 148:14 represents Israel’s restored “dignity” and “strength.” Thus, Israel is granted a “national courage” for a new international and political landscape following the Exile. However, mere dignity and strength does not fully elucidate the significance of “horn” in the culmination of Ps 148, since it does not adequately consider “horn” within the closing doxological theology of Ps 146–50. The metaphorical emphasis suffers from a lack of historical contextualization.

Embracing a more historical-literal view, other commentators attempt to construct a concrete occasion behind “horn,” such as Israel’s return and rebuilding under Ezra and Nehemiah. This view scours the co-textual terms of the adjoining halleluyah psalms such as 146–47 and particularly the political and military language of Ps 149:6–9. A further subcategory here would even see a new Davidic ruler, while still others emphasize Israel’s exclusive role as promoter of global praise itself, albeit against the backdrop of political reconstitution. As a view, this argument is too often driven more by literary constructs and does not adequately wrestle with the socio-religious realities operative in the Persian period (558–359 B.C.E.) and the political situation facing the Judean returnees—what Gerstenberger calls “a decapitated nation turned into a community of faith.”

To a greater or lesser degree, some scholars read “horn” within an eschatological movement while others—not denying the eschatological momentum—view the Psalter’s redaction against a more historical frame. For Lothar Ruppert, “horn” stands metaphorically for “Kraft, Macht”


("strength, power"; cf. Ps 75:6, 11; 89:18, 25). He considers the possibility of an eschatological scope to v. 14 in terms of a specific act of salvation (Heilstat) or end-time increase of a reestablished Israel.\(^{12}\) Von Christian Brüning nuances the importance of v. 14 by explaining that it conveys Israel's special mediating role in calling all of creation to praise God.\(^{13}\) In this way, Israel's reputation may also be in view. Ultimately, v. 14 conveys that God granted Israel power to praise.\(^{14}\)

According to David Mitchell, the Psalms represent an eschatological-messianic agenda rather than a historico-didactic thrust.\(^{15}\) Mitchell, it appears, sees a messianic expectation surrounding “horn” throughout the Psalter. Rather than a “historically oriented reедакtional agenda,” he sees an “eschatological agenda” in the Psalter’s very structure in which the re-editors intended the messianic psalms to infect the interpretation of the entire Psalter.\(^{16}\)

Believing v. 14 is a secure conclusion, Marc Girard argues that the election and restoration of Israel is the main hymnic motif.\(^{17}\) “Yet, a thematic link unites both micro-units [13bc, 14abc]: the idea of elevation. The high and powerful God lifts up the ‘horn’ (la ‘corne’) of his people—the power of his people—through his salvation.”\(^{18}\) So we find credible emphases, but none that brings consensus.

For their part, translations both ancient and modern render the final tricolon with subtle clues as to the perceived identity of “horn.” The standard rendering ambiguously retains “horn” (KJV, RSV, NRSV, ESV), whereas the NIV suggests that this refers to a “strong one” or “king” (text note).\(^{19}\) The TNIV counters this with the abstract “strength” of the people (cf. NLT), different but related to “fortunes” (JB), “pride of power” (NEB), and “power, prosperity, and pre-eminence” (Berkley). The interpreter can readily recognize the dissonance in the translations, and there are reasons for this.\(^{20}\)

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\(^{14}\) Ibid., 5–6.


\(^{18}\) Ibid., 531; my translation.

\(^{19}\) Others include: YLT, ASV, NKJV, NASB, Darby, JPSV, NAB, Websters, BBE, WEB.

\(^{20}\) Translations across the spectrum interpret the final tricolon with subtle shifts in emphasis. For instance, in v. 14a and v. 14b some translations reflect an *appositional* relationship (e.g., NKJV, NRSV, NIV, TNIV) where “horn” and “praise” are essentially equated, the latter explicates the former. Others stipulate *result* or *telic* relationships (e.g., JPSV, Tanakh, BBE, NET). JPSV reads, “He has exalted the horn of His people for the glory of all His faithful ones.”
"HORN" IN COLLOCATION

We now turn our attention to the use of "horn" in collocation. While diachronic word studies of ḫrq/ḵēpaʾ are plentiful enough, what is needed is a more robust understanding of ḫrq/ḵēpaʾ in fixed expressions, particularly as found in Ps 148:14, ḫrq µwriʿ ("to raise a horn").

In the following passages, we consider "horn" as a composite phrase. What emerges is a multifaceted idea, spanning a polarity between (negative) judgment on enemies and (positive) deliverance/restoration. Herein lies a semantic spectrum of possibilities showing the vibrancy and flexibility of the referent. A given text may stipulate battle, divine judgment, restoration, or even deliverance from enemies by judgment, all depending on the contextual emphasis. In all cases, however, they fall within the rubric of political and militaristic advantage. Whether a literal army is conscripted, which is present in some cases, or the point is hope in national safety, the full impact of this phrase becomes more of a balance struck between two sides of the same coin than that of competing ideas. Though the genre of doxology often trades the military "mechanism" for liturgical emphases (i.e., what God has done), it nevertheless fuels the expectation in the LORD to take up "arms" on behalf of his people with unfettered praise. Beginning with a lexical overview, we will turn our attention to an analysis of specific occurrences.

"To Raise the Horn": An Overview

The word ḫrq occurs as the subject of the Qal and the Polel passive. More significantly for our collocation, however, ḫrq functions as the direct object, the syntactical accusative of Hiphil µwriʿ. The imagery is arguably drawn

Whether the "faithful ones" are in fact the recipients of glory (= objective, so JPS) or issue it forth (= subjective, so NET), the identity of praise is an interpretive decision.


22. However, Margit Süring concludes that two "diametrically opposed traditions" lie behind the horn motif: (a) a horizontal tradition, in which political struggles for supremacy are played out between kingdoms and the pagan practices of bull worship, fertility and astral cults exist, and (b) the vertical tradition, which is associated with the messianic victory and eschatological realities (p. 462). According to Süring, the vertical trajectory in the Bible will ultimately bring the strife of the horizontal tradition to an end (The Horn-Motif in the Hebrew Bible and Related Ancient Near Eastern Literature and Iconography [Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1980], 302–435, esp. 446–62).

23. Scripture references throughout generally reflect differences in the MT and LXX version. LXX references are placed in brackets after MT references (e.g., Ps 95[94]:6). As subject of the Qal, see 1 Sam 2:1; Pss 89[88]:18 [Qere reads Qal], 25; 112[111]:9; as subject of the Polel passive, see Ps 79[74]:11.

24. See 1 Sam 2:10, Pss 79[74]:5, 89[88]:18 [Ketib], 92[91]:11; 148:14; Lam 2:17; 1 Chr 25:5; cf. Zech 2:4.
from the wild bull, standing with uplifted horn, challenging his opponent while flaunting his full strength (cf. Deut 33:17). Though הוהי צור is typically a constructive expression for divine aid (Ps 75[74]:11, 92[91]:11), it is also used of destruction (Ps 75[74]:5–6; Lam 2:17). Thus, the broader semantics can denote either triumph (i.e., “exalt the horn”) or defeat (i.e., “cut off the horn”), with some texts capitalizing on both expressions to highlight contrasting fates (cf. Ps 75:4, 5[5, 6], with 10[11]). Within the OT canon there is a semantic gradation in the figurative use of the phrase, culminating in the abstract concept “power.” This abstract use is clearly illustrated by the warring nations of the Medes and Persians in their struggle for supremacy alongside the Hellenistic kings who have their own lust for power (Dan 7:3–21, 8:3–22). Significantly, however, there is a socioreligious setting operating behind this metaphorical warring power. The post-exilic setting surrounding Ps 148:14 finds the הוהי צור expression in semantic democratization—it refers to nations as well as individuals. In Ps 148:14, we read כי ישים צוב לציון צוב וחמרא; in the LXX version, καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν λαῶν αὐτοῦ. Barring the obvious shift in time referent noted by the translation (MT = “he has raised,” vs. LXX = “he will raise,” to be discussed), we should note that in both versions it is strictly the Lord as subject who raises the horn of his people, using the constructive usage. People do not raise their own horn, except to grasp after power (Ps 75[74]:5–6). This is significant since “horn” can be uniquely used of military might. God not only “exalts” through blessing (Ps 37[36]:34), he also delivers the righteous from their enemies (Ps 30[29]:2). By contrast, it is the hubris of the wicked to be “self-exultant” (ץְרִי) in pride, often described through their uplifted “heart,” “eyes,” or “head” (Hos 13:6; Pss 131[130]:1, 110[109]:7).

The Hebrew expression “to raise the horn” (הוהי צור) is rendered 11 times throughout several LXX books. The following analysis shows that this translational combination in the LXX, irrespective of differing translators, renders its Hebrew counterpart in a formal and straightforward way. That is to say, the LXX typically trades aorist and future verbal

26. To “cut off” or “cut down” the horn is the antonym (ץֶר), cf. Jer 48:25; Amos 3:14; similarly Lam 2:3, 17; Ezek 29:21).
28. Ibid., 173.
31. See 1 Sam 2:1, 10; 1 Chr 25:5; Pss 74:5, 11; 88:18, 25; 91:11; 111:9; 148:14; Lam 2:17; cf. Odes Sol. 3:3, 10.
forms in the Greek for perfect/preterite and imperfect/modal forms in the Hebrew. This may signify that this Hebrew expression was also read as a fixed expression in Greek by the translators; in every instance, some inflection of υψώοι (= υψη) is coupled with κέρας (= κέρας).

Thus, in 6 instances, κέρας serves as the nominative subject of an aorist or future passive verbal form, while the remaining 5 instances employ κέρας as the accusative direct object of an aorist or future active verbal form. Since Sir 47:5, 11 utilize (υψώοι + acc. κέρας, we shall include these in the latter category. The semantic difference in either case is negligible, more clearly seen in 1 Sam 2:1, 10 and Ps 74:5, 11 (LXX), where both categories appear in the same passage.

Further analysis shows equivalencies in the expected unmarked verbal categories. Where κέρας serves as the subject of the passive verb, future verbs render imperfect/modal verb forms in the presumed Vorlage, with the possible exception of Ps 91:11 and 148:14 (LXX; to be discussed). 1 Samuel 2:1 displays the sole occurrence of an aorist passive, which renders a Qal perfect. Lexicons indicate an intransitive, static, or passive semantic force in the Qal (“reach high up, be exalted, high, be raised”), which likely motivated the passive transfer in translation for the first category.

Not surprisingly, unlike the Qal, the Hiphil is semantically active or causative, though also at times appearing to have some overlap with the Qal. In these cases, the LXX translator opted for active verbal forms in the second category above. Again, in these examples κέρας serves as the object of the verb (1 Sam 2:10, Ps 148:14, Lam 2:17). In 1 Sam 2:10, ὑψόσει κέρας renders a Hiphil jussive (ἐρχόμενος κέρας) and so translates the phrase as

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32. The Greek Psalter also bears this trend. Of the 332 consecutive verbs in the MT Psalter that are translated (and assuming the MT is similar to the LXX Vorlage), roughly 90% are rendered with aorist forms (299), 7% future (22), 2% present (5), and 1% imperfect (3). Further, imperfect/modal forms in the MT Psalter are very frequent and more flexible than ωςω- consecutive forms; there are some 2,088 imperfect verbs alone in the MT Psalter. The flexibility of modals (e.g., jussive, cohortative) are spread out among present and future indicative forms in translation far more than preterite and perfect forms, the latter of which, again, tend toward aorist forms in translation. For instance, there are some 1,792 perfect/preterite forms in the MT Psalter, with a rough correspondence of aorist indicative forms in the LXX Psalter (1,943). There are 1,426 aorist verbs in the LXX Psalter that comprise imperative, subjunctive, optative, and infinitive forms, roughly corresponding to imperative, jussive/cohortative and infinitive forms in the MT Psalter. All of this is to say that the Greek Psalter tends toward a formal and even predictable relationship with its presumed Hebrew parent with respect to the categories stated. See also J. Barr, “Translators’ Handling of Verb Tense in Semantically Ambiguous Contexts,” in VI Congress of the IOSCS, Jerusalem 1986 (ed. C. Cox; SBLSCS 23; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 381–403.

33. Cf. 1 Sam 2:1; Ps 74:11; 88:18, 25; 91:11; 111:9.

34. Cf. 1 Sam 2:10; 1 Chr 25:5; Ps 74:5, 148:14; Lam 2:17.

35. HALOT 3:1202–3; BDB 926.

36. The Polal imperfect of Ps 75:11 (ὑψάθηται, Ps 74:11, LXX) also suggests, “be exalted,” though perhaps with a more inceptive nuance (i.e., “becoming exalted”; HALOT 3:1204).
expected, with a future rendering an imperfect verb. Likewise, in Lam 2:17 the aorist active ὑψώσειν κέρας renders a Hiphil perfect (הירחא כפ). \(^{37}\)

In Sir 47:5, the aorist infinitive ἀνύψωσαι followed by an accusative object κέρας renders a Hiphil infinitive construct לְרָעֵשׁ (+ ל + וָו) followed by the object marker and object (לְרָעֵשׁ ו). Further, in v. 11 the aorist indicative ἀνύψωσα + accusative object τὸ κέρας renders a Hiphil preterite וָו + object וָו, just as we would expect. If we admit a basic MT/LXX equivalence as suggested, it is striking that LXX Pss 91:11 and 148:14 trade future verbs (passive and active respectively) for Hiphil imperfect וָו consecutive (preterite) verbs. This is a seemingly counterlinguistic move, since the translation defaults demonstrated so far would anticipate aorist forms. We shall take up this issue again below, but for now we should bear in mind that the LXX expression conveys, on the whole, a unified linguistic relationship to its presumed Vorlage. But any discussion about translation strategies—only one piece of the exegetical pie—must move beyond statistics to application, if in fact we wish to understand their significance in a theological setting. To this end, we shall briefly consider a few examples.

The technical militaristic usage of κέρας as a “flank” or “wing” occurs in apocryphal literature, often late, but biblical expressions of horn often carry militaristic tones as well. \(^{38}\) Beyond the army “flank,” however, “horn” was also used to denote military power (LXX Ezek 29:21), military advantage (1 Macc 2:48), or military victory (1 Kgs 22:11). \(^{39}\) The horn of the ram signified goring strength as well as signaling military orders. Iron horns symbolize the goring of Syria (1 Kgs 22:11; 2 Chr 18:10), and the horns of unicorns (μονοκέρως) were used sometimes as vivid imagery for a sure death to enemies (e.g., LXX Num 24:8; Deut 33:17). \(^{40}\) One may wonder if the more obvious militaristic practice of raising the horn to signal a battle charge did not evolve into the power idiom of “raising a horn” used in ancient literature. Below we shall briefly examine key passages illustrating this expression, laying particular emphasis upon the psalms: 1 Sam 2:1, 10; Pss 75[74]:11; 89[88]:11–25; 92[91]:11; 112[111]:9; 148:14.

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\(^{37}\) Other minor occurrences break from the “indicative,” e.g., 1 Chr 25:5 and the LXX Ps 74:4.

\(^{38}\) Josephus, for example, speaks of a literal horn (κέρας) employed in militaristic settings, an instrument used to rally the troops for a battle charge (Ant. 5:223; 6:5; 7:279), or summon the people after a military victory (5:194). Though “horn” can refer to a “wing” (of a theater; 19:91), it also refers to a military “company” or “flank” (= κέρας; 8:409); cf. Ant. 10:77, 12:428–29, 13:59, 14:133–34, 14:416; JW. 1:191–92, 306. Similar language also occurs in 1 and 2 Maccabees (1 Macc 9:1, 11, 16; 2 Macc 15:20, 33, 34) for militaristic flanks (= κέρας).

\(^{39}\) Cf. 2 Chr 18:10; Mic 4:13; Ps 91:11 (all LXX).

Hannah’s well-known prayer employs our collocation in the context of her dedication of Samuel. The literary effect parallels a heart that rejoices (“strengthened,” ἑστερέωση) with a “raised horn” (ῥημα κέρας, ὕψωσθ΄ κέρας). The “raising of the horn” results in her ability to speak against her enemies in light of the salvation the Lord provides (v. 1). The wisdom of Hannah’s prayer extols the “poor” (剀, πένης) and “needy” (πτωχος, πτωχος), raising them to a place of honor, while castigating the wicked in judgment (vv. 8–9; cf. Ps 1, 113[112]). Her prayer closes with a militaristic expression in v. 10, where “raising the horn” of the Lord’s anointed (ῥημα κέρας, χριστου αυτου) anticipates “giving strength to our kings” (δώσωσιν σωτηρίαν αυτουν ημων). In essence, the “anointed” would judge wickedness and institute justice (deliverance/salvation) with military might and divinely endorsed potency, as vice-regent to the Lord. Here, unlike the references in Daniel, “horn” refers not to the king but to his militaristic potency that checks the hubris of the wicked and supplies protection for his righteous people (1 Sam 2:9).

Salvific themes pertaining to the poor and needy (cf. 1 Sam 2:1, 10) comport well with other passages containing our phrase (e.g., “horn of salvation,” ρημα κέρας = κέρας σωτηρίας). An offensive militaristic posture (i.e., “raise the horn”), as we have seen, may give way to a defensive posture when the notion of protection is involved (i.e., “horn of salvation”). The two are not altogether dissimilar and may at times conflate. In the idiom of 1 Sam 2:1, 10, a status is elevated with visible distinction.

After being delivered from “all his enemies” (κλα αθια, πάντοιν τούν ἐξθρον αυτου) including Saul, David extolled the Lord as his “horn of salvation.” Examining 2 Sam 22:1–3 = Ps 18[17]:1–3, we see in parallel terms what constitutes the “horn” of salvation.

These terms, glossed as “strength, rock, firmness, fortress, refuge, deliverer, guard, helper, shield, protector, supporter, etc.,” demonstrate an overlapping lexical pool in both versions by which “horn” may be understood. In this way, the Lord delivered David from the “unjust” person...
(αδικος; 2 Sam 22:3) and was the source of “strength” (i.e., “horn”) for David’s deliverance. Indeed, the psalmist stipulates a militaristic deliverance, evident through the vivid imagery of theophonic judgment (cf. Pss 18[17]:13, 148:7) within the song itself (vv. 8–16). Against his ever-present enemies, the Lord “sent out his arrows and scattered them; many lightening bolts and confused them” (v. 15).

Psalm 75[74]:11

Other psalms also utilize the collocation צרן. To begin with, Ps 75 is a community song of praise. It is a “judgment doxology” in which “Yahweh’s righteous rule is honored and glorified.” The first-person language in v. 3 (MT) designates the Lord as judge: “I will judge with uprightness” (אִם מִשְׁפָּר אֲשֶׁר, see notes). In v. 5, judgment belongs to those who “boast” (הלודג), or, as in the LXX, “lawbreakers” (τοῖς παρανομοῦσιν), which is paralleled in warning with “raising their horns” and defined even further by speaking “injustice” against God (v. 6, so NETS). Though plural, the key phrase seems to have the same effect. Like Ps 1, the “wicked” (רשעים) do not stand in judgment, but the righteous prosper. Through it all, God remains judge, for “this one he humbles and that one he exalts” (v. 8, NETS). So too in v. 11, God will “cut off the horns” of the “wicked/sinners” (צרעים) but exalt the horns of the “righteous” (צדק). Here the motif of judgment shapes the nature of the idiom, but covenantal protection from the “God of Jacob” (v. 10) is the portion of the righteous. This is YHWH’s kingdom ethic of justice arbitrating human destiny through praise.

Psalm 89[88]:11–25

Psalm 89 offers further insight as the scattering of enemies (v. 11) and debasing the proud correlate with militaristic fervor (v. 14). “Righteousness” and “judgment” are the “foundation” (מָסָל) or even “provision” (тельноוסא, so NETS) of the Lord’s throne. Like the Lord’s powerful “right arm” (רוֹאֵשׁ, ψηφιδίῳ ἢ δεξιᾷ σου, v. 14), so too shall the “horn” of his people “be raised” (צֵדֶק, ψηφιδίῳ τὸ κέρας σου, v. 18). Similarly, it is said in the following vision of the anointing of King David (vv. 20–38) that “his horn shall be exalted” (צֵדֶק, ψηφιδίῳ τὸ κέρας αὐτοῦ, v. 25).

46. Another example of the expression occurs in late Hebrew and Hellenistic Greek. These show the idiom in its full militaristic force. The royal connections Sir 47:1–12 makes with 1 Sam 15–18 (esp. chap. 17) and royal psalms (e.g., Ps 89) are well known (cf. also Ps 151). These intratextual links are no surprise since David’s victory over Goliath (Sir 47) draws heavily from the accounts in Samuel and Chronicles. Here, the translator trades the more usual ψηφιδίῳ for the stylistic compound ψηφιδίῳ, though the sense remains intact (see esp. vv. 5, 11).

47. Kraus, Psalms 60–150, 2:104.

48. A. Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds., A New English Translation of the Septuagint and Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
Psalm 92[91]:11

Kraus describes Ps 92 as “permeated by the tendency of a ‘doxology of judgment,’” having arisen in some undisclosed “postexilic time.” The personalized language of this psalm traces an individual’s existential confidence in the Lord’s saving power through battle and victory metaphors. The ultimate outcome of the “enemies” is defined within a wisdom theme (cf. v. 13). Even in doxology, the psalmist acknowledges that his enemies are the Lord’s enemies (יִסְגָּרַק, ἐγέρσοι σου, vv. 1–4). In contrast, the salvific power of the Lord, again, supplies power to the righteous.

When sinners sprang up like grass also all who practice lawlessness popped up so that they may be destroyed forever and ever... because, look, your enemies, O Lord, because, look, your enemies shall perish and all those who practice lawlessness shall be scattered.

(LXX Ps 91:8, 10, NETS)

This collocation falls within the confines of “strength,” “eminence,” and “power” over an enemy, a subset of a militaristic victory. In the LXX, the nuance is anticipatory. His divinely exalted horn is equated with the defeat of an enemy, since they are indeed the Lord’s enemies.

However, as mentioned earlier, 92[91]:11 presents a variation in the expected rendering of waw-consecutive imperfect verbs—here the MT reads יִמְרַא יֶמֶנְת ("and you raised up my horn"). Some “play” must exist in translation in order to ensure an intelligible transfer from Hebrew to Greek, so we need not assume an exact system for translation equivalency. Yet, we should keep in mind what seems to be the “norm” for the various translators—trading aorist forms for perfects and waw-consecutive imperfects and future or present forms for imperfect/modal verbs. Two possible exceptions within our set phrase need further examination, Pss 92:11[LXX 91:11] and 148:14.

In LXX Ps 91:11 the Greek future passive 3s ἔγερσεται τὸ κέρας μου ("my horn shall be raised") apparently renders יִמְרַא יֶמֶנְת ("and you raised up my horn"); MT Ps 92:11), a Hiphil waw-consecutive imperfect. Since the Greek shifts the 2ms Hiphil preterite (יִמְרַא) to a 3rd-person future passive verb (ἔγερσεται), one may wonder if graphic confusion or metathesis was the problem. Because the Hiphil יִמְרַא would be read as יִמְרַא due to metathesis, this could be construed as a Qal form (cf. יָמָר, Gen 7:17). Further, יָמָר could also be read as יָמָר due to metathesis, thus warranting

49. Kraus, Psalms 60–150, 2:228.
50. Hossfeld and Zenger, Psalms 2, 440. They also emphasize “royal theology” in these texts (ibid.).
51. “But my horn will be exalted (ἔγερσεται τὸ κέρας μου) like a unicorn’s; and my old age with thick oil” (LXX Ps 91:11, NETS).
the future passive of the LXX. Since there is no variant listed in Rahlfs’s *Psalmi cum Odis* to commend this emendation, arbitration is contingent on internal evidence. However, the Qal imperfect 3ms (הֹרֶה) is the precise form found elsewhere in our expression (never a Hiphil preterit), unless we allow for the only other example to be our verse, Ps 148:14 *(to be discussed)*. Yet in each following case, the LXX reads with a future passive (יִפְגָּדְדוּ; cf. Ps 112[111]:19).

Additionally the *ketib* of MT Ps 89:18 presents the Hiphil imperfect form הֶרֶה but is read *(qere)* הָרֶה (= Qal impf.); the latter form is again commended in the text itself in v. 25. Therefore, it is more likely that the preterite form of 92:11 is a Masoretic construction that differs from the LXX Vorlage.

*Psalm 112[111]:9*

The wisdom tradition of Ps 1 also colors Ps 112[111]. That is to say, Ps 112, like 75[74] and 92[91], cherishes the theological conviction that the “righteous” (καθιστάν, δίκαιος) will be blessed (vv. 2, 6) and the “wicked/sinner” (יוּשֶׁר, יִשָּׁרֵע), who collectively comprise the “enemies” (cf. ἐχθροί, v. 8), shall be judged and defeated (v. 10). The righteous person is the one who fears the Lord (v. 1) and is “gracious” (רְחָמִים, or “merciful,” ἐλεήμον) and “compassionate” (ונח, ὑπερπνομον). Verse 9 explains the one who fears the Lord.

The ethical treatment of the poor and needy characterizes the godly person, but “anger” (ἔγκρατον, ἐγκρατεία) defines his adversaries. The Lord gives status and victory to the righteous person who looks after the poor and destitute, whether in political/military victory or in eschatological blessing; though ultimately, perhaps, the two cannot be separated. The wisdom tradition theologizes the realities of sociopolitical and religious sentiments, perhaps because it is more historically rooted in other contexts. Here, the raised horn is a blessed and protected life for the יְדֵי, which enrages the enemies of God.

Our phrase occurs for the last time within the Final Doxology itself (= MT Ps 146–50, LXX 145–50). We submit that this final use of the expression in Ps 148:14 should ultimately be understood within this climactic literary collection and not merely as an isolated term posted at the close of Ps 148. At this point, our study of “horn,” particularly “to raise a horn,” can be mined further with an investigation of the syntactical structure of v. 14 itself.

**THE SYNTACTICAL STRUCTURE OF 148:14**

*Clausal Syntax of the MT vv. (13–)14*

Except for one verb (לה, v. 14a), the MT tricolon is essentially comprised of nominal clauses in apposition. Whatever “raising a horn” may mean in v. 14a, the following two cola develop the significance of this fact (v. 14b, c).
The combination of these cola creates a “stair-step” apposition broadly reflected in the structure of the MT tricolon itself (fig. 1). A cadence of 8 beats per line generates balance and sustains momentum. Furthermore, the preterite (םירט) not only initiates v. 14 but also forms the lead clause (a). 54 Every ensuing word is a nonverbal form, highlighting יהוה as the governing verb of the entire tricolon. Whereas the “LORD” is the implied subject and “horn” the direct object (a), colon b in turn develops the direct object of “horn” through הלוֹח as the new “lead idea.” This same pattern occurs in colon c as לָלֵי כִּיִּם in turn functions as the new “lead idea” in apposition to יִתְנָה. Rhetorically, what emerges is an escalation of expressions that drive the successive appositional phrases (v. 14b, c), phrases that flow from the הָרַק collocation (v. 14a), explicating its significance.

In the first colon, הָרַק functions as an adverbial accusative of result, a metonymy of effect for cause heightening the causative Hiphil (וֹדֵר, וֹדֵר, “He has raised”), 55 The significance of the expression is then described in the following two cola (v. 14b, c). Thus, the station of הָרַק in the lead clause is rhetorically significant to the logic of the entire verse, as multiple clauses in apposition follow with an expositional function. 56 Observe the layout in fig. 2 (p. 174). Whereas the lead clause establishes the LORD’s special feat (v. 14a), the following expositional clauses mark the effect on an international scale (v. 14b, c). Covenant reaffirmation occurs when vertical intervention intersects with horizontal need. Divine transcendence and immanence for Israel issues in robust praise that defines Israel. Within hymnic poetry, the concluding tricolon of v. 14 does not merely cite the LORD’s work; it celebrates it.

54. In the Psalter, וֹדֵר occurs 53x, 13x in the Hiphil (3:4; 74:3; 75:5, 6, 7, 8; 89:18, 20, 43; 92:11; 110:7; 113:7; 148:14).
55. Just as the poet’s artistry in the ground of reason postponed the Hiphil Preterite (וֹדֵר וֹדֵר, “and he established,” v. 6a) following the Niphal perfectбавיָרָא . . . אָל (“for . . . they were created,” v. 5a), so too, the Niphal participle נַעֲשֶׂה (“[for] is exalted,” v. 13b) precedes yet another Hiphil preterite, דְּרֵי (“and he has raised up,” v. 14a) in the final ground of reason. The Niphal and Hiphil stems only occur here in Ps 148. Rhetorically, observe that the number of clauses in vv. 5b–6 (2 + 3) becomes the same number of cola in vv. 13b–14 (2 + 3; Allen, Psalms 101–150, 391). Balance that is both measured and aesthetic defines the psalm’s movement. D. R. Hillers’ overturning of the MT preterite because it is “awkward in a hymn” is hardly convincing (“A Study of Psalm 148,” CBJQ 40 [1978]: 327). Listing 22 entities (= Hebrew alphabet) in Ps 148:7–12 hardly fits the standard Call to Praise either.
The v. 14 tricolon is an example of additive apposition (a: b + b'). By addressing the covenant nation with well-worn expressions, the significance of “horn” (v. 14a) for the recipients is uniquely spelled out through the syntax of the expository bicola (v. 14b, c). Poetic analysis presupposes some kind of spatial arrangement in the sequence of words; so by “stacking” class-name terms in apposition, the beneficiaries are emphasized and the magnanimous affection of their covenant God is underscored. As the final phrase, also stands in apposition to essentially epexegetically. Yet there is more to the textuality of this tricolon.

Both the accents and poetics of MT 148:14 argue for a cohesive tricolon within an ancient liturgical tradition. As disjunctive accents, pûázér and rébîa magnum replace the standard 'etnâh (cf. 148:1–13). In fact, every psalm in the FD concludes by employing one or more rébîa accents rather than the 'etnâh. This concentrated use of the rébîa in MT 148:14 delineates a series of nominal clauses, indicating an awareness and interaction.

57. Viewing tricola as poetically suspect if not ideologically driven, modern scholarship struggled greatly with a perceived “irregularity” in this poetic style, often claiming evidence of redaction; 148:14 also fell under the same critique. For one, the tricolon of MT 148:13 was deemed a thematically sufficient ending without v. 14. Further, the language of “raising up a horn” (= 'etnâh) juxtaposed to terms such as µydysj (“loyal ones”) and larçy ynb (“sons of Israel”) smacked of nationalism as “a glossator was not satisfied with this modest reference to Israel” (Briggs, Psalms, 2:540). Wishing to retain only v. 14b, even BHK (1954) proposes deleting both cola 14a and 14c—a note BHS wisely omits. Within poetic texts, contemporary psalms scholarship is less dogmatic about emendation and evidence of a redactor’s hand in MT 148:14. For more on tricola, see the helpful discussion of J. T. Willis, “The Juxtaposition of Synonymous and Chiastic Parallelism in Tricola in the Old Testament Hebrew Psalm Poetry,” in Poetry in the Hebrew Bible: Selected Studies from Vetus Testamentum (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 156–71.


59. Within the FD (146–50), two rébîa predominate in the final verse of each psalm (146:10, 147:20, 148:14, 149:9), with one rébîa in 150:6. A consistent pattern emerges with the initial rébîa, the strongest of the secondary disjunctives, preceded by 'azlā ìqərmîh with pâsôq (146:10a, 147:20a, 148:14a, 149:9a). Further, in all five closing verses of the FD the terminal rébîa always precedes the final µâyîh (“Praise Yah!”, 146:10b, 147:20b, 148:14c, 149:9b), a point made quite clear in the two-column layout of the Aleppo Codex used for Psalms, Proverbs, and Job (also, Mikra’ot Gedolot ‘Haketer’: A Revised and Augmented Scientific Edition of ‘Mikra’ot Gedolot’ Based on the Aleppo Codex and Early Medieval mss. Psalms Part II [ed. M. Cohen; Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University, 2003], 240–45).
with this poetic structure. It is precisely in liturgical passages that tradition is strongest. For v. 14, the effect is a measured cadence in theological fermata, extolling a praiseworthy God through his privileged people. Inasmuch as tricola are rhetorically emphatic as a psalm's terminal boundary, the reader has no choice but to do a double take. Observe the clausal interplay between vv. 13–14 in fig. 3 (p. 176). The LORD worthy of praise (v. 14a) is a climactic shift from human praise worthy of the LORD (v. 13a). Verse 14 is relationally dynamic, and the poetics enliven this message. Every colon of v. 14 concludes with a 3ms divine suffix, underscoring the shift of subject to the LORD. This not only creates a majestic crescendo in the tricolon, but it also highlights the LORD’s covenant intimacy toward “his loyal followers” (מַעַד בְּעַדָּיו, 14b), “a people near him” (וּבְעֵדָיו, 14c). So for MacKenzie to claim that “v. 14bc comes rather lamely . . . with the effect of an anticlimax” is a rather naïve assessment. An adequate appreciation of the semantic, syntactic, and poetic structure of v. 14 does not lie behind his evaluation.

The tricolic structure and ethnic emphasis of v. 14 has been a source of consternation for many scholars. To account for the MT reading, which the Greek translator seems to have had, one can, with Prinsloo, shift the emphasis to “what the text looks like today,” irrespective of possible flux in

61. Ibid., 328.
63. The divine suffixes (vv. 2 [2x], 14 [3x]) and use of the prepositionelah (vv. 6 [2x], 14 [3x]) build poetic reenactment and intensification at the beginning, middle, and end of Ps 148. Grammatical inclusion heightens the climactic function of v. 14.
64. Employing three 3ms suffixes, the genitival constructions of v. 14 are a syntactical and grammatical expansion of the three in v. 13 (תְּמוֹנָה, לְבָנָה, נְאֻם מִי). In Ps 149, which follows, מַעַד does not only form an inclusion but it is exactly the middle word (5a) of the entire psalm (cf. מַעַד כְּבָר לְבָנָה נְאֻם מִי v. 1b, “his praise in the assembly of the loyal followers”); מַעַד אצְלֹת נְאֻם מִי v. 9b, “this is honor for all his loyal followers”). Note the repeated terms forming the lexical “seam” between Pss 148 and 149.
65. R. A. F. MacKenzie, “Ps 148:14c: Conclusion or Title?” Bib 51 (1970): 221; emphasis added. MacKenzie claims that 148:14c is likely the misplaced title of Ps 149 that follows, rather than belonging to Ps 148. Because he insists that “psalms 146–150 had to be written in sequence” (223 n. 2), he holds that semantic clusters must be isolated within a given psalm and not shared between them. This drives his observation that of the seven words of v. 14b, c, six are found in Ps 149 and only one in Ps 148 (ibid., 222). However, psalms do not have to be written in sequence. Further, the lexemes of Ps 149 arguably expand the climax of 148:14. Similarly, the LORD’s “lifting up those who are bent down” (אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדוּעֵהוּ) only occurs in two adjoining Psalms (145:14, 146:8)—should they be conflated?
transmission. For Brüning, however, v. 14 was likely already a fixed text in Ps 148, since Ben Sira’s psalm climaxes with a verbatim quotation of Ps 148:14 (= 51:12o), a psalm similar to 136. It is further arguable that the co-texts surrounding Ps 148 have also exerted their influence, especially reflected in the pointed language of exile, rebuilding, and restoration (cf. Sir 51:12f–g; Ps 147:2). In short, vv. 13–14 function as the final stanza in parallel tricola, comprising the final rationale of the psalm on the analogy of the Genesis creation (“heavens” → “earth” → “people”).

Brüning argues that Ps 148:14 may be intentionally vague by oscillating between different meanings, but interpretive ambivalence seems unwarranted. Arguably, covenant intimacy is further communicated through three § prepositions, one in each clause. In the lead clause, (for his people,” 14a) employs a benefitactive dative, denoting a group, in this case, uniquely aided through divine provision. Grammatically, the last two could be broadly classified as emphatic § (14b, c), as they stand before nouns in verbless clauses yet also serve in explication of the lead clause. Syntactically the § in (of all his loyal followers,” 14b) is more precisely a genitival §, strengthening the construct chain between (praise) and (loyal followers”; cf. 149:9). The third § in (the children of Israel,” 14c) functions in specification. It extends the genitival force of 14b and calls attention to the object of the preposition.

67. The superscript o marks the 15th line of a Hebrew psalm. This hymn is a closing unit embedded within Sirach. V. C. Brüning, “Psalm 148 und das Psalmenbeten,” MTZ 47 (1996): 3–5. This only applies to MS B, not the Greek version.
68. He notes that (may refer to (a) the praise of the people, i.e., a hymn of praise (Lob), (b) to reputation (Ruhm), or (c) the reason to praise (Grund zum Lobpreis; ibid., 4).
69. IBHS §11.2.10d; also called § of interest (datives commodi). However, a § of datival goal or “indirect object” may also be reflected here, in which an altered status results (ibid.).
70. GBHS §4.1.10.g; cf. Jōuon §130. In 148:14b, the § preposition helps establish a genitive relationship among nonverbal forms with inadequate concord, though in reverse, the LXX construed the first § as genitival (lōnō) and the following two in the dative (tōc, enēc, lānē). The masculine plural adjective (loyal followers) is decidedly definite with (but in the plural— but the feminine singular (children) is not adequately definite (see H. Ringgren, “§ ,” TDOT 7:136, 140). Though our translation uses the definite article to sustain the clarity in apposition between 14a–b (i.e., “the praise”), the translations are obviously struggling at this juncture (cf. NET, NRSV, ESV, HCSB).
71. GBHS §4.1.10.h. Sensing the difficulty surrounding the third § in a series, some translations have opted for concessive force (“even”; so AV, JPSV, NASB), but this is unnecessary subordination.
With סע (א, c²), an inclusion is formed highlighting the three class-name expressions (ולֵּם يִשְׂרָאֵל הָרָאסִים, סע, וַיְסַפְרו). This syntagmatic “triad” operates synonymously, defining the cultic community, the covenant people of God. Distributed over the tricolon, standard epithets are clustered in v. 14 for emphasis. With the plural forms located medially (הָרָאסִים [b²], וַיְסַפְרו [c¹]), the poetics reveal an interplay of syntactical and grammatical equivalences that animates and balances the tricolon of v. 14.

The secondary motivation of v. 14 extends key lexemes initiated in the primary motivation (v. 13) forming an external parallelism between the two tricola. Both semantic interplay and thematic progression emerge. In panveled format, וַיָּשָׁם ("raise up," 14a) extends the earlier וַיִּשְׁמָא ("exalt," 13b), just as הָעָלֹם ("praise," 14b) expands the earlier הֶרֶם ("majesty," 13c). This throng is gathered for praise (v. 13) because of Israel’s restoration (v. 14). The interplay between vv. 13 and 14 creates the following parallel structure: abc : b’c’c”—the additive apposition noted earlier. Moreover, thematic progression occurs between v. 13 and v. 14 as the nominal forms serve as human response to God’s gracious (verbal) acts. This directs the doxology. Extension through resumption links the two tricola. The author has skillfully moved from terms of “elevation” (13b, 14a) to “exaltation” (13c, 14b), wedding jubilant themes in a score of cosmic praise.

Clausal Syntax of the LXX vv. (13–)14

The LXX version conveys clausal relationships that diverge from the MT. These are illustrated in tab. 1 (p. 178) along with some LXX-English translations. Thomson’s translation renders v. 14a as a temporal clause, the consequence of which anticipates praise in the apodosis (v. 14b). The apodosis further assumes the imperatival force initiated in v. 13a, which in context conveys a lighter “subjunctive” nuance than that of a command. Sensing the tension that יִשְׁמָא is the nominative subject of its clause, Brenton’s translation fronts the verb in italics (“there is a hymn for all his saints”), which obscures the English sentence structure with punctuation. Confusingly, in a footnote (z) Brenton offers an unwarranted elliptical-relative clause: “who is the praise of,” in a similar fashion to the English Geneva

72. Observe the relationship of nominals: סע (a) → וַיְסַפְרו (b) → וַיְסַפְרו (c¹) → וַיְסַפְרו (c²).
74. Also observed by L. C. Allen (Psalms 101–150, 312), who calls it “the clue to understanding the controverted second color” (ibid.).
75. From noun to verb even סע ("raise up," 14a) in the closing verse forms a lexical inclusion with its cognate, "height," 1b. The expanded form of מַשְׂמִירָה ("in the highest realms") functions as a plural of spatial extension to describe heaven’s heights (H.-P. Stähli, "מרָה," TLOT 3:1223; cf. GKC §§124a–b; 118d).
76. M. D. Goulder, The Psalms of the Return, 295. Celebrating “international respect, with the raised horn of a victorious army,” Goulder holds that Pss 148 and 147 are from the same fifth-century hand (ibid., 296).
77. Allen construes the cola of vv. 13, 14 similarly: ab : b’c’ (Psalms 101–150, 314).
translation: “which is.” Observe the clausal layout in fig. 4 (p. 179). Nevertheless, v. 14b (elliptically) implies the verb following the subject (ὥμοι [ἐστιν] πᾶσι τοῖς ὁσίοις αὐτοῖς). Had the Greek more formally represented MT’s sentence structure, we might have expected accusative ὦμοι in simple apposition to ψάρας in v. 14a (κέρας λαοῦ αὐτοῦ ὦμοι πᾶσιν).78 Although the syntactical structure of MT v. 14 is strung together in a series of appositional clauses such that v. 14b–c further identifies ἡρῴς, the inflection of the LXX version disallows this literary logic since, generally speaking, “an appositive agrees in case with the word it describes.”79 Instead, v. 14b in the LXX breaks away from v. 14a by initiating an independent clause.

Table 1. LXX Ps 148:14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rahlfis</th>
<th>Thomson</th>
<th>Brenton</th>
<th>NETS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ἅκαι ὑψώσει</td>
<td>aWhen he shall exalt the horn of his people,</td>
<td>aHe will exalt his people's horn; b a hymn belongs to all his devout, c the sons of Israel, a people drawing near to him.</td>
<td>b He will exalt the horn of his people,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>κέρας λαοῦ</td>
<td>b there is a hymn for all his saints, c even of the children of Israel, a people drawing near to him.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>αὐτοῦ ὦμοις</td>
<td>b there is a hymn for all his saints, c even of the children of Israel, a people drawing near to him.</td>
<td>b there is a hymn for all his saints, c even of the children of Israel, a people drawing near to him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>πᾶσι τοῖς ὁσίοις</td>
<td>c among His saints—a among the children of Israel—a people who draw near to Him.</td>
<td>c among His saints—a among the children of Israel—a people who draw near to Him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>αὐτοῦ τοῖς υἱοῖς</td>
<td>c among the children of Israel—a people who draw near to Him.</td>
<td>c among the children of Israel—a people who draw near to Him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ἰσραήλ λαῷ</td>
<td>c among the children of Israel—a people who draw near to Him.</td>
<td>c among the children of Israel—a people who draw near to Him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ἐγγίζοντι αὐτῷ</td>
<td>c among the children of Israel—a people who draw near to Him.</td>
<td>c among the children of Israel—a people who draw near to Him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though the Hebrew poetics are largely lost in the LXX translation, the basic parallelismus membrorum remains.80 Like v. 13c, v. 14b is related to the stitch immediately preceding it.81 It is possible that the parallelism of clauses above is twofold, making 2a parallel to 1a and 2b to 1b. Where 1a and 2a convey the “raising” (ὑψῶ) of the name and horn respectively, 1b and 2b convey parallel, supplemental clauses to these, which assume their own verbs (ἐστιν). “Confession” (ἐξομολογησίς, 1b; ὦμοι, 2b) issues forth from “raising” (ὑψώθη, 1a; ὑψώσει, 2a), though the “chronology” of events (1a/b to 2a/b) is not the point of the stanza.

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80. Verse 14b in B (Vaticanus) is lacking (ὠμοὶ τοῖς ὁσίοις αὐτοῖς), such that v. 14c follows v. 14a with an awkward dative beginning the “parallel” line.
81. Since poetic relationships are often logically ambiguous, especially in translation, syntactical significance on the clause level is sometimes mitigated and often cannot clarify larger interpretive issues.
Another option suggests that, whereas v. 13c further fleshes out the Lord’s exalted name (appositionally)—illustrated by cosmic praise (ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν . . . ἐκ τῆς γῆς) in vv. 1–12 (cf. vv. 1, 7)—v. 14 more arguably extends the result of the raised horn in the form of a praise hymn from his people (so Thomson). Put differently, ὕμνος does not equate with κέρας but elucidates its consequence. In this way, v. 13b–c functions as the first of a bipartite ground statement with καὶ (v. 14a) extending, as a parallel unit, the causal nuance (ὅτι) with a simple coordination of clauses.82

In either case, the general sense is a compound “rationale” for praise (1a/b, “his name is confessed”; 2a/b, “he will raise the horn”). The subtle shift in concept of the MT is presented more explicitly by the LXX. Both the “elevation” (ἐν, 13a) of majesty and “exaltation” (ὁρ, 4a) of the horn are rendered by the same lexeme in the LXX, ὑψώο (“to exalt”). As sure as the “name of the Lord” was “exalted” (ὑψώθη, v. 13) in confession about him (ἡ ἐξομολογήσις αὐτοῦ), so too “he [κύριος] shall exalt” (ὑψώσει) his people’s κέρας (v. 14a), resulting in grand praise.83 This coupled with the reappearance of ὑψώο in LXX Ps 149:4 (= MT ὁρ, “to beautify”) suggests semantic leveling, such that LXX forces a comparison or equation of these concepts.84

The construction of ἔρ + ὅ occurs only three times (Ezek 29:21; MT Ps 132:17, 148:14). The Greek renders ὅ as a dative in Ezek 29:21 (τῷ οἴκῳ) and LXX Ps 131:17 (τῷ Δαυίδ) but as a genitive in Ps 148:14 (λαοῦ). Though the

82. Paratactic waw rendered καὶ is ambiguous. Lexical cohesion with ὑψώο in vv. 13b and 14a offers some textual basis for positing the present analysis, despite the poetic ambiguity (see A. Aejmelaus, Parataxis in the Septuagint: A Study of Their Renderings of the Hebrew Coordinate Clauses in the Greek Pentateuch [Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1982], 12–55).


84. Semantic leveling refers to “one to many” Greek-to-Hebrew renderings. Though only three occurrences of ὑψώο appear in FD, it renders three different Hebrew lexemes, arguably justifying semantic leveling (A. Pietersma, A New English Translation of the Septuagint, 542).
dative construction τῷ λαῷ ἀντίκα could have been used in keeping with the way ἀντίκα is translated in 14b–c, the psalms translator consciously opted for a genitive. The adjectival nature of the genitive crafts a more intimate relationship between the κέρας and the λαός to whom it belongs, at least at the broad semantic level as an alternative to the adverbial nuances available through the dative (e.g., commodi). The departure from dative to genitive suggests that the lifting of κέρας is not expressly an action external to the people (cf. nRSV, “He has raised up a horn for his people”) but rather elevation of the people’s horn, an integral relationship that involves the people in the very act that they do not initiate.

Since Israel is in the fore in v. 14, ὅσιος (v. 14c) following the assumed verb likely functions as a dative of possession (a hymn belongs to), a nuance recognized by the NETS. Like the Hebrew, v. 14c is an appositional clause to v. 14b, specifically, οὗτς in dative simple apposition to ὅσιος. Also like the MT, τοῖς ὅσιοι Ἰσραήλ (v. 14c) is appositional to v. 14b, and λαῷ ἐγγίζοντι αὐτῷ (v. 14c) is again appositional to 14c.83

The LXX also deviates from patterns anticipated by the MT, even though poetry is often “semantically ambiguous” regarding time. The LXX renders the pointed Hiphil preterite µρυ with a future form (καί ὑψώσετι) as do the Syriac and Vulgate.84 While one might expect an aorist form (ὑψάσθη) to render a Hebrew preterite, the future opens the door to a host of possible theological interpretations regarding the identity of “horn” in its reception history.

Nevertheless, there is no reason to suggest a theologically motivated future verbal form for the Greek translation, since the more apparent explanation for this shift is a linguistic one.85 The unpointed Vorlage was

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85. Unless we wish to argue for a more ambiguous idea that the hymn is somehow for the benefit of the devout and not necessarily even sung by them.

86. Though one witness (Holmes-Parsons 262 in the Cambridge LXX) does testify to the aorist subjunctive υψώση (”may he raise”) for MT µρυ, Jerome’s translation of the Vulgate from the LXX also renders a future indicative verb (ὑψάσθη = exaltabit), in contrast to his Psalterium juxta Hebraeos, which employs a perfect tense (ὑψάσθη = exaltavit).


Ruppert and Brüning also recognize the parallel text in 1 Sam 2:10. Ruppert explains the similarity for the LXX as a Messianic development without any consideration for translational issues, whereas Brüning notes that though the Hebrew verb in v. 14 is Vergangenheitstempus (in the past), it likely carries future implications, as interpreted by the LXX (Ruppert, “Aufforderung und die Schöpfung zum Lob Gottes,” 228 n. 4; Brüning, “Psalm 148 und das Psalmenbeten,” 5). The future form of 148:14 rendering a Hebrew preterite is unique to Book Five. Two other preterite renderings such as these are present tense forms in Greek. In the MT, there are some 10 preterite 3s forms of µρυ (= µρυ). Only Ps 148:14 is rendered with a future; the others are aorists: Exod 7:20, Num 20:11, 1 Sam 9:24, 2 Kgs 2:13, Ezek 10:4, Hos 13:6, Dan 12:7,
more likely understood by the translator as a Hiphil jussive (יָרֵא). A jussive reading would most likely produce the future indicative of the LXX (and hence the later attestations of the Latin and Syriac). In fact, Hillers prefers the jussive form for the MT as more expected in a prayer/petition sequence of Psalm openings and closings, though this is not immediately clear from the LXX given the prior imperatival renderings of jussive forms in vv. 5 and 13.88

“Horn” in the Final Doxology (MT Psalms 146–50 / LXX 145–50)

Like the prior examples, where praise follows militaristic victory, it also occurs here. Themes of deliverance and militaristic advantage converge in the FD.89 By looking back to Pss 146–47 and ahead to 149–50, Ps 148:14 wedds these themes. Yet this language of doxology shifts “victory” from a merely historical plain to the status of confession, a living hope and expectation.

In the FD, God is the Creator (146[145]:5–6; 148:5–6) who delivers his people by rebuilding Jerusalem and gathering exiles/Diaspora (147[146]:2).90 He helps the poor and sets prisoners free (146[145]:7–8), heals the brokenhearted (147[146]:3), and brings peace (147:3–14). He blesses Jerusalem by strengthening the city (147:2). Only Israel, his devout people (148:14; 149:1, 4) receive revelation (147:8–9).91

In addition to deliverance, the Lord also judges and executes judgment on wrongs. The Lord loves the righteous, those who fear him (147[146]:11, 147:12), but causes the wicked to perish (146[145]:9); he picks up the meek but humiliates sinners (147[146]:6, 149:4). His judgment on enemies comes in the form of elements (147:4–7; 148:8) and sword against the nations (149:7–9).91 Within this literary context, Israel’s deliverance and restoration brings about military advantage (148:14), such that their reputation as the people of God endorses their mission to police the world (149:6) with the aforementioned kingdom ethic. Goulder draws a similar conclusion: “In practice the lifting up of his people’s horn probably means military success. . . . Ps 148:14 is in close parallel to the honour of all

2 Chr 35:7. There are 4 jussive forms of יָרֵא (= יָרַא): Num 17:2 (= aor. pl. impv.), 24:7 (= fut.); 1 Sam 2:10 (= fut.); 2 Sam 22:47 (= fut.).
89. C. C. Broyles (1999) represents a minority opinion, stating: “Israel’s power is now embodied in their worship of God . . . not in a political or militaristic fashion but by means of praise” (Psalms, 516; emphasis added; so J. H. Waltner, Psalms, 706). However, the earlier opinion of F. Delitzsch seems more accurate: “The Israel of the Exile had lost its horn . . . its defensive and offensive power” (Psalms, 3:409).
his saints in Ps 149:9, in a clearly military context.\footnote{Goulder, The Psalms of the Return, 295. For a discussion of Ezra’s “edict” (7:12–26) and the broader historical backdrop, see Goulder’s appendix (pp. 306–24), esp. pp. 316–22.} Contextually, it is no surprise that divine “restoration” (םֵאות, 148:14) immediately prompts Israel’s “praise” ( トラם, Ps 149:6). In Ps 149:6, the reader hears an “eschatological hymn, with reference to praise during battle against the nations.”\footnote{Ibid.} In an echo of 149:6, 1QM describes the victorious army singing a hymn of praise to God and carrying a banner, heralding: トラם אל (“Praise of God”).\footnote{Ibid.}

In FD, Zion is central to the king, who is God (146[145]:10, 149:2), for the people are not to trust in humankind (146[145]:3–4, 147[146]:10) but must praise the Lord for his sovereign acts (150:2). Yet even the cosmos is juxtaposed to Zion as the stage on which this righteous rule is to be enacted. In Ps 148, the cosmos indeed praises, culminating in praise from “everything that has breath” (150:6).

The hope for peaceful borders in Jerusalem (Zion, Ps 147:112) anticipates the language of judgment (vv. 5–7). The elemental language in these verses is certainly juxtaposed with that of 148:8, where description reminiscent of the Exodus judgment rhetorically praises the Lord’s rule over his kingdom.\footnote{Cf. Exod 9:18–34; LXX Pss 17:13, 77:8–48, 104:32; Job 38:22–23; Wis 16:16–27; Sir 43:13–21.} But judgment on enemies also implies a protective rule over a kingdom, and the raised horn of 148:14 heralds just this sort of setting in militaristic tones. For Süring, v. 14 confirms that Ps 132:17 is a “Messianic prophecy.”\footnote{Süring, The Horn-Motif, 356–57.} Yet a reading of v. 14 within the FD suggests that the “horn” of the people is their protection from enemies and their restored reputation among the nations. Prophecy, in any predictive sense, seems unlikely here. Further, Ps 148 takes on its own role in the FD and need not find substance in the overtly Davidic context of Ps 132:17, which employs its own expression (גָּזַע, not גזע).

Psalm 148 may be “messianic” in the sense that political and spiritual restoration is anticipated along covenantal lines, but it seems contrived to suggest that a particular event is in view. Israel’s advantage is both militaristic and religious. Yet significantly, the “national” thrust of Zion/Jerusalem in Ps 146[145]:10, Ps 147[146]:1, and Ps 149:2 is extended in 148 to an international and cosmic scale. This juxtaposition draws attention to the community of faith (148:14) and away from physical borders, as such. But the Zion militaristic nuances that emerge in Ps 149 further validate the protective national and religious legitimacy codified by “horn” in Ps 148:14. A tension thus emerges in the FD when Ps 148 is read within its surrounding co-texts.
CONCLUSION

Using several methods, we have attempted to compare the MT and LXX versions in order to better understand what “raising a horn” means in Ps 148:14a. Commentators are largely divided between (1) literary-metaphorical (2) and historical-literal interpretations of “horn.” To explain “horn” in Ps 148:14, metaphorical notions of “strength” or “power” are too vague and do not adequately convey what is meant. Historical references juggle notions of a king/messiah with political reconstitution.

In the MT, appositional clauses create a majestic crescendo in the closing tricolon of v. 14, highlighting the Lord’s covenant intimacy with his “loyal followers.” For the LXX, the collocation shows a formal relationship with its presumed Vorlage, trading a future verbal form for a Hiphil jussive. In the FD, “victory” has shifted from a flat reference on the historical plain to the status of a hymnic confession, expressed as a dual rationale in the LXX version.

Thus, “raising a horn” in Ps 148:14a has the contextualized significance of Israel’s political and military viability. In the setting of 148:14a, a national intervention of God animates praise of cosmic proportion. Judgment and deliverance from enemies with affiliated peace are the essential elements of the collocation. In semantic gradation, these nuances move from actual battle victory (“to raise a horn”) or defeat (“to cut off horns”) to a hope in restoration that is celebrated in doxology.

The sociopolitical reality of exile gathers themes of deliverance and judgment for 148:14a from the surrounding FD. The ethical treatment of the poor and needy is prominent in the FD, and an expectation for national restoration pervades this unit. In the LXX, this is more explicitly the case with Diaspora Judaism. Against a postexilic background with unique political realities for the Judean returnees, “raising a horn” describes both the judgment of Israel’s enemies and Israel’s restored reputation on an international scale.

The Creator (146[LXX 145]:5–6, 148:5–6) not only recreates using the Diaspora (147[146]:2), he also rescues the feeble and captive alike (146[145]:7–8), establishing peace (147:[3]14). The Lord also purifies with judgment, whether through global elements (147:[4–7]15–18) or national sword (149:7–9). The hope in a regained national potency affirms Israel’s theocentric role in the cosmos. Not surprisingly, a deliverance of eschatological proportion (148:14) prompts an eschatological praise (149:6, 150:6).