

**THE USE OF MOSES TRADITIONS
IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN:**

**A CONTRIBUTION TO JOHN'S USE
OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the ways in which Moses traditions are used in the Gospel of John. The term “Moses traditions” is meant to refer to the stories connected with the person of Moses in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Later developments of these traditions are taken into account, if they are relevant to John’s use of Moses traditions.

The study addresses three areas of concern: First, the literary context and narrative significance of each instance of a use of a Moses tradition in John’s Gospel is investigated. Secondly, the probability of the suggested links to the Old Testament *Vorlagen* is assessed. It is argued that in many cases the identification of a suggested link cannot be strictly separated from the interpretation of the link. Thirdly, the theological significance of each suggested link is presented. It is argued that the most significant theological inference from the use of Moses traditions in John is the sociological function of the christological use of Moses traditions. Although Moses traditions are used to illuminate the person of Jesus, the function of that use is time and again to define the identity of Christian believers in relation to mainstream Judaism.

The introductory chapter presents a short survey of scholarly work on John’s use of the OT. It also tackles the details involved in detecting and interpreting OT allusions in a NT text. Finally, it discusses the explicit use of the name “Moses” in John’s Gospel and establishes the thesis of the sociological function of the use of Moses traditions.

Chapter Two discusses the use of Sinai traditions in John 1 and 2. It is argued that Ex 33-34 provides the crucial OT background to Jn 1:14-18, and that Ex 19-24 illuminates several details of John 1:19-2:11.

Chapter Three follows the use of Passover traditions throughout the whole Gospel. It is argued that Passover traditions serve mainly to illuminate aspects of Jesus’ death.

Chapter Four presents the use of wilderness traditions in John 3 and 6-8. A multifaceted picture emerges that includes a variety of ways in which wilderness traditions are evoked. Also, an excursus is added that discusses the question of how John’s use of the OT affects the theological value of the OT revelation.

Chapter Five tackles several instances in which the prophet like Moses is evoked or in which Moses and Jesus are compared as persons. Chapter Six summarizes the main results of the study.

Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work, and was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire. It is not being submitted for any comparable academic award at any educational institution in the United Kingdom or elsewhere. The views expressed in this work are my own, and do not represent those of the University.

Rainer K. W. Behrens

15 March 2004

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Preface

‘To many the form of this “exposition” will perhaps seem strange; it will seem to them too strict to be edifying, and too edifying to be strictly scientific. As to this latter point I have no opinion. As to the first, however, this does not express my opinion of the matter; and if it were true that the form is too strict to be edifying, that, according to my conception, would be a fault. It is one question whether it cannot be edifying to everyone, seeing that not everyone possesses the capacity for following it; it is another question whether it possesses the specific character of the edifying. From the Christian point of view everything, absolutely everything should serve for edification. The sort of learning which is not in the last resort edifying is precisely for that reason unchristian.’

Sören Kierkegaard, Preface to *The Sickness unto Death*

Kierkegaard wrote these words presumably with some anxiety whether or not his intellectually challenging text *The Sickness unto Death* would serve to edify (in the best sense of that term). Personally I think that it does, and that the books and articles I read in the process of writing this dissertation did not always do justice to Kierkegaard’s concern. I hope that the present thesis, despite the technicality that cannot be avoided in a project like this, may be considered by some who want to or have to read it not only intellectually stimulating but also edifying in the Kierkegaardian sense.

I would like to thank the following people who in one way or another helped me complete this dissertation:

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Abbreviations

ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
AGSU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentums
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
AOTC	Apollos Old Testament Commentary
ATh	Arbeiten zur Theologie
<i>AThR</i>	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
AUS	American University Studies
BETHL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BGBE	Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament
BRS	Biblical Resources Series
BSL	Biblical Studies Library
<i>BThB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BU	Biblische Untersuchungen
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CB.NT	Coniectanea Biblica – New Testament Series
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
<i>CJT</i>	<i>Canadian Journal of Theology</i>
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
EHS	Europäische Hochschulschriften
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
<i>ExpT</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>GuL</i>	<i>Glaube und Leben</i>
HC	Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament
HThKNT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUT	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie

ICC	International Critical Commentary
IRTh	Issues in Religion and Theology
IVP	Inter Varsity Press
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBTh</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie</i>
JCHS	Jewish and Christian Heritage Series
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSS	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KEKNT	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>KuD</i>	<i>Kerygma und Dogma</i>
<i>LThR</i>	<i>Lutheran Theological Review</i>
<i>LTP</i>	<i>Laval théologique et philosophique</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary of the New Testament
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovSup	Supplement to Novum Testamentum
<i>NRT</i>	<i>La nouvelle revue théologique</i>
NTA	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTD	Neues Testament Deutsch
<i>NTPG</i>	<i>The New Testament and the People of God</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
ÖTKNT	Ökumenischer Taschenkommentar Neues Testament
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
PBTM	Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs
PTMS	Princeton Theological Monograph Series
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RHE	<i>Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique</i>
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Recherches des science religieuse</i>
RTL	<i>Revue théologique de Louvain</i>
SANT	Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Studies
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>

SNT	Schriften des Neuen Testaments
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SSN	Studia Semitica Neerlandica
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TeolSkr	Teologische Skrifter
ThKNT	Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>ThLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
<i>ThR</i>	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentary
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie
TVG	Theologische Verlagsgemeinschaft
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
UTB	Universitätstaschenbücher
UUA	Uppsala Universitets årsskrift
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>
<i>ZWT</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie</i>

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1. Introduction

By way of introductory remarks, I shall first state the aim of the present study. Secondly, a short survey of scholarly work on the use of the OT in John's Gospel will be provided. Thirdly, introductory remarks on the handling of allusions will be given, focusing on four aspects of the task: (1) the tension between overly anxious scepticism and overconfident creativity towards detecting allusions; (2) the relation between determination and interpretation of allusions; (3) the question of the locus of the allusion; and (4) the issue of 'atomistic allusion'¹ and evocation of the OT cotext² of a given allusion. Fourthly, an overview of the explicit occurrences of the name Μωϋσῆς will be given; this overview leads to the basic thesis of this study, namely, that the christological use of the Moses traditions points to a sociological function of that use. Fifthly, a few remarks on the conception of the study complete the introduction.

1.1 The aim of the study

The aim of the present study is to investigate the ways in which Moses traditions are used in the Fourth Gospel. By 'Moses traditions' I refer broadly to everything connected with the life of Moses as related in Exodus to Deuteronomy. In addition, I take into account Moses traditions as reflected in other OT texts and later Jewish literature, if these texts can be shown to have an impact on the understanding of John's use of Moses traditions.

The fact that Moses traditions are used in John's Gospel is neither a new nor a controversial suggestion. Thus, in a study that marks the first attempt to gather together various kinds of references to Moses traditions in John's Gospel, T. F. Glasson refers to an exposition of John 1-12 by F. B. Meyer entitled *The Life and Light of Men* from 1891. It was in this book that he found the idea that in John 6-8, three factors of the wilderness experience of Israel at the time of the exodus from Egypt

'reappeared in Christian dress. In chapter 6 instead of the manna we have Christ as the true bread coming down from heaven; in chapter 7 he offers the living water corresponding to the

¹ I coin this phrase in imitation of MEYER, *Christus Faber*, 29, who speaks of 'atomistic citation' to refer to quotations not designed to evoke the broader literary context of the quotation. The concept of an 'atomistic use of Scripture' was already suggested by CADBURY, 'Titles', 369.

² The term 'cotext' is used in distinction from 'text' and 'context' in the way proposed by COTTERELL; TURNER, *Linguistics*, 16, who understand the texts of Scripture as *utterances*, not as context-less text: 'the understanding of *utterances* requires some measure of understanding of the *text*, the actual words used; the *cotext*, the sentences, paragraphs, chapters, surrounding the text and related to it; and the *context*, the sociological and historical setting of the text.' For an application to a NT text see WENDLAND, 'Tale', 121, who further differentiates two kinds of cotexts: 'The cotext of a given text, or oral/written speech event, is any discourse that is somehow associated with it in linguistic or literary terms. We might distinguish between two types of cotext; the intratextual, which refers to any passage that is related to another within the demarcated text itself; and intertextual, which then applies to any other relevant text.' The methodological framework of this phraseology is discourse analysis; cf. the work of BROWN, YULE, *Discourse Analysis*, and the convenient overview by GREEN, 'Discourse Analysis'.

streams from the rock which Moses smote; and in chapter 8 instead of the fiery pillar we have Christ as the Light of the World in following whom men walk no longer in darkness.’³

Finding the same idea also in Westcott’s commentary, Glasson continues: ‘This interpretation of John 6-8 seemed to me so obvious that I have seldom referred to this section of John since without recalling it.’ Set on track to look for Mosaic traditions by this initial evidence, Glasson presents in his book the fruit of his search for explicit and implicit references to Moses as a person and to events which were part of the exodus. However, in contrast to the interest in the comparison between the person of Moses and the person of Jesus, which is even more the focus of the studies of Meeks,⁴ Haacker,⁵ Boismard,⁶ and Harstine,⁷ my own focus is not on Johannine

³ GLASSON, *Moses*, 10.

⁴ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*. Meeks’ study, praised by John Ashton as an ‘outstanding dissertation’ (ASHTON, *Understanding*, 93), and by Louis Martyn as ‘a model of careful research’ (MARTYN, *History*, 106 n. 156 [with special reference to Meeks’ chapters on religio-historical sources]), is a religio-historical contribution to Johannine christology. In contrast to Bultmann’s attempt to construct an elaborate theory to account for the *total* christological picture in John’s Gospel, Meeks deliberately chose ‘a narrow aspect of the Johannine christology’ (*Prophet-King*, 16). He takes on board some suggestions of Carsten Colpe (see COLPE, *Schule*) with respect to an adequate use of gnostic redeemer myths: ‘Just as Colpe calls for a precise, philologically based exploration of the redeemer myth wherever it occurs within gnostic sources, so it is appropriate in a study of the Fourth Gospel to focus attention upon a single phenomenon or group of closely related phenomena. This is the only means by which scholarship can move from Bultmann’s great synthesis, now made problematical, toward the possibility of a new synthesis which may account more adequately for the additional facts and insights that have come to light.’ (*Prophet-King*, 16). In order to contribute to such a new synthesis Meeks chose the motif of the prophet-king. Evaluations of Meeks’ study can be found in e.g. BÜHNER, *Gesandte*, 62-69. Cf. the short verdict of ASHTON, *Understanding*, 100: ‘Unfortunately the theme Meeks himself selected for investigation, the figure described by the merging of the functions and titles of “prophet” and “king”, rests near the periphery of the Gospel’s web of concern, which explains why his meticulously conducted enquiry is in some respects so inconclusive.’ However, at the beginning of section 1.4 I will show that Meeks himself pointed beyond christological issues to questions about the identity of disciples of Moses and disciples of Jesus, questions that will become relevant in my own investigation of Moses traditions.

⁵ HAACKER, *Stiftung*. Like Meeks’ study, Haacker’s dissertation *Die Stiftung des Heils* has to be seen in the context of studies triggered by aspects of Bultmann’s work on John’s Gospel. Haacker’s aim is to replace the notion of Jesus as the revealer, immensely important for Bultmann and a vital link to his preferred religio-historical material of comparison, the Mandaean sources and the gnostic redeemer myth, with the notion of Jesus as *Stifter*. Haacker takes this term, approximately to be translated ‘founder’, from the *Religionstypologie* of G. Mensching and G. van der Leeuw (see MENSCHING, *Religion*, and VAN DER LEEUW, *Einführung*). The starting point of his study is the attempt to establish Jn 1:17 as ‘Zielpunkt des Prologs und Themaangabe des vierten Evangeliums.’ (*Stiftung*, 25-36, quotation p. 25). His insights are helpful in that they point to the significance of this verse for the story of the Gospel. However, the whole idea of Jesus as a founder of a new religion analogous to Moses as a founder of a religion does seem misdirected, since it only accounts for contrasts like the one between disciples of Moses and disciples of Jesus in John 9, but does not explain the continuity envisaged in passages like Jn 5:45-47, where believing in Moses and believing in Christ is not depicted as mutually exclusive, but as compatible. On pp. 34-35, Haacker mentions the latter aspect, but characteristically does not say anything as to its meaning or relevance.

⁶ The English version of Boismard’s *Moses or Jesus: An Essay in Johannine Christology* from 1993 is a translation of the French *Moïse ou Jésus: Essai de christologie johannique* from 1988. Boismard, well known for his rather complicated reconstruction of pre-Gospel traditions (cf. the illuminating diagram of Boismard’s theory in SMITH, *Gospels*, 143), presents a lot of ingenious suggestions as to possible allusions to Moses traditions in John’s Gospel and connects those with his view of the evolution of Johannine christology in four stages. Meeks, Haacker, and Boismard will nevertheless be major discussion partners, esp. in ch. 5.

christology. The present study, focusing on the use of Moses traditions, has to be seen primarily as an investigation of an aspect of John's use of the OT.

The following short survey of scholarly work briefly sketches major research into John's use of the OT and establishes that there is room for a study aiming specifically at a more comprehensive understanding of John's use of Moses traditions than is currently available.

1.2 The use of the OT in John's Gospel: A short survey of relevant scholarship

A comprehensive *Forschungsgeschichte* on John's use of the OT has not yet been done,⁸ though short orientations can be found in various places.⁹ Most comprehensive so far is Obermann, who surveys the field from the study by Erich Haupt in 1871¹⁰ to the third volume of Hans Hübner's *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* in 1995.¹¹ Obermann concludes his survey by pointing out the following results of research: 1. Several authors understand the OT as 'Mutterboden der johanneischen Theologie'.¹² 2. Some tried, though not very successfully, to relate the OT-quotations to source theories.¹³ 3. Those who investigated especially the sources of John's quotations do not agree in their conclusions.¹⁴ 4. The frequent use of typological elements was seen by some.¹⁵ 5. The theological use is dominated by John's view of the christological fulfilment of scripture.¹⁶ Obermann sees three areas in which research concerning the quotations is needed:

'Obgleich die Quellenfrage und der Wortlaut der johanneischen Zitate in der Forschung eingehend behandelt wurden, ergeben sich bezüglich der hermeneutischen Prämissen des

⁷ HARSTINE, *Moses*, explores Moses as a character in the narrative world of John and compares this with Moses in the Synoptics and in other Jewish writings and with Homer in Greek writings. Harstine restricts himself to narrative critical remarks about characterization and does not engage the question of the use of Moses tradition which is the focus of my study.

⁸ So OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 3 n. 1.

⁹ Cf. e.g. REIM, *Studien*, 1-3; HANSON, *Gospel*, 248-253; SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*, xi-xv; KYSAR, 'Fourth Gospel', 2416-2421; HUMANN, 'Function', 31-54.

¹⁰ See HAUPT, *Citate*.

¹¹ The survey can be found in OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 3-36.

¹² OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 34. Important in this category are THOMA, 'Testament'; FRANKE, *Testament*; BARRETT, 'Testament'; SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium I*, 27-29, 103-106 (= IDEM, *Gospel I*, 38-40, 121-124); HENGEL, 'Schriftauslegung'; HANSON, *Gospel*; SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*. Since Obermann's study, one has to add HAMID-KHANI, *Revelation*, who argues from a distinctly theological perspective that the special nature of Johannine language, i.e. its revealing and concealing quality, is understandable only when its total dependence on the Old Testament is taken seriously.

¹³ FAURE, 'Zitate'; GOODWIN, 'Sources'; NOACK, *Tradition*, § 4; REIM, *Studien*.

¹⁴ REIM, *Studien*: LXX is insignificant as a source of John's quotations; SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*: all quotations are from LXX (in its original form); FREED, *Quotations*, and MENKEN, *Quotations*: nearly all quotations are from LXX.

¹⁵ Franke; Reim; Schnackenburg; LONGENECKER, *Exegesis*.

¹⁶ So Barrett, Longenecker, Schnackenburg, Hengel, Hanson, Schuchard, Menken, Hübner.

Evangelisten, der methodischen Aneignung der Schrift sowie der Bedeutung der Schrift für die Theologie und Konzeption des Evangeliums offene Fragen.’¹⁷

Against this background he formulates the aim of his own study,

‘die sich der Untersuchung der christologischen Aneignung der expliziten Schriftzitate sowie des Schriftverständnisses des Evangelisten unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner hermeneutischen Voraussetzungen widmet.’¹⁸

Obermann does not include allusions, since on the one hand the material would be too much, and on the other hand allusions are harder to verify methodologically:

‘Eine Vielzahl johanneischer Anspielungen sind auf Grund ihrer Einarbeitung in die johanneische Darlegung nur schwer zu bestimmen ... und eignen sich demzufolge nicht in dem Maße für eine präzise Bestimmung der johanneischen Hermeneutik (...) wie das durch die expliziten Schriftzitate möglich ist.’¹⁹

This statement reflects a certain reservation about allusions that I will address in the section on the handling of allusions.

With respect to John’s use of OT quotations in particular, Obermann sees the following aspects as important: 1. The influence of the evangelist’s post-Easter perspective (Jn 20:9). 2. The influence of John’s theological and conceptual ideas. 3. The influence of christological aspects and motifs on the understanding and wording of the quotations. 4. The redactional work of the evangelist. 5. The literary context of the quotations in John’s Gospel. 6. The position of John’s Gospel over against the ‘Kreis jüdischer Schriften’ which were still in the process of canonization when John was written. 7. The significance of scripture for the Johannine community. 8. The historical place of John’s Gospel as illuminated by his use of scripture compared to Jewish methods of interpreting scripture.²⁰

Since quotations are one way in which Moses traditions are evoked in John’s Gospel,²¹ I will include some of Obermann’s points and other significant contributions to the question of quotations²² at the appropriate points during the course of my study. However, since my study does not tackle the problem of quotations as such but the use of Moses traditions, I have to include also insights from studies that go beyond quotations. Pre-eminent here is the work of N. T. Wright on the subversive retelling of stories²³ that I will link with allusions to Moses traditions in parts of John’s narrative. An introduction to Wright’s ideas will be given at the first relevant point of my study, the reading of Jn 1:14-18 against the background of Ex 33-34 in ch. 3.

¹⁷ OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 35.

¹⁸ OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 35.

¹⁹ OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 35 n. 191.

²⁰ All of these points are listed in OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 35-36.

²¹ Most important are the quotations of either Ps 78:24 or Ex 16:4, 15 in Jn 6:31, and of either Ex 12:10, 46 or Ps 34:21 in Jn 19:36.

²² Including e.g. FREED, *Quotations*, SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*, and MENKEN, *Quotations*.

²³ See WRIGHT, *NTPG*, ch. 3.

Furthermore, on the basis of a close comparison between John and Second Isaiah in his study *Truth on Trial*, A. T. Lincoln develops the idea of a cosmic trial as the conceptual background of John's Gospel. Although in this comparison quotations and allusions have their respective places, Lincoln goes beyond questions of literary dependence and investigates the theological implications of the links to this important part of the OT. I will apply some of his insights and methodological steps to the question of John's use of Moses traditions at the appropriate points in my study. However, since the question of allusions pervades much of my study, some introductory remarks are in order now.

1.3 Some remarks on the handling of allusions

In order to work our way through the many issues connected with the notion of literary allusions I subdivide this section into four parts as indicated above.

1.3.1 *Two extremes to be avoided*

On a first basic level, one has to take into account two opposite positions, neither of which do justice to the phenomenon of allusion. On the one hand, over-ambitious attempts to find allusions everywhere can easily end up as a form of 'Parallelomania'²⁴ or 'Typologicalmania'.²⁵ As Allison says, 'we must beware of auditory hallucinations.'²⁶ The fact is that there are interpretations that work with allusions and typologies²⁷ in a methodologically irresponsible way. Confronted with such interpretations, one cannot but agree with E. Miner who says that, occasionally, '... the ability to declare typology absent is a kind of proof of sound modern critical method.'²⁸

On the other hand, the desire for methodological clarity as well as the difficulties of defining what an allusion is and how it is to be detected should not go so far as to neglect allusions completely. We have already encountered a quotation by Obermann that points in this direction.²⁹ A clearer example of an understanding of *Wissenschaftlichkeit* that does not allow for any imagination and creativity in dealing with allusions is Martin Rese's article on

²⁴ SANDMEL, 'Parallelomania'; cf. also DONALDSON, 'Parallels'.

²⁵ ALLISON, *Moses*, 18.

²⁶ ALLISON, *Moses*, 18.

²⁷ Typology is understood by Allison as a special form of allusion. There is no shortage of discussions of typology from a variety of angles; cf. esp. HAYS, *Echoes*, 95-102; FISHBANE, *Interpretation*, 350-379, 408-440. Significant contributions include also GOPPELT, *Typos*; BARR, *Interpretation*, 103-148; BULTMANN, 'Ursprung'; FRYE, *Code*, 78-138; cf. also CHILDS, *Biblical Theology*, 13-14; MACDONALD, 'Philosophy'; OSTMEYER, 'Typologie'; ALSUP, 'Typology', *ABD*, 6.682-685; EVANS, 'Typology', *DJG*, 862-866; DAVIDSON, *Typology*; FREI, *Eclipse*, 2ff.; for the phenomenon in Josephus see DAUBE, 'Typology'.

²⁸ MINER, *Typology*, 377.

²⁹ See above, p. 4.

intertextuality, which includes a rejection of the approach of Richard Hays' book *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*.³⁰ Discussing first the notion of 'intertextuality', Rese states:

'Über Sinn und Unsinn einer neuen Methode entscheiden auch in der Exegese die konkreten Ergebnisse, die mit dieser neuen Methode erzielt worden sind, nicht jedoch theoretische Reflexionen.'³¹

I agree that in the end only the results count, although the contrast with theoretical reflection seems quite unwarranted. Is not any exegetical procedure based on theoretical reflection, be it a method well established in traditional critical orthodoxy, or a more innovative and imaginative approach like the one of Hays? The question seems to be whether a chosen approach can be shown to be adequate to its object of investigation, not how much or what kind of theoretical reflection is in the background.

Real confusion seems to reign, however, in a note Rese adds after recommending a result-oriented approach:

'An diesem Punkt sehe ich keinen Unterschied zwischen der Arbeitsweise der Naturwissenschaften und dem Vorgehen der wissenschaftlichen Exegese des Alten und Neuen Testaments. Ich setze freilich voraus, daß diese Exegese den biblischen Texten nur das entnehmen will, was sie sagen, und daß sie nicht die eigenen Gedanken in sie hineinliest oder aus ihnen heraushört. Deshalb scheint es mir bedenklich, wenn HAYS ausdrücklich betont, Exegese sei "a modest imaginative craft, not an exact science", und es gebe nur "certain rules of thumb", um "intertextual echoes" in den Paulusbriefen zu identifizieren (29).'³²

Apparently Rese wishes to secure a certain *Wissenschaftlichkeit* of exegesis, but he does not see Hays' approach as precisely in line with result-orientation. The theoretical reflections of Hays' approach include not only comments on the imaginative aspect of the task, but show in particular an awareness that only the results of his exegesis can persuade a critical reader.³³ In contrast to this, I suspect that Rese's understanding of '*wissenschaftliche Exegese*' allows only certain clearly defined exegetical methods, of which Hays' approach is not part. An interpretation is judged to be scientific if it is in accordance with those methods. Does Rese suggest that the methods he has in mind necessarily produce undisputed results or a better illumination of biblical texts? He certainly gets dangerously close to a positivistic approach to exegetical method.

The alternative to a parallelomaniac overconfidence to find allusions everywhere is not a methodological rejection of imaginative exegesis, but an approach that takes into account (1) the

³⁰ See RESE, 'Intertextualität'. Concerning the term 'intertextuality' in Hays' work, it has to be said that although Hays is aware of the philosophical implications of the term as used by e.g. Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes, he uses it in a fairly non-ideological way: 'Without denying the value or intrinsic interest of such investigations [i.e. by Kristeva and Barthes], I propose instead to discuss the phenomenon of intertextuality in Paul's letters in a more limited sense, focusing on his actual citations and allusions to specific texts.' (*Echoes*, 15). In his response to critiques of his monograph (see HAYS, 'Rebound') he is even prepared to give up the term.

³¹ RESE, 'Intertextualität', 433.

³² RESE, 'Intertextualität', 433 n. 5. The number in brackets refers to HAYS, *Echoes*.

³³ See below, p. 8, in the discussion of criteria for determining allusions, Hays' final and most important criterion of 'satisfaction'.

nature of the texts and (2) the abilities of the texts' readers and hearers in the original cultural situation. Also, an adequate approach has to be based on some theoretical reflections on criteria for determining allusions and on the relation of determination to interpretation. The discussion of criteria will be the subject of the next section, but the first two requirements are illuminated by the following perceptive insights of Allison:

'[I]n the Bible, almost every book is charged with allusion: to things and events, above all to the high points in salvation-history. From at least the Babylonian exile on, Jewish literary history – this includes the New Testament – is to significant degree a chain of responses to foundational traditions (especially those preserved in the Pentateuch).'³⁴

Allison is even more persuaded of this view after his investigation of Moses typology in relation to major Jewish figures.³⁵ He concludes:

'While the pervasion of our sources by the implicit is a stubborn fact which makes contemporary interpretation difficult, it is useless to complain about improbable literary complexity or subtly encoded messages. Why expect an ancient Jew to have floated everything with meaning to the surface of his text, so that its contents should be as visible to us, bad readers with poor memories, as to those who shared his small literary canon and memorization skills? We, who are temporally estranged from the biblical writers, must not confuse our eyes and ears with the eyes and ears of those who first read, let us say, Isaiah or Matthew. If there is always the danger of thinking we can see the grass grow, that is, of overinterpreting texts, we must equally beware of underinterpreting texts. Much of what was once unconcealed has become, with time's passage, hidden. That is why there are historians: they recover what has been lost. Even so, an adult learner of a second language never quite catches all the nuances; and such are we.'³⁶

Being thus persuaded of the presence of implicit allusions and typological connections in the ancient texts and of the ability of ancient readers or hearers to pick up 'the implicit', Allison highlights our contemporary situation by reference to the work of Abraham H. Lass, *The Facts on File Dictionary of Classical, Biblical, and Literary Allusions*. This dictionary is devoted to the explanation of words and phrases like 'doubting Thomas', 'golden calf', or 'Rubicon', 'words and phrases once well known but apparently now recondite to many ...'.³⁷ Displaying a kind of sad humour, Allison laments:

'The existence of this book, which serves a real need, as anyone who has recently taught undergraduates can sadly testify, is as good a witness as any to our society's ever-increasing collective amnesia. Moreover, as more and more biblical scholars who have little or no religious training, by which I mean intensive exposure to the Bible as children and young adults, enter our field, we will, I think, see less interest in and more scepticism toward internal biblical allusions and typologies. There will be a generation who knew not Joseph.'³⁸

Against the background of these reflections by Allison, I will try in this study neither to become a victim of parallelomania nor to show too many signs of collective amnesia.

³⁴ ALLISON, *Moses*, 15. Similarly FISHBANE, *Interpretation*, 360.

³⁵ See ALLISON, *Moses*, 11-90, where biblical and later Jewish traditions are investigated as to Moses typology in connection to 14 persons, including Joshua, David, Jeremiah, Hillel, the prophet like Moses, and the Messiah.

³⁶ ALLISON, *Moses*, 92-93.

³⁷ ALLISON, *Moses*, 17 n. 25.

³⁸ ALLISON, *Moses*, 17 n. 25. On p. 18 he speaks of 'our historically conditioned deafness to oblique allusions in the Bible.'

**1.3.2 Determination and interpretation:
discussing criteria that help to deal adequately with allusions**

In his book *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* Richard Hays suggests seven tests to validate allusions or ‘echoes’.³⁹ Interestingly, from the outset he declares that these tests concern ‘criteria for testing claims about the presence and meaning of scriptural echoes in Paul.’⁴⁰ Here the ‘presence’ and the ‘meaning’ of an allusion are not strictly separated. This is picked up in a discussion of Hays’ seven tests by Stanley Porter.⁴¹ Porter is looking for criteria that help *to determine* allusions. He dismisses Hays’ first three tests as problematic. The first test is the *availability* of the OT text to both author and readers. Secondly, the *volume* of an echo is primarily determined by the degree of explicit repetition of words or syntactical patterns. Thirdly, the *recurrence* of the OT passage in other allusions or quotations increases the probability of the presence of an echo in another NT text. Furthermore, Porter rejects the last four tests as not concerned with determination, but with interpretation of echoes. These tests are *thematic coherence*,⁴² *historical plausibility*,⁴³ *history of interpretation*,⁴⁴ and *satisfaction*.⁴⁵ Commenting on ‘satisfaction’, the last and most important test in Hays’ eyes, Porter says:

‘It is perplexing that the most important criterion is not in fact a criterion for discovering echoes, but only for interpreting them, leaving the question of definition and determination unresolved.’⁴⁶

In my view it is not always possible strictly to separate determination and interpretation.⁴⁷ There simply are cases in which it is impossible to identify an allusion unambiguously without any reflections about its meaning. Porter’s own definition of allusion shows the inherent vagueness of the concept:

‘Allusions ... could refer to the nonformal invocation by an author of a text (or person, event, etc.) that the author could reasonably have been expected to know ...’⁴⁸

³⁹ HAYS, *Echoes*, 29-32. With Hays I do not think it is possible to differentiate clearly between the two terms. Within a spectrum of degrees of clarity of reference to other texts, from an explicit quotation with an introductory formula to slight hints only detectable for finely tuned ears, *allusion* may be used to refer to ‘obvious intertextual references, *echo* to subtler ones.’ (*Echoes*, 29).

⁴⁰ HAYS, *Echoes*, 29.

⁴¹ PORTER, ‘Use’, 82-84.

⁴² HAYS, *Echoes*, 30: ‘How well does the alleged echo fit into the line of argument that Paul is developing?’ Here Hays explicitly says: ‘This test begins to move beyond simple identification of echoes to the problem of how to interpret them.’

⁴³ HAYS, *Echoes*, 30: ‘Could Paul have intended the alleged meaning effect? Could his readers have understood it?’

⁴⁴ HAYS, *Echoes*, 31: ‘Have other readers, both critical and pre-critical, heard the same echoes?’

⁴⁵ HAYS, *Echoes*, 31: ‘With or without clear confirmation from the other criteria listed here, does the proposed reading make sense? Does it illuminate the surrounding discourse?’

⁴⁶ PORTER, ‘Use’, 83.

⁴⁷ For similar positions cf. also WATTS, *New Exodus*, 8; THOMPSON, *Clothed*, 28-36.

⁴⁸ PORTER, ‘Use’, 95.

I agree, but I suggest that a satisfactory, illuminating interpretation can be a valid element in the list of criteria that render a proposed allusion probable. My investigation of the use of Moses traditions in John's Gospel will provide concrete examples.

In order to arrive at an even more comprehensive list of criteria, the helpful insights of Allison must be mentioned. He also does not simply look for criteria that clearly determine allusions, but states the task like this:

'In order to gain, in our present circumstances, so far removed from those of ancient Jews and Christians, some way of measuring the probability or improbability of a proposed allusion to the Bible, we must begin by asking in what ways one text may be linked to another.'⁴⁹

He goes on to suggest six ways.⁵⁰ First, there are *explicit statements* like Jn 3:14, where the allusion is fairly clear. Secondly, *implicit citations or borrowings* have to be based on clear verbal parallels. Examples in this category include the allusion to Ex 4:19 in Mt 2:20, or to 2 Kings 1:8 LXX in Mk 1:6. Thirdly, *similar circumstances* can serve to evoke another biblical text. An obvious example within the OT itself is Joshua's crossing of the Jordan, which evokes Moses' crossing of the Red Sea. Fourthly, *key words or phrases* can serve to alert the reader that a text alludes to another text; for example, the story of the feeding of the 5000 in both the Synoptics and in John shares significant phrases with 2 Kings 4:42-44. Fifthly, *similarities of narrative structure* may provide a link to another text, as exemplified by B. W. Bacon's famous attempt to find a Pentateuchal structure in Matthew.⁵¹ Sixthly, a *similar word order, syllabic sequence, or poetic resonance* can allude to another text. Allison refers to the allusion to Gen 1:1 in Jn 1:1, saying:

'It is not just the shared phrase, *en arche*, that sends one back to Gen 1:1. There is additionally a deeper parallel of sound and order: *en arche* prefacing a sentence at the beginning of a book + verb (*epoiesen / en:e* and *n* are common) + *ho* + two-syllable subject with two vowels ending in *-os* (*the-os* in Genesis, *log-os* in John).'⁵²

Allison realizes, however, that of these six only the first two criteria produce unambiguous results. He therefore goes on to say:

'Only a delicate and mature judgment bred of familiarity with a tradition will be able to feel whether a suggested allusion or typology is solid or insubstantial: the truth must be divined, groped for by "taste, tact, and intuition rather than a controlling method."⁵³

The notions of feeling and intuition are not meant to open the doors for an uncontrolled interpretative chaos to come in. It is precisely at this point that Allison suggests some 'broad guidelines' designed to help decide 'when is an allusion an allusion'.⁵⁴ These guidelines overlap

⁴⁹ ALLISON, *Moses*, 19.

⁵⁰ The following six ways can be found in ALLISON, *Moses*, 19-20.

⁵¹ See BACON, *Studies*.

⁵² ALLISON, *Moses*, 20.

⁵³ ALLISON, *Moses*, 21, quoting ABRAHAMS, 'Rationality', 176.

⁵⁴ ALLISON, *Moses*, 21.

somewhat with Hays' tests, but they are nevertheless mentioned to complete the list of criteria relevant for an adequate handling of allusions.⁵⁵

The first guideline is simply that the text alluded to must *chronologically precede* the text which alludes to it. Secondly: 'Probability will be enhanced if it can be shown (on other grounds) that a passage's proposed subtext belongs to a book or tradition which held some significance for its author.' Thirdly: '... a typology will not be credible without some combination of devices (3) - (6) [in Allison's previous list].' Fourthly: 'A type should be prominent.' Here Allison has in mind, for example, the idea that an allusion to Moses is initially more probable than to Ittai, since the former is simply a more prominent figure. Fifthly: 'An alleged typology has a better chance of gaining our confidence if its constituent elements have been used for typological construction in more than one writing.' Sixthly: 'Unusual imagery and uncommon motifs.' By way of example for this last criterion, Allison rejects the idea of Otto Betz,⁵⁶ who sees a direct allusion to the two-way theme in Deuteronomy in the Sermon on the Mount. Allison points out:

'... as it stands, the suggestion is less than compelling because that theme, occurring as it does so often in so many Jewish texts, cannot in itself be a pointer to any one of them.'⁵⁷

This introductory survey of important criteria provides guidelines for my own investigations of allusions in the context of my study of Moses traditions in John's Gospel. At the end of the study one of the results will be to see more clearly which of the criteria mentioned here proves to be more important than others when applied to John's Gospel. In addition, it might well turn out that my study brings to light other criteria not yet mentioned. For the time being, however, my attention will turn to the question of the locus of allusions.

1.3.3 The locus of allusions

Beyond the issues of determination and interpretation another important aspect is to ask about *the locus* of the allusion. Hays is especially perceptive in this area and lists five options: the author's mind, the original reader, the text itself, the interpreter's act of reading, and a community of reading.⁵⁸ Understanding 'echoes' as an hermeneutical event and relating all possible *loci*, Hays writes:

'The hermeneutical event occurs in my reading of the text, but my reading always proceeds within a community of interpretation, whose hermeneutical conventions inform my reading. Prominent among these conventions are the convictions that a proposed interpretation must be justified with reference to evidence provided both by the text's rhetorical structure and by what can be known through critical investigation about the author and original readers. Any interpretation must respect these constraints in order to be persuasive within my reading community. Claims about intertextual meaning effects are strongest where it can credibly be

⁵⁵ The following guidelines and quotations are from ALLISON, *Moses*, 21-23.

⁵⁶ See BETZ, 'Bergpredigt'.

⁵⁷ ALLISON, *Moses*, 22.

⁵⁸ HAYS, *Echoes*, 26.

demonstrated that they occur within the literary structure of the text and that they can plausibly be ascribed to the intention of the author and the competence of the original readers.⁵⁹

This quotation points to the complexity of the issues involved and invites imaginative interpretation, while emphasizing that not just any interpretation will do. I am in basic agreement with Hays' perspective, although I will argue that the allusions to Moses traditions I find in John's Gospel can reasonably be understood as intended by the author.⁶⁰

1.3.4 'Atomistic allusion' or evocation of broader OT literary context?

In a recent article⁶¹ Christopher Tuckett tackles the question of how to determine whether a quotation or an allusion is intended to evoke only the very words or phrases it refers to, or whether the broader OT literary context is also meant to be evoked. One of his suggestions is to differentiate between allusions to well known persons or foundational events of primary importance and allusions to less significant people or events. In the former case, it is obviously more probable that readers or hearers would be familiar with the context of the story alluded to.⁶² For the purpose of this study I do not take this insight as a license to argue in principle that allusions to Moses traditions are always intended to evoke the broader literary context of a given story. However, one cannot rule out that the evocation of the broader context is initially relatively probable in the case of allusions to these foundational traditions. I will address this question in each instance according to the particular problems and possibilities each allusion poses.

This principle of looking at each instance in its own right is a deliberate methodological decision, and it stands in contrast in particular to one of the methodological foundations of the Dutch research program *Intertextualiteit en bijbel*.⁶³ This project, focussing so far on the use of OT quotations and allusions in Luke-Acts, is based on the conviction 'that the explicit quotations function as a *pars pro toto* ...'⁶⁴ In the background stands the conviction of M. Pfister who wrote:

⁵⁹ HAYS, *Echoes*, 28.

⁶⁰ For a strong argument in favour of a place for authorial intention in interpretation, see ALLISON, *Moses*, 1-8.

⁶¹ See TUCKETT, 'Paul'.

⁶² Cf. also HENGEL, 'Schriftauslegung', 257: 'Diese [profetische Schriftdeutung] konzentrierte sich in der Regel auf ganz konkrete begrenzte Textstücke, die aus dem Zusammenhang herausgelöst wurden. Nicht selten muß jedoch zu ihrem Verständnis auch der Kontext mitbeachtet werden, da man dessen Kenntnis u.U. beim Hörer voraussetzte. Das gilt besonders von bekannten Texten.'

⁶³ This is the title of both an article and of a collection of articles on intertextuality by W. Weren (see WEREN, *Intertextualiteit*). Studies in the context of the Dutch project include BASTIAENS, *Interpretaties*, and four articles by H. van de Sandt (see bibliography).

⁶⁴ WEREN, 'Psalm 2', 190.

‘Mit dem pointiert ausgewählten Detail wird der Gesamtkontext abgerufen, dem es entstammt, mit dem knappen Zitat wird der ganze Prätext in die neue Sinnkonstitution einbezogen.’⁶⁵

In my view one has to start with the assumption that this may well be so sometimes, but it does not have to be so in every case. Instead of forcing the evidence to accord with this methodological decision, I will argue that in some cases it seems most likely that the OT context is evoked, and that in other cases we are dealing with an atomistic allusion. If I pointed out above that meaningful interpretation might well be part of the criteria of identification of allusions, so here I suggest that meaningful interpretation might well be part of the decision as to whether we are dealing with atomistic allusion or evocation of the broader OT context.

More could be said about other fascinating aspects of allusions and echoes, not least from a perspective informed by poetics and music. For example, different kinds of allusions can perform different functions. The ironical echo of *Frère Jaques* in the third movement of Mahler’s Symphony No. 1 creates malicious joy for those with ears to hear. This joy is only increased if one knows that Mahler was partly inspired for this funeral march by a painting by Callot depicting a procession of animals carrying the dead body of a hunter. According to Mallarmé, poems with subtle allusions have a different kind of joy in view, for those

‘who make a complete demonstration of the object thereby lack mystery; they deprive the mind of that delicious joy of imagining that it creates. To name the thing means forsaking three quarters of a poem’s enjoyment.’⁶⁶

Apart from various functions of intertextual echoes, one could also reflect on ways in which such echoes can be created apart from intended references in written texts. Richard Hays gives the following example:

‘Anyone who has ever acted in a play knows the experience of discovering that lines from the play come unexpectedly to mind in real-life situations different from the original dramatic context. The aptness of the quoted line does not depend on exact literal correspondence between the original meaning and the new application. Indeed, the wit and the pleasure of such quotations lie partly in the turning of the words to a new sense. In such cases, the act of quotation becomes an act of figuration, establishing a metaphorical resonance between drama and life.’⁶⁷

In applying insights like these to John’s Gospel, one could ask whether similar processes lie behind John’s use of OT texts. However, since it is not my intention to develop a comprehensive theory of quotation and allusion, I close this section with some insights of Richard Hays that remind us that in the last analysis no theory can be comprehensive enough to account for the often unexpected power of texts:

‘Despite all the careful hedges that we plant around texts, meaning has a way of leaping over, like sparks. Texts are not inert; they burn and throw fragments of flame on their rising heat.’

⁶⁵ PFISTER, ‘Konzepte’, 29. The idea that in some, though not all, cases the broader OT context is evoked is not new, cf. e.g. DODD, *Scriptures*, ch. 2; DODD, *Interpretation*, 271 n. 3; BROWN, *John*, 409; HANSON, ‘Citation’, 159-160; PANCARO, *Law*, 177.

⁶⁶ The quotation is from ALLISON, *Moses*, 16 n. 22.

⁶⁷ HAYS, *Echoes*, 33.

Often we succeed in containing the energy, but sometimes the sparks escape and kindle new blazes, reprises of the original fire. That is a way of saying that texts can generate readings that transcend both the conscious intention of the author and all the hermeneutical strictures that we promulgate. Poets and preachers know this secret; biblical critics have sought to suppress it for heuristic purposes. At times, the texts speak through us in ways that could not have been predicted, ways that can be comprehended only by others who hear the voice of the text through us – or, if by ourselves, only retrospectively.⁶⁸

Moving on from the methodological problem of the handling of allusions, I now turn to the explicit occurrences of the name Μωϋσῆς in John's Gospel. The following overview provides the background against which the discussion of the various uses of Moses tradition has to be seen.

1.4 Setting the scene: Μωϋσῆς in John's Gospel

At the end of his study of Moses as prophet-king in John's Gospel and in numerous other ancient sources, Meeks presents the following conclusion:

'The Fourth Gospel is not so constructed that the reader, in order to understand it, would have to perceive that Jesus, the "Son of Man," is like Moses – that is the error of the numerous typological treatments of John that have proliferated in recent years. On the other hand, its form and content are such that, if the reader *were* acquainted with those Moses traditions described above, he would recognize (1) that Jesus fulfills for the believer those functions elsewhere attributed to Moses and (2) that the Christian claims he does this in a superior and exclusive way, so that Moses is now stripped of those functions and made merely a "witness" to Jesus (like John the Baptist). Therefore one who had formerly accounted himself a "disciple of Moses" would now have to decide whether he would become instead a "disciple of Jesus." If he did not, then from the viewpoint of this gospel he had in fact deserted the real Moses, for Moses only wrote of Jesus and true belief in Moses led to belief in Jesus.'⁶⁹

The decisive element for the present study is the direction of Meeks' conclusion: although Meeks first chose the figure of the Mosaic prophet-king as an aspect of Johannine christology,⁷⁰ he ends by pointing to the contrast between "disciples of Moses" and "disciples of Jesus", thereby going beyond christological questions into the area of identity issues.

Identity issues play a prominent role in a recent article by de Boer on "The Depiction of 'the Jews' in John's Gospel: Matters of Behavior and Identity."⁷¹ De Boer analyses the problem of 'the Jews' in John from the angle of the behaviour and identity of the two groups mentioned above, i.e. the disciples of Moses and the disciples of Jesus. The key text that provides the entrance into de Boer's discussion is Jn 9:28-29 within its context in chapter 9. Following the lead of Martyn's ground-breaking work (without agreeing with all the details⁷²), de Boer

⁶⁸ HAYS, *Echoes*, 33.

⁶⁹ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 319. For the typological treatments cf. SAHLIN, *Typologie*; ENZ, 'Book'; SMITH, 'Exodus', and the critique in HARSTINE, *Moses*, 4-7.

⁷⁰ See my remarks above, p. 2 n. 4.

⁷¹ DE BOER, 'Depiction', 260-280.

⁷² Thus, de Boer holds on to the significance of Jn 9:22; 12:42; 16:2 in that these texts point to the most probable historical setting of John's Gospel, namely, the inner-Jewish conflict between Jews who believed in Jesus as the Messiah and Jews who did not, and to Martyn's notion of John as a two-level drama. At the same time, de Boer sees the problems with Martyn's attempt to link this setting

emphasizes the importance of chapter 9 in general and of the self-understanding of ‘the Jews’ as “disciples of Moses” (ἡμεῖς δὲ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἐσμὲν μαθηταί, 9:28) in particular for an adequate approach to John’s depiction of ‘the Jews’. He summarizes the characteristics of the disciples of Moses as follows:

‘In chapter 9, these disciples of Moses live from the conviction that “God has spoken to Moses” (9:29). For this reason, Moses is the one in whom Jews “have hoped” (5:45) and whom they would wish to “believe” (5:46). To speak of Moses is to speak of that authoritative body of teaching revealed to Moses, namely, the law: “the law was given to Moses” (1:17; cf. 7:19) and “the law of Moses” is “not to be broken” (7:23), including the law pertaining to the Sabbath (5:10; 7:23; 9:16). Moses’ teaching is largely preserved in ‘the Scriptures’, primarily if not exclusively the Pentateuch. Disciples of Moses thus “search the Scriptures”, with the conviction that “eternal life” is to be found there (5:39; cf. 7:52).’⁷³

In what follows, I will develop some of de Boer’s insights. It will become clear that “Moses” functions less as a person to be compared with Jesus, and more as the author of the law, the one through whom God gave the law, the one God spoke to, and the one who in his writings wrote about Jesus. This provides the background of the present study of Moses tradition: by using terminology and stories from Moses tradition that play an important role in Exodus to Deuteronomy, John provides examples of the ways he understands “Moses” to have written about Jesus. The study will therefore discuss in detail John’s christological use of Moses tradition. However, at several points in the discussion of the use of Moses traditions we will see that the primary *function* of the use of Moses tradition is not christological, but the christological use functions to serve identity issues. Since the text displays a severe conflict between “disciples of Jesus” and “disciples of Moses”, I understand the use of Moses tradition to function at several points primarily sociologically. By using Moses tradition in various ways in its presentation of Jesus, the Fourth Gospel reassures those of its Jewish readers who follow Jesus that they are at the same time the true disciples of Moses. Simultaneously, John’s use of Moses traditions might also help those Jews who did not believe in Jesus, or who at least did not confess such faith publicly,⁷⁴ to understand that if they want to be true disciples of Moses, they should join the followers of Jesus. The function of the use of Moses traditions is therefore primarily an internal one: helping the Jewish Christians to understand better their new identity. However, this does not necessarily preclude any missionary effect, since Jews who study John and understand his use of Moses tradition might become sympathetic to John’s cause in the

directly to the *Birkat ha-Minim*, see DE BOER, ‘Depiction’, 267. For the relevant literature on the conflict behind John’s Gospel and a full discussion of all the relevant issues involved, see LINCOLN, *Truth*, 263-332.

⁷³ DE BOER, ‘Depiction’, 272. For the self-identification of ‘the Jews’ as ‘disciples of Moses’ in 9:27-28 cf. PETERSEN, *Sociology*, 84. Cf. also HARSTINE, *Moses*, 68, who says that in Jn 9, ‘[t]he Pharisees introduce Moses as justification for their position toward Jesus and as confirmation of their identity.’

⁷⁴ The problem of the “secret believers”, those who do not confess their faith in Jesus because they fear the Pharisees, occurs in 9:21-23; 12:42. Cf. also the narrative function of Nicodemus, who may well be an example of a secret believer who has not yet decided whether or not to confess publicly.

process. This is of course not highly likely, but nevertheless possible.⁷⁵ The following section explains this perspective in more detail.

The name Μωϋσῆς appears 12 times in John's Gospel (1:17; 1:45; 3:14; 5:45,46; 6:32; 7:19, 22 (two times); 7:23; 9:28, 29).⁷⁶ Two of these occurrences can be dealt with fairly quickly at this stage: in both 3:14 and 6:32, Moses is mentioned as a real person, someone who did something of importance at the beginning of Israel's history. Since both of the events evoked, the brazen serpent incident in 3:14 and the giving of manna in 6:32, are part of explicit allusions to wilderness traditions, both texts will be discussed in detail in chapter 4.

The remaining verses are all connected in that they all link "Moses" to God's revelation to him, a notion that is expressed in terms of "the law" (ὁ νόμος in 1:17; 1:45; 7:19; 7:23), in terms of "the writings of Moses" (γράμματα in 5:47), and in terms of "God speaking to Moses" (Μωϋσεὶ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός in 9:29). A closer look reveals the following details:

1:17 states that ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη. This is an uncontroversial claim: that God gave the Torah through Moses is an undisputed fact that unites the various forms of Judaism in the Second Temple period and beyond. 7:19 says essentially the same, although here, in a rhetorical question asked by Jesus, Moses occurs as the subject of the giving of the law: οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν νόμον; This question introduces an episode in which Jesus accuses his opponents of not keeping the law (οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ποιεῖ τὸν νόμον, 7:19), a claim that is explained in 7:22-23. Here Jesus uses the example of circumcision in the context of the accusation that he breaks the law by healing on the Sabbath. Jesus' response clearly uses the notion that some things in the law are more important than others, so that it is not only allowed to circumcise on the Sabbath, but it is considered necessary to do so in order to keep the law. In this context, the name Μωϋσῆς occurs three more times. In 7:22, Moses is presented as the one who gave circumcision, a claim that is quickly put in perspective: διὰ τοῦτο Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὴν περιτομὴν οὐχ ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἐστὶν ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν πατέρων. In 7:23, the law is characterized as Moses' law when Jesus brings his point home, using again a rhetorical question: εἰ περιτομὴν λαμβάνει ἄνθρωπος ἐν σαββάτῳ ἵνα μὴ λυθῇ ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως, ἐμοὶ χολᾶτε ὅτι ὅλον ἄνθρωπον ὑγιῆ ἐποίησα ἐν σαββάτῳ;

These five occurrences of the name Μωϋσῆς in 1:17 and 7:19, 22-23 provide the first important insights for the study of Moses tradition. First, both the narrator in 1:17 and the Johannine Jesus in 7:19-23 agree with the usual Jewish view that the law was given through Moses. Although a fairly unspectacular point, it is still worth mentioning because it is the small

⁷⁵ I therefore disagree with e.g. MEEKS, 'Man', and PETERSEN, *Sociology*, who deny any missionary intention of John's Gospel, as Petersen says: '[W]e are dealing with a case of social conflict between the powerful and the powerless in which emotions run high, and John's special language response is informed by both conflict and emotions. And as we will see, this response is itself the only power of the powerless, for they have no political redress with their rejecters. Their response is not missionary fare, but the fare of communal survival.' (PETERSEN, *Sociology*, 81)

⁷⁶ Another occurrence is in the later inserted *pericopae adultera* in 8:5.

common denominator that all parties in John agree on. Secondly, although the law is regarded as an authority by all parties, the dispute in ch. 7 shows that *the interpretation* of that law is quite another matter. It is part of the present thesis that it is not only the Johannine Jesus who uses the law in an authoritative and unfamiliar way, but also the author of John's Gospel. The present study of Moses traditions will provide examples of creative uses of "the law" in John's Gospel. Thirdly, coming back to 1:17, the verse is part of the passage 1:14-18 which has repeatedly been read against the background of Ex 33-34. In chapter 2 I will present my own reading of that passage. Here it is sufficient to say that the function of 1:17 cannot be reduced to what was said above, but that 1:17 has to be understood in relation to 1:14-18.

Of the remaining five occurrences of the name Μωϋσῆς, another three also connect Moses with "the law" and "Moses' scriptures", but a decisive element is added: Moses, that is the body of writings connected with his name, is said to be a witness to Jesus.⁷⁷ In 1:45, it is Philip who introduces Jesus to Nathanael with the words: Ὁν ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ οἱ προφήται εὗρήκαμεν, Ἰησοῦν υἱὸν τοῦ Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ. Although Boismard presents an elaborate argument to show that this phrase evokes the prophet like Moses as promised in Deut 18:15-20,⁷⁸ I think it more likely that the phrase is meant more broadly. The reason is the connection to Jn 5:45-47. These verses provide crucial keys for the present project.

First, in relation to 1:45 it has to be said that in 5:46 Jesus claims with respect to Moses that περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν, taking up the terminology of 1:45. In 5:47 there follows a fairly general statement (in the form of another rhetorical question) about believing the writings of Moses that does not suggest a narrow allusion to Deut 18: εἰ δὲ τοῖς ἐκείνου γράμμασιν οὐ πιστεύετε, πῶς τοῖς ἐμοῖς ῥήμασιν πιστεύσετε; I take 5:46-47 and therefore also 1:45 to imply that the writings of Moses entail elements that speak of Jesus in a non-defined way, and the present study of Moses traditions will reveal examples of possible ways in which "Moses wrote about Jesus". This is especially true of the use of the manna tradition in John 6, which immediately follows 5:46-47 (see the discussion in ch. 4 below), but I understand the other uses of Moses traditions to display the same intention, namely, to show how the writings of Moses are a testimony for Jesus.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ The theme of Moses as witness is also emphasized by HARSTINE, *Moses*, 72, who summarizes his findings in the following way: 'In each instance Moses functions as a witness to Jesus' identity (1.17; 1.45; 5.45-46; 6.32; 9.28-29). The totality of Jesus' identity can only be viewed through the lens that Moses provides. Jesus is not to be understood as merely a man, a prophet, or one sent from God. Jesus' true identity can be understood only through a comparison with the greatest religious figure of Jewish history, Moses.' A similar conclusion is reached by PETERSEN, *Sociology*, 108, who puts the issue in terms of his understanding of the Johannine language as anti-structural: 'John anti-structurally derives the key terms of his characterization of Jesus from the image of Moses adhered to by the disciples of Moses who are persecuting his people.'

⁷⁸ See BOISMARD, *Moses*, 25-30, and my summary of his suggestions in chapter 5, section 1.

⁷⁹ HÜBNER, *Biblische Theologie*, 3.166f., draws the following theological conclusions, starting from the point that those who believe in Moses should also believe in Jesus: 'Wer dem Mose wirklich glaubt, der glaubt auch ihm [Jesus]! Denn Mose hat von ihm geschrieben, ἔγραψεν, V.46. Aber dessen *Schriften*, τοῖς ἐκείνου γράμμασιν, stellt Jesus seine *gesprochenen Worte*, τοῖς ἐμοῖς

Secondly, in 5:45 and 5:46 two elements occur that point forward to 9:28-29, the final occurrences of the name Μωϋσῆς in John. The first element is that “Moses”, here obviously short for “the writings of Moses” or “the law”, is the one Jesus’ opponents put their hope in: Μωϋσῆς, εἰς ὃν ὑμεῖς ἠλπικατε (5:45). The second element is that 5:46 talks about believing in Moses and says that if the opponents believed in Moses, they would also believe in Jesus, the reason being the aspect mentioned above, namely, that Moses wrote about Jesus: εἰ γὰρ ἐπιστεύετε Μωϋσεῖ, ἐπιστεύετε ἂν ἐμοί· περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν. This verse is the clearest formulation in John of the position pointed out by Meeks in the introductory quotation of this section and the angle from which I shall investigate the use of Moses tradition: The ideological point of view of the narrative, here expressed on the lips of Jesus, is that the one who hopes in “Moses”, who believes in “Moses”, should also believe in Jesus.⁸⁰ However, within the narrative world of the text those who most clearly associate themselves with “Moses” cannot see that a double alliance to both Moses and Jesus is possible. This becomes explicit in John 9:28-29.

In 9:28, the controversy after the healing of the blind man is focused in a self-characterization of “the Jews” as “disciples of Moses”, which for them is clearly incompatible with being a disciple of Jesus: καὶ ἐλοιδόρησαν αὐτὸν [the healed man] καὶ εἶπον, Σὺ μαθητῆς εἶ ἐκείνου, ἡμεῖς δὲ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἐσμὲν μαθηταί. In verse 29, “the Jews” further focus the incompatibility of the two allegiances in another contrast: ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεῖ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἴδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν. The fact that they know that God spoke to Moses, i.e. that Moses received God’s revelation, is contrasted with the fact that they do not know where Jesus is from. Despite the irony that might well be at work here,⁸¹ it seems clear enough that on the narrative level we have an explicit contrast between two groups, one of which is unable and/or unwilling to see that belonging to one group (the followers of Jesus) is not incompatible with belonging to the other (the disciples of Moses). I

ῥήμασιν, gegenüber: Mose hat nur *über* Jesus geschrieben. Jesus aber redet *als* Gott von Gott. ... Damit zeigt sich eine *Offenbarungsstruktur*, der wir schon mehrfach im Neuen Testament begegnet sind: Der *schriftlichen* Offenbarung des Alten Testaments folgt die neutestamentliche Offenbarung als *mündliches* Ereignis. Diese neue Offenbarung ist zunächst *vorösterlich* der inkarnierte Gott als Wort, das dann *nachösterlich* als Kerygma die präsente Dynamis Gottes geschichtliche Wirklichkeit sein lässt (vgl. Röm 1,16f!).’

⁸⁰ The negative contrast to this is that those who do not acknowledge that Moses wrote about Jesus misunderstand the Scriptures and are prepared to kill Jesus, as Hübner makes clear in relation to 5:18,39f.: ‘Das Zeugnis für den der Blasphemie angeklagten Jesus ist das Zeugnis der Schriften (5,39: ἐραυνᾶτε τᾶς γραφάς, ... καὶ ἐκεῖναί εἰσιν αἱ μαρτυροῦσαι περὶ ἐμοῦ). Die Juden kennen also ihre eigenen Schriften nicht! Ihnen gegenüber versagen sie hermeneutisch. Also ist es ihr Gewährsmann Mose, der sie anklagt. Der der Blasphemie angeklagte Jesus klagt daher die Juden wegen ihrer Unkenntnis der Schrift an. Und diese Unkenntnis ist furchtbar: *Wer die Schrift nicht kennt, wird zum Mörder!*’ (HÜBNER, *Biblische Theologie*, 3.166)

⁸¹ In 7:27, τινες ἐκ τῶν Ἱεροσολυμιτῶν (7:25) claim that they know where Jesus is from, but that the origin of the Messiah would be unknown; against this background, the confession of the Jews in 9:29 that they do not know where Jesus comes from amounts to an ironic identification of him as the Messiah.

suggest that without buying into all the details of various attempts to reconstruct the history of Johannine Christianity, it is in a setting of conflict between disciples of Moses and disciples of Jesus as hinted at in John 9 that John's use of Moses tradition would be most meaningful in that it speaks to the identity issues of the groups involved. The plausibility of this position is further strengthened by a significant characteristic of the disciples of Moses: according to 5:39, they search the scriptures. Whether or not one agrees with the elaborate argument of Martyn concerning the issue of a midrashic dispute in the background of John's Gospel,⁸² it is sufficient for the present study to suggest that if disputes about the interpretation of Scripture were a significant part of the background to John's Gospel, the use of Moses traditions surely must have played an important role in them.

1.5 The conception of the study

The following study is structured according to a combination of two factors. First, in principle the narrative flow of John's Gospel has been followed. Secondly, the chapters reflect various aspects of the Moses traditions as used by John.

Thus, chapter two discusses the use of the Sinai tradition behind Jn 1-2, chapter three aspects of the Passover tradition throughout the Gospel, chapter four the tradition of the wilderness wanderings behind Jn 6-8. Chapter five looks at the use of various other elements of Moses tradition, focusing mainly on allusions to and evocations of the prophet like Moses.

Each chapter includes some methodological remarks on relevant issues as they occur. Each case of quotation from or allusion to a Moses tradition is discussed according to a threefold pattern: (1) remarks on the context and narrative significance of the texts under discussion; (2) discussion of arguments that try to establish the presence and/or the nature of a suggested link to Moses' tradition; (3) presentation of the theological implications of the suggested link. This basic structure varies according to the character of each suggested link. Finally, the conclusion (chapter six) will summarize the results of the study.

⁸² See MARTYN, *History*, 115-128.

2. The use of Sinai traditions in Jn 1-2

The aim of this chapter is to look at the ways in which Sinai traditions are used in Jn 1-2. The term ‘Sinai traditions’ is meant to refer primarily to the stories in Exodus 19-40. However, since these stories were used and alluded to in various other Jewish sources, I will include these sources as well if they are of interest for the interpretation of the relevant passages in John’s Gospel. It will be argued that at least in two passages (Jn 1:14-18; Jn 1:19-2:11) John is alluding to highly significant aspects of this narrative of the revelation of God at Sinai. Each of these passages will be examined first in its Johannine context and narrative significance. Secondly, the probability of each proposed connection to Exodus will be established. Thirdly, the theological significance of each link will be described.

2.1 Jn 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34

The prologue of John’s Gospel raises many and complex questions: What is its literary form, and what is its relationship to possible sources? How is the historical and conceptual background of terms such as δ $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ to be determined, and how does that background benefit interpretation? In what way is John’s understanding of Jesus Christ, of God and of the relation between the two theologically significant? The vast literature on the prologue provides exhaustive material about nearly every aspect of the problems of the prologue.¹ One can easily get lost in these detailed discussions.² My discussion of Jn 1:14-18 against the background of Ex 33-34 is a restricted exercise in illuminating the text from the angle of intertextuality. I will not discuss questions of the differentiation between a Christian or pre-Christian hymn and the additions of the evangelist (or of some other redactor, if the evangelist is not considered to be the compiler of the prologue). Since I am interested in the ways Moses traditions are used in John’s Gospel, I focus precisely on this question.

¹ To mention only a few important contributions to the study of the Prologue: the question of a hymnic *Vorlage* is discussed e.g. in SCHNACKENBURG, ‘Logos-Hymnos’, HAENCHEN, ‘Probleme’, KÄSEMANN, ‘Aufbau’. Questions of conceptual background are the focus of BULTMANN, ‘Hintergrund’ (wisdom traditions; gnosticism). KYSAR, ‘Background’, ASHTON, ‘Transformation’, GESE, ‘Johannesprolog’, focus on Wisdom traditions. BOISMARD, *Prologue*, EVANS, *Word*, BORG, ‘Targumic Character’, discuss broader OT backgrounds. The structure of the final form of the Prologue is discussed in CULPEPPER, ‘Pivot’, RIDDERBOS, ‘Structure’; STALEY, ‘Structure’. Newer trends in biblical studies are reflected in the feminist approach of JASPER, *Garment*.

² The problems of the prologue are accompanied by a particular high degree of speculation amongst exegetes. This was nicely captured by HOLTZMANN, *Evangelium*, 21: ‘Ueberhaupt zeigt jeder Blick in die Commentare, dass die Exegese des Prologs sich von jeher der Methode des Rathens bediente.’

2.1.1 Jn 1:14-18 in its context and its narrative significance

Jn 1:14-18 is part of the prologue of John's Gospel, and as such its narrative importance is beyond question. Although the precise relationship between the prologue and the body of the Gospel is disputed,³ there is a growing consensus that perceives the prologue as *Leseanweisung* for the Gospel.⁴ As such it provides vital clues for the reader to understand the narrative from the ideological point of view of the narrator.⁵ Different approaches to understanding the structure of the prologue in its final form or in relation to possible hymnic sources have led to different appreciations of the precise function of vv. 14-18 within the prologue;⁶ however, these differences do not affect the basic agreement that vv. 14-18 do contribute in important ways to the provision of hermeneutical keys for the understanding of the Gospel.

The importance of exegetical observations within the prologue for the understanding of the Gospel is illustrated by the famous dispute between Bultmann and Käsemann about the emphasis of v. 14. Although diametrically opposed in their perception of the major point of v. 14,⁷ both are united in using their understanding of this verse to lead their interpretation of the Gospel as a whole, thus acknowledging the programmatic character of the prologue.

³ See especially HARNACK, 'Verhältnis', ROBINSON, 'Relation', and now THEOBALD, *Fleischwerdung*.

⁴ The term *Leseanweisung* is used by e.g. THYEN, 'Johannes 10', 163 n. 1. That the prologue provides vital clues for the understanding of the Gospel is emphasized by e.g. CULPEPPER, *Anatomy*, 19; OLSSON, 'Deus', 168; GUNDRY, *Jesus*, 3; KÜGLER, *König*, 37, 50; ZUMSTEIN, 'Prologue'; PEDERSEN, 'Anti-Judaism', 173; BECKER, 'Methoden', 52; WENGST, *Gemeinde*, 84 n. 26, 189-193; IDEM, *Johannesevangelium*, 42; NISSEN, 'Mission', 222; BARRETT, *St. John*, 130; BERNARD, *St. John*, cxlv. HEITMÜLLER, *Johannes-Evangelium*, 37, says: 'Zum nachfolgenden Evangelium verhält sich der Prolog wie eine Overtüre. Es erklingen hier schon die Hauptthemen, die dann im Evangelium näher ausgeführt werden.'

⁵ A peculiar approach to the narrative significance is presented by STALEY, 'Structure'. He finds the movements in the chiasmic structure of the prologue repeated in the journeys of Jesus in the Gospel. This perception results in a new proposal about the structure of the Gospel according to four 'ministry tours' (1:19-3:36; chs. 4-6; chs. 7-10; chs. 11-21; cf. his diagram on p. 264). Although a creative attempt, it is not convincing since it does not take into account other significant structural markers of the Gospel. Thus, while I agree with Staley's interest to inform theology by narrative analysis ('We cannot overlook the peculiar issues which narrative raises for traditional ways of doing theology, and we must somehow address the problem of how story effects it.' [p. 263]), I am not looking at the ways the structure of the prologue is reflected in the structure of the Gospel, but at the ideological point of view of the narrator given in the prologue to lead the reader's understanding of the Gospel.

⁶ Representing sharply contrasting approaches, KÄSEMANN, 'Aufbau', is rigorous in his reconstruction of the hymnic source of the prologue and assigns all of vv. 14-18 to the evangelist, thus putting the major emphasis on this part. CULPEPPER, 'Pivot', focussing on the final form of the prologue, detects an elaborate chiasm which centers in v. 12b, thus putting the emphasis on the power to become children of God. Less elaborate chiasms are suggested by LUND, 'Influence' (center: v. 13), BOISMARD, *Prologue*, 79-80 (center: vv. 12-13), PRYOR, *John*, 9-10 (center: vv. 9-11). For further authors sympathetic to a chiasmic structure of the prologue, including Lamarche, Feuillet, Borgen, and Hooker, see CULPEPPER, 'Pivot', 4-6. Chiasm theories are rejected with respect to John's prologue by e.g. DE LA POTTERIE, 'Structure'; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 4.

⁷ Putting the emphasis firmly on incarnation in v. 14a (BULTMANN, *Johannesevangelium*, 38-43), Bultmann emphasized the anti-docetic character of Johannine christology, whereas Käsemann, emphasizing the vision of the glory of the Logos in v. 14b (KÄSEMANN, *Wille*, 21), ended up with a Christology in terms of 'naiver Dokerismus' (KÄSEMANN, *Wille*, 61-62).

Another example of the programmatic function of the prologue for one's understanding of the Gospel is N. T. Wright's creative reading of its Wisdom background, especially as expressed in Sirach 24. To appreciate the significance of Wright's contribution, and because of the relevance of his approach for my own suggestions in relation to the Exodus background, Wright's reading deserves a fuller description.

The striking similarities between Jn 1:1-18 and Sir 24:1-28 have been noticed by many interpreters.⁸ I am here primarily interested in the question: what are the best ways to explain the relationship between the Johannine prologue and Wisdom texts? Although the answers to this question vary considerably, they can be divided into six categories. First, there are those who see John's prologue dependent on a 'Wisdom hymn' or 'Wisdom myth' as a source which was adapted, either by the evangelist or by a redactor (or redactors). Distinctive features important for the purpose of the prologue were then added in the process.⁹ Secondly, Ridderbos sees the similarities but emphasizes the Johannine distinctives in order to argue against a literary dependence from a source.¹⁰ Thirdly, some play down the influence of Wisdom tradition because of the lack of Wisdom terminology elsewhere in the Gospel; the similarities might stem from a common dependence on the OT use of 'word' and 'Torah'.¹¹ Fourthly, Beasley-Murray emphasizes the probable influence of a variety of both Greek and Judaic traditions, thereby mentioning the links to Wisdom traditions but not particularly exploiting them.¹² Fifthly, there are those who focus on the Semitic rather than Greek background, where Wisdom traditions are an important factor alongside the prophetic concepts of the word of the Lord and the law, as well as the targumic use of *memra*.¹³ Brown refers to an impressive number of similarities between the Johannine prologue and Wisdom literature and even says that 'in the OT presentation of Wisdom, there are good parallels for almost every detail of the Prologue's description of the Word.'¹⁴ In addition, he thinks that John's Gospel as a whole presents Jesus as Wisdom,¹⁵ and that the 'Wisdom poems offer a parallel in general literary form to the Johannine hymn to the Word.'¹⁶ Nevertheless, summing up his discussion of the different Semitic influences, Brown presents a conclusion that combines all four Semitic backgrounds evenly:

⁸ E. g. ASHTON, 'Transformation'; BULTMANN, 'Hintergrund'; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 8-9; KOESTER, *Introduction*, 208; WITHERINGTON, *John's Wisdom*, 52, 55; SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 207 [= *John I*, 231]; ZAHN, *Johannes*, 47; WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 37-39.

⁹ E.g., HAENCHEN, 'Probleme'.

¹⁰ RIDDERBOS, *Gospel*, 31-36.

¹¹ CARSON, *John*, 115-116.

¹² BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 6-10.

¹³ BROWN, *John*, 520-524.

¹⁴ BROWN, *John*, 523.

¹⁵ BROWN, *John*, CXXII-CXXV; 522.

¹⁶ BROWN, *John*, 522.

‘In sum, it seems that the Prologue’s description of the Word is far closer to biblical and Jewish strains of thought than it is to anything purely Hellenistic. In the mind of the theologian of the Prologue the creative *word* of God, the word of the Lord that came to the prophets, has become personal in Jesus who is the embodiment of divine revelation. Jesus is divine *Wisdom*, pre-existent, but now come among men to teach them and give them life. Not the *Torah* but Jesus Christ is the creator and source of light and life. He is the *Memra*, God’s presence among men. And yet, even though all these strands are woven into the Johannine concept of the Word, this concept remains a unique contribution of Christianity. It is beyond all that has gone before, even as Jesus is beyond all who have gone before.’¹⁷ (my italics).

All of these investigations represent a form of looking for or rejecting some kind of conceptual or literary dependence on various philosophical or religious traditions, including Wisdom traditions. A sixth way of approaching the problem is N. T. Wright’s model of the retelling of stories in early Judaism and Christianity,¹⁸ which he applies to the issue of the prologue’s relationship to Wisdom traditions.

In the epistemological and methodological introduction to the first volume of his project ‘Christian Origins and the Question of God’ Wright argues for an integrated approach to the New Testament which takes seriously the literary, historical and theological dimensions of the New Testament. All three dimensions are closely connected in the articulation of the worldview that is communicated through the texts of the New Testament. In this view the category of story commands a key position:

‘Stories are a basic constituent of human life; they are, in fact, one key element within the total construction of a worldview. ... all worldviews contain an irreducible narrative element, which stands alongside the other worldview elements (symbol, praxis, and basic questions and answers), none of which can be simply “reduced” to terms of the others. ... worldviews, the grid through which humans perceive reality, emerge into explicit consciousness in terms of human *beliefs* and *aims*, which function as in principle debatable expressions of the worldviews. The stories which characterize the worldview itself are thus located, on the map of human knowing, at a more fundamental level than explicitly formulated beliefs, including theological beliefs.’¹⁹

Wright spells out the implications of this for the study of the literary, historical and theological dimension of the New Testament in general in the second part of *NTPG*, and then applies it to the study of first-century Judaism and early Christianity in parts three and four respectively. In this fourth part he discusses also the basic stories underlying Luke-Acts, Matthew, Mark, Paul, Hebrews, and John. In the case of the latter, he turns to a comparison between John’s prologue and Sir 24:1-28, pointing out the similarities, but also the significant differences between the two. The focus of Wright’s approach is not simply to argue for some kind of dependence or to establish the most probable background for John’s prologue. Wright is interested in *the significance of Wisdom thought for the prologue*:

‘The background to the Johannine prologue in wisdom thought is evidence, not of its leaning in the direction of early Gnosticism, but of its emphatically Jewish and world-affirming orientation.

¹⁷ BROWN, *John*, 524.

¹⁸ Cf. WRIGHT, *NTPG*, 69-80; 371-417; cf. also 418-443, the consequences for form criticism.

¹⁹ WRIGHT, *NTPG*, 38.

This is not to say that the Johannine prologue is simply an affirmation, with minor modifications, of the worldview of Sirach. Rather, it must be seen, at least in part, as a subversive retelling of the story of Wisdom.²⁰

Here we have the decisive point - the prologue functions 'as a subversive retelling of the story of Wisdom'. This point is underlined by a comparison with another subversive retelling, *1 Enoch* 42. Here we find the pessimistic story of Wisdom not finding a place to dwell on earth at all, and returning to heaven to settle among the angels. From the comparison of these three texts Wright draws the following nuanced conclusions:

'John's subversion of the Wisdom poem in Ben-Sira is of a different order altogether. He agrees with Sirach that the divine Wisdom does indeed find a home. He recognizes, and takes on board, the tragedy which lies behind *1 Enoch* 42: the world did not know the logos, its creator, and even 'his own people did not receive him'. But this did not make him return home having abandoned the world to "iniquity". The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. The logos has come, as mainstream Judaism would expect, not to judge the world but to redeem it. But instead of Shekinah and Torah, the Jerusalem temple and the covenant code, as the places where Wisdom/logos dwells and reveals the divine glory, John says that the logos became flesh, became a human being, became Jesus of Nazareth. Sirach's positive worldview is reaffirmed, but now deals with the problem that *1 Enoch* saw and that Sirach, with its optimism, did not address.'²¹

What does this perception mean in terms of the programmatic character of the prologue for the understanding of the whole Gospel? In the light of the identification of Wisdom with Torah in Sir 24:23 (JB: 'All this is no other than the book of the covenant of the Most High God, the Law that Moses enjoined on us'; LXX: ταῦτα πάντα βιβλος διαθήκης θεοῦ ὑψίστου νόμον ὃν ἐνετείλατο ἡμῖν Μωυσῆς) the significance of Wright's reading can be stated as follows:

The story of wisdom's search for a place to live is one way of expressing the quest for the location of God's presence on earth. According to Sir 24:23 this location is the Torah. Jn 1:1-18 is a subversive retelling of this story in that it presents a different location of the presence of God, namely, Jesus Christ. Seen from this angle, v. 14 still holds a key position in the prologue as the most explicit statement of the location of the presence of God. However, the contrast in v. 17 between the giving of the law through Moses and Jesus Christ as the one through whom grace and truth became reality provides an important additional qualification in terms of the controversial setting in which the confession of v. 14 occurs.²² The expectations of the reader about the content of the Gospel are thus shaped in the following way: The Gospel is not about an unqualified incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. It is about the presence of God in Jesus Christ in contrast to opposing views that claim the presence of God in the law. This reading of the

²⁰ WRIGHT, *NTPG*, 415.

²¹ WRIGHT, *NTPG*, 415-416.

²² The importance of 1:17 is seen by e.g. LINDEMANN, 'Mose', 310; cf. also HAACKER, *Stiftung*, 25, who seems to go too far, however, in calling the verse '*Zielpunkt des Prologs und Themaangabe des vierten Evangeliums*'. For Haacker this means that the Fourth Gospel presents Jesus primarily as a founder of a religion (in analogy and contrast to Moses), not as the revealer of God. Although Haacker presents many helpful insights, his attempt to argue against Bultmann's emphasis on the concept of the revealer is not convincing. See also the critique in ASHTON, *Understanding*, 129, 194-195.

prologue does not only make good sense within a post-A.D. 70 setting, during which the Torah became increasingly important after the destruction of the Temple as the place of God's presence, it is also confirmed by the narrative itself, in which the question of the presence of God in Jesus and the role of the Torah play crucial and interrelated roles. As Pancaro has shown in his exhaustive study of the law in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus' opponents use the law to convict him as a breaker of the law.²³ But Jesus, possessing supreme authority as the Son of God, shows that in fact 'the Jews' are misusing the law.²⁴ From the point of view of the narrator the Son of God is *both* the unique revealer of God *and* the true interpreter of the law. One aim of the narrative is therefore to show that since God the Father is uniquely present in Jesus the Son, the law cannot be interpreted apart from this revelation of God in Jesus. For those who share the narrator's point of view, what is said about the scriptures can also be said about the law: both bear witness to Jesus,²⁵ and in him the law is truly fulfilled.

It is the contention of what follows that within this subversive retelling of the story of Wisdom incarnated in the Torah in Sirach 24 in terms of the story of the Logos incarnated in Jesus Christ in John's prologue there is to be found a second subversive retelling. This second retelling qualifies the point of the former by contrasting the problem of *the ambiguity* of the presence of God at the time of the giving of the Torah at Sinai with *the clarity* of the witness to God's presence in Jesus Christ by a confessing community.²⁶ The next section discusses the links that can be established between Jn 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34.

²³ See PANCARO, *Law*, part I: In the eyes of 'the Jews' Jesus violates the Sabbath (Jn 5:1-16), he is a blasphemer (Jn 5:17-18; 8:58; 10:24-38), a false teacher (Jn 7:14-18, 45-49; 9:24-34; 18:19-24) and an enemy of the Jewish nation (Jn 11:47-52).

²⁴ See PANCARO, *Law*, part II: They go against the law by condemning Jesus (Jn 7:19, 51), but Jesus is authorized to act on the Sabbath as he does because of his unique relationship to his Father (Jn 5:17-47; 7:21-23; compare Lk 6:1-11 for two similar examples). Finally, the law is used by Jesus to justify his claims to be the Son of God (Jn 10:34-36) and the unique teacher and revealer of God (Jn 1:45-49; 5:31-47; 6:45; 8:12-20).

²⁵ This is not to deny that the terms νόμος and γραφή, γραφαί are used in different ways in John's Gospel. Νόμος can be used in a derogatory sense, especially in the distancing phrase ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῷ ὑμετέρῳ (8:17), ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ὑμῶν (10:34), ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτῶν (15:25). In contrast, γραφή is used positively as one of the witnesses for Jesus (5:39; 7:38, 42 [if taken ironically]; cf. 2:22; 20:9 as indirect evidence for this). γραφή is also evaluated positively in that its unbroken validity is stressed (10:35), and in that the term is used in combination with the fulfillment motif (13:18; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37). However, a positive role can also be assigned to νόμος, see 1:45 (νόμος as witness to Christ). Cf. also 5:46, where the term νόμος does not occur, but the reference is implicit in the phrase περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν, referring to Moses as witness to Christ. Cf. also 7:50-51, where Nicodemus refers to ὁ νόμος ἡμῶν in an attempt to protect Jesus from being sentenced in an unjust way. Lastly, although 10:34 is an example of the distancing use of νόμος, it is used in this verse to refer to Ps 82:6, a verse designated as λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ and connected with ἡ γραφή in 10:35, thus implying again a positive use of νόμος. Cf. LINDEMANN, 'Mose', 327 n. 76, who argues against HENGEL, 'Schriftauslegung', 277, for a differentiated understanding of νόμος according to the context of each occurrence; cf. also PANCARO, *Law*, 327-329; LINCOLN, *Truth*, 54-56.

²⁶ Behind this statement stands the conviction that those who believed in Jesus and who now stand behind John's Gospel, testifying to its reliability (cf. 21:24), i.e. the Johannine community, is the first referent of 'we' in Jn 1:14. For one way of extending the referent to later believers cf. BULTMANN, *Johannesevangelium*, 45-46, who utilizes Kierkegaard's concept of simultaneity in this context. A different route is taken by WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 61, who divides the prologue

2.1.2 Jn 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34: establishing the links

That there are links between these two texts has been observed by many,²⁷ and most emphatically by A. T. Hanson.²⁸ The focus has mostly been on the phrase χάρις καὶ ἀληθεία in 1:14, 17, understood to allude to Ex 34:6, חַסְדִּים וְרַחֲמִים.²⁹ The major arguments against this link are given by Bultmann.³⁰ First, John does not use ἀληθεία in the sense of חַסְדִּים. Secondly, the LXX does not translate רַחֲמִים by χάρις, but by ἔλεος.³¹ It has to be admitted that at first sight the evidence from the use of the vocabulary is a strong argument against the link with Ex 34:6, but Hanson tries to provide examples from the LXX where רַחֲמִים is translated by χάρις. In addition to Esther 2:9, the only example from the Hebrew canon, he finds two verses in Sirach (7:33; 10:17) and a few more in the remains of other Greek translations: Symmachus provides three examples in 2 Sam 2:6; 10:2; and Ps 89:24. Four further examples are Theodotion in Prov 31:26, Quinta in Ps 33:5, and Sexta in Ps 30:7; 33:18.³² Hanson takes also into account the arguments by Montgomery that χάρις in the NT is translated in the Syriac text by the same word that is used to translate רַחֲמִים,³³ and by Black, who postulated an Aramaic source behind χάρις ἀντὶ χάριτος in Jn 1:16.³⁴ He thus manages to ease the pressure of the argument from the vocabulary, only to introduce in the next paragraph another aspect which does not really support the link to Ex 34:6:

‘... if it is correct to say that *pleres kharitos kai aletheias* in John 1.14 renders *rab hesed we^emet* in Exodus 34.6, then *rab* is translated by *pleres*. For such a translation I can find no parallel anywhere else.’³⁵

Even this aspect does not persuade Hanson to give up the link to Ex 34:6. He immediately continues:

into two parts, understanding the ‘we’ in the confessional part 1:14-18 as all those who confess their faith in the one who is described in vv. 1-13.

²⁷ Cf. the list of commentators from Westcott to Lindars in HANSON, *Interpretation*, 97-98, and now especially THEOBALD, *Fleischwerdung*, 255.

²⁸ See especially HANSON, *Interpretation*, 97-109 (a newer version of HANSON, ‘John 1:14-18’), and HANSON, *Gospel*, 21-32.

²⁹ E.g. MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 288 n. 2.

³⁰ BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 50 n. 1.

³¹ Further, more far-fetched arguments against the allusion by DE LA POTTERIE, ‘*Kharis*’, are rejected persuasively by HANSON, *Interpretation*, 99ff.

³² See HANSON, *Interpretation*, 100. All of these examples had already been observed by DODD, *Interpretation*, 175 n. 3, taken up by SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium* I, 248 n. 3 (= IDEM, *Gospel* 1, 272 n. 193), who in n. 4 also points out that Philo prefers χάρις to ἔλεος to translate רַחֲמִים. Dodd did also already point out that ‘the combination of χάρις and ἀλήθεια is so unusual in Greek that we must suppose that the expression was derived from a Hebrew source.’ (DODD, *Interpretation*, 175).

³³ See MONTGOMERY, ‘Hebrew *Hesed*’. In agreement with Montgomery is BROWN, *John*, 14. Reading the reflections of Brown at this point, the comment of ASHTON, ‘Transformation’, 183 n. 22, that Brown (and Lindars) ‘simply assume’ the allusion to Ex 34:6, seems not wholly justified.

³⁴ See BLACK, ‘Tradition’.

³⁵ HANSON, *Interpretation*, 100.

‘From this, however, I would conclude, not that the equivalence is mistaken but that the author of the Fourth Gospel has translated the phrase for himself direct from the Hebrew. It is, all the same, a perfectly reasonable translation of the Hebrew phrase.’³⁶

The discussion so far shows that it is too simplistic to reject the idea of an allusion to Ex 34:6 only on the basis of the vocabulary; apart from the problem of exact terminological identity other aspects have to be considered. A valid question to clarify further the probability of an intended link to Ex 33-34 is the following: what other means could the author have used in order to point his audience to an illuminating OT background? *The combination of significant concepts in a given text* is surely one effective means to make an audience think about possible allusions. It is in this area that Hanson offers his most persuasive argument in favour of the link to Ex 33-34:

‘In the series of events narrated in Exodus 33.12-34.8 we have a Scripture passage in which (a) Moses is allowed to see God, however partially; (b) this vision is represented as a vision of God’s glory; (c) the content of the vision in terms of a revelation of God as (literally) “full of mercy and truth”; and (d) the revelation is associated with, though not identified with, the giving of the Law through Moses. It would be impossible to find a Scripture passage which contains more fundamental elements in common with John 1.14-18. I find it inevitable to conclude that the one is the basis of the other.’³⁷

Not dissimilar is Theobald’s compilation of elements that occur both in Jn 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34:

‘Im Ausgang vom eindeutigen V. 14d (vgl. Ex 34,6) erinnert man sich beim „Zelten“ des Logos in seiner Gemeinde an das heilige Zelt, den Wohnort Jahwes in Israel, beim Bekenntnis „wir haben seine Herrlichkeit geschaut“ an die Bitte des Mose an Jahwe Ex 33:18 „Laß mich doch deine Herrlichkeit sehen!“, und bei Joh 1,18a assoziiert man den negativen Bescheid Jahwes an Mose Ex 33,20.23: „ . . . Kein Mensch kann mich sehen und am Leben bleiben . . . Mein Angesicht kann niemand sehen“. Bestätigt wird man in diesen Bezügen durch den ausdrücklichen Hinweis auf Mose und das Gesetz in V. 16.’³⁸

Apart from the reference to Ex 34:6, the combination of Hanson’s and Theobald’s observations suggests a link between the two passages based on the following elements: (1) σκηνώω in 1:14 and the tent of meeting/witness in Ex 33:7 (מִוֶּעַד לְאֵהָרָא; LXX: σκηνή μαρτυρίου); (2) ἔθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ in 1:14 and Ex 33:18; (3) Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε in 1:18 and Ex 33:20,23; (4) the explicit mentioning of Moses and the giving of the Torah in 1:17 and Ex 33-34 as part of the narrative of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai in Ex 19-40.³⁹

³⁶ HANSON, *Interpretation*, 100. He agrees with Lindars, who makes the same point in *Gospel*, 95.

³⁷ HANSON, *Gospel*, 21 (originally in IDEM, *Interpretation*, 102).

³⁸ THEOBALD, *Fleischwerdung*, 255.

³⁹ EVANS, *Word*, 79-83, summarizes the aspects that link the two passages in a similar way. He does not, however, mention my no. (1), but thinks that ‘the “bosom of the Father” (v. 18) contrasts with Moses’ fleeting glimpses of God’s “back” (Exod. 33.23). In sharp contrast to Moses, the eternal Word existed “with [or *facing*: πρὸς] God” (v. 1) and “in the bosom [that is, front] of the Father” from eternity.’ (EVANS, *Word*, 81). Although it might be another possible connection, I do not wish to put any weight on it since in this case there is no terminological link, and the detail in Ex 33:23 is not as significant as are the aspects mentioned above.

Simply to list these elements does not demonstrate whether the link is established by ingenious exegetes or intended by the author,⁴⁰ for one can ask why the author did not choose an explicit quotation if a reference to Ex 33-34 was really intended. To support the thesis that the link to Ex 33-34 was indeed intended by the author I put forward the following line of argumentation:

The explicit mention of the giving of the Torah through Moses in 1:17 is the most obvious textual marker that evokes the Mount Sinai account. Given the importance of this foundational event at the beginning of the history of Israel, the author of the prologue could expect familiarity with the details of this story among many Jewish, if not also among educated pagan readers. Moses' request to see God's glory was one of the details of this story, and not an unimportant one at that. It is therefore not difficult to see how the confession ἔθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ in v. 14 and the claim Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε in v. 18 would evoke the story of Ex 33. From this perspective the traditional role of the phrase χάρις καὶ ἀληθεία in 1:14, 17 for the establishment of the link to Ex 33-34 can almost be reversed. It is not primarily this phrase that leads the reader to recall Ex 34:6, but the reader who associates Ex 33 because of the connections just mentioned is led to take Ex 34:6 to illuminate χάρις καὶ ἀληθεία in 1:14, 17. This is not to deny that it is also perfectly possible for a reader familiar with the Sinai events to associate first Ex 34:6 and then to pick up the other connections. The particular sequence in which a reader picks up various allusions may vary and is not the decisive point.

There is, however, at least one further aspect that might have functioned to point the reader to Ex 33-34 in the first place. In his discussion of ἐξηγέομαι in 1:18 Hanson traces a possible background in Job 28:27, Sir 1:9 and 43:31, utilizing the three forms of wisdom as distinguished by B. L. Mack.⁴¹ One form is the concept of the 'hidden wisdom', visible in passages like Job 28:27 and Sir 1:9. This concept implies the need for revelation, and it is the content of revelation that leads Hanson again to Ex 33-34:

'It seems that in his account of the incarnation of the Logos John is attempting to make a takeover bid for all that Wisdom meant to Israel of old. The relevance of this evidence for our subject is that it clearly demonstrates the connection of John 1.14-18 with the revelation of God. But, if this passage is concerned with revelation, the question must arise: revelation of what? Or, what is God revealed to be? And once we have reached this point we can hardly escape a reference to God revealed on Sinai as full of grace and truth. Thus de la Potterie's emphasis on the fact of revelation is quite justified, but it must raise the question of the content of revelation; and here we are inevitably brought back to Exodus 33-34.'⁴²

⁴⁰ By using the phrase 'intended by the author' I am aware of the numerous problems connected with the notion of authorial intention. I am in basic agreement with HAYS, *Echoes*, 201 n. 90, on the famous 'intentional fallacy' (see below, note 147), and with WRIGHT, *NTPG*, part 1, who argues that the discovery of intentions is not possible in simple and straightforward ways, but in a process of hypothesis and verification that is always open to being tested and questioned.

⁴¹ HANSON, *Interpretation*, 105-106, using MACK, *Logos*.

⁴² HANSON, *Interpretation*, 106. The reference is to DE LA POTTERIE, 'Kharis'.

The interesting aspect of this argument for the present discussion is that it is open to be interpreted as a further way of identifying an allusion. This way consists in *theological reflection*, in the given case theological reflection triggered by another allusion. Although on the one hand this way seems to be even more speculative than the way of picking up terminological and conceptual similarities between texts, on the other hand it cannot be ruled out that the author of such a complex work as John's Gospel might well have thought about allusions detectable through theological reflection. I shall be careful, however, not to rest too much weight on this possibility. Given the discussion so far, I will focus on the following three aspects of the argument: (a) The density of the elements in Jn 1:14-18 that occur also in Ex 33-34; (b) the importance of these elements both in the prologue and in Exodus, and (c) the status of the Sinai story as a foundational event for Israel. The combination of these three aspects make it more likely to think the author did intend the link to Ex 33-34 than to imagine he did not.

There is one element not yet mentioned as part of my argument that the connection to Ex 33-34 is intended. This is the possible link between σκηνώω in 1:14 and אָהֵל מוֹעֵד (LXX: σκηνή μαρτυρίου) in Ex 33:7.⁴³ An impressive variety of possible candidates of reference have been suggested: (1) the dwelling of Wisdom in Israel (Sir 24:8; *1 Enoch* 42:2)⁴⁴; (2) the dwelling of YHWH in Israel as indicated by שָׁכַן (Ex 25:8; 29:46; 40:34)⁴⁵; (3) the tabernacle, הַמִּשְׁכָּן (Ex 25:9)⁴⁶; (4) the שְׂכִינָה of rabbinic Judaism⁴⁷; (5) a tent as a 'fragile shell', 'a symbol of the human body and of the vulnerability of the life within that body'⁴⁸ (Wis 9:15; 2 Cor 5:1.4; 2 Pet 1:13.14; *Diogn.* 6:8)⁴⁹; (6) the Temple (e.g., Ps 26:8 MT)⁵⁰; (7) the

⁴³ The possibility of this link has been suggested by CARSON, *John*, 127; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 14 (for him the primary allusion).

⁴⁴ BAUER, *Johannesevangelium*, 24; BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 41-42 n. 5; MOLONEY, *Belief*, 42; SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium 1*, 245 [= *John I*, 269], WITHERINGTON, *John's Wisdom*, 55.

⁴⁵ MOLONEY, *Belief*, 42; RIDDERBOS, *Gospel*, 51.

⁴⁶ CARSON, *John*, 127; ZAHN, *Johannes*, 81; the concept of God's presence in the tabernacle was underlined by the relation between שָׁכַן and הַמִּשְׁכָּן in Ex 25:8-9; cf. also Ex 40:34-38.

⁴⁷ MOLONEY, *Belief*, 42; CARSON, *John*, 128 (although he sees the problem that this allusion as well as the one to שָׁכַן requires knowledge of Hebrew, which John might not have expected in his audience, as 1:38, 41, 42; 9:7 and 20:16 show).

⁴⁸ BRODIE, *John*, 143 (he sees a 'profound ambiguity' between this allusion and the one to the presence and revelation of God).

⁴⁹ BAUER, *Johannesevangelium*, 24 (for him the primary allusion); LIGHTFOOT, *St. John*, 84; WESTCOTT, *St. John*, 11; ZAHN, *Johannes*, 80-81 (the latter two at the same time point out that this allusion does not sufficiently explain ἐσκήνωσεν here). KOESTER, *Dwelling*, 115, supports this allusion, but sees also that tabernacle imagery is appropriate because of the fulfilment of prophetic promises that God will tabernacle among his people; cf. p. 102.104.

⁵⁰ HOSKYNIS, *Gospel*, 148; ZAHN, *Johannes*, 81 n. 78. SCHLATTER, *Evangelist*, 23, refers to *Tanh.* 8.93 and במדבר 14.3 for the familiarity of the thought of the presence of God in the Temple and in the community in rabbinic writings [the presence in the community raises the question whether the destruction of the Temple forced this understanding]. Schlatter refers also to the fact that Josephus does not lament a single consequence of the Jewish war so much as the loss of the temple, whereas for John the presence of the glory of God in Jesus provides already an answer to this

eschatological dwelling of God in the midst of his people (Zech 2:14; Joel 4:17; Ezek 37:26; 43:7)⁵¹; (8) Jesus living in a tent among the disciples of John the Baptist.⁵² This variety cautions against placing too much weight on this element in order *to establish* the link to Ex 33-34. However, once the link *is established on other grounds*, this element becomes important since it directs the attention to the problem of the presence of God. To this I now turn.

2.1.3 Jn 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34: the theological significance of the links

Before discussing the theological significance of the link and the problem of the presence of God, some remarks about the significance of the link in terms of its impact on various readers of the prologue are in order.

To appreciate the impact of this link on a reader one has to realize that it is not an explicit quotation, but a combination of statements that evokes a foundational OT story with terminological allusions that become meaningful for a reader familiar with the details of that story. The absence of an explicit quotation does not therefore mean that the link is insignificant. On the contrary, less obvious, implicit, but still clearly detectable links between passages may be even more significant than explicit quotations, since implicitness presupposes good knowledge of a shared tradition. Furthermore, the reader who picks up the connection discovers *how* the narrator uses the shared tradition. This is likely to cause one of three reactions, depending on whether or not one shares the narrator's point of view, or whether one is as yet undecided. When they detect the link, all of these readers discover an illuminating background that provides clues to understand the meaning of the text. A sympathetic reader will welcome the additional layer of meaning, but the unwilling reader will disapprove of the narrator's claims. The reader who is still undecided whether or not she should accept the ideological point of view of the narrator is given additional information about this point of view. Thus the evocation of the OT background is anything but insignificant in its impact on different readers.⁵³

Turning to the theological significance of the link, the question that is illuminated by the connection with Ex 33-34 is not the problem of the incarnation as such, but the question of the

dilemma (23-24). BROWN, *John*, 33, sees Jesus as the new location of the presence of God, thereby replacing both Tabernacle and Temple.

⁵¹ ZAHN, *Johannes*, 81.

⁵² SPITTA, *Johannes-Evangelium*, on 1:14.

⁵³ On the concept of evocation cf. the remarks by COSERIU, *Textlinguistik*, 102: 'Die Evokation trägt besonders viel zum Reichtum der Sprache bei, durch sie entsteht jene Mehrdeutigkeit, die man nicht immer nur negativ als "Vagheit" sehen sollte, sondern durchaus positiv als eine Bereicherung.' This is applied to the understanding of the prologue by THEOBALD, *Fleischwerdung*, 209-210: 'Tragen auch die von einzelnen Wörtern oder Wortfolgen "evozierten", nicht an der Oberfläche des Textes liegenden Bedeutungsschichten Wesentliches zum Aufbau seines "Sinnes" bei, dann müssen über die Synchronie des Textes hinaus auch seine biblischen Anspielungen in ihrem semantischen Beitrag gewürdigt werden.'

presence and revelation of God. A comparison of Jn 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34 highlights the following aspects.

Ernst Käsemann, in his famous *Der letzte Wille Jesu nach Johannes 17*, was right in suggesting that the focus of 1:14 is not on the incarnation (ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο), but on the actual experience of the presence of God in Jesus (καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός).⁵⁴ This view is supported by the following observations: (a) Perhaps already in 1:3c-4,⁵⁵ or in v. 5,⁵⁶ but certainly in 1:9 the coming of the λόγος into the world *in Jesus* is in view.⁵⁷ (b) 1:6-8 is about the witness of the Baptist to the light of the world, a reference to Jesus. (c) 1:9-10 talks about the coming of the light into the world in general, and 1:11 to Israel in particular, so 1:14 by no means introduces the incarnation motif, but picks it up again.⁵⁸ The new thought is that of the close presence of the δόξα λόγου in the midst of those who not only encountered Jesus in his lifetime, but were also prepared to perceive God at work in him.⁵⁹ Whether or not this points to an enthusiastic community on its way into docetism or gnosticism is another question.⁶⁰ The important point is the focus here on the presence of the δόξα λόγου in Jesus.

This interpretation obviously depends on a reading of the final form of the prologue. An example of a very different perspective is presented by Hengel, who reads the prologue in the

⁵⁴ KÄSEMANN, *Wille*, 16ff. Cf. also HAACKER, *Stiftung*, 27.

⁵⁵ So MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 36. If this is a minority position, even more so is the view of SCHOTTROFF, *Glaubende*, 229f., supported by THYEN, 'Literatur I', 62f., that Jn 1:1 is already about the historical appearance of the revealer. The reason for this interpretation is Schottroff's view of the Johannine dualism in terms of *Wesensaussagen* which do not allow for a temporal dimension. For a definitive rejection of any a-temporal interpretations of John's Gospel see FREY, *Eschatologie II*.

⁵⁶ KÄSEMANN, 'Aufbau', 86, thinks that vv. 5-13 refer to the 'historical epiphany of the revealer'. He is followed by APPOLD, *Oneness*, 35, n. 1, a student of Käsemann, who says that 'v. 5 as a parallel to v. 14 implies the historical appearance of Jesus and indicates that already the initial statements of the Prologue cannot be restricted to a trans-historical dimension. Past and present are bound together "sub specie aeternitatis". Consequently, the oneness of the pre-existent Logos with God cannot be separated from the oneness of the In-carnated Logos with the Father.' An interpretation like this seems to be more perceptive of possible overlapping layers of meaning in a text like the prologue than attempts that narrow down interpretative options to a single one. Most recently, WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 41, argues that 'im beschreibenden Teil ab V.5 das geschichtliche Wirken Jesu im Blick ist'. Cf. also his detailed comments on p. 51f.

⁵⁷ So e.g. HOFIUS, 'Struktur', 19; CARSON, *John*, 122; BORGAN, 'Targumic Character', 14; MERKLEIN, 'Geschöpf', 174; KÜGLER, *König*, 43.

⁵⁸ Cf. the comparison of the repetitive technique of the prologue with waves rolling onto the shore, falling back to gather new strength and coming back even more powerfully by LACAN, 'Prologue', 97, taken up by MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 34 (without reference to Lacan).

⁵⁹ Behind this statement stand some crucial exegetical decisions. First, we take ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν as referring to the physical presence of Jesus among people, not to an inner spiritual presence. Secondly, we take the aor. mid. ἐθεασάμεθα as referring first of all to the perception of the δόξα λόγου in the earthly Jesus which can only secondarily be extended to all believers of all times, a view favoured by BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 45-46. Thirdly, the combination of the first two points suggests as the first referent of 'we' those who believed in Jesus and who now stand behind John's Gospel, testifying to its reliability (Jn 21:24). On the issue of eyewitness testimony from a perspective of speech act theory cf. now TOVEY, *Art*.

⁶⁰ This is the view of KÄSEMANN, *Wille*, passim.

light of Jn 10:34f. and takes 1:1-5,9-13 as a condensed summary of the activity of the Logos at the creation of the world and in OT Israel. In his reading, 1:11-13 expresses the fact that already during OT times only some in Israel could be considered children of God:

‘Joh 1,11 wird mit den lapidaren Worten εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον die Offenbarung des Logos, d.h. des heilschaffenden und richtenden Gotteswortes gegenüber Israel als dem Eigentumsvolk umschrieben: »Er kam zu den Seinen, und die Seinen nahmen ihn nicht auf«. Das εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν und das πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐγένετο [from 10:35; R.B.] entsprechen sich. Es geht um die (erwählende) Anrede durch das Gotteswort. Freilich gilt die Zurückweisung dieser Anrede nicht für alle: »Welche ihn aber aufnahmen, denen gab er Vollmacht, Gottes Kinder zu werden, denen, die an seinen Namen glauben«. Einzelne schenken schon im alten Israel dem Gotteswort Glauben und wurden dadurch zu Gotteskindern. Die Gotteskindschaft, ja die »Erzeugung« des Gottesvolkes durch Jahwe ist eine genuin alttestamentliche Vorstellung. Zugleich ist im vorauslaufenden alttestamentlichen Heils- bzw. Unheilsgeschehen das Ereignis der Offenbarung, Verwerfung und Annahme des menschengewordenen Logos und Gottessohnes je und je vorabgebildet. Joh 1,5.9-13 umschreiben so die Offenbarung des Logos gegenüber der Menschheit von der Urzeit an und dann im besonderen an Israel und weisen gleichzeitig indirekt auf das Schicksal Jesu. Was in der »Heilsgeschichte« geschah, wiederholt sich nach dem ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο.’⁶¹

This is a very elegant and perceptive approach, based on the work of Eltester and Gese.⁶² It also fits with the differentiation in ch. 8 between Abraham’s *descendants* (σπέρμα) and Abraham’s *children* (τέκνα).⁶³ Nevertheless, I contend that not only the inclusion of vv. 6-8, but also the other aspects mentioned above render it less likely that the reference to Jesus is only indirect in 1:11-13, and more likely that Jesus is very much in focus in the final form of the prologue even before v. 14. The emphasis on the experience of the glory of Jesus is the focus of v. 14, which leads to the following investigation of an OT text that is concerned with the problem of experiencing God’s glory.

The question of the presence of God and the desire to see his glory features prominently in Exodus 33-34. First, in the context of the golden calf incident the question ‘Whose people are these stiff-necked Israelites?’ is visible in the designation ‘your people’ by God (Ex 32:7) and by Moses (Ex 32:11) respectively. In 32:7 and 33:1, God distances himself from Israel by talking to Moses about the people ‘you brought up out of Egypt’. This distance becomes even greater in 33:3-5, where God signals that he himself cannot go with the people, since he might destroy them because of their sin. This is immediately followed by the story of the tent of meeting or tent of witness (MT מוֹעֵד אֶהָל, LXX σκηνὴ μαρτυρίου).⁶⁴ Significantly, it is emphasized that this tent was put outside the camp and that therefore the people had to leave the camp in order to ‘seek the Lord’ (Ex 33:7). Thus, the covenant breach of the golden calf incident led to a greater distance between God and his covenant people.

⁶¹ HENGEL, ‘Schriftauslegung’, 263.

⁶² Cf. the ‘heilsgeschichtliche’ interpretation of ELTESTER, ‘Logos’, and GESE, ‘Johannesprolog’.

⁶³ See HENGEL, ‘Schriftauslegung’, 264.

⁶⁴ For the source-critical questions behind Ex 33:7-11 and a convincing argument as to the function of the verses in their present context, cf. CHILDS, *Exodus*, 584-593.

Furthermore, although the pillar of cloud at the entrance of the tent signals the presence of God (33:9), and although it is said that ‘the Lord would speak to Moses face to face’ (33:11) - both signs of God’s gracious presence even in the face of covenant breach - the following verses clearly show Moses as still uncertain about the presence of God. Obviously not content with the promise of an angel who will accompany the Israelites, apparently as a substitute for the presence of God (Ex 33:2), Moses asks for direct guidance (Ex 33:13). God finally seems to give in by promising that his presence will be with him (MT **פָּנָי יֵלְכוּ**; LXX: *Ἀὐτὸς προπορεύσομαι σου*, Ex 33:14). But even after this, Moses keeps asking for continued guidance (vv. 15-16), and his request is again granted by God (v. 17). The discourse comes to its climax when even after the reassurance in vv. 15-16 Moses has the nerve to request to see the glory of God (v. 18):

MT: **הֲרֵאֵנִי נָא אֶת־כְּבוֹדְךָ**

LXX: *Δεῖξον μοι τὴν σεαυτοῦ δόξαν.*

The seeing of the glory corresponds to the second and most important element of John 1:14. Although the LXX of Ex 33:19 seems to indicate that Moses’ wish was granted (*εἰς τὸ παρελεύσομαι πρότερος σου τῇ δόξῃ μου*), the MT reflects a different vocabulary:

אֲנִי אֶעֱבִיר כָּל־טוֹבִי עַל־פְּנֵיךָ

‘I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you’ (NIV) seems to be a perceptive translation of God’s answer, pointing out that it was not God’s glory that Moses was about to see. Neither was it God’s face, as v. 20 makes clear:

MT: **לֹא תוּכַל לִרְאוֹת אֶת־פָּנָי**

LXX: *Οὐ δύνησῃ ἰδεῖν μου τὸ πρόσωπον*

Instead, what God promises Moses in Ex 33:19 and what eventually happens in 34:5-6 is at its core an audition, not a vision. The focus is clearly on the proclamation of God’s name. The promise to cause his goodness to pass in 33:19 is not taken up in 34:5; here only the cloud is mentioned to signal God’s presence.

How does this reading of Ex 33-34 impact on the theology of Jn 1:14-18? The main point seems to be the following: what was a considerable problem in the context of the Sinai covenant, namely, the presence of God among his people in the face of the covenant breach, and what was impossible for Moses in the same context, namely, the vision of God’s glory, was neither a problem nor impossible when the word became flesh.

It is at this point that the above mentioned notion of a subversive retelling can be spelled out in more detail. The story of wisdom in Sir 24 is subversively retold in Jn 1:1-18 in that the presence of God is not seen in Torah but in Jesus Christ. The retelling of Ex 33-34 concerns not simply the location of the presence of God, but the struggle to encounter the presence of God. As we saw, Ex 33-34 is everything but a straightforward account of an encounter of the presence of God, let alone an unambiguous story about an incident of the vision of God’s glory.

By way of contrast, Jn 1:14-18 reflects the claim of a community to have seen God's glory in their encounter of the earthly Jesus. The notion of difficulty underlying Moses' attempts to secure the presence of God is turned into the notion of simplicity of access to the glory of God. For those who belonged to the category outlined in Jn 1:12-13, the presence of God and the vision of his glory had finally become reality.⁶⁵

If the subversive retelling of Exodus 33-34 thus underlines the claim of the reality of the presence of God in Jesus, the question can be raised about the reality status of the revelation on Sinai. This question can take two directions. First, one can ask whether John is implicitly denying that the revelation at Sinai was a true revelation of God. This has been argued by Michael Theobald. Secondly, one can ask what exactly was revealed at Sinai. Here Hanson's theory about Israel's encounter with the pre-existent Logos at various points in her history deserves detailed discussion.

First, however, I turn to Theobald. He is particularly interested in the question of the reality status of the revelation at Sinai, and he introduces the issue like this:

'Entsprechend den Ausführungen zu Joh 1,1-5 wird man auch bei den hier [in 1:14-18] zu beobachtenden alttestamentlichen Reminiszenzen nicht erwarten, daß sie *eigenständige* theologische Bedeutung besitzen. Der Transfer von Weisheitsaussagen bzw. Aussagen zur Epiphanie Gottes im Alten Bund auf den Logos wird keine heilsgeschichtliche Erfüllungstheologie begründen, sondern das Erinnertere ausschließlich für den Logos-Christus als die wahre und eigentliche Epiphanie Gottes reklamieren. Welcher Wirklichkeitsgehalt dem Erinnererten für sich selbst zukommt, hat der Prologautor bisher nicht thematisiert.'⁶⁶

The last sentence seems to express an open mind on the question of the reality status of the OT background. However, the denial of a salvation-historical theology of fulfilment and the denial of any theological significance of the OT texts in themselves, expressed in the earlier sentences, point already in the direction Theobald wishes to go. Especially the latter point becomes clearer in his comments on Jn 1:16-17. These comments are worth quoting in full, since the decisive point he makes here will reappear in the discussion of other Johannine texts later in this study. Implying that the parallelism in Jn 1:17 is sharply antithetical, Theobald says:

'Zunächst fällt auf [in v. 17], daß die Sentenz „Gesetz“ und „Gnade und Wahrheit“, die im jüdisch-biblischen Kontext zusammengehören, auseinanderreißt. Wie wesentlich sie zusammengehören, hat schon die in V. 14 eingearbeitete Erinnerung an die Sinaiepiphanie gezeigt. Wenn es in Ex 34,6 heißt: „Jahwe ist ein barmherziger und gnädiger Gott, langmütig, reich an Güte und Treue“, dann begleitet diese Selbstoffenbarung seines Namens seine Epiphanie vor Mose, begründet die Erneuerung seines Bundes mit Israel und mündet ein in die erneute Übergabe des Dekalogs durch Mose an Israel (Ex 33,7-34,35). Bei all dem verpflichtet Jahwe sich, bei seinem Volk zu bleiben und mit ihm zu ziehen. Diese Selbstoffenbarung Jahwes greift nun die Sentenz mit ihrer Formel ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀληθεία auf, reduziert sie auf ihren Heilsaspekt und transponiert sie so auf den einen Mittler Jesus Christus. Ist er der Ort, an dem „Gnade und Wahrheit“ Jahwes *Wirklichkeit* geworden sind, dann bleibt für das Gesetz nur ein Vakuum an göttlicher Wirklichkeit, wie das dann auch V. 18a mit einem Seitenblick auf die Epiphanie Jahwes vor Mose zu sagen scheint: „Gott hat niemand je geschaut!“ Ist der

⁶⁵ That this conclusion equates the glory of the λόγος of which 1:14 speaks with the glory of God seems to be justified in the light of the close connection between the λόγος and God in 1:1-2.

⁶⁶ THEOBALD, *Fleischwerdung*, 255.

unsichtbare Gott allein in Jesus Christus sichtbar und erfahrbar geworden, dann verblaßt auch die Epiphanie Jahwes vor Mose hinter der Übergabe der Tora an ihn, wie diese nach dem 4. Ev ja auch vor allem Zeugnis der außerhalb ihrer selbst liegenden Heilswirklichkeit Jesu Christi ist. Vielleicht ist die Ent-Wirklichung der Tora aber auch noch in einem umfassenderen Sinn gemeint.⁶⁷

The key phrase Theobald emphasizes is *Ent-Wirklichung der Tora*. In the context of the above quotation the phrase seems to mean this: the fullness of the revelation of God in Christ results in the fading away of the reality status of the Torah, with *Ent-Wirklichung* referring to a process, not a given state of affairs. Read in this way, the quotation may reflect an extreme formulation of a position that emphasizes the aspect of change and discontinuity connected with the coming of Christ. However, in a later publication Theobald goes further than this.⁶⁸ Even here his perception of v. 18 seems to suggest that Theobald understands the way John uses the OT as implicitly denying the reality of God behind OT events. This is a serious charge with equally serious consequences, including the claim that John's use of the OT is unacceptable in the light of contemporary Jewish-Christian dialogue.⁶⁹ Hanson may be instinctively right when he shortly reacts to Theobald's view: 'John would never so discredit scripture.'⁷⁰ But this is surely not an adequate response to Theobald's well argued case. Since he sees the *Ent-Wirklichung der Tora* again in Jn 5:37 and 6:32, I will respond to his arguments in an excursus in connection to Jn 6. At this point I shall proceed by looking at Hanson's own theory of the presence of the pre-existent Logos in Israel's history.

The starting point of Hanson's argument is that θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε in Jn 1:18, and even more so Jn 5:37 and 6:46⁷¹, seems to contradict those incidents in the OT where some kind of seeing of God is reported. After listing various attempts to get around this problem, Hanson offers his own solution:

⁶⁷ THEOBALD, *Fleischwerdung*, 257-258.

⁶⁸ See THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', an article on John 6 in which he explicates his view of the paradigm of John's use of the OT. This article is dealt with in detail in my discussion of John 6 in ch. 4 below.

⁶⁹ KÜGLER, *König*, 70, comes close to Theobald's position in that he suggests that texts like Jn 1:18 display an unacceptable anti-Judaism which has to be rooted out by rejecting John's soteriological exclusivism: 'Diese christologische Monopolisierung des Heils, die sich selbst durchaus in Kontinuität zur jüdischen Tradition sieht (*Joh 4,22*), scheint mir die eigentliche Herausforderung für eine wirklich heutige Theologie zu sein. Die johanneische Frontstellung gegen "die Juden" läßt sich historisch gewiß erklären, etwa durch die lebensbedrohlichen Konflikte der jüdisch geprägten johanneischen Gemeinde mit einem (anderen) Judentum, das sie als feindliche Welt erlebt. Aber damit ist das theologisch Anstößige des johanneischen Antijudaismus noch nicht bewältigt. Es wird wohl unumgänglich sein, die soteriologische Exklusivität der johanneischen Christologie zu entradikalisieren und ihren dualistischen Denkraum aufzubrechen.' In Kügler's view, this should be achieved by developing a theology that embraces non-Christian concepts of salvation: 'Vermutlich ist die prinzipielle Anerkennung einer nichtchristlichen Heilsmöglichkeit nötig, um eine angemessene Theologie des Judentums – und nichtchristlicher Religionen überhaupt – entwickeln zu können.' These are theological reflections of immense importance, and I will address them in an excursus in chapter 4.

⁷⁰ HANSON, *Gospel*, 30.

⁷¹ Even more strongly than the denial of the vision of God in 6:46 is the denial of both the vision of God and the hearing of his voice in 5:37. This poses a special problem, since the conviction that the God of Israel is the God who speaks is never denied in any Jewish sources.

'It seems to me there can only be one answer: according to John, on those occasions in Israel's history when God is described as being seen, it was not in fact God who was seen, but the Logos. John says this *totidem verbis* in 12.41, where he describes Isaiah's vision in the Temple as Isaiah having seen Jesus' glory; in other words, Jahweh Sabaoth is the Logos.'⁷²

The fact that in Jewish tradition it was increasingly emphasized that it was not in fact God who was seen by several people in OT times⁷³ is taken by Hanson to confirm his conclusion:

'It therefore follows that in John's theology the Word is the visibility (as well as the audibility) of God; whenever God has been described as appearing in Israel's history, it has always been the Word who appears. Consequently, far from denying the reality of the revelation on Sinai, John regards it as a genuine revelation of God's character as full of mercy and truth, but it is a revelation, as all revelation must be, mediated by the Word.'⁷⁴

This in turn leads Hanson to interpret the contrast between the law given by Moses and grace and truth in Jesus Christ in Jn 1:17 not as an antithetical parallelism, but in a synthetic way.⁷⁵ Hanson thus seems to offer a coherent alternative to interpretations that see a devaluation of the reality status of the OT in Jn 1:14-18. However, the problem with his argument is that on the one hand he distinguishes between God and the Logos ('it was not in fact God who was seen, but the Logos'), and on the other hand he identifies both ('Jahweh Sabaoth is the Logos'). The identification is also made in Jn 1:18. It is therefore necessary to ask again about the implications of Jn 1:18. The problem of the denial of the visibility of God is again posed in Jn 5:37 and Jn 6:46, and Theobald connects it with the question of John's view of the reality status of the OT revelation. I will address the questions in the excursus in chapter 4.

The devaluation of OT revelation is sometimes thought to be implicit in interpretations that see an antithetical parallelism in Jn 1:17. It is, however, possible to see the notions of replacement and supersession in vv. 16-17 without denying the importance of the OT revelation. This becomes clear if one focuses on the combination of the meaning of ἀντί in v. 16 and the explanatory function of v. 17, introduced by ὅτι. Carson and others suggest the meaning of these verses to be that the 'grace' of the old covenant was superseded by the 'grace' of the new covenant. χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος means 'grace instead of grace',⁷⁶ 'grace [for all] in contrast to

⁷² HANSON, *Interpretation*, 103.

⁷³ This is hinted at by HANSON, *Interpretation*, 103f. in a quotation from Sanders, and expanded by adducing evidence from Targums and other rabbinic sources in HANSON, *Gospel*, 22-24.

⁷⁴ HANSON, *Interpretation*, 104.

⁷⁵ HANSON, *Interpretation*, 104. A synthetic parallelism is also favoured by e. g. OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 53-56, who gives a full discussion of the relevant literature.

⁷⁶ CARSON, *John*, 131-132, lists four possible meanings of ἀντί: (1.) 'correspond to'; problems: (a) the relation of v. 16 to v. 17, and (b) the fact that ἀντί never unambiguously means this, except in some compounds; (2.) 'in return for'; problems: (a) 'the idea of grace being given "in return for" something else, a kind of *quid pro quo*, is alien to the New Testament in general and to John in particular' (131), and (b) again the relation to v. 17; (3.) 'upon' or 'in addition to'; problem: this meaning is normally conveyed by ἐπί, not by ἀντί; Carson discusses the only parallel which authors in favour of this meaning always cite (Philo, *Poster. C.* 145), saying that 'on close inspection it proves unhelpful. Philo speaks of "graces", not "grace"; for him, there is not an accumulation of graces, one "upon" another, but a substitution of graces, one kind replacing another. His point, quite unlike John's, is that God is wise in dispensing his "graces" in small doses, so that people do not receive more than they can cope with; John is emphasizing the superabundance of God's grace.'

grace [displayed to Moses]’⁷⁷, ‘grace in place of grace’,⁷⁸ ‘love in place of love’,⁷⁹ and the reason for this is given in v. 17: ‘because the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.’⁸⁰ Carson’s analysis and his careful interpretation not only explains vv. 16-17 in their interrelationship, but also throws light on v. 14:

‘the law that was *given* through Moses, and the grace and truth that *came* through Jesus Christ (v. 17), alike sprang from the fulness of the word (v. 16), whether in his pre-existent oneness with the father, or in his status as the Word-made-flesh. It is from that “fulness” that we have received “one grace replacing another”. It is in this sense that v. 16 is an explanation of v. 14 (it begins with *hoti*, “for” or “because”): we have seen his glory, John writes, because from the fulness of his grace and truth we have received grace that replaces the earlier grace - the grace of the incarnation, of the Word-made-flesh, of the glory of the Son “tabernacling” with us, now replacing the grace of the antecedent but essentially promissory revelation.’⁸¹

Having thus established that John’s use of the OT background in this passage does not imply a denial of the reality status of OT revelation, a further theological aspect comes into focus through the link with Ex 33-34. This is *the motif of the covenant* already mentioned in passing in the discussion of Jn 1:16-17.

Since Ex 33-34 is part of the establishment of the Sinai covenant, the question can be raised whether the notion of covenant is part of the aspects evoked by the link. A covenantal reading of John’s Gospel has been presented by John Pryor. He sees the motif of a new covenant people in

(131-132). For more supporting arguments cf. EDWARDS, ‘Grace’, 3-15. (4.) ‘instead of’; arguments in favour: (a) it is one of the most common meanings used in the NT, (b) it reflects the most common use in the LXX, and (c) it makes sense of the connection to v. 17. BRUCE, *Gospel*, 43, cannot see any ‘satisfactory sense’ in this translation. He prefers option (3.), but then, although he translates ὅτι at the beginning of v. 17 with ‘because’, he does not explain the meaning of the causal link between vv. 16 and 17.

⁷⁷ PRYOR, *John*, 9.

⁷⁸ EVANS, *Word*, 80. Cf. also KING, ‘Prologue’, 372-375.

⁷⁹ PANCARO, *Law*, 537 n. 138, who holds that ‘[i]t is possible that the χάρις ἀντὶ χάριτος means “love in the place of love” - the New Covenant being contrasted with the Old Covenant, *in the hymn*.’ However, a few lines further he accepts ‘grace upon grace’ in the sense of ‘an accumulation of graces’ as equally possible.

⁸⁰ CARSON, *John*, 132-134, discusses again different options, this time the objections against this understanding of vv. 16-17. He lists three objections, all of which have to do with the understanding of the law in John’s Gospel. Over against those who see the point of vv. 16-17 in the denial that grace came through Moses, and that the whole Gospel is to be understood to be deeply opposed to the law, or those who hold that for John the law seems to continue in force (at least in some sense), Carson argues for a balanced perception of the law in John, allowing for both the view that John appreciated the time of the Mosaic law as a time of God’s grace, but also for the view that since in Jesus that which the old covenant had promised is now fulfilled, the new grace is superseding the old. A similar position is now held by SMITH, *John*, 61.

Another argument against the implication of the devaluation of the law in an antithetical parallelism is provided by PANCARO, *Law*, 534-546. He interprets Jn 1:17 only after his detailed exegesis of all relevant Johannine texts about the law. Pancaro refers to the concrete situation of John’s discussion within a Synagogue context as a situation *post Christum*: ‘Jn is not concerned with the value of the Law as divine revelation, as expression of God’s חסד ואמת, *before Christ’s coming* - he sees Jesus as the fulness of χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια and denies that they are now to be found in the Law, *as the Jews with whom he is disputing would have it*.’ (540). This is a valid reminder that one cannot discuss Johannine texts as timeless statements detached from their particular situation.

⁸¹ CARSON, *John*, 134. The argument for the replacement of the old covenant was also emphasized by BOISMARD, *Prologue*, 68-87, and GOPPELT, *Typos*, 232.

Jn 1:12-13, and thinks that in Jn 1:14-18 we are informed that God is present in a new, more direct way among the ‘we’ of his new people.⁸² Within this covenantal framework he reads Jn 1:14 in this way:

‘But of all the covenant images in John’s Gospel, perhaps the most powerful is what is given in 1:14. The motif of divine presence in Israel as the sure sign of their covenant status was a central motif of the Old Testament.’⁸³

Another aspect that might convey covenantal thought is suggested by R. E. Brown, who notes that

‘vs. 17 merely spells out what has been said in 16 by naming the two occasions of God’s demonstration of covenant love, namely, in the gift of the Law to Moses on Sinai, and in Jesus Christ.’⁸⁴

Going a step further, Craig Evans not only observes the notion of covenant behind Jn 1:14-18, but links it with the notion of creation behind Jn 1:1-5:

‘It is clear that there are two principal biblical themes presupposed by the Johannine Prologue. The first is creation, primarily alluded to in the opening five verses. The second is the Sinai covenant, primarily alluded to in the final five verses. In Exodus creation and covenant are linked, primarily with respect to the Sabbath (cf. 20.8-11; 31.12-17; 35.1-3).’⁸⁵

‘The two elements found in the Prologue’s first five verses (*logos* and creation) and the last five verses (Moses and covenant) are actually combined in first-century traditions about Moses, as seen in the following statement attributed to the Lawgiver: “But he designed and devised me, who [was] prepared from the beginning of the world, to be the mediator of his covenant” (*T. Mos.* 1.14). Here creation and covenant are juxtaposed and related to the person of Moses.’⁸⁶

In an article on the structure and movement of thought in the prologue Otto Hofius also sees the references to creation and covenant in the first and last verses respectively and points to the link between the two in Psalm 19.⁸⁷ Finally, the notion of creation and covenant brings us back to Sirach 24 as the primary background of the prologue. In Sirach 24 Wisdom is both involved in creation and incarnated in the Torah, which, as we saw, is explicitly presented as ‘the book of the covenant’ (Sir 24:23). The covenantal setting of Ex 33-34 thus seems to function as a strong reinforcement of the subversive retelling of the story of Wisdom: God’s covenantal presence is

⁸² The notion of a new proximity of the presence of God is observed by PRYOR, *John*, 10; RIDDERBOS, *Gospel*, 51. The exodus background of the verse is also emphasized by FERREIRA, *Ecclesiology*, 151: ‘The δόξα of Jesus like כבוד יהוה refers to the presence of God with his people for salvation. ... The verb σκηνώω associates the earthly ministry of Jesus with the presence of יהוה with his people at the exodus, which meant the salvation of his people.’

⁸³ PRYOR, *John*, 158, referring to CLEMENTS, *God*, as a useful study of the connection between the presence of God and the temple in the OT. A similar connection between God’s presence and covenantal thought is seen by DUMBRELL, *Search*, 238.

⁸⁴ BROWN, *John*, 35.

⁸⁵ EVANS, *Word*, 82.

⁸⁶ EVANS, *Word*, 136. One aim of Evans’ very valuable study is to show the inadequacy of Gnosticism as the proper background of the prologue, arguing instead for close connections to OT thought and Jewish interpretive parallels in a very convincing way. This is not to disregard the fact that the OT was also used by Gnostics, but to show that one does not need to postulate dependence on Gnostic sources to explain the prologue.

⁸⁷ HOFIUS, ‘Struktur’, 14 [repr. 12-13].

now to be found not in the Torah as such, but in Jesus Christ.⁸⁸ This covenantal background in turn can become significant for Johannine ecclesiology: the question is whether it can be shown that the self-understanding of the Johannine community, expressed in terms of ‘children of God’ (1:12) and ‘friends of Jesus’ (15:13-15), includes the notion of a new covenant people. Jn 1:14-18, following Jn 1:11-13 surely points in that direction. It remains to be seen whether this interpretation is supported by other examples of John’s use of Mosaic traditions. With respect to our thesis of the sociological function of the christological use of Moses tradition the following reflection on 1:14-18 can already be given: the christological use of Ex 33-34 occurs in 1:14-18 in the context of a confession of the Johannine community (the “we” in 1:14, 16). It is therefore obvious that here a Moses tradition informs a confessional claim, and a confessional claim is part of the means by which a community formulates its identity markers. Thus, the first use of Moses tradition in John’s Gospel confirms our main thesis. It is to the second example of John’s use of Sinai traditions that I now turn.

2.2 Jn 1:19-2:11 and the ‘Sinai-screen’

One of the structural markers of this section is the temporal sequence of several days. The phrase τῆ ἐπαύριον occurs in Jn 1:29, 35, 43, distinguishing on first inspection four days: vv. 19-28 reporting events on day one, vv. 29-34 dealing with day two, vv. 35-42 concerning day three, and day four encompassing vv. 43-51. Some have found a fifth day in that they understand v. 39 to refer to the end of day three, implicit in the statement: καὶ παρ’ αὐτῶ ἔμειναν τὴν ἡμέραν ἐκείνην ὥρα ἦν ὡς δεκάτην. In addition to these temporal divisions, ch. 2 starts with the phrase: Καὶ τῆ ἡμέρα τῆ τρίτη. If one accepts an inclusive counting of the days and accepts the fifth day, then the Cana miracle in 2:1-11 takes place on the seventh day, thus completing a whole week. This has led some to argue for an allusion to the creation week.⁸⁹ Against this attempt to invest the temporal sequence with theological significance, it is surely possible to argue that if a whole week had been intended one would expect the fifth day not to be hidden in v. 39, especially not in the light of the three repetitions of τῆ ἐπαύριον.⁹⁰ Without a whole week, the days might then have no significance at all. Since John’s use of language has long since been seen as highly symbolic and very carefully chosen, no one

⁸⁸ This implies the replacement of a non-personal entity with a person. This pattern is also visible in the other instances of replacement, e.g., Jesus replacing the Temple (see e.g. WALKER, *Holy City*, 168).

⁸⁹ E.g., BROWN, *John*, LX. Others who see a new creation week in John 1-2 include CARSON, *John*, 168; MORRIS, *John*, 114; BOISMARD, *Baptême*, 15; BAROSSE, ‘Days’; TRUDINGER, ‘Days’; SAXBY, ‘Time-Scheme’. Allusions to the creation week and to the resurrection are seen by MALINA; ROHRBAUGH, *Social-Science Commentary*, 66.

⁹⁰ Cf. OLSSON, *Structure*, 24, who says that ‘1:35-42 are to be regarded as referring to one day, since the chronological scheme does not seem to have been derived from the events themselves but to be a pattern imposed on the narrative in 1:19ff.’

recently has had the nerve to suggest that the sequence of days might simply reflect historical reality, i. e., the events simply took place within a few days. But apart from the allusion to the creation week another attempt has been made to understand the significance of the sequence of days. In his study *Structure and Meaning in the Fourth Gospel*, Birger Olsson suggested reading Jn 1:19-2:11 against the background of Ex 19-24. Before discussing this suggestion some remarks on the narrative significance of Jn 1:19-2:11 are in order.

2.2.1 Jn 1:19-2:11: Introductory remarks and narrative significance

Numerous questions can be and have been asked with respect to this passage. One is about the historical plausibility of John's account of the beginning of Jesus' ministry. How can the Johannine picture of a Jesus already heralded with some of the most significant christological titles at the very beginning of his public ministry ever be reconciled with the Synoptists' picture of a Jesus whose true identity is not understood properly even by the disciples during the course of his whole ministry? One attempt to solve the problem is to deny that it exists: for some interpreters, John's theological agenda is so dominant that all interest in historical questions has disappeared.⁹¹ Others attempt to harmonize John and the Synoptists in varying degrees.⁹² Part of this specific problem is the larger question of John's dependence or non-dependence on the Synoptists, as well as John's general historical reliability. A good case can be made for an interpretation that allows John to be literarily independent of the Synoptists, whether he knew them or not,⁹³ as well as for an approach that takes into account that John expected his readers to be familiar at least with Mark.⁹⁴

Turning to the narrative significance, the section is important as it introduces the story proper after the prologue. The witness of John the Baptist and the introduction of the first disciples lead to the first sign Jesus performs. The narrative seems to presuppose some familiarity with the story of Jesus, since John the Baptist is not introduced as an unknown

⁹¹ E. g., HANSON, *Gospel*, 19-20, who does not see John's Gospel presenting a historically reliable picture of Jesus because of John's "prophetic" use of scripture: 'I maintain ... that part of John's purpose ... was to show that scriptural prophecies justified his picture of Jesus. If I am right, this throws some light on the question posed by the conclusion that John's presentation of Jesus is far from being accurate history: how did John feel himself justified in modifying the early tradition of Jesus as he did?' Cf. also p. 254, where he states that the Messianic designations in Jo 1:19-51 start 'from a point further on than that achieved by Peter in the Synoptics.'

⁹² E. g., MORRIS, *John*, 136ff. The impossibility of harmonisation is stated by BARRETT, *St John*, 179.

⁹³ The independence of John was put into prominence by GARDNER-SMITH, *Saint John*, and, with the aim of showing the historical reliability behind John's independent traditions, by DODD, *Tradition*. Others who argue mainly for Johannine independence include SMITH, *Johannine Christianity*, 190-197.

⁹⁴ This is the new perspective presented by Bauckham in his essay on John in BAUCKHAM, *Gospels*. Bauckham is not arguing that John uses Mark in some sort of literary dependence, but that John wrote with the assumption that his Gospel might quite soon be circulating among readers already familiar with Mark. This scenario opens up new interpretative possibilities.

character. The variety of designations of Jesus (ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ in 1:29, 36, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ in 1:34, 49, ῥαββί in 1:38, 49, Μεσσίας = Χριστός in 1:41, ὁ ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ οἱ προφηταὶ in 1:45, βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ in 1:49) signals the importance of the one whose story is about to be related. Given this highly significant second introduction after the introductory prologue,⁹⁵ one is justified in asking about the importance of the first sign at Cana. This miracle, considered strange by some,⁹⁶ was evidently noteworthy enough for the narrator to be present at this prominent point at the beginning of the narrative.⁹⁷ It is the expectation of a special significance of this sign that initiates the search for an illuminating OT background.

2.2.2 Jn 1:19-2:11 and the ‘Sinai screen’: Establishing the links

Among the literature on Jn 1:19-2:11, by far the most detailed study is that of Olsson.⁹⁸ Building on earlier works,⁹⁹ Olsson suggests to interpret the whole passage against the background of Exodus 19-24 and its various interpretative traditions. He uses the term ‘Sinai-screen’ to characterize this tradition. The following section is to some extent indebted to Olsson’s points.

My reading of Jn 1:19-2:11 starts with more obvious observations and works its way towards a coherent interpretative perspective of the passage. The climax of this section is arguably the last verse (2:11).¹⁰⁰ After the prologue’s confessional reference to the glory visible in Jesus (1:14), in 2:11 we have the second reference to this glory, now in connection to a concrete manifestation of that glory at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. The story of the wedding in Cana ends with the simple yet profound sentence:

⁹⁵ Similarly, OLSSON, *Structure*, 279, thinks of 1:19-4:45 as a ‘second prologue’, similar to Matthew’s beginning (Mt 1:1-2:23 and 3:1-4:11) as ‘double prologue’.

⁹⁶ Cf. the comments of those who point to the ethical problems of the miracle: ‘It strikes every reader of the Bible that this assistance [to provide more wine for the wedding guests] is by no means necessary; it is indeed even dubious. In any case, it has nothing to do with the Protestant ethos.’ (DIBELIUS, *Formgeschichte*, 98); ‘If one seeks to edify the congregation far more can be said against our pericope than for it.’ (DERRETT, *Law*, 244).

Cf. Hengel’s approach, which does not take issue with the miracle, but takes it realistically and humorously: ‘In the case of a Galilean wedding, sobriety was difficult to imagine even for the one who reported it.’ (HENGEL, ‘Interpretation’, 88 n. 21).

HANSON, ‘Use’, 370 n. 1, jumps from the strangeness of the incident to a judgement of its historicity: ‘The events lying behind such narratives as the wedding at Cana of Galilee and the raising of Lazarus are so obscure that we have no way of pronouncing upon their historicity.’

⁹⁷ LABAHN, *Jesus*, 160, observes the ‘Signalcharakter’ of the positioning of this sign. Cf. also COLLINS, ‘Cana’, who sees the incident as the key to the signs, and MEIER, *Jew*, 2.946, who calls the Cana event ‘archetype of all the signs to come’.

⁹⁸ OLSSON, *Structure*, was one of the first textlinguistic approaches to John’s Gospel. Cf. his introduction for detailed information about his methodology.

⁹⁹ Esp. POTIN, *Fête I*.

¹⁰⁰ With e. g. MARSH, *Saint John*, 141.

Ταύτην ἐποίησεν ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ ἐφάνερωσεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ. (2:11)

As simple as these words look, they present the climax of the whole passage, and they contain at least four significant statements:

(1) As already mentioned, of all the miracles attributed to Jesus in both the synoptic and Johannine traditions this especially strange one is given the special status ἀρχὴ τῶν σημείων. Since John's Gospel is characterized by a carefully worked out structure,¹⁰¹ it is inherently probable that he deliberately selected this particular story. Possibly it is related as the first sign simply because it was the first.¹⁰² Yet even if historically it had been the first sign of Jesus, its meaning and significance would still need to be explained because of the symbolism involved, a symbolism that is not denied by scholars who either defend or reject its historicity. Either way it is significant that the changing of water into wine at a marriage in Cana is presented as the first of the signs of Jesus.¹⁰³

(2) With this σημεῖον Jesus reveals his glory. Δόξα certainly is an important term with various semantic and theological meanings.¹⁰⁴ The very importance of the concept raises the question: Why and how is the revelation of Jesus' glory visible in this particular miracle?

(3) The disciples believed in Jesus. Here the question about the relation between faith and the revelation of glory has to be answered.

(4) The relation between signs and faith is emphasized in the statement of the aim of the Gospel in 20:30f. This fact adds support for the suggestion under (1) that this sign, being the first one, might have special significance.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ For different approaches concerning the structure of John's Gospel cf. MLAKUZHYIL, *Structure*, and BOOTH, *Peak*.

¹⁰² See ROBINSON, *Priority*, 23-26, who puts forward some strong arguments against too quick a suggestion of literary dependence or imaginative invention where the dependence on the event might be as good an explanation. Cf. his quotation of the ingenious insight of GREEN-ARMYTAGE, *John*, 12.

¹⁰³ OLSSON, *Structure*, 18, notes that this first sign is not explained in the text of the Fourth Gospel; thus, the reader is led to look for interpretative clues within the narrative of the sign; the quest for text-signals that provide such clues is required by the lack of explicit explanation.

¹⁰⁴ (a) The glory/honour of God: 9:24; 11:4 (here a link is made between the glory of God and the glorification of the Son); 11:40; (b) Jesus' glory/honour: 1:14; 2:11; 8:50.54; 5:41; 12:41; 17:22 (the glory given to Jesus by God is given to all believers); 17:24; (c) the honour of people as opposed to that given by God: 5:44; 7:18; 12:43; (d) the glorification of God by Jesus and vice versa: 17:1-5. The verb δοξάζω is used (a) with reference to Jesus in 7:39 (Jesus was not yet glorified); 8:54 (the Son does not honour himself, but the Father honours the Son); 11:4; 12:16 (post-resurrection glorification); 12:23; (b) connecting the glorification of Jesus and of God: 13:31.32; 14:13. It is used with reference to (c) the glorification of the name of the Father in 12:28; (d) the glorification of the Father through fruitbearing of the disciples in 15:8; (e) the glorification of Jesus by the Paraclete in 16:14; (f) the glorification of Jesus in the disciples in 17:10. It is used (g) with reference to the death of Peter as glorification of God in 21:19. On the various aspects of the concept of glory in John see CAIRD, 'Glory'; THÜSING, *Erhöhung*, 41ff.; NICOL, *Semeia*, 119ff. LABAHN, 'Tradition', 188, takes the fact that the notion of faith and glory is also taken up in connection with the last sign in 11:4, 40 to mean that the signs do have a positive role in John's aim to lead to full faith in Jesus.

Thus, the climactic verse (Jn 2:11) leads to the question: What interpretative perspective could account best for the features displayed by the Cana event? Various approaches have been suggested.

One line of interpretation focuses on Jesus as wonder-worker with the emphasis on the amount of changed water (600-700 litres). This route was taken by J. Michl, C. P. Ceroke, F. Büchsel, W. Grundmann.¹⁰⁶ A strictly christological interpretation, emphasizing v. 11 and therefore the secret revelation of Jesus' *doxa* only to the disciples is given by Schnackenburg, Bultmann, Barrett, and Rengstorff.¹⁰⁷ Jeremias, van den Bussche, Noetzel, and Sahlin¹⁰⁸ argue for a messianic interpretation, emphasizing the large quantity of wine and its choice quality which points to the miracle as a messianic sign. The replacement motif is emphasized by Dodd, Guilding, Hanhart and others.¹⁰⁹ Cullmann argues for a sacramental interpretation, pointing to the two levels of the historical Jesus and the life of the church.¹¹⁰ A mariological perspective is employed by those who see Mary as a partner in God's work of salvation, pointing to her role as mediator, intercessor, and prototype Christian, representative of Judaism or the Jewish Christian church or the church in general.¹¹¹ A strictly symbolic interpretation with the denial of any historical basis is advocated by Hanhart, who sees the story as an allegorical *haggadah* which links the theological message in Lk 1-2 with Acts 1-2.¹¹² In contrast, and to complete the range of suggested interpretative perspectives, van der Loos rejects any symbolism.¹¹³

According to Olsson,¹¹⁴ this variety is due to different views on five points, namely, (1) assumptions about what counts as relevant parallel material, (2+3) about the function and significance of the literary context, (4) about the history of the text, and (5) about the character of the text (text type). Taking account of all these factors Olsson himself proposes the 'Sinai screen' as the most appropriate framework of interpretation for the Cana event. His case rests on thirteen arguments arising out of the comparison of John 1:19-2:11 and Exodus 19-24. The first

¹⁰⁵ LABAHN, 'Tradition', 187f., says that this first sign 'functions as an introduction that provides an interpretation to all of them.' Similar OLSSON, *Structure*, 18, 67; CARSON, *John*, 175; WILKENS, *Entstehungsgeschichte*, 40; NICOL, *Semeia*, 114.

¹⁰⁶ See the references in SMITMANS, *Weinwunder*, 37ff.

¹⁰⁷ Detailed references in OLSSON, *Structure*, 19.

¹⁰⁸ See again SMITMANS, *Weinwunder*, 43ff.

¹⁰⁹ SMITMANS, *Weinwunder*, 46ff.

¹¹⁰ CULLMANN, *Gottesdienst*. CULPEPPER, *Anatomy*, 193, also sees 'eucharistic overtones'.

¹¹¹ Examples in SMITMANS, *Weinwunder*, 54ff. MARSH, *Saint John*, 145, sees Mary representing 'Judaism as such'. WESTCOTT, *St. John*, 36, and MOLONEY, *Belief*, 83, suggest that the relationship between Mary and Jesus is the key to the passage.

¹¹² HANHART, 'Structure', 23 n. 3, 38-43.

¹¹³ VAN DER LOOS, *Miracles*, 615.618.

¹¹⁴ OLSSON, *Structure*, 20.

seven are presented as strong evidence, the last six as additional observations. The arguments are as follows:¹¹⁵

1. The third day as the day of the giving of the Law at Sinai

After mentioning the general possibility that ‘the third day’ simply refers to ‘the day after tomorrow’, thus connecting the story with the previous encounter between Jesus and Nathanael,¹¹⁶ Olsson refers to Ex 19:11, 16: the third day is the day of the giving of the law, one of the most significant foundational events in the history of Israel. This allusion, recently taken up by Moloney¹¹⁷ and also considered by other authors,¹¹⁸ fits well the significant place and function of the Cana incident at the beginning of John’s account of the life of Jesus.

That the giving of the law could have been evoked by mentioning ‘the third day’ is supported by evidence from various Jewish sources. The third day as the day of the giving of the law occurs in the Targum (*Tg. Ps.-J.* counts eight days, with ‘the third day’ as the sixth¹¹⁹), and in the Mekilta.¹²⁰ The Talmud gives the sixth or the seventh day of the week,¹²¹ whereas the giving of the law on the third day is not found in Josephus or Philo.¹²²

¹¹⁵ All arguments can be found in OLSSON, *Structure*, 102-114.

¹¹⁶ This connection is emphasized e. g. by WESTCOTT, *St. John*, 36; HOSKYNS, *Gospel*, 186; BARRETT, *St. John*, 190; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 34. RIDDERBOS, *Gospel*, 102f., also recognizes a connection, but does not see a counting of days, resulting in an introductory week, intended in chs. 1-2. He nevertheless takes ‘the third day’ as indicating ‘a direct historical and material connection’ [103] between what follows and what did happen earlier.

¹¹⁷ MOLONEY, *Belief*, 77; MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 66. Others see the third day alluding to the day of the resurrection (e. g. DODD, *Interpretation*, 300; HANHART, ‘Structure’, 38ff.; LIGHTFOOT, *Gospel*, 105; LINDARS, *John*, 124; BRODIE, *Gospel*, 172f.; KOESTER, *Symbolism*, 82; MARSH, *Saint John*, 143; SCHNELLE, *Christology*, 171). A variation is presented by BOOTH, *Peak Marking Features*, who points to 2:19 and says that it ‘seems that there could be a semantic link between τῆ ἡμέρᾳ τῆ τρίτῃ and ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις which are separated by only nineteen verses.’ He then explains the links between the first week in John 1 and the last week in John 12-19, pointing to the following similarities: day 1: John the Baptist as preparer of Jesus’ way, not worthy to untie his sandals; cf. Mary anointing Jesus’ feet; day 2: Jesus is revealed to Israel (1:31) as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (1:29); cf. the triumphal entry, which presents Jesus as the King of Israel (12:13) and the whole world went after him (12:19); day 6: Mary in Cana; cf. Mary at the foot of the cross (her only occurrences in John). Booth states that these similarities may not have been intended from the start, but they are striking nonetheless (pp. 42-43).

ROBINSON, *Priority*, 166, takes ‘the third day’ simply as the usual way to say ‘Tuesday’. Interestingly, he also mentions that this day is today still regarded as the normal day for weddings, the reason being that in the creation account the third day is the only one with a double “and it was good”. Concerning the pattern of a week, Robinson argues that it is not possible to establish a week, pointing to the fact that it is impossible to make the journey to Cana in two days [161-168].

¹¹⁸ LÜTGEHETMANN, *Hochzeit*, 29, 36, 301; IDEM, ‘Anfang’, 190f.; HEEREKENS, *Zeichen-Quelle*, 72; MANN, ‘Traditions’, 299; RIEDL, *Zeichen*, 282f.; LABAHN, *Jesus*, 135, 162. LOHFINK, ‘Weinwunder’, 169, 170f., emphasizes the theophanic character of the sign because of the Sinai background.

¹¹⁹ OLSSON, *Structure*, 103.

¹²⁰ Ad Ex 19:3: the second day (LAUTERBACH II, 201); ad Ex 19:10: today = the fourth day; tomorrow = the fifth day; the third day = sixth day of the week (LAUTERBACH II, 210).

¹²¹ *b. Šabb.* 68b; 87a; *b. Yoma* 4b; *b. Ta’an.* 28b; see SERRA, ‘Tradizioni’, 30f.

¹²² OLSSON, *Structure*, 104.

Olsson's argumentation in favour of the Exodus allusion runs as follows: (1) the third day occurs in Ex 19; (2) in Jewish tradition a preparatory week at Sinai was reconstructed (in *Tg. Ps.-J.*, *Mekilta*, *Talmud*);¹²³ (3) Jn 1:19-2:11 presents an introductory week;¹²⁴ and (4) he concludes that 'the possibility of relating this to the great week of preparation at Sinai immediately presents itself.'¹²⁵ For the present purpose of establishing the probability of an intended link to Ex 19-24 this means that this first element can arguably be seen as providing the initial text signal that points the reader to Ex 19-24, especially for a reader who is already sensitive to allusions to the Sinai revelation because of the explicit Moses – Jesus comparison in 1:17 and the other links to Ex 33-34 in 1:14-18.

2. The obedience motif

Jn 2:5, λέγει ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ τοῖς διακόνοις, "Ὁ τι ἂν λέγῃ ὑμῖν ποιήσατε, raises the question of a possible OT allusion: Gen 41:55¹²⁶ or Ex 19:8; 24:3, 7¹²⁷ have been suggested. The other Sinai-allusions point to the Exodus background as the more likely option,¹²⁸ although the Genesis text cannot simply be rejected.

The relevant words of Gen 41:55 LXX (ὁ ἂν εἶπῃ ποιήσατε) are closer to Jn 2:5 than the Exodus references which are nearly identical repetitions of a confessional formula: cf. Ex 19:8 (ἀπεκρίθη δὲ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ὁμοθυμαδὸν καὶ εἶπαν Πάντα, ὅσα εἶπεν ὁ θεός, ποιήσομεν καὶ ἀκουσόμεθα.); Ex. 24:3 (ἀπεκρίθη δὲ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς φωνῇ μιᾷ λέγοντες Πάντας τοὺς λόγους, οὓς ἐλάλησεν κύριος, ποιήσομεν καὶ ἀκουσόμεθα), and Ex 24:7 (καὶ λαβὼν τὸ βιβλίον τῆς διαθήκης ἀνέγνω εἰς τὰ ὄτα τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ εἶπαν Πάντα, ὅσα ἐλάλησεν κύριος, ποιήσομεν καὶ ἀκουσόμεθα). The choice, then, seems to be between (a) no allusion

¹²³ For Pentecost as celebration of the giving of the Law and covenant renewal cf. *Jub.* 1:5; 6:11.17; 15:1-24; 1QS 1:7-2:19; *b. Pesah.* 68b. Cf. also Acts 2:1-11; Eph. 4:7-10 (the use of Ps 68 in the Pentecost celebrations). See VAN GOUDOEVER, *Calendars*, 139-144; WRIGHT, *NTPG*, 234; LINCOLN, *Ephesians*, 243-244; CAIRD, 'Descent'. DUNN, 'Pentecost', 784, differentiates between the connection of Pentecost with covenantal renewal (*Jub.* 6:17-21), and with the giving of the law; although he sees the latter connection not documented before the second century A.D., he still conjectures that it was probably known earlier: 'The association [of Pentecost with the law-giving at Sinai] was inevitable from the time that festivals became also celebrations of Israel's history ...'.

For a recent commentary that links the days in John 1:19-2:1 with the days of preparation for the feast of Pentecost see MOLONEY, *Belief*, 57-58; MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 50-63.

¹²⁴ Olsson argues for an introductory week in this way: (a) concerning Jn 2:1 the choice is between a general time indication and a specific one; (b) the latter is supported by the fact that John uses other words to make unspecific time indications, by the place of the adjective, and by the counting of days in Jn 1:29.35.43. See OLSSON, *Structure*, 21-25. On p. 104 Olsson makes clear that the 'Sinai screen' requires only an 'introductory week' of six days. This distinguishes his approach from the suggestion of a relation to creation, which would require seven days. For arguments against seven days in Jn 1:19-2:1 see above, p. 38-39.

¹²⁵ OLSSON, *Structure*, 104.

¹²⁶ E. g., GÄCHTER, *Marjam*, 112; RIDDERBOS, *Gospel*, 106; BOISMARD, *Moses*, 10f.

¹²⁷ E. g., MOLONEY, *Belief*, 83f.; SERRA, *Contributi*, 139ff.; GRASSI, 'Wedding', 134f.

¹²⁸ OLSSON, *Structure*, 46-47; 104-105.

whatsoever, (b) an allusion to Gen 41:55 because of closer verbal agreement, or (c) an allusion to the Exodus story because of the overall similarities between Jn 1:19-2:11 and Ex 19-24. I prefer the last option precisely because of the other similarities between the stories. Once a reader compares the two stories because of the first signal ‘on the third day’, she might well pick up the link between Jn 2:5 and Ex 19:8; 24:3,7 because (a) it is a prominent statement in John,¹²⁹ and (b) it is emphasized by the threefold repetition in Exodus.

Olsson suggests a further possible significance of this verse when he asks whether John’s emphasis on obedience to the word of revelation brought by Jesus, even described as ἡ ἐντολή (Jn 13:34), points to ‘a connection between the Cana narrative, the description of the true disciples in Jn (as being those who obey the words of Jesus) and Ex 19-24.’¹³⁰ This suggestion is a first example of the way in which a close connection between determination and interpretation of a possible allusion to an OT text can be construed.

3. The revelation of the glory in 2:11

Olsson points out that although φανερώω and δόξα occur frequently in John, the particular combination of the two terms in 2:11 (καὶ ἐφάνερωσεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ) has no Johannine parallel. There are, however, parallels in the Sinai-tradition:

‘The equivalent Hebrew and Aramaic verb () is often used in the Targums when the revelation at Sinai is described, for example of Ex 19:9 “See I will reveal myself (מתגלי) to you in the cloud of glory (בצבא דענן יקרא)”, and 19:11 “On the third day the glory of Yahweh’s *shekinah* (יקרא וכינתא די) will be revealed (תתגלי)”. Both the verb “to reveal oneself” and the concept “glory” (δόξα, יקרא) occur in a striking fashion in the Sinai texts and in the Cana narrative ...’¹³¹

Whether this observation, although interesting and meaningful, can be used in an attempt to establish the link to Ex 19-24 depends on the kind of knowledge of the Targums one supposes a reader to have. Given the popularity of the Targums based on their use in synagogue readings, they surely did not belong to the more obscure writings of the time. It is, however, difficult to argue with certainty that this subtle element was intended by the author to be picked up simply by reading or even only listening to John’s Gospel. It seems that only for someone both familiar with the Targums and committed to the detailed study of John’s Gospel can this element become part of the links to Ex 19-24.¹³² Whether such a person can only be found among modern scholars or also among first century scribes is a difficult question.

¹²⁹ See OLSSON, *Structure*, 45-47.

¹³⁰ OLSSON, *Structure*, 47.

¹³¹ OLSSON, *Structure*, 70. The empty space between the first brackets is in Olsson’s text; the verb to be added would be גלה.

¹³² An additional problem is that two languages are involved. This would not be a problem if Olsson’s point is about the combination of two concepts, namely, revelation and glory. However, his point rests on the combination of two particular terms; only this is unique to both Jn 2:11 and the Targum.

Despite this subtle point about the specific terminological combination, the concept of the revelation of glory as such, emphasized in the climactic verse in Jn 2:11, is an element of importance in the Sinai story as well. Although it is mentioned explicitly within Ex 19-24 only in 24:16-17, in these verses it is connected with the cloud that covered the mountain and the consuming fire, the visible manifestations of God's presence already mentioned in Ex 19:16, 18 (cf. also 20:18: lightning, smoke). Thus, only to mention the glory is surely not enough to evoke Ex 19-24, since it is an important and widely used element in the OT perception of God.¹³³ It does, however, play a significant role in the revelation of God at Mount Sinai and therefore is a meaningful element in the comparison between Jn 1:19-2:11 and Ex 19-24.

4. The purification motif

Here Olsson points to Ex 19:14f; 24:5-8, and to the Targums that stress the expiatory power of Moses' sacrifice.¹³⁴ Furthermore, Mekilta *ad* Ex 19:2¹³⁵ refers to the penance of Israel, and Mekilta *ad* 19:11¹³⁶ to the cleansing with water by immersion = baptism (סבילה). Olsson suggests:

'This pronounced purification motif in the Jewish material sheds new light on Jn 1:19ff and the central role of purification there. John the Baptist with his *baptism with water* stands within the context of the old covenant, and only by revelation can he know of the new covenant to come: one who will *baptize in the Spirit*. His function is to reveal to "Israel" the person who will baptize with the Spirit, 1:31ff, so his chief message is: "*Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*", 1:29,36. This is the message which makes John's disciples into Jesus' disciples. Purification, liberation from sin, is essential – as it was once at Sinai – if a people of God is to be born. In Jn's account it is there in Jesus Christ. The revelation of Jesus as the Lamb of God by John who baptized with water, therefore, has a natural place in 1:19ff, if we see the text from the Sinai screen.'¹³⁷

This element seems to fall under the same category as the previous one. It cannot be used as a major aspect that leads a reader or listener to identify the connection to Ex 19-24 in the first place, but it renders the suspected link more probable for a reader familiar with the Targums. And again: it is obvious that meaningful interpretation of a possible allusion can be part of the process of establishing the probability of the suggested overall link.

¹³³ Cf. the articles on δόξα in *TLNT* 1, 362-379; *EDNT* 1, 344-349.

¹³⁴ OLSSON, *Structure*, 105; POTIN, *Fête* I, 213.

¹³⁵ LAUTERBACH II, 196-197.

¹³⁶ LAUTERBACH II, 212.

¹³⁷ OLSSON, *Structure*, 106-107. An interesting connection between the purification element in John's baptism and the situation of Israel at Sinai is made by MEYER, *Christus Faber*, 29, on the basis of the Urzeit/Endzeit schema: 'In this view, the generation of the wilderness was readied for the revelation and covenant of Sinai by a bath of immersion. Where in the scriptures is this said? It is not said, but simply inferred from the conclusion of the great covenant scene: "Then Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people" (Exod 24:8). The premise of the inference is that there is no sprinkling without previous bath of immersion (cf. *b. Yeb* 46b). Further: we know that Paul found just such a "bath" in Israel's escape from Pharaoh through the sea (1 Cor 10:1-2). On the principle of correlation between beginning and end, Israel in the endtime was to be made ready for the definitive act of God by being bathed and purified.'

5. The wedding: Sinai as the marriage of the Lord and Israel

Καὶ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ γάμος ἐγένετο... . As we have seen, the introductory temporal phrase might well have been intended to allude to the giving of the law ‘on the third day’ at Mount Sinai. The immediately mentioned wedding could confirm this allusion, since the Sinai covenant was sometimes depicted as the event when Jahwe married Israel.¹³⁸ Olsson puts it like this:

‘The Jewish tradition concerning the events at Sinai often mentions *the marriage of the Lord and Israel*. It is not particularly far-fetched from a Sinai perspective to allow events at a village wedding – historical or imaginary – to carry a message of something which, according to the narrator, replaces the old wedding at Sinai. The author did not however use this element in an allegorical fashion, so as to make Jesus consistently the bridegroom, and Jesus’ mother or someone else the bride etc. It may be an allusive element for the initiated reader. Yet the essential point here is that the Sinai screen explains how material concerning a wedding could be incorporated into the Johannine week of introduction.’¹³⁹

The last two sentences address two sides of the problem of allusions. By saying that the reference to the wedding may be an allusive element for the initiated reader, Olsson addresses the issue of determination: he is cautious not to assign too much significance to this element as a signal that helps the reader to identify the allusion in the first place. The last sentence talks about the procedure from the author’s point of view. The assumption seems to be that, given the author wanted to start with an introductory week and an allusion to the Sinai events, a story about a wedding served his purposes nicely, since this event was sometimes depicted as a wedding.¹⁴⁰ It seems difficult to prove or disprove the probability of this perception of the authorial process. Concerning the wedding as a signal for the reader it is wise to be as cautious as Olsson, though in combination with the temporal signal ‘on the third day’ it can also be taken as one element of a two-part signal. In that case it might even better serve as a sign in the text pointing to the Sinai background.

6. The wine

Wine was presented as one of the Messianic gifts in the age to come in Amos 9:13; Hos 2:24; Joel 4:18; Is 29:17; Jer 31:5; *1 Enoch* 10:19; 2 Bar. 29:5; *Sib. Or.* II.31f; III.620ff.744f. In the

¹³⁸ Cf. Mekilta *ad Ex* 19:17: ‘*And Moses Brought Forth the People Out of the Camp to Meet God*. Said R. Jose: Judah used to expound: “The Lord came from Sinai” (Deut. 33.2). Do not read it thus, but read: “The Lord came to Sinai,” to give the Torah to Israel. I, however, do not interpret it thus, but: “The Lord came from Sinai,” to receive Israel as a bridegroom comes forth to meet the bride.’ (LAUTERBACH II, 218-219). Cf. also Shir 1:12; 5:3; *Deut. Rab.* 3:12; *Pirqe R. El.* 41. See STAUFFER, art. γαμέω, *TDNT* I, 648-657; GINZBERG, *Legends*, vol. III, 92; vol. VI, 36 n. 200. In this note Ginzberg refers to *Bereshit* 41:126, where according to him נסוּתָ (Ex 20:10) is derived from נָסָא = נָשָׂא “to marry”. The problem is that the word נסוּתָ is not to be found in Ex 20:10. Cf. also the extended metaphor about the relationship between God and Jerusalem in Ez 16, including the possible reference to the Sinai covenant as marriage in 16:8.

¹³⁹ OLSSON, *Structure*, 107.

¹⁴⁰ It is clear how in this case again the identification and the interpretation of the link go hand in hand.

context of the Cana story, for some it mainly symbolizes joy, spontaneity, ecstasy,¹⁴¹ for others it points to the blood of Christ and the eucharist.¹⁴² Another option is wine as a symbol of ‘the knowledge of God which is eternal life’,¹⁴³ of the Spirit,¹⁴⁴ or of the Law. This is the option advocated by Olsson: ‘The wine would stand as a symbol of the Law, especially when the events at Sinai are depicted under the guise of a wedding.’¹⁴⁵ The problem with this view is that within the story the wine replaces the water of the purification vessels. This is normally taken to symbolize the replacement of the old Jewish order by the new messianic wine, and on p. 101 Olsson actually agrees with this interpretation. It is therefore difficult to see how the wine can function at the same time to evoke the law. Thus it seems that in this case we are dealing with an example that shows that the desire to establish the ‘Sinai screen’ can actually result in incoherent suggestions. It may be best, therefore, to reject this element in a discussion of elements that link Jn 1:19-2:11 with Ex 19-24.

7. The description of the disciples in 1:35ff

Here Olsson connects the description of Israel at Sinai with the function of Nathanael as the true Israelite in John 1:

‘As in Ex 19 we have a gathering of the people of God before the revelation. In both cases the fact that they will see God, and his glory, is emphasized. The Johannine description is concentrated in the person of Nathanael, the *true Israelite* who, in contrast to the rest of Israel, confesses Jesus as *Israel’s* king, Nathanael in whom there is *no guile*, like Israel once before God at Sinai.’¹⁴⁶

Again this connection is interesting and meaningful, but cannot bear much weight in determining the reasons for the Sinai allusion. Nevertheless, it is an interpretative aspect I will take up in the discussion of the theological significance of the link in the next section.

With these seven arguments Olsson presents an interpretative perspective that illuminates the text under consideration. There are more observations, but Olsson himself realizes that they are less persuasive.¹⁴⁷ Despite these more imaginative elements Olsson’s major observations

¹⁴¹ Cf. the comments of Bultmann, Barrett, *ad loc.*

¹⁴² CULLMANN, *Gottesdienst*, 69f.

¹⁴³ DODD, *Tradition*, 223.

¹⁴⁴ HANHART, ‘Structure’, 41.

¹⁴⁵ OLSSON, *Structure*, 108; in ns. 69-71 he lists rabbinic references to the connection between wine and the Law, and in the text he cites especially *SofS* 2:4 which he thinks reflects an old tradition.

¹⁴⁶ OLSSON, *Structure*, 108.

¹⁴⁷ The following points are found in OLSSON, *Structure*, 109-112:

(8) The Galilean location: Galilee as the place of believing is the fitting place for the true people of God to come into being.

(9) Symbolism in the name Cana: The meaning of the name is ‘ownership, possession’. Although Olsson notes that ‘it is here difficult to find definite criteria’, he still holds that if there would be a

deserve to be taken seriously. Herman Ridderbos is one of a few authors who engage with Olsson.¹⁴⁸ In his discussion of Olsson's suggestions, he basically agrees that subtle allusions to the OT might have been picked up by first century readers: 'Perhaps we may say that there is here a playing with the "sacred language" (in, e.g., vs. 5) to which the ears of the first readers were probably better attuned than those of today's church.' But he denies that these allusions provide 'the real key to the understanding of the intent of the text.' He refers to 1:14-18, saying that there the OT allusions are unproblematic, because they are explicit. Since they are not explicit in the case of the Cana story, he talks about 'a number of highly dubious allusions' which must not lead the exegesis.

In contrast to this rejection of the Sinai background I would like to argue that *precisely because* the last part of the prologue alludes clearly to Sinai events, it would not be surprising to find allusions to other aspects of these events also in the body of the Gospel. I suggest that the reader is expected to ask: How is the motif of the relationship of the Mosaic covenant to the story of Jesus spelled out in the body of the Gospel? This question seems to be a natural one, especially for a Jewish reader in the first century. Although some authors seem to be overconfident in their reconstruction of the precise history and sociological situation of the Johannine community,¹⁴⁹ the fact that the Gospel points to some kind of conflict between Christian and non-Christian Jewish circles, presumably in a synagogue setting, is presently nearly universally acknowledged.¹⁵⁰ In such a situation, then, it is highly likely that the last part of the prologue leads the perceptive reader to ask precisely this question, and in light of the 'Sinai screen' background of the prologue, Olsson suggests that such a question would be entirely intelligible. Seen from this perspective, the reference to 'the third day' in Jn 2:1 appears

symbolic meaning intended, it would fit the Sinai screen interpretation, especially since both the MT and the LXX in Ex 19:5 refer to Israel as God's possession.

(10) The sign as the first sign: The reference is not only chronological, but the special significance of the sign is pointed out.

(11) The role of the servants: Because of what they do (obeying Jesus' mother, hearing and doing what Jesus says, drawing water, knowing where the water/wine comes from) they represent the new people of God.

(12) The steward: As the one who is superior to the servants (with features also seen in Nicodemus and the Pharisees in ch. 9: he sees the result of Jesus' acts, admits that he did a miracle, but does not perceive Jesus' true identity), he represents the Judaism that rejects Jesus, thereby being part of the old people of God.

(13) Jesus' mother: She represents faithful old Israel and is therefore the link between the old and the new covenant. She is similar to Abraham (8:39ff), to Moses and the Scriptures (5:39ff; 45ff), to Isaiah (12:41), and to John the Baptist (1:29ff; 3:27ff.). Not only that, but Olsson sees more: 'she is described on the basis of *the true Israel within the framework of the old covenant*, the Israel which by God's work in Christ is transformed into the "new" Israel.'

¹⁴⁸ For the following, see RIDDERBOS, *Gospel*, 112.

¹⁴⁹ In particular MARTYN, *History*, and BROWN, *Community*.

¹⁵⁰ Apart from the influential studies of MARTYN and BROWN, see esp. RENSBERGER, *World*, and SMITH, *Johannine Christianity*, and most recently the balanced presentation of the issue in LINCOLN, *Truth*.

quite likely intended to evoke the giving of the law ‘on the third day’, a signal reinforced by the immediate mention of the wedding. Once this text signal is picked up, it invites the reader to read the Cana story against Ex 19-24, and in the course of the comparison to pick up further connections between the two stories. Among these connections the one between the glory in Jn 2:11 and in Exodus is the most significant theologically.

Francis Moloney supplies another argument in favour of the allusion to the giving of the Law at Sinai by utilizing insights from narrative criticism. He starts with the fact that the giving of the Law was depicted as a manifestation of YHWH’s glory in the tradition of Israel.¹⁵¹ The fact that there is no reference to this tradition in the context of John is taken as evidence that the author expected the reader to know it: ‘As the reader receives no instructions on this background, he is credited by the author with knowledge of the Jewish notion of the gift of the Law, the “glory of YHWH” on the third day.’¹⁵² In a footnote Moloney explains the general principle behind this assumption:

‘The implied reader’s knowledge of the story depends entirely on the medium which expresses that story, the linguistic signifiers. When they are not explained to the reader, then he understands those signifiers. Such must be the case for *doxa*.’¹⁵³

The objection that this reasoning assumes that ‘the third day’ and the ‘glory’ allude to the Sinai events is valid only on a fairly technical level and would imply that it is possible to determine an allusion *a priori* and beyond doubt, a possibility rejected in the introduction. As I pointed out there, determination and interpretation cannot be strictly held apart in the discussion of NT allusions to the OT. This becomes even clearer when we consider yet another argument that leads to the identification of the Sinai scene as the most probable interpretative background of the passage, which has to do with the search for criteria for assessing the validity of various interpretations of a given text. This problem is what motivates Olsson in the first place to analyse first every single unit of a text, and then to ask about the message of the text as a whole. Given the variety of interpretations of the symbolic meaning of the text,¹⁵⁴ Olsson makes an interesting suggestion:

‘The previous analyses suggested an abundance of interpretations. Which are intended by the author? As I said, the only answer I could find was to first arrive at the central meaning of the text from such features as are particularly prominent and presumably help to convey the message. In general I consider that the *most probable, and therefore the correct, interpretation is that which assigns a communicative function to, or explains, the majority of the textual characteristics discerned, and is at the same time in harmony with what we know with some degree of certainty of the situational and linguistic context and the author’s horizon*. The central meaning intended by the author, thus established, enables us to determine the degree of

¹⁵¹ For references see VON RAD, ‘*dokeo ktl.*’, *TDNT* 2:232-255.

¹⁵² MOLONEY, *Belief*, 55.

¹⁵³ MOLONEY, *Belief*, 55 n. 6.

¹⁵⁴ See above p. 42.

symbolism in the individual details and to describe the type of text with which we are dealing in the Cana narrative.¹⁵⁵

The last sentence reveals Olsson's aim in undertaking his detailed investigation, namely, the identification of the text type of the Cana pericope. I suggest, however, that his notion of the communicative function of the majority of textual characteristics can also be of help in the determination of allusions. Although I am not persuaded that the democratic notion of majority should be our guiding principle at this point, one cannot ignore the impact of a coherent interpretative perspective on the probability of an intended link to an OT text. In this case this means that the illumination of a considerable number of elements of Jn 1:19-2:11 renders a connection to Ex 19-24 more likely, although the number of clear textual signals capable of undoubtedly evoking this OT background is not identical with the elements illuminated by the link. To put the issue like this is clearly another example of mixing the determination with the interpretation of allusions. If, however, the mutual influence of the two is not ruled out from the start, it seems difficult to avoid the impression that the meaningful interpretation of allusive elements of a text does supply additional evidence in the process of determining the probability of the presence of an allusion.

On the basis of the probability of the link between Ex 19-24 and Jn 1:19-2:11 I turn now to a more detailed presentation of the theological significance of the link.

2.2.3 Jn 1:19-2:11 and the 'Sinai screen': The theological significance

The theological significance of the reading of Jn 1:19-2:11 against the Sinai screen lies predominantly in the confirmation of the ecclesiological significance of the Sinai background already hinted at in the discussion of Jn 1:14-18 above. Our thesis of the sociological function of the use of Moses tradition here develops in the following way: The decisive point is that the allusions to Ex 19-24 provide clues for John's understanding of the change that is taking place in and with the people of God. Usually the categories of replacement, transcendence and

¹⁵⁵ OLSSON, *Structure*, 98 (italics original). The notion of authorial intention and correct interpretation seems to be open to severe criticism. However, Olsson's methodological remarks in his introductory chapter show quite clearly that he is not unaware of the problems connected with these phrases. His way of handling those problems is to take into account insights from German *Textlinguistik* (W. Dressler, M. Scherner, H. Brinkmann, S. J. Schmidt) and American discourse analysis (K. L. Pike, R. Longacre, E. A. Nida, J. P. Louw). See his explanation on pp. 8-17.

Concerning authorial intention, the oft (mis)used article by Wimsatt and Beardsley ('The Intentional Fallacy') is properly assessed by HAYS, *Echoes*, 201 n. 90: Wimsatt and Beardsley 'did not exclude in principle the possibility of gaining information about the author's intention in all texts. Indeed, they asserted that "practical messages" – as distinguished from "poetry" – "are successful if and only if we correctly infer the intention" (5). Their primary point was that "the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable *as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art*" (3, emphasis mine). This is a proposal about aesthetics, not a skeptical stricture on historical knowledge.' The page numbers in brackets refer to the publication of the article in *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry*, Lexington, 1954. The article is now more easily accessible in DAVID LODGE (ed.), *20th Century Literary Criticism*, London, ¹⁸1995, pp. 334-344.

supersession have been put forward to characterize the force of much of John's narrative. Thus,

C. H. Dodd writes:

'In ii. 1-10 water is replaced by wine; in ii. 14-19 a new temple is foretold; the dialogue with Nicodemus in ch. iii is about new birth; the dialogue with the Samaritan woman in ch. iv contrasts both the φρέαρ of Jacob with "living water", and the ancient cults of Jerusalem and Gerizim with the worship ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ for which the time is ripe.'¹⁵⁶

Even more perceptive is the overview given by Max Turner:

'Already in the prologue he [John] has made the point that as incarnate Logos/Wisdom, he and his teaching transcend the Law and definitively reveal the Father in grace and truth (1:17,18). Chapter 2 will imply that the revelation in Jesus surpasses the Law as wine betters water, and that Jesus replaces that other major pillar of Judaism, the temple. He is the "true" temple, the dwelling place of God amongst his people, and the means of their fellowship. Other chapters will follow up this claim; in ch. 3 we learn that *new birth* by the Spirit through belief in the Son replaces natural birth into Israel as the condition for entry to the eschatological blessings of God's reign. In ch. 4 we learn that Jesus' teachings, not the Law, are *living water*, and that *true* worship is in the Spirit mediated through acceptance of his revelation, not merely available at the temple. In ch. 6, Jesus – or specifically his act of giving himself at the cross – is the true *manna* in the wilderness, while, in ch. 7, the Spirit which Christ gives is the *true water* in the wilderness: the eschatological counterparts to the lesser gifts of manna and water enjoyed by Israel in her wanderings. In ch. 8, his day is the joy of Abraham (8:56). And if Judaism claims the Law and her tradition are a lamp to guide people's feet to life, Jesus is the *light* and the *life* (chs. 8 and 9), the *way* and the *truth* (ch. 14). He, and not the Jewish leadership, is the fulfilment of God's promise of a *Shepherd* for the flock (ch. 10), and it is in him that the symbol of the *vine*, the national symbol of Israel, truly inheres (ch. 15). Indeed, in him the fulfilment of all OT hope for future life is to be met: for he is the *resurrection* and the *life* (11:25).'¹⁵⁷

Although the elements of replacement and transcendence are clearly part of John's theological endeavour, their meaning can be understood more precisely when one takes into account the subtle conclusions Olsson draws at the end of his detailed exegesis of the Cana story. Olsson sees the major impact of the Sinai background as follows:

'The analysis of these two texts [Jn 2:1-11 and 4:1-42] showed that their *message* is to a great extent the same: how the people of the new covenant, in the following often called the new people of God, is born from that of the old. In the *Cana narrative* the author is seeking to describe how Jesus' *ergon*, i.e Jesus' work of salvation in all its range, covering both the time before and the time after Jesus' "hour", implies the creation of a new people of God ... This he does by telling of the wedding at Cana in the light of Jewish concepts of what once happened at Sinai ..., and by using a vocabulary all his own, which is bound to an interpretation of Jesus' work in its entirety, including its consequences. The structure and themes of the opening week in Jn (1:19-2:11), culminating on the third (=the sixth) day at Cana, are dependent on a Sinai screen, in order to show how the new people of God is born from the old. As once at Sinai, a *purification* of the people is called for, a purification realized by the death of Jesus (the Lamb of God). The baptism in water is complemented with the baptism of the Spirit, the water in the Jewish purification vessels is transformed at Jesus' "hour" to "choice wine". As once at Sinai, *obedience* to God's revelation is also essential. In talking of this obedience the narrator evidently wishes to point out the connection between the old and the new.'¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Cf. DODD, *Interpretation*, 297.

¹⁵⁷ TURNER, *Holy Spirit*, 59 n. 9.

¹⁵⁸ OLSSON, *Structure*, 275-276.

This perspective, including especially the insight that the Cana story embodies in one single narrative the major pattern of change that Jesus' whole ministry brought about, is further clarified in Olsson's summary of his interpretation of Jn 2:1-11 as a whole:

'In his account of Jesus' works at the beginning of his earthly activity, the evangelist considers *Jesus' saving acts in general*. Indeed the narrative deals with an isolated event in Jesus' life, but its real objective and theme is Jesus' *ergon* as a whole and its implications, i.e. according to the Gospel in general, God's saving acts in Jesus Christ, the union between the Father and the Son and its manifestation in the faith of the disciples. These acts culminate in *the "hour"* of Jesus but also cover the time *before* and the time *after* this "hour". All three periods are projected into the Cana narrative, giving us the same dominant structure in the account as in the rest of the Gospel. The essential point is that *change* coincides with Jesus' "hour": the old "religion" is replaced by a new one. Since Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, 20:31, the ordinances and status of the people of God are changed and a "new" people of God emerges. The new, however, is not really new but a part of the old; it is the true people of God in all ages. There is here a continuity in God's saving acts. The narrator saw elements of this profound change in the wedding at Cana and this vision has formed his narrative in all its parts.

This interpretation from basic features of the text is in close harmony with the linguistic context: 1:19ff gives us a comprehensive picture of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God. It also describes the relationship between the "old" and the "new". 1:35ff tell how Jesus gathers a group of people round him who confess him as King of "Israel", while 2:13ff relates how Jesus "replaces" and "fulfils" the old order. The interpretation also agrees with the rest of the Gospel, which deals to a high degree with the manner in which the true Israel is brought forth from the people of Israel. It explains the text in its entirety and the many characteristics my analysis brought out previously. So I consider that this interpretation should provide the norm for the determination of the "symbolical possibilities" of the text and of its character (text type).¹⁵⁹

For my present purposes it is vital to distinguish several elements within Olsson's overall interpretative conclusions. First, the claim that the Cana episode encapsulates Jesus' saving acts in general is certainly open to debate. On the one hand, Olsson bases this claim on numerous perceptive observations concerning every little detail of the Cana story. But the very scope of his detailed exegesis¹⁶⁰ may also raise the suspicion of over-interpretation. It takes a very perceptive reader indeed (let alone a hearer) to make all the connections Olsson sees within the Cana story itself and in its relationship to the Gospel as a whole.

On the other hand: As far as the significance of the Sinai screen is concerned, it seems that Olsson's remarks about the implications for John's perspective on the people of God are sound and by no means too far fetched to be intelligible for a first century reader or hearer. Once the connection between the giving of the law on the third day at Sinai and the revelation of Jesus' glory on the third day at Cana is made, it seems entirely appropriate to draw the conclusions Olsson draws. The Sinai background helps especially not to overplay the notions of replacement and supersession. With Olsson I would argue that the allusions to Ex 19-24 should be taken to see continuity behind the new developments Jesus brought about in Israel's history. The reasons for such an understanding can be put forward with reference to Martin Hengel's view on Jn

¹⁵⁹ OLSSON, *Structure*, 101-102.

¹⁶⁰ Olsson spends 57 pages on the analysis of 31 'Statement Units of the Text' he detects in Jn 2:1-11 (OLSSON, *Structure*, 21-77), supplemented by 38 pages of synthesis, summarising the findings of the exegesis in terms of the structure and message of the text (OLSSON, *Structure*, 77-113).

10:34f., verses which are crucial for an adequate understanding of John's overall approach to scripture. Here we find the insertion καὶ οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή, and Hengel comments on the significance of the reference to Ps 82:6 in Jn 10:34f. as follows:

'In der Argumentation des Evangelisten läuft das Ganze auf einen Schluß a minore ad maius hinaus: Wenn Gott selbst Israel in seinem Wort »Götter« nennt, die er (am Sinai und später) der Anrede durch sein Wort gewürdigt hat, wie kann dann der, »den der Vater heiligte und in die Welt sandte«, der Gotteslästerung bezichtigt werden, weil er gesagt hat: »Ich bin Gottes Sohn« – man könnte hinzufügen: da er als der Sohn das Wort Gottes verkörpert? ... Das heißt: Die Schrift als das Wort Gottes, das an Israel gerichtet ist, bleibt unverbrüchlich in Geltung (vgl. 7,23); durch die Anrede des λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ erhält dieses Volk erst seine einzigartige Beziehung zu Gott, so daß sie selbst der Bezeichnung θεοί gewürdigt wurden. Man könnte hinzufügen: Und eben darum wird der λόγος in Israel σὰρξ und nicht irgendwo anders. Darum kann das Heil nur von den Juden kommen. Joh 10,34f; 4,22 und 1,14 hängen im Grunde zusammen.'¹⁶¹

Two aspects of Hengel's remarks are important for my argument that the background of Ex 19-24 should be taken to emphasize continuity. First, the affirmation of the validity of scripture should preclude an interpretation of the allusion of the Sinai background of John 1:19-2:11 in terms of a devaluation of the Sinai revelation. Secondly, the perceptive link between the three verses mentioned by Hengel to the effect that the unbroken word of God is now incarnated in Jesus the Jew should preclude an interpretation that neglects the elements of continuity amidst all the changes and replacements involved in the re-gathering of the people of God around Jesus.¹⁶² Thus, Olsson's balanced remarks given in the above quotations not only adequately summarize the major theological significance of the Sinai background behind Jn 1:19-2:11, but are also in accordance with John's overall approach to scripture as expressed in Jn 10:34f.

2.3 Summary

The investigation of the allusions to Sinai tradition in Jn 1:14-18 and Jn 1:19-2:11 has yielded the following results:

First, in both cases the narrative significance of the Johannine texts was pointed out and the probability of the intended allusions established. Secondly, elements that help the reader to pick up an allusion include explicit evocation of an OT foundational story (e.g., the reference to the giving of the Law through Moses in 1:17), terminological similarities (e.g., χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια in 1:14), the density of significant concepts in both the Johannine text and the OT text alluded to (cf. the list of elements in Jn 1:14-18 on p. 26), links established through theological reflection (cf. the connection between Wisdom traditions and the giving of the Law at Sinai on p. 27-28), and the illumination of a considerable number of Johannine textual features (cf. the remarks on pp. 43-49). Time and again the difficulty in making a clear distinction between the

¹⁶¹ HENGEL, 'Schriftauslegung', 262-263.

¹⁶² The element of continuity is also stressed by PANCARO, *Law*, 183f.

identification and the *interpretation* of an allusion became apparent. Although both aspects of the exegetical task should not be confused, it is not adequate to reject completely any notion of interpretative illumination as a limited but valid factor in determining the probability of an allusion. Thirdly, reflections on the theological significance of the links with Sinai traditions have shown that John's Gospel presents the story of Jesus not as an unqualified story of the incarnation of God, but against the background of the quest for the presence of God. This quest was expressed not only in Wisdom traditions, especially in Sirach 24, but also in the story of Moses' attempts to secure the presence of God after the covenant breach in Ex 33-34. Furthermore, our thesis of the sociological function of the use of Moses tradition was confirmed in two ways. First, the link between 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34 occurs in the context of confessional claims by the believing community (the "we" in 1:14, 16), and confession is one means to express the identity markers of a given group. Secondly, the ecclesiological implications of the Sinai background were pointed out in that the allusions to Ex 33-34 and Ex 19-24 serve to paint the christological redefinition of the people of God in Jn 1-2 against the background of the constitution of Israel at Sinai.¹⁶³ It was argued that in the light of the evocation of this background any attendant notion of replacement and supersession should be balanced by elements of continuity. After all, it is John's view that the scriptures cannot be broken (Jn 10:34f.) and that Jesus is the incarnation of the word of God which was active already at creation and throughout Israel's history.

From the use of the Sinai tradition we now turn to the Passover traditions as reflected in John's Gospel. As will become clear, this aspect of Moses traditions serves mainly to illuminate Jesus' death. The sociological function of the christological use of Moses tradition is more indirect, in that the death of Jesus is, together with the resurrection, the key foundational event for the community that believes in Jesus. The following chapter shows in detail how the Passover traditions are used.

¹⁶³ This conclusion is also reached by Harstine's exploration of Moses as a character in the narrative world of John's Gospel. After referring to Jn 1:17 and 3:14, Harstine says: 'The narrative is to be understood in comparison with the Sinai event that founded the covenant community of Israel.' (HARSTINE, *Moses*, 72).

3. The Passover traditions

‘The evidence of a Passover theme in the Fourth Gospel, it seems to me, is stronger than many recognize. The Passover theme essentially states that Jesus is seen by the author of the Fourth Gospel as the suitable and in fact ideal or perfect Passover victim. Since the animal sacrificed at Passover symbolized deliverance from the angel of death as well as redemption from the oppression in Egypt, which leads to the exodus and, eventually, entrance into Canaan, there are several supporting themes in the Fourth Gospel that could be cited as giving further support to the Passover theme. These would include reference to Moses, the leader of the people during the course of these events (1.17; 3.14; 5.45, 46; 6.32; 7.19, 22, 23; 8.5; 9.28, 29), and possibly even reference to the serpent raised by Moses in the desert (3.14). ... More to the point, although not significant without further elucidation ... is reference to the Passover either directly or as “feast” (πάσχα is used in 2.13, 23; 6.4; 11.55 bis; 12.1; 13.1; 18.28, 39; 19.14; and ἑορτή is used with reference to the Passover in 2.23; 4.45; 5.1; 6.4; 11.56; 12.12, 20; 13.1, 29).’¹

As indicated by this quotation, Stanley Porter cannot be accused of being too restrictive in his search for Passover references in John’s Gospel. This is confirmed by Porter’s exegetical remarks on six passages in which he sees the Passover theme in the background. These passages are (1) 1:29, 36; (2) 2:13-25; (3) 6:1-14, 22-71; (4) 11:47-12:8; (5) 13:1-17:26; and (6) 19:13-42.² The Passover motif as an important factor in John’s Gospel is also emphasized by e.g. J. K. Howard³ and by Mark Stibbe, who holds that

‘there is evidence in John’s story of a rich Passover symbolism. The whole of the Gospel could be described as a *Passover plot* in that it moves through the three Passover festivals in 2.13, 6.4 and 13.1.’⁴

Others, however, warn us not to exaggerate the significance of this motif in John’s Gospel. Pre-eminent here is C. H. Dodd,⁵ who denies a reference to the Paschal lamb in Jn 1:29, 36. He also thinks that Ps 34:21, not Ex 12:10, 46 or Num 9:12, is cited in Jn 19:36, and plays down the significance of the Passover mentioned in Jn 6:4 for the following discourse. I take both Porter’s and Dodd’s positions as a reminder not to be too confident in my search for Passover traditions.

There are three main areas in which Passover traditions have been considered important for John’s Gospel. First, the term ‘lamb of God’ in Jn 1:29, 36 has been understood to include an allusion to the Passover lamb. Secondly, whether or not this lamb is intended to evoke the Passover background cannot be discussed without reflecting on Passover motifs in Jn 18-19 and the connections between Jesus’ death and the Passover theme. Thirdly, the narrative function of the Passover feasts mentioned in the quotation by Stibbe has to be analysed. Since all of these aspects belong closely together, they will be discussed together within the next section. However, since there are different kinds of references involved (terminological allusion, quotation, chronological references), I will first look at Jn 1:29, 36, secondly at Jn 18-19, and

¹ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 406.

² See PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 407-421.

³ HOWARD, ‘Passover’, 330, says that ‘the writer seems to be concerned with presenting Jesus as the perfect Paschal Victim.’

⁴ STIBBE, *John*, 35.

⁵ See DODD, *Interpretation*, 230-240. Scepticism is also expressed by KYSAR, *Evangelist*, 140.

thirdly at the thesis of a ‘Passover plot’. Finally, a section on the theological significance of the Passover motif will present a synthesis developed on the basis of more detailed observations concerning the nature of the links to Passover motifs. Again, although the focus of the next part is on the *identification* of possible links to Passover themes, *interpretative issues* will be discussed if they clarify the identification. Further theological reflection is postponed until section 3.2.

3.1 The evocation of Passover motifs

3.1.1 *The lamb of God: a terminological allusion to the Passover lamb?*

There is no shortage of suggestions concerning the background of the term ‘lamb of God’ in Jn 1:29, 36. Porter gives the following list:

‘the apocalyptic lamb of Revelation and apocalyptic literature (e.g. Rev 5.6, 8, 12, 13; ch. 6; 7.14, 17; 14.1, 4, 10; 15.3; *T. Jos.* 19.18-19; *1 En.* 89-90),⁶ the sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22 (see e. g. v. 8),⁷ the daily sacrifice or some other sacrifice of a lamb for an offering in the Old Testament (e.g. Lev. 7.1-7; 14.1-32; Num. 6.1-21),⁸ the “son of God” on the basis of the parallel with Jn 1.34,⁹ the suffering Servant of Isaiah 53,¹⁰ or some combination of these.¹¹

⁶ So e.g. DODD, *Interpretation*, 230-238 (the meaning intended by the evangelist); BROWN, ‘Quotations’, 295-297 (the meaning intended by the Baptist; so also ROBINSON, *Priority*, 176); cf. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 24-25; O’NEILL, ‘Lamb’, 2-30. Objections against this allusion include the terminological differences (ἀμνός in Jn 1:29, 36, ἀρνίον in Rev; however, *T. Jos.* uses ἀμνός), and the fact that the apocalyptic lamb does not take away the sin of the world. The suggestion of Brown that on the lips of the Baptist the phrase ‘can be interpreted as a reference to the destruction of the world’s sin’ looks like a desperate attempt to assign a sacrificial function to the apocalyptic lamb. See BROWN, *John*, 59-60.

⁷ So e.g. GLASSON, *Moses*, 100; KOESTER, *Symbolism*, 198-199. The development of the *Aqedah* in Jewish tradition and possible links to NT texts is treated in VERMES, *Scripture*, 193-227; BRAUN, *Jean*, 3.157-165; MEEKS, ‘Man’, 63; BROWN, *Death*, 2.1435-1444. Brown does not even mention Jn 1:29 as a possible link. However, he refers to *Jub.* 17:5 and 18:3, which in combination were used to argue that the sacrifice of Isaac took place on the day of the Passover; no one has been bold enough to exploit this for the idea of a combination of Gen 22 and Ex 12 as backgrounds of Jn 1:29, 36.

⁸ So e.g. DAVIES, *Rhetoric*, 234. The daily *tamid* sacrifice is described in Ex 29:38-43; Num 28:10 (עֲלֹת הַתָּמִיד). Its importance is indicated by the fact that the Mishnah spends a whole tractate (*Tamid*) to describe the procedure of this sacrifice in great detail. It is favoured as the background of Jn 1:29, 36 by STUHLMACHER, ‘Lamm’, but rejected by TURNER, ‘Atonement’, 120 n. 49, who sees no reason why these lambs should be distinguished as ‘Lamb of God’.

⁹ So e.g. PETERSEN, *Sociology*, 26.

¹⁰ So e.g. EVANS, *Word*, 182-183; TURNER, ‘Atonement’, 119-122. MEYER, *Christus Faber*, 26, 37 n. 1, thinks that the reference to Is 53:12 is certain because of the singular ‘sin’, which makes John the first attestation of the MT’s singular (the plural is attested in LXX and 1QIs). DIETZFELBINGER, ‘Sühnetod’, thinks that the non-traditional, specifically Johannine parts of the Gospel do not know the atonement aspect of the death of Jesus. However, since atonement is the ‘Integral des Evangeliums’ (Hengel), Dietzfelbinger sees this aspect in 1:29, 36, meaning that Jesus is ‘sühnendes und stellvertretendes Opfer’ (p. 75), the lamb alluded to in Is 53:7, 12.

¹¹ For the quotation see PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 407-408. For detailed presentations of various suggestions and arguments for and against them cf. especially BROWN, *John*, 58-63; MORRIS, *John*, 126-130; CARSON, *John*, 148-151. For the idea of a combination of various backgrounds see e.g. the commentaries of Schnackenburg, Bauer, Hoskyns, Barrett, Lightfoot, and Brown, as well as the remarks in HOWARD, ‘Passover’, 331f.; HENGEL, *Frage*, 191; LINCOLN, *Truth*, 62, who all favour

This list could be extended by subtle additions to the alternatives above or new suggestions.

Brown, for example, refers to Jer 11:19:

‘Since Jeremiah may have been the pattern on which Deutero-Isaiah fashioned the image of the Suffering Servant, this suggestion can be incorporated into the interpretation of the Lamb as the Servant.’¹²

Another suggestion is made by Glasson who refers to the Targum of Ex 1:15, where Moses is compared with a lamb.¹³ This is surely an interesting idea, especially in view of the Moses – Jesus comparison in Jn 1:14-18. However, there is no evidence that a tradition about Moses as a lamb was well known. Further suggestions include the scapegoat of the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:21f.),¹⁴ and the lamb of Lev 4:32.¹⁵

Klaus Berger, no doubt with a sense of humour, complains about the variety and combination of all sorts of lambs seen behind Jn 1:29, 36,¹⁶ and presents a new view. According to him, ‘Lamb of God’ has its nearest analogy in ‘the Holy One of God’ (Mk 1:24; Jn 6:69). It refers to Jesus as the righteous one because the white wool of a young sheep stands for righteousness in apocalyptic animal visions.¹⁷

In order to assess the validity of each suggestion, it is vital to take into account the ways in which a particular background relates to other aspects of John’s literary and historical setting. Thus, the suggestion of the apocalyptic lamb relates well to the historical setting of John the Baptist and his message of repentance and judgment. On the other hand, these elements, emphasized in the Synoptics, are not at all significant in the Fourth Gospel, where the Baptist is recast as a supreme witness for Jesus.¹⁸ An allusion to the story of the near sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22 might be supported with reference to Jn 3:16, but compared to the significance of

the combination of the Passover and the Servant of the Lord backgrounds. GRIGSBY, ‘Cross’, 54 nn. 37, 38, refers to 1 Pet 2:22-25, and Justin Martyr, *Dial. Tryph.* 111, for early Christian evidence for the link of Passover with the Servant of the Lord. The combination of the apocalyptic lamb (most probable for John the Baptist) and the lamb of Is 53 (which is unlikely not to be in the mind of the evangelist) is favoured by CARSON, *John*, 150. Given this view, it is difficult to understand that Carson criticizes BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 24-25, who differentiates between the historical level of John the Baptist (‘Look, the Lamb of God’) and a sacrificial addition of the evangelist (‘who takes away the sin of the world’).

¹² BROWN, *John*, 63. TURNER, ‘Atonement’, 120 n. 49, counters that the picture in Jer 11:19 has nothing to do with removal of sin.

¹³ GLASSON, *Moses*, 96.

¹⁴ See BARRETT, *St. John*, 176, and the simple, but effective objection of TURNER, ‘Atonement’, 120 n. 49: this was not a lamb.

¹⁵ See BROWN, *John*, 63: although this background ‘would explain the idea of the Lamb’s taking away the world’s sin, it must be noted that the bull and the goat were more common sin offerings. In any case there is no other evidence that such sacrifices formed the background for Johannine christology.’

¹⁶ BERGER, *Anfang*, 228: ‘Es ist an dieser Stelle nicht unüblich, alle biblischen Lämmer, an die man sich überhaupt erinnert, über einen Kamm zu scheren und theologisch per Handstreich gleichzusetzen.’

¹⁷ See the discussion in BERGER, *Anfang*, 227-231.

¹⁸ See esp. LINCOLN, *Truth*, 58-65, for a presentation of the function of John the Baptist as witness in the cosmic lawsuit of John’s Gospel.

the Exodus narrative, this story is not really prominent in John's Gospel. Similarly, only the Exodus narrative and Second Isaiah can claim to be significant backgrounds of John's Gospel. This does not mean, of course, that only these backgrounds are possible. It means, however, that the Passover and Servant of the Lord backgrounds can claim to fit better into John's theological framework than other possible backgrounds. I will therefore summarize the major arguments in favour of these two suggestions.

Brown supports the allusion to Is 53 with the following arguments:¹⁹ (1) Is 53:7 LXX describes the Servant as a lamb (πρόβατον parallel to ἀμνός in the same verse), and this text is applied to Jesus in Acts 8:32ff. (the same two terms for lamb are used in quoting Is 53:7) and can be expected to have been well known in early Christianity. (2) Second Isaiah is associated in all four canonical Gospels with John the Baptist. (3) The descent of the Spirit and the identification of Jesus as God's chosen one²⁰ are two elements in Jn 1:32-34 that can be related to the Servant theme of Second Isaiah. (4) Jn 12:38 explicitly refers to Is 53:1 and describes Jesus in term of the suffering servant. The problem of having ὁ αἴρων in Jn 1:29 but φέρει in Is 53:4, 12 is solved by referring to other instances in the LXX, in which the Hebrew אָשַׁן is translated by both verbs. Brown rejects the suggestion that 'Lamb of God' may be a mistranslation of the Aramaic אֲלִיָּא in this way:

'The Servant of Isaiah is known in Hebrew as the *'ebed YHWH* (Aram. *'abdā*); there is absolutely no evidence of *talyā* (Heb. *taleh*) being used for the Servant. Nor, it may be added, is *taleh* ever rendered by *amnos* in LXX.'²¹

In an argument that entails some of the aspects highlighted by Brown, A. T. Hanson similarly juxtaposes Is 53:7 and 53:4, saying: 'If we put these two quotations together, we get in fact the lamb who takes away sins.'²² However, Hanson adds an elaborate but important argument in order to account for the universalistic taking away of the sin *of the world* in Jn 1:29 against the background of Second Isaiah. This argument is based on the possibility that in Jn 1:34 the textual variant ὁ ἐκλεκτὸς τοῦ θεοῦ could be understood as *lectio difficilior* and therefore the original reading.²³ In that case the reference would be to Is 42:1, where Israel is depicted as God's servant and chosen one. Hanson then observes the universalistic overtones in Is 42:4b, 6c and concludes:

¹⁹ For the following see BROWN, *John*, 61.

²⁰ Brown understands ὁ ἐκλεκτὸς τοῦ θεοῦ in 1:34 to be the original reading. For the textual criticism see below, n. 23.

²¹ BROWN, *John*, 61.

²² HANSON, *Gospel*, 33. Hanson also observes that Is 53:1 is quoted in Jn 12:38, and that both αἴρειν and φέρειν can translate אָשַׁן. KOESTER, *Symbolism*, 198, adds the observation that the servant was "lifted up" (ὕψωθήσεται in Is 52:13), a concept that John took up and invested with new significance (Jesus being lifted up on the cross and returning to his Father, cf. Jn 3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34).

²³ The textual criticism can be found in HANSON, *Gospel*, 34, 36. Hanson takes up the argument of JEREMIAS, *Theology*, 53-55. Other authors in favour of ὁ ἐκλεκτὸς τοῦ θεοῦ include Loisy, Schnackenburg, Barrett, Carson.

‘This might well explain the Lamb of God that takes away (better “bears”) the sin *of the world*. John sees in this passage in Isaiah a prophecy about the universal scope of the Son’s redemptive activity.’²⁴

Whether the connection to Is 42 is seen as valid or as too far fetched, the other arguments seem to establish convincingly the background of ‘the Lamb of God’ in Second Isaiah. We can thus turn to the arguments in favour of an allusion to the Passover lamb.

One of the latest attempts to argue strongly for an allusion to the Passover lamb is presented by Stanley Porter. However, Porter does not engage in detail with those who propose various other lambs as the proper background to Jn 1:29, 36, but starts by noting that ‘in the eyes of most interpreters, the “lamb” includes at least some references to the Passover ...’²⁵ Porter then admits that ἀμνός is not used in Ex 12, but refers to Num 28:19; Ex 29:38-41; Lev 9:3; 12:6; 14:10.²⁶ However, these verses do not refer to the Passover lamb, but to other sacrifices, as Porter admits. His conclusion, therefore, seems not quite warranted:

‘This verbal correspondence, the association of the lamb with the sacrificial system, the significance of the Passover in this system, and the function of both in John’s Gospel’s and later Jewish thought (...), all point toward Jesus as the Passover lamb.’²⁷

Porter’s second argument in favour of the association of the lamb with Passover concerns the understanding of the phrase ‘who takes away the sin of the world’ in Jn 1:29. Here he first refers to Is 53:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12 as the proper background invoked. However, Porter sees the reference in Jn 1:29 as ‘apparently more specifically focused,’²⁸ intensifying what is said in Isaiah. Jesus does not only bear (φέρει in Is 53:4) the sins of Israel like a lamb, but takes away (ὁ αἴρων in Jn 1:29) the sin of the world (Porter takes the singular to indicate sin as a concept²⁹), being himself the lamb. The next (and final) step in Porter’s argument is to refer to 1 Cor 5:7 as evidence for the early Christian connection between the Passover and Jesus’ sacrificial death.³⁰ This verse, however, uses πάσχα, not ἀμνός τοῦ θεοῦ, in order to evoke

²⁴ HANSON, *Gospel*, 35.

²⁵ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 408, referring to TAYLOR, *Jesus*, 226-227; BARRETT, *St. John*, 176-177; BROWN, *John*, 295 n. 9; LINDARS, *John*, 109; CAREY, ‘Lamb’, 111; MOO, *Testament*, 312-314; CARSON, *John*, 150; EVANS, *Word*, 181-182; DAVIES, *Rhetoric*, *passim*. This list could easily be extended, but the mere quantity of authors holding this view does not add to the validity of it.

²⁶ So also DAVIES, *Rhetoric*, 234.

²⁷ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 409. On p. 412 he talks about ‘the temple system oriented toward the Passover sacrifice.’ A similar view of the importance of Passover is held by REID, ‘Sacrifice’, *DNTB*, 1043, who talks about the ‘prominence of the Passover sacrifice in the life of Israel and the Gospel accounts ...’.

²⁸ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 410.

²⁹ Cf. KOESTER, *Symbolism*, 197, who observes that ‘[t]he Fourth Gospel usually speaks of “sin” in the singular, as human rebellion against God. Individual sins are particular manifestations of this fundamental antipathy toward God and the one whom he sent.’ DE BOER, *Perspectives*, 278, observes the difference between the singular in John and the plural in Is 52:12, and takes it, together with the difference between ἀναφέρειν and αἴρειν, as evidence against the Isaianic background.

³⁰ Additional evidence that the Passover, although originally not a sin offering, became seen as such, is seen by Porter in Num 28:22; Ezek 45:21-25. However, although Num 28:22 belongs to a passage that mentions the Passover (LXX 28:16: πάσχα), it goes on to describe what should happen during the feast of unleavened bread (28:17-25). Lambs are mentioned (28:19, 21: ἐπὶ ἀμνοί), but

the Passover background. All this seems to indicate that ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ is a poor choice if one intends a reference to the Passover victim. The strongest argument in favour of the allusion to the Passover lamb remains the Passover setting of Jesus' death in Jn 18-19, which I will discuss in the next section. The validity of this argument clearly depends on the methodology chosen to interpret John's Gospel. A narratological perspective might suggest that Jn 1:29, 36 introduces the Passover motif that finds its climax in Jn 18-19.³¹ One type of reader-response approach will emphasize that at this point in the narrative (Jn 1:29) the reader does not know about the Passover motif. That the phrase ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ as such does not evoke this motif has been pointed out by Leon Morris on the basis of traditional historical research. Morris first says that the Passover victim was not necessarily a lamb at all.³² The second objection, that the Passover was not expiatory, is not valid because according to Morris, 'All sacrifice was held to be expiatory, and, specifically, the Passover was sometimes viewed in this way.'³³ These insights led Morris to argue for a broader sacrificial background evoked by the phrase ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ:

'The fact is that a lamb taking away sin, even if it is distinguished as God's Lamb, is too indefinite a description for us to pinpoint the reference. If the writer really had in mind an allusion to one particular offering we are not able any longer to detect it with certainty. But it

significantly in v. 22 the sin offering for atonement is not ἀμνος, but ἀΐξ, and it is not the Passover lamb. Ez 45:21-25 describes the same event, using the same terminology, except that ἀμνός does not occur at all. For evidence that the idea of the atoning power of the Passover continued in Judaism Porter refers to *Ex. Rab.* 15.12 on Ex 12:6, also seen by DALMAN, *Jesus-Jeshua*, 167, and by HOWARD, 'Passover', 332, who adds Ex 24:8; Zech 9:11; *Jub.* 49:3, 11, 15. However, this is evidence for sin and guilt-offerings 'associated with the Passover ritual.' *Associated*, yes; but was the Passover lamb itself a sin offering?

³¹ So e.g. KOESTER, *Symbolism*, 84, 196-198, who also links the 'lamb of God' with the symbolic action in the temple at Passover (Jn 2:13, 23).

³² MORRIS, *John*, 127 n. 48: "'the Passover lamb" is a modern expression, not an ancient one. Even if a lamb was offered, most often the term "the Passover lamb" was not used of it (τὸ πάσχα was the term as in 1 Cor. 5:7; curiously the NIV imports "lamb" into this verse with no MS support). We are looking for a source of an expression that explicitly mentions a lamb.' Morris is using GRAY, *Sacrifice*, 397, who says: 'the Paschal victim was ... neither as a matter of fact necessarily a lamb, nor in the usage of the time was it called a lamb; the proper term for it was "Passover", and it is only reasonable to suppose that had the author of the Fourth Gospel intended this he would, like St. Paul, have used the correct and unambiguous designation.' More recently, CHILTON, 'Festivals', *DNTB*, 373, has confirmed the view that after Josiah's reform and the centralisation of the cult in Jerusalem the Passover victim could also have been a bull; see 2 Kings 23:21-23; Dt 16:1-8.

³³ MORRIS, *John*, 127. Evidence: Lev. 14:20 (burnt and meal offerings making atonement); Lev 17:11 (atonement by 'blood' of no specific sacrifice). The expiatory power of the Passover is stated in *Ex. Rab.* 15 (35ab); *Pirqe R. El.* 29; cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.312. The expiatory power of the original Passover lamb is suggested by HARMAN, 'Passover', *NIDOTTE* 4, 1045: 'The blood was smeared on the two doorposts and the lintels of the house, and in this respect the Passover resembled the sin offering. Like all the other sacrifices, it was expiatory. Animal life that was without blemish, so to speak not liable to death, was shed so that another life under judgment was spared. The beneficiaries were redeemed by blood not only from judgment but to be God's own possession.' Contrast with this statement the view of DE VAUX, *Israel*, 488: 'the Israelite Passover never had any expiatory purpose.' The same view is expressed by DE BOER, *Perspectives*, 280. However, de Vaux does not use post-biblical material. The problem that the Passover sacrifice 'was not ordinarily considered to be an offering for sin but a sign of deliverance from death' (KOESTER, *Symbolism*, 197) is ingeniously solved by Koester in that he understands Jesus to be the (Passover-)lamb of God who by his sacrificial death delivers the people from sin. See HOWARD, 'Passover', 329, for the same idea.

seems more probable that of set purpose he used an expression that cannot be confined to any one view. He is making a general allusion to sacrifice. The lamb figure may well be intended to be composite, evoking memories of several, perhaps all, of the suggestions we have canvassed. All that the ancient sacrifices foreshadowed was perfectly fulfilled in the sacrifice of Christ.³⁴

Similarly, Moloney thinks that although it is right to look to Jn 19:14 for the Passover allusion, one cannot restrict Jn 1:29, 36 to an allusion to the Passover lamb:

‘Perhaps we need to look further than the Passover lamb to the whole of the ritual practice of Israel, where the lamb was used both for the sacrificial rites of communion and reconciliation after sin. Through the use of the lamb, the people of Israel established and renewed their union with God and among themselves after having sinned. Jesus is now presented as the lamb, but he is not of the same order. Again the reader reaches beyond familiar traditions. Jesus is not a cultic offering. Jesus is “of God”.³⁵

In the light of all the evidence gathered here, this line of interpretation is the most convincing. Given also the persuasive arguments in favour of the Second Isaiah background, I conclude that for the purpose of my investigation the phrase ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ cannot initially be regarded as a prominent element in John’s use of Moses traditions. As was said before, the use of Passover motifs in Jn 18-19 are the strongest argument for seeing an allusion to Passover also in Jn 1:29, 36. To John’s passion narrative I now turn.

3.1.2 Passover motifs in Jn 18-19

In the literature on John’s account of Jesus’ passion several links to Moses traditions have been suggested. Brown refers to a parallel of Jesus uttering an unqualified ἐγὼ εἰμι and the subsequent falling to the ground of the soldiers in Jn 18:5-6. Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* IX, xxvii. 24-26, relates a tradition according to which Pharaoh was falling down when Moses uttered the secret name of God;³⁶ Eusebius assigns the report about this incident to Artapanus. J. J. Collins classifies the text as a ‘romance’,³⁷ but it is difficult to say whether this is a valid background to the scene in John’s Gospel. On the one hand, in conjunction with the falling down of the Roman soldiers and Jewish military police,³⁸ Jesus’ utterance ἐγὼ εἰμι (mentioned three times, 18:5, 6, 8) has to be seen as an utterance of the divine name.³⁹ It is thus an important incident, and may well lead some readers to think of other examples of similar reactions to the utterance of the divine name. However, since it is not clear how early and how widespread the tradition in

³⁴ MORRIS, *John*, 129-130.

³⁵ MOLONEY, *Belief*, 65. Earlier on the same page he pointed out the significance of the objective genitive in “Lamb of God”, which evokes John’s christology of Jesus as the one sent by God.

³⁶ BROWN, *John*, 818.

³⁷ For the text and Collins’ introduction see *OTP* 2.889-903; the section in question is on p. 901.

³⁸ They are mentioned in v. 3 and only referred to implicitly in the plural verbs in v. 6. Cf. BARRETT, *St. John*, 518-519, on the character of the group Judas brought to the garden.

³⁹ That 18:6 hints at something like a theophany is seen by e.g. BARRETT, *St. John*, 520; LINCOLN, *Truth*, 47.

Praep. Ev. was,⁴⁰ it is not possible to assess the probability that Jn 18:6 could have evoked that tradition.

Turning to the evidence for possible links to Passover traditions, the following picture emerges. (1) There are references to the feast of Passover that place the action of the two chapters within the temporal framework of the last days of the feast: τὸ πάσχα in 18:28, 39; ἡ παρασκευὴ⁴¹ τοῦ πάσχα in 19:14.⁴² (2) Hyssop is mentioned in 19:29 (ῥωπος) which may have been meant to evoke Ex 12:22, where hyssop is used to put the blood of the lambs on the doorframes. (3) Jesus' body is not allowed to stay on the cross until the next morning (19:31, 38). Some see here a reference to Ex 12:10, where it is said that no leftovers from the passover lamb should stay until the morning. (4) The blood and water flowing out of Jesus' body (19:34) might evoke Ex 12:7, 22,⁴³ which give instructions about the blood of the passover lamb. Another suggestion is that the link with Jn 7:37-39 evokes a tradition reflected in *Tg. Ps.-J. Num* 20:11 and *Ex. Rab.*, which includes an interpretation of Ps 78:20.⁴⁴ Both sources say that blood and water came out of the rock Moses smote in the wilderness. (5) The issue of the breaking of the legs of those crucified on the day of preparation (19:31-37) includes two OT quotations, the first of which is probably citing Ex 12:10, 46 (19:36). To assess the validity of each suggestion one has to look at the details involved. This is the task in the next sections, and we will see that the value of the suggestions varies greatly.

(1) The Passover feast

I start with the temporal signals τὸ πάσχα and ἡ παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα. 18:28 introduces the third part of John's passion story.⁴⁵ After Jesus' arrest and the interrogation before Annas and Caiaphas Jesus is brought to the praetorium. The Passover is mentioned in a remark about

⁴⁰ The evidence for dating Artapanus 'is in fact compatible with any date in the period 250-100 B.C.' (Collins in *OTP* 2.890; after further considerations he opts for a date towards the end of the third century B.C. as the most likely date). In the second edition of *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, Collins extends the possible period to 60 B.C. (see COLLINS, *Athens*, 37-46, for discussion and literature). Collins also says Artapanus 'represents a very unusual, and distinctly syncretistic, theological stance within Judaism.' (*OTP* 2.892).

⁴¹ The term as such refers to each Friday where the preparations for the weekly sabbath take place (Josephus, *Ant.* 16.163). It was also used by Christians to refer to the sixth day of the week (Lactantius, *Mart. Pol.* 7,1; *Acts Paul* 7,14). See BAUER; ALAND, *Wörterbuch*, 1257.

⁴² LINCOLN, *Truth*, 203, observes that the references in 18:28 and 19:14 form an *inclusio* for the account of the Roman trial.

⁴³ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 420. See FORD, 'Blood'; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 353-358 (medical explanations); STIBBE, *Storyteller*, 115-116.

⁴⁴ LINCOLN, *Truth*, 54.

⁴⁵ Chs. 18-19 can be subdivided according to scenes at the beginning of which new places and characters are introduced, a feature used throughout the Fourth Gospel (e.g., 2:1-2, 13-14; 3:1-2a; 4:1-7a; 5:1-5; 6:1-4; 7:1-14; 9:1-5; 10:22-23; 11:1-4; 12:1-2). According to this criterion, the following subdivisions occur: I. 18:1-11 (Jesus and his enemies in a garden); II. 18:12-27 (Jesus' appearance before "the Jews"); III. 18:28-19:16a (Jesus before Pilate); IV. 19:16b-37 (The crucifixion of Jesus); V. 19:38-42 (The burial of Jesus in a garden with his newly-found friends). For this division see MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 482.

those who brought him there.⁴⁶ they did not enter the praetorium, ἵνα μὴ μιανθῶσιν ἀλλὰ φάγωσιν τὸ πάσχα. Brown discusses various proposals about the precise nature of the impurity threat.⁴⁷ Whatever it might have been, it seems likely that the remark in John serves a theological purpose, expressed ironically: ‘As “the Jews” struggle to maintain their ritual purity on the occasion of the Passover (cf. 11:55-57) they seek the death of the Lamb of God.’⁴⁸ To link this verse with 1:29, 36 in this way could be considered difficult on the basis of the problem with clearly identifying the lamb in 1:29, 36 as Passover lamb. In the light of the narrative function of the Passover feasts and their connection with Jesus’ death, however,⁴⁹ it seems likely that the irony was intended. Additionally, the remark about the Jews not entering the praetorium serves to establish the different localization of Jesus (inside) and the Jews (outside), with Pilate going in and out. This device in turn subdivides 18:28-19:16a into seven brief scenes. It is thus crucial to differentiate between a clear, even explicit reference to Passover, and the theological significance of that reference. In this case, even if one allows for the theological irony, the verse does not contribute a lot to a Johannine theology of Jesus’ death in relation to Passover. If such a theological interest were present in Jn 18-19, more prominent features would be needed.

The second instance of the use of τὸ πάσχα in 18:39 is of similar value. On the surface, the verse relates that Pilate, not finding any reason to sentence Jesus, reminds the crowd of the custom to release a prisoner at the feast of Passover. One can speculate about Pilate’s role during the whole trial. Is he a weak figure trying to get rid of the responsibility to pass just judgment upon Jesus, being in fact forced by “the Jews” into a decision he did not want to make?⁵⁰ Or is he in fact totally in control, giving only the impression to involve “the Jews” in the trial, whereas the underlying rationale is all along that only he has the real power to

⁴⁶ There is no explicit subject in 18:28. One has to go back to 18:12 to find ἡ σπεῖρα καὶ ὁ χιλιάρχος καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται τῶν Ἰουδαίων as closest subject. However, since the group in 18:28 is worried about their ritual purity, it can only consist of Jewish persons. Thus, in 18:31 the same group is suddenly referred to simply as οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, the term that is used in a variety of ways in the whole Gospel and also in chs. 18-19 (for Jesus’ antagonists: 18:12, 14, 31, 38; 19:7, 12, 14, 38; in the phrase “king of the Jews” in 18:33, 39; 19:3, 19, 21; as referring to the crowd or the Jewish people in a neutral sense in 18:20; 19:20, 31).

⁴⁷ See BROWN, *Death*, 1.744-746; BROWN, *John*, 845-846; cf. also BARRETT, *St. John*, 532-533; LINCOLN, *Truth*, 124. It is not clear what exactly would have caused impurity. Possible causes include (1) the very fact that the premises were Gentile (cf. Acts 10:28); (2) defilement by a corpse (cf. Num 19:16; 31:19; Gentiles often buried beneath their houses); (3) the presumed presence of leaven in a Gentile’s house (Deut 16:4). Cf. also SEGAL, *Passover*, 36 n. 2, who notes (a) ‘we do not know how the laws of ritual cleanness were interpreted at the time of Jesus’, and who points out that according to Mt 27:11f.; Mk 15:2f.; Lk 23:1f. the priests did enter the governor’s court.

⁴⁸ MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 494. Similarly BROWN, *Death*, 745: ‘[T]he very fact that the specific defilement is not spelled out suggests that John’s reason for mentioning impurity may be theological irony. Those who stand outside the praetorium are careful about ritual purity; yet they wish to put Jesus to death!’ Cf. also LINCOLN, *Truth*, 124f.

⁴⁹ See below, pp. 77-83.

⁵⁰ E.g., BROWN, *John*, 894: ‘Pilate remains convinced that Jesus is harmless, but “the Jews” are forcing his hand.’

condemn or to set free?⁵¹ The irony in Pilate's question in 18:35 (Μήτι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖός εἰμι;), implying a positive answer, suggests that from the narrator's point of view he belongs on the same side as the Jews.⁵² Whatever perspective one takes on Pilate, the Passover motif is again not at the forefront. Only if the overall Passover plot is taken into consideration, can one go beyond the surface of the text and find a possible implication of Pilate's remark and subsequent question in 18:39. Pilate offers to release Jesus according to a custom at the time of Passover. In that "the Jews" choose Barabbas instead, they appear at this stage to open up the possibility of Jesus being killed at the time of the Passover feast. This is, however, again a subtle point of irony. One has to look further afield to get clear positive or negative evidence for the relative importance of the Passover motif.

The next verse to be considered (19:14) refers to ἡ παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα;⁵³ it is crucial for any attempt to throw light on the question of the significance of the Passover motif. It is here that an explicit and precise temporal signal is given: ἦν δὲ παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα, ὥρα ἦν ὧς ἕκτη. Since this is the time the slaughtering of the Passover lambs began, the implication is clear and has been pointed out by many:

'At the sixth hour (...), precisely at the moment when the Passover lambs were being ritually slaughtered in the Temple, "the Jews" scream out for the death of Jesus, the lamb of God ...'⁵⁴

The situation in which the temporal signal occurs is theologically significant also in that the issue of kingship, crucially important throughout the whole trial before Pilate, comes to its climax. When Pilate presents Jesus with the words: ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν, the high priests respond: οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα εἰ μὴ Καίσαρα. Brown perceptively points to the significance of this. What is going on here is in fact the rejection of the Davidic covenant by the Jewish leaders. Both the Davidic kingship and the Passover motif are linked in 19:14-15, and Brown's comments hit the centre of the issue:

'Israel had proudly claimed Yahweh as its king (Judg viii 23; I Sam viii 7). From the time of Nathan's promise to David (II Sam vii 11-16), according to the theology of Jerusalem, God's kingship was made visible in the rule of the Davidic king whom He took as His son (Ps ii 7). ... It is an ironical touch of the Johannine writer to have "the Jews" renounce the covenant at the moment when their priests are beginning the preparations for the feast that annually recalls

⁵¹ Cf. e.g. LINCOLN, *Truth*, 125, who suggests that the power of Pilate is visible in his response in 18:31 that the Jews should judge Jesus according to their law. The Jews' reply (Ἡμῖν οὐκ ἐξεστὶν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα) probably reflects the historical reality that they were not legally entitled to enforce the death penalty, although that might have occasionally happened. So also BOND, *Pontius Pilate*, 176-177.

⁵² So e.g. MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 67; LINCOLN, *Truth*, 126.

⁵³ ἡ παρασκευὴ occurs again in 19:31, 42. It refers to the same day, but it adds nothing in terms of the significance of the Passover motif. Both verses concern the issue of the bodies of the crucified to be buried before the Sabbath, which in this case was the day of the Passover festival and was therefore considered a special Sabbath. See BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 524.

⁵⁴ MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 496. Cf. more cautiously SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium* III, 307 (= IDEM, *Gospel* 3, 265).

God's deliverance of His people. By the blood of the lamb He marked them off to be spared as His own, and now they know no king but the Roman Emperor.'⁵⁵

Brown also sees here the climax of the replacement motif in the Fourth Gospel:

'Now in the breaking of the covenant whereby God or his Messiah was Israel's king, the movement of replacement comes to a climax, for "the Jews" have renounced their status as God's people.'⁵⁶

Considering the connection between the issue of kingship and the Passover motif, it seems highly likely that 19:14-15 has indeed to be considered the strongest element in John's attempts to invest Jesus' death with theological significance by establishing links with the Passover tradition. It is interesting that the question of the status of the people of God is implicit here. Thus we can conclude that the thesis of a sociological function of the use of Moses traditions is at work here in a twofold manner. First, the death of Jesus is illuminated with reference to the Passover framework, i.e. Jesus dies when the Passover lambs are slaughtered. The death of Jesus, however, is, together with the resurrection, part of the hour in John's Gospel, which becomes the foundational event for the believing community. Thus, when Jesus' death is illuminated with the help of a Moses tradition, the sociological function of Moses traditions is implicitly confirmed. Secondly, the fact that the connection between the Passover motif and the issue of kingship evokes the question of the status of the covenant people also highlights the sociological implication of the use of Moses traditions. I therefore conclude that by way of theological reflection the underlying sociological function of Moses traditions can here be clearly deduced with respect to one aspect of the Passover tradition.

(2) The hyssop

The hyssop in 19:29 has been the subject of much discussion.⁵⁷ The immediate context of the verse is about Jesus' actual death (19:28-30). Three times the verb *τελέω* occurs in this short section, a first indication of the climactic character of the scene. Prior to this point of John's story, several indicators have pointed to the moment of Jesus' death as the moment of utmost importance. Already in 1:29 the notion of death is implied in the sacrificial language of the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. In 2:4 "Jesus' hour" is mentioned for the first time. When this term returns time and again (7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1), it becomes clear that Jesus' hour is the time when his opponents will finally do away with him, the death on the cross being the first climax of this "hour". Similarly, the motif of the necessity of the Son of Man to be lifted up (3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34), the language of glorification (7:39; 11:4; 12:16, 23, 28;

⁵⁵ BROWN, *John*, 894-895.

⁵⁶ BROWN, *John*, 895. Similarly, MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 76: 'Rejecting the "King of the Jews", "the Jews" cease to be "Israel", the special people of God, and become only one of the *ἔθνη* subject to Caesar.' Meeks goes on (p. 77) to relate this to the Passover Haggadah, specifically to the *Nismat*, the concluding hymn of the Greater Hallel. Here the high priests confess God as their king: 'We have no king but thee!'

⁵⁷ Cf. e.g. SENIOR, *Passion*, 117-118; BEETHAM; BEETHAM, 'Note'; BRAWLEY, 'Complement'; WITKAMP, 'Thirst'.

13:31f.; 14:13; 16:14; 17:1, 4f.), and the motif of leaving this world and going to the Father (13:1, 33, 36; 14:2-4, 12, 19, 25, 28; 16:5, 7, 16-22, 28; 17:13) all point in different ways to Jesus' death.⁵⁸ It is therefore imperative to understand how the actual moment of Jesus' death is depicted in this Gospel.

The most exhaustive exegesis of Jn 19:28-30 has been done by Obermann, who devotes fifteen pages to the scene, focussing on the fulfilment of Scripture as the most important theological aspect.⁵⁹ Obermann shows convincingly that two OT traditions converge in the scene of Jesus' death. First, the reference to Ps 69:22 seems most likely to be implied in the sequence: ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή, λέγει διψῶ.⁶⁰ Jesus is then given ὄξος. The combination of thirst and ὄξος is also found in Ps 68:22 LXX. There ὄξος stands next to χολή, so that the parallelism suggests that it is a drink that intensifies the pain of the sufferer.⁶¹ By way of contrast, in Jn 19:29 it seems to refer to the drink of the soldiers which was popular because it quenches one's thirst.⁶² Therefore the use of Ps 68:22 LXX in Jn 19 results in a combination of the positive and the negative quality of the drink:

'In Analogie zum Psalm wird in 19,29 unter ὄξος eine saure Flüssigkeit ... zu hören und als hintergründige Bedeutung des "Volksgetränks" zu verstehen sein. Entsprechend ist auch die unangenehme und eine Schmach steigernde Wirkung des ὄξος als Form einer impliziten Demütigung im Joh mitzuhören. In soteriologischer Perspektive ergibt sich damit folgende Dialektik: Dem, der selbst das Lebenswasser ist (7,37f.) und spendet (6,35 nach 7,37), wird ein ungenießbares Getränk gegen seinen Durst gereicht, durch das er letztlich seinen Weg – zur Rettung der anderen – vollendet. Für ὄξος ergibt sich an unserer Stelle eine doppelte Bedeutung. Der Essig stellt einerseits nach dem johanneischen Kontext ein Volksgetränk dar, andererseits vom unbedingt zu berücksichtigenden Psalmkontext eine ungenießbare Flüssigkeit, so daß bei ὄξος das Leid umfassenden Alleinseins bzw. umfassender Einsamkeit anklingt.'⁶³

Secondly, the hyssop mentioned in 19:29 may have been intended to evoke Ex 12. The reason for this is primarily the fact that hyssop is an unstable small bush, so that a hyssop stick would

⁵⁸ The verses listed above imply of course more than mere references to Jesus' death. The motif of being lifted up, in all probability taken from Is 52:13, but in 3:14 linked with the serpent on the pole in Num 21:9ff., combines ingeniously the paradox of glorification through death. The language of glorification implies the resurrection, but resurrection presupposes death. The motif of going to the Father implies death, but also raises the question of what will happen after the resurrection and ascension (e.g., the sending of the Spirit by both Father and Son, the coming back of both Father and Son). Further texts that point to Jesus' death include 2:13-22 (the implication of Jesus' death in the prediction of the destruction of the Temple), 5:18 (the decision that Jesus must be killed after the healing on the Sabbath; cf. also 7:19f., 25, 30, 44; 8:37, 40), 6:51 (ὁ ἄρτος δὲ ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω ἡ σὰρξ μου ἐστὶν ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς; see SCHÜRMAN, 'Joh 6,51c'), ch. 10 (the shepherd laying down his life for the sheep), 11:47-53 (the decision of the Sanhedrin to execute Jesus) and 12:24 (the image of the dying kernel of wheat).

⁵⁹ See OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 350-364.

⁶⁰ Possible OT references like Ps 63:2; 42:3; 22:16 are to be dismissed because of the different content and terminology in these texts. See OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 351. Ps 69:22 is preferred by e.g. HANSON, *Gospel*, 212; REIM, *Studien*, 49; CARSON, *John*, 619; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 351.

⁶¹ Cf. KRAUS, *Psalmen*, 2.644-645: 'Es war üblich, daß man schwer Betrübe durch eine Mahlzeit, durch ein "Trostbrot" (בְּרוֹת; vgl. auch Thr 4,10) erquickte Aber dem todbedrohten Beter gibt man "Gift" und "Essig" – eine Nahrung, die die Qualen nicht lindert, sondern erhöht.'

⁶² So EDNT 2.523.

⁶³ OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 357-358.

have been unsuitable to carry a sponge with sour wine up to the mouth of someone on a cross.⁶⁴ One attempt to explain the situation is to understand ὕσσώπῳ as erroneously replacing ὕσσῳ̄ (a javelin).⁶⁵ Alternatively, one could understand hyssop to be a deliberate choice⁶⁶ in order to remind the reader of another significant use of hyssop. Ex 12:22 relates that hyssop was used to sprinkle the blood of the lambs on the doorposts of the Israelite homes in the night when the angel of death killed the firstborn in Egypt. Brown notes that ‘there is a difference between using hyssop to sprinkle blood and using hyssop to support a sponge full of wine,’ but does not have a problem with this since ‘John shows considerable imagination in the adaptation of symbols.’⁶⁷ However, it would be wrong to dismiss too easily the fact that

‘giving Jesus a drink of wine vinegar soaked in a sponge perched on a bit of hyssop that couldn’t hold its weight is a remote parallel from a sprig of hyssop used to sprinkle blood.’⁶⁸

One seems forced either to opt for a textual variant or to accept a reference to hyssop because of its symbolic value. If the latter, the problem is how to interpret the symbolism. In this regard, a suggestion by Brodie might shed new light on the passage. He observes first the threefold repetition of ὄξος and takes it as emphasizing ‘the depth of the distastefulness.’⁶⁹ Accepting hyssop as the original reading he makes an interesting connection to Jn 1:29:

‘The placing of the rather heavy drink on a weak hyssop plant (inexplicable as simple history) evokes what hyssop was used for – to sprinkle the saving blood of the paschal lamb ... [I]n fact, the light hyssop which bears the heavy weight of bitterness is like a variation on the picture of the (light) lamb who takes away the (weight of the) world’s sin (1:29). Thus, the bitterness

⁶⁴ This argument is accepted e.g. by HANSON, *Gospel*, 213.

⁶⁵ Emphatically argued by DODD, *Tradition*, 123f. n. 2. CARSON, *John*, 620-621, first says that the fact that *Roman soldiers* offered Jesus the sponge might support this suggestion, but then refers to an article by G. D. Kilpatrick who shows that ὕσσοϛ was a javelin reserved for the legionary troops, not for the auxiliary troops in Judea.

⁶⁶ In contrast to κάλαμος in Mk 15:36; Mt 27:47, if one presupposes John’s knowledge of the synoptics or the passion tradition they reflect.

⁶⁷ Both citations from BROWN, *John*, 930. Considering that it is not obvious in what way the symbolism works, it is disappointing to find only two passing remarks on the issue in KOESTER, *Symbolism*, 195, 197. Others who link the hyssop with Ex 12:22 include HANSON, *Gospel*, 213 (who thinks this is another example of John inventing historically improbable details in order to make a theological point); HOSKYNS, *Gospel*, 531; MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 504; BARRETT, *St. John*, 553; CULPEPPER, *Anatomy*, 195.

⁶⁸ CARSON, *John*, 620. Amongst those who are sceptical about the allusion to Ex 12:22 are HAENCHEN, *John*, 2.194; SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium* III, 331 (= IDEM, *Gospel*, 3.284); DODD, *Tradition*, 123f. n. 2; BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 522 n. 4; DAUER, *Passionsgeschichte*, 208; RIDDERBOS, *Gospel*, 617 n. 166 (but Ridderbos is sceptical about any notion that Jesus is depicted as the Passover lamb); BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 352. SMITH, *John*, 361, is cautious but thinks that ‘[q]uite possibly John knows a different version that contained an allusion to Passover through the hyssop.’ ZAHN, *Johannes*, 660 n. 5, thinks that the semantic range of κάλαμος might well include hyssop, and that the cross might not have been a very high structure anyway. Similarly SCHLATTER, *Evangelist*, 351-352, who takes the hyssop for granted, says that one cannot know why John used the term instead of κάλαμος, and infers that the cross must not have been high because of the action involving the hyssop. That a cross ‘was often no more than the height of a man’ is held by BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 352.

⁶⁹ BRODIE, *John*, 551. This of course presupposes that ὄξος does predominantly indicate the horrible drink suggested by the Psalm quotation in 19:28.

ultimately does not dominate; instead of fighting it, Jesus receives it, accepts it – and thus robs it of its oppressiveness.’⁷⁰

Although this reading verges on the realm of imagination, it is worth taking seriously on the basis of the detailed observations of textual signals which it builds on. However, it is again clear that an interpretation along these lines presupposes that a reference to the Passover lamb is intended in 1:29. And even if this could be demonstrated conclusively, it requires a significant effort from a reader, let alone hearer, of the Gospel text to make the connection.⁷¹ Again we are left to conclude that if the Passover motif can be considered a strong one on other grounds, the hyssop symbolism might well have been intended to be part of the Passover allusions. If one is sceptical about the overall importance of Passover in John’s Gospel, one will hardly be persuaded otherwise by this passage and instead be inclined to argue for the textual variant, as Dodd did. However, if the reference to the Passover hyssop is accepted, the question of the theological significance is crucial, since the scene is the climactic moment of Jesus’ death. Taking also into account the reference to Ps 69, the passage entails a merging of the tradition of the innocent sufferer with the Passover tradition. Obermann puts the theological significance as follows:

‘Durch $\delta\iota\psi\tilde{\omega}$ initiiert, inszeniert der Evangelist diese der Schrift entlehnte Wendung und nennt dabei – auf der Handlungsebene gleichwertig nebeneinanderstehend – ὄξος und ὕσσωπος, die jedoch bezüglich ihrer hintergründigen Konnotationen in Spannung zueinander stehen: die in ὄξος mitklingende Einsamkeitserfahrung des Psalmverses gegenüber der in ὕσσωπος anklingenden Heilserfahrung des Exodus. Die Verknüpfung dieser beiden Aspekte durch den Evangelisten im Durst Jesu ist theologisch wie folgt aufzulösen: Die Inszenierung des Durstes Jesu drückt einerseits durch das Psalmwort einen Augenblick höchster Einsamkeit aus und wird andererseits zu einem Hinweis auf Gottes rettendes Handeln. Nehmen wir die Kreuzigung in diesem Zusammenhang wahr, ergibt sich folgende Perspektive: Am Tiefpunkt des anstehenden Todes am Kreuz klingt eine sich hier vollziehende, die Todesdynamik durchbrechende Rettungserfahrung an. Das Kreuz als Ort menschlichen Leidens und menschlicher Einsamkeit ist zugleich der Ort der Vollendung des Rettungshandelns Gottes.’⁷²

The christological implications are spelled out in this way:

‘Der Evangelist stellt Christus in die Klage des unschuldig Angeklagten hinein und verbindet diese Klage – und damit das Kreuz – mit der im Ysop anklingenden Exodustradition. Am Kreuz ereignet bzw. vollendet sich im Todesleiden Jesu ein neues Rettungshandeln Gottes. Der Ysop(-busch) markiert – in Analogie zum Exodusgeschehen – die Gnade Gottes in Form seiner Fürsorge, die sich inmitten der dringlichsten Leidenssituation gegenüber dem Seinen zeigt. In der Not verhält sich Gott zum notleidenden Jesus. Eine durchgehaltene Beziehungslosigkeit würde eine völlige Hoffnungslosigkeit bedeuten. Für den Evangelisten ist es das fleischgewordene Wort, an dessen Person der Ysop diese Gnade Gottes in Form seiner Nähe

⁷⁰ BRODIE, *John*, 551.

⁷¹ For the actual practice of reading and writing in the first century cf. MILLARD, *Reading*. In conversation at a Biblical Studies Seminar in Cheltenham, Millard expressed scepticism about attempts to establish significant relationships between verses that are divided by a few chapters in a NT text. However, since John does emphasize the written text (20:31), and since the text seems to invite repeated rereading, I conclude that those relationships might well have been intended. That the Fourth Gospel encourages repeated rereading is supported by the phenomenon of “semantic lines”, a term used by LABAHN, ‘Tradition’, 188, to ‘mean intratextual references that function as hermeneutical links. Semantic lines work by taking up slightly revised wordings or by taking up pictures and situations already mentioned by the use of analogous words or word families.’

⁷² OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 360.

markiert. Von daher kann er das Kreuz als Erhöhung (vg. 12,32) und als Verherrlichung des Vaters verstehen (vg. 17,1-5).⁷³

These quotations jump ahead into the area of theological reflection. However, if it were impossible to find any theological significance in a suggested allusion, the case for its very presence would surely be weakened. Conversely, I again take the theological significance to render an intended allusion more probable.

(3) The removal of Jesus' body

Both this and the next suggestion represent the least likely links to the Exodus background. Nevertheless, they are included as examples of what I consider overzealous attempts to establish links to OT texts, thereby clarifying the degree of probability I would consider necessary to establish a meaningful connection.

'Jesus' body is not allowed to stay on the cross until the next morning (19.31, 38), just as the remains of the Passover meal were not to be left until the next day but burned (Exod. 12.19).⁷⁴ Porter mentions this in passing at the end of a section in which he discusses 'specific events associated with Jesus' actual death [that] are perhaps best interpreted in terms of the Passover.'⁷⁵ The problem with this example is simple: there is a far more obvious OT background to the request to remove Jesus before the next morning. Deut 21:22-23 addresses the specific problem of someone 'hung on a tree' because of a capital offence.⁷⁶ The reason for the removal of a corpse on the same day is the threat of the desecration of the land.⁷⁷ Given this background and the fact that the problem occurred frequently because crucifixions were not uncommon, it seems difficult to see readers detecting a reference to the Exodus text, unless they are looking for potential links. In that case Num 9:12 seems to be a more likely candidate, since this verse contains both the prescription to have no leftovers from the meal and the prohibition of the breaking of the legs of the Passover lamb, which is of course the issue in Jn 19:31ff. Thus the conclusion has to be that this element is a very weak link indeed in the chain of arguments that try to establish the importance of the Passover background of John's passion narrative.⁷⁸

⁷³ OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 361.

⁷⁴ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 420. The verse in question is not Ex 12:19, but 12:10. See also DAVIES, *Rhetoric*, 234, 305, 355.

⁷⁵ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 419.

⁷⁶ This background is seen by virtually all commentators, cf. e.g. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 353; CARSON, *John*, 622; SMITH, *John*, 363. It is not mentioned by MARSH, *Saint John*, 620, but he does not refer to Ex 12 either. MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 505, implies the purity issue without explicitly pointing to Deut 21. Josephus mentions the custom twice, only listing it as a law (*Ant.* 4.202), and in order to emphasize the importance of burial for Jews (*Bell.* 4.317; the issue of desecration of the land is not mentioned).

⁷⁷ On the OT background of the idea of the defilement of the land see DAVIES, *Gospel*, 24-35, esp. 31-35. For the equation of crucifixion with the punishment in Deut 21:22-23 cf. Gal 3:13; *Sanh.* 7:1; cf. CHILTON, 'Targumim', *DNTB*, 907-908.

⁷⁸ Similarly, BROWN, *John*, 953, mentions the possible connection, but does not place any weight on it. See also PANCARO, *Law*, 346.

(4) Blood and water flowing out of Jesus' body

'In Jn 19:34, the blood and water of Jesus that flow out when he is stabbed by the soldier may be reminiscent of the flow of blood and fluid out of the sacrificial animal (Exod. 12:7, 22).'⁷⁹ Again, Porter suggests a link to the Passover tradition, and again it is not very persuasive. Not many authors consulted have seen this connection, let alone put any weight on it.⁸⁰ This is hardly surprising, considering the fact that Ex 12 talks only about the blood – water or any other 'fluid' is never mentioned as coming out of the lamb. Again, a far more plausible background has to be pointed out, this time only indirectly from the OT. John's own words in 7:37ff. provide the relevant information for Jn 19:34.⁸¹ Since it is not the aim at this point to provide a full interpretation of that passage, it must suffice to say that the flow of blood and water very likely signifies the life-giving power of Jesus' death.⁸² An intended allusion to Ex 12 can safely be ruled out. However, if we take seriously the connection to Jn 7, a relation to another element of Moses tradition can be seen in the background: as we will see, Jn 7:37ff. evokes the story of Moses smiting the rock in the wilderness. The discussion of this passage in the next chapter will include some reflections on the relevance of this background for Jn 19:34.

(5) The breaking of the legs

The issue of the breaking of the legs of those crucified on the day of preparation (19:31-37) includes two OT quotations, the first of which probably quotes Ex 12:10, 46 or Num 9:12 (19:36).⁸³ As Obermann says, it does not matter which of the three verses is in the background,

⁷⁹ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 420. See FORD, 'Blood'; STIBBE, *Storyteller*, 115-116.

⁸⁰ STIBBE, *Storyteller*, 117f., does not refer to Exodus, but with BROWN, *John*, 951, to *m. Pesah*. 5.3, 5, where it is emphasized that the blood of the sacrificial victim 'should flow forth at the moment of death so that it could be sprinkled.' (BROWN, *John*, 951). In *m. Tamid* 4.2 it is ordered that 'the priest should slit the heart of the victim and make the blood come forth.' (BROWN, *John*, 951). Brown uses this background as a possible way to point to the sacrificial aspect of Jesus' death. Stibbe sees 'some paschal significance' [117], but in the end stresses Jn 7:38-39 as relevant background.

⁸¹ Cf. e.g. PANCARO, *Law*, 332, 359-360.

⁸² Cf. BROWN, *John*, ad loc., for a full discussion of the relevant interpretative issues. See also LINCOLN, *Truth*, 54, who suggests that the link with Jn 7:37-39 evokes a tradition reflected in *Tg. Ps.-J.* Num 20:11 and *Ex. Rab.* SMITH, *John*, 363-364, mentions the eucharistic and the antidocetic traditions of interpretation, but not the pneumatological perspective that the connection to 7:37ff. implies: 'With its talk of rivers of living water flowing from Christ's belly, it [7:38] provides the key to the meaning of the water that comes from Jesus' side, namely, the life of the Spirit that comes from Jesus' glorification.' (LINCOLN, *Truth*, 216; cf. p. 255 for the role of the Spirit in the positive verdict of life in the cosmic trial of the Fourth Gospel). For the eucharistic interpretation on the basis of a comparison to 1 Jn 5:6 cf. OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 303 n. 28.

⁸³ The verbal correspondences are closer to the Pentateuchal texts than to Ps 33:21 LXX, so OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 298-300, and SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*, 134-136. In favour of the Psalm is e.g. DODD, *Tradition*, 43-44, who in line with his downplaying of the importance of Passover traditions elsewhere in John does not see an element of it here. MENKEN, *Quotations*, 147-166, focuses on the verb συντριβήσεται, which occurs only in Ps 33:21 LXX and therefore prefers this text as the primary referent, but he does not deny the reference to the Passover texts. CULPEPPER, 'Irony', 202, prefers Ex 12:46 as closest parallel, as does LINCOLN, *Truth*, 62. BEUTLER, 'Use', 151, finds it 'difficult, if not impossible', to identify the referent of Jn 19:36. But he has the same difficulty with 19:37, and takes a low key view about the significance of the two quotations: 'Their only function seems to be to show Christian readers that this double event did not happen by chance, but brought

since they all agree on the point that a Passover lamb has to be without fault and therefore without broken bones.⁸⁴ If this is the OT background to be evoked, then here we finally have an explicit identification of Jesus with the Passover lamb.⁸⁵ However, it is quite possible that here again two scriptural texts have been blended together. If Psalm 33 LXX is evoked as well (because of the verb, see note 83), then the notion of the redemption of the righteous sufferer is also in the background.⁸⁶ Obermann puts the connection like this:

‘Gott behütet den “Gerechten” (LXX Ps 33,20a) und wacht, daß nicht eines seiner Glieder zerschmettert werden wird (LXX Ps 33,21b). Im Joh wird genau das nach der Weisung Gottes geschildert: Jesus blieb auch in seinem Tod unversehrt. Insofern sagt συντριβήσεται als eine bewußte Anspielung auf den Psalm aus, daß ... die Fürsorge Gottes mitzuhören ist, die den auf Gott vertrauenden Leidenden und Verzweifelnden verheißen ist.’⁸⁷

And again, Obermann draws out the christological implications:

‘Christologisch klingt hier das Vertrauen des Sohnes zum Vater an – ein Vertrauen, das nicht enttäuscht wird und dem Leidenden Hilfe in der Not ist. In der letztgenannten Linie ist damit die Tradition des “leidenden Gerechten” als christologisches Interpretament auf Jesus übertragen.’⁸⁸

The quotation in Jn 19:36 suggests, therefore, a combination of elements from the Passover tradition and the tradition of the righteous sufferer. This conclusion is similar to that of the discussion of Jn 1:29, if one agrees that elements of both traditions were similarly combined there. This was observed by Brown, who says that

‘in John xix 36 we may well have a double inclusion with the reference to the Lamb of God at the beginning of the Gospel (i 29); for ... we saw that the Lamb of God referred not only to the paschal lamb but also to the Suffering Servant. Jesus is the suffering innocent one who takes on himself the sins of others; and even if he is brought to the slaughter like a lamb (Isa liii 7), God does not allow his bones to be broken and thus does not deprive him of the victory of resurrection.’⁸⁹

The *inclusio*, while agreeing with this conclusion, is supported by yet another element. Both 1:29, 36 and 19:36 occur in contexts in which the witness motif is prominent. 1:29 presents John

God’s will to completion. The fact that scripture was fulfilled is again more important than the precise reference to a particular text.’ [157]. This seems to be an overcautious position to take.

⁸⁴ OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 300 n. 9. He also observes (309 n. 36) that the OT contexts do not seem to be evoked. However, since the Passover tradition was very well known in the Johannine milieu (302 n. 19), a single quotation from that tradition might well evoke several aspects of it.

⁸⁵ So e.g. SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*, 136; OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 305; HENGEL, *Frage*, 191 n. 114.

⁸⁶ The Psalm is classified as ‘*Der berichtende Lobpsalm des Einzelnen*’ by WESTERMANN, *Lob*, 76. Cf. KRAUS, *Psalmen*, 1.416-423.

⁸⁷ OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 307.

⁸⁸ OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 307. DODD, *Tradition*, 131f., goes further than this in drawing out the significance of the link to Ps 34. He refers to a rabbinic interpretation of this Psalm that saw here a reference to a bone in the human body which resists corruption and becomes the basis of the resurrection-body, so that the evangelist saw a promise of Christ’s resurrection. This is taken up by SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*, 139; cf. DAUBE, *Judaism*, 309; BROWN, *John*, 953. LINDARS, *Apologetic*, 96, sees the notion of resurrection evoked directly by Ps 34:20-21; however, this would require the reader of John’s Gospel first to pick up the terminological link to Ps 33:20 LXX, then to reflect on the next verse which mentions the death of the wicked, and then to go back to v. 20 to understand the protection of the bones as implying a promise of resurrection. I judge both Dodd’s and Lindar’s suggestions to be less likely than Obermann’s.

⁸⁹ BROWN, *John*, 953.

the Baptist's words when he first meets Jesus. The Baptist is introduced in 1:6-8 as one sent from God, a witness to the light meant to call forth faith. By characterizing John the Baptist in this way and choosing terminology that is mainly used in relation to Jesus (ἀποστέλλω, 1:6)⁹⁰, and language that is picked up in the presentation of the aim of the whole Gospel (1:7: ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσιν δι' αὐτοῦ: cf. 20:31), the Gospel writer stresses the Baptist's importance. This being the case, it is particularly significant that in his first identification of Jesus, this witness takes up an aspect of Moses tradition and combines it with the Suffering Servant motif. Similarly, in 19:35 the witness motif and the aim of believing is stressed. Although the issue of the function of the witnesses, and especially the notion of eyewitness in 19:35, are complicated matters,⁹¹ for the present purposes it is enough to notice that both in the first and last section of the narrative, Moses tradition is part of the OT background used in contexts that are particularly highlighted by the notion of testimony and the aim to evoke faith.

If the importance of the reference to the Passover Lamb and its presence as part of an allusion to two OT backgrounds has thus been established, then the precise nature of this link to the Passover tradition in 19:36 must also be established. Shall we think of it as an 'atomistic citation', meant only to identify Jesus as the true Passover lamb? Or is it helpful to consider the broader context of the OT quotation? Bruce Longenecker argues for the latter option; in an article on the motif of the 'unbroken Messiah', he suggests that the context of the OT quotations in Jn 19:36 has to be taken into account. He uses the concept of 'metalepsis' to clarify his understanding of the process of evocation of the context of a quoted text.⁹² He observes that in the context of both Ex 12:46 and Num 9:12 the question of Israel as the people of God plays an important role. This is fairly clear in Ex 12:47: 'The whole community of Israel must eat it [the Passover lamb].' In Num 9:11 the issue is that even the ceremonially unclean are to eat the Passover lamb; 9:13 presents the warning that the ceremonially clean who do not eat it will be cut off from the people of God. Longenecker thus draws the following conclusions:

'The citation of scripture at John 19:36 may be intended to suggest more than it asserts, with unspoken scriptural resonances aimed at the secret Christians who keep themselves within the synagogue. If this is the case, the fourth evangelist expects or at least hopes that intertextual echoes of Exodus 12 might resonate at John 19:36, challenging those within the synagogue to participate in the true passover celebration, focused now in Christ. Or, if intertextual echoes of Numbers 9 resonate at John 19:36, Jewish believers who maintain their synagogue membership

⁹⁰ The term ἀποστέλλω is used 28 times in John's Gospel, the vast majority of instances referring to Jesus as the sent one from God (e.g. 3:17, 34; 5:36, 38; 6:29, 57; 7:29; 8:42; 17:3).

⁹¹ See the discussion of eyewitness testimony within the part on 'The Gospel as Witness' in LINCOLN, *Truth*, 378-389.

⁹² The term 'metalepsis' was used to refer to a rhetorical technique by HOLLANDER, *Figure*, and then utilized in Pauline studies by HAYS, *Echoes*. Longenecker refers to both these authors, and cites Hays' understanding of metalepsis: 'When a literary echo links the text in which it occurs to an earlier text, the figurative effect of the echo can lie in the unstated or suppressed (transumed) points of the resonance between the two texts ... [This] technique functions to suggest to the reader that text B should be understood in light of a broad interplay with text A, encompassing aspects of A beyond those explicitly echoed. This sort of metaleptic figuration ... places the reader within a field of whispered or unstated correspondences.' (HAYS, *Echoes*, 20).

are shown to be Israelites who are in danger of not participating in the true passover celebration; they are confronted with the commands of Israel's covenant God to eat the true unbroken passover lamb. For the evangelist, that involves proclaiming their faith publicly and participating fully in the life of the true worshipping community. In this way, the depiction of Jesus as the unbroken paschal lamb may serve not merely as a golden gem of christological insight, but also as a polemic tool.⁹³

These are challenging observations. First, if one considers Longenecker's view to be persuasive, it could be regarded as another example of *interpretation* helping in the process of the *identification* of an OT allusion, or – as in this case - quotation. Whether this will persuade those who see only Ps 33:21 LXX quoted is, of course, more than doubtful. But Longenecker's interpretation, by providing a meaningful explanation of the link to this element of the Passover tradition, adds potential support for those who want to see a Passover connection. In a different but comparable way, Dodd's view that only the Psalm is quoted is based also on his interpretative choices that play down possible Passover links in Jn 1:29, Jn 6, and Jn 19.

How persuasive are Longenecker's observations? The problem seems to be that in this case the suggested metalepsis seems too distant from the obvious force of the passage. There is a considerable gap between the situation in Jn 19:31ff., illuminated by the quotation, and the issues that come up when Longenecker considers the OT cotexts. This is to say, Jn 19:31-37 does mention the breaking of bones and piercing of the side, which is picked up explicitly in the OT quotations. The focus is clearly on the situation of Jesus. One could, of course, argue that the identification of Jesus with the Passover lamb implies an exhortation to "eat" this Passover lamb, so that a bridge can be constructed to the exhortations and warnings about eating the Passover lamb in Ex 12 and Num 9. However, in order to arrive at Longenecker's conclusions readers are not only expected to see the relevant elements in the cotext of the OT texts, but are also to understand that the literal exhortations in the OT texts function metaphorically in the new cotext: the exhortation to eat the Passover and the warning about being cut off function now as invitation to take part in the Christian eucharist⁹⁴ and to proclaim publicly their faith in Jesus as Messiah. On the one hand, this seems to demand quite a lot of the reader. On the other hand, once the reader is understood to be familiar with the Passover tradition and to be by now tuned into the Passover motifs in Jn 18-19, someone looking for the deeper significance of those motifs might well detect this interpretative possibility.

Longenecker supports his argument by pointing to the quotation of Zech 12:10 in 19:37: here, as Brown and Schnackenburg have suggested, the evocation of the broader OT cotext might be illuminating. Brown uses the outpouring of 'a spirit of compassion' in Zech 12:10 and the opening of a fountain to cleanse from sins in Zech 13:1 to justify his interpretation of 19:37 against the whole background of 19:34, including the relationship of 19:34 to Jn 7:37ff.⁹⁵

⁹³ LONGENECKER, 'Messiah', 438.

⁹⁴ I take this to be implied in this sentence from the above quotation: '... challenging those within the synagogue to participate in the true passover celebration, focused now in Christ.'

⁹⁵ See BROWN, *John*, 955.

Schnackenburg also observes these connections, but emphasizes the change from lament to conversion and blessedness in Zech 12:10-14.⁹⁶ Although the evocation of the broader context of Zech 12:10 might be considered illuminating,⁹⁷ it does not necessarily follow that a similar evocation was also intended in 19:36. I take the issue as difficult to assess, but would only allow Longenecker's argument to be of secondary importance when it comes to detecting and understanding the significance of the Passover link.⁹⁸

Another way to support the view that Jn 19:36 includes a reference to the Passover lamb is to look for other examples of the combination of references to the Passover tradition with the righteous sufferer. Menken has done this and suggests several possibilities.⁹⁹ His fourth suggestion is a reference to *Jub.* 49:13, 'in which the identification of the paschal lamb and the community is especially prominent.'¹⁰⁰ The English translation of the Ethiopic text reads: "They shall roast it in fire without breaking any of its bones within it because no bone of the children of Israel will be broken."¹⁰¹ Menken gives three reasons that suggest that *Jub.* 49:13 was influenced by Ps 34:21. (1) The content of the causal clause: only the Psalm and *Jubilees* deals with the breaking of human bones. (2) The same passive verbal form in the causal clause is used in the Psalm and in *Jubilees*. (3) The double "not a single one" in *Jubilees* is reminiscent of "all his bones" in the Psalm.¹⁰² For my purposes it is less significant that *Jubilees* thus provides 'a clear pre-Johannine instance of the combination of the same biblical passages as we found in John 19:36'.¹⁰³ More important are the implications of Menken's final conclusion of his comparison:

⁹⁶ See SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium* III, 342-345 (= IDEM, *Gospel*, 3.292-294).

⁹⁷ The OT context is also important in the interpretations of e.g. PANCARO, *Law*, 351-352; OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 318-325; CARSON, *John*, 627-628; more restrictive is MENKEN, *Quotations*, 182 n. 13. 'Atomistic citation' is in this case favoured by LINDARS, *Apologetic*, 124. SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*, 141-149, concerns himself with the textual form behind the quotation and with the two standard issues in the history of interpretation of this verse, i.e. the subject of ὄψονται, and the reason for the choice of ὀράω. The decisive point of the quotation is for him the identification of Jesus with God.

⁹⁸ OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 308, is sceptical about Longenecker's attempt to establish the motif of the unbroken Messiah, but he is more positive about Longenecker's conclusions in terms of Jewish opponents and the 'secret believers', since both types of people are present at the crucifixion scene.

⁹⁹ See MENKEN, *Quotations*, 160-164. The first three interesting, but not very significant suggestions are: (1) in the OT and in both later Jewish and Christian sources, "lamb" or "sheep" functions frequently as a metaphor for God's people or for the Messiah; (2) in *Quaest. in Ex.* 1:3 '[i]t seems that Philo, in his own philosophical way, identifies on the allegorical level the paschal lamb and the pious person.' [161]; (3) the apotropaic function of the provision not to break the bones of the paschal lamb. On the last point cf. SEGAL, *Passover*, 161-173; GRAY, *Sacrifice*, 355ff.

¹⁰⁰ MENKEN, *Quotations*, 161.

¹⁰¹ This is the translation by O. S. Wintermute in OTP 2.141. MENKEN, *Quotations*, 162, gives a literal translation by L. van Rompay: "... and there is no breaking of bone from the middle of it [the paschal lamb], not a single one, because not will be broken from the children of Israel a single bone." For arguments that the Ethiopic, not the Latin text is more original, see MENKEN, *Quotations*, 162-164; VANDERKAM, *Jubilees*, 320.

¹⁰² For all three points see MENKEN, *Quotations*, 164.

¹⁰³ MENKEN, *Quotations*, 164.

'In *Jubilees*, Israel takes the role of the righteous sufferer, and it is only indirectly identified with the paschal lamb. In the Christian view of the fourth evangelist, Jesus, as the representative of Israel, is the righteous sufferer, and at the same time he is the true paschal lamb.'¹⁰⁴

There is an important implication here for the understanding of the people of God. *Jubilees* provides an example of a text that connects the prohibition to break the bones of the Passover lamb with the promise of God's care for Israel. But what is the meaning of this connection? Segal, who has done an in-depth study of all relevant Passover traditions from the earliest sources to rabbinic writings, observes clearly what is going on in *Jub.* 49:

'The writer of *Jub.* 49 goes, indeed, farther than the Bible documents by giving the prohibition an apotropaic significance. If the Pesah victim's bones are not broken, no bone of the Israelites shall be broken; if, further, they carry out fully the Pesah rites, no plague shall afflict them during the ensuing year.'¹⁰⁵

Against this background the identification of Jesus with the Passover lamb might entail the promise of God's care for the followers of Jesus, those who metaphorically 'eat the Passover' in the eucharist. In the light of *Jub.* 49:13, *Jn* 19:36 might thus be seen not to include an exhortation for Jews and 'secret believers' to join publicly the followers of Jesus, as Longenecker's metaleptic reading suggests. It might entail a reassuring promise of protection for those already following Jesus.¹⁰⁶ This view gains support if John's Gospel is not seen as a missionary document, trying to convince Jews to become followers of Jesus, but primarily as strengthening the faith of those who do already believe in Jesus and consequently face severe conflict with the synagogue.¹⁰⁷ This view would also support my thesis that the christological use of Moses traditions serves a sociological function.

To conclude, it has been shown that the five instances of suggested links to Passover traditions are not equally compelling. The explicit references to the Passover feast, including the special time indicator of 19:14 (1) and the breaking of the legs, explained not solely by but with reference to the Passover lamb (5), are the clearest examples. The hyssop (2) is an example of somewhat unclear Passover symbolism, given that one does not choose the textual variant. The removal of Jesus' body (3) cannot be understood as a clear allusion to *Ex* 12:10 because of a more plausible OT background. The blood and water flowing from Jesus' side (4) is hardly a

¹⁰⁴ MENKEN, *Quotations*, 164.

¹⁰⁵ SEGAL, *Passover*, 233. The second conditional sentence refers to *Jub* 49:15, which promises the absence of the plague on condition of right Passover observance.

¹⁰⁶ Without reference to *Jub.* 49:13, ASHTON, *Understanding*, 491, also emphasizes the apotropaic function of the paschal lamb, and uses this insight to discount *Jn* 19:36 as evidence for a sacrificial interpretation of Jesus' death.

¹⁰⁷ These are the classic contrasting positions as to the purpose of John's Gospel. The missionary thesis is defended by VAN UNNICK, 'Purpose'; ROBINSON, 'Destination'; CARSON, *John*, 87-95; the faith strengthening purpose in a situation of conflict is emphasized by e.g. MARTYN, *History*; BROWN, *Community*; RENSBERGER, *World*. S. J. Tanzer's suggestion that John's Gospel 'might indeed have more than one purpose and one intended audience – written on the one hand for the edification of "insiders", and yet also written to deliver a hortatory message for those on the fringe of the Johannine community' (TANZER, 'Salvation', 285f.), is a helpful development of the 'edification' hypothesis.

convincing link even if the Passover setting is granted. It has also been observed that one has to differentiate between the clarity of a reference and the theological significance of a proposed link. Thus, the explicit use of τὸ πάσχα in 18:28, 39 only indirectly invests the passion and death of Jesus with theological meaning. This is important as we now turn to the thesis of an overall ‘Passover plot’ of John’s Gospel, since it is one thing to find clear references to the Passover feast, and another to assess the significance of the presence of those references.

3.1.3 The ‘Passover plot’

Apart from the suggested Passover allusions discussed so far, Passover as a feast and related motifs occur in several other places in John’s Gospel. This has led several authors to emphasize the Passover theme in the plot development of this Gospel. Thus, Porter says that the Passover theme is ‘one that in conjunction with the Old Testament fulfilment motif binds together the entire Gospel.’¹⁰⁸ He criticizes both Stibbe and Davies for observing the most important aspects of the Passover theme, but not drawing adequate conclusions as to its theological significance.¹⁰⁹ Porter’s aim is to show that there is much more evidence for the Passover motif than commonly seen, and that the theological significance of the motif centers on its merging with the OT fulfilment motif in 19:36f. Of the six passages which he sees as important for the motif ((1) 1:29, 36; (2) 2:13-25; (3) 6:1-14, 22-71; (4) 11:47-12:8; (5) 13:1-17:26; and (6) 19:13-42), the first and the last have already been discussed above. What force do the other texts have for the establishment of a ‘Passover plot’?

(1) John 2:13-25

For Porter the following elements point to the significance of Passover for this section. First, not only is the Passover mentioned in 2:13, but also in 2:23, thus forming an *inclusio*.¹¹⁰ Secondly, Porter criticizes Stibbe who sees 2:13 as the start of a plot, with the other Passovers in 6:4 and 13:1 forming the middle and the end of the plot:

‘Stibbe’s statement suggests that his understanding of plot is simply related to the marking of events. Plot, however, is better understood as concerned with the motivation for these events. In this sense, equation of Jesus with the Passover lamb is not simply a plot marker but potentially a major motivating factor for Jesus’ actions throughout the entire Gospel, including his actions in the temple.’¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 397. I will deal in this part with the evidence for the Passover plot. The conjunction with the fulfilment motif is part of the theological synthesis, 3.2.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. the remarks on the Passover theme in STIBBE, *Storyteller*, 115, 191, 195; DAVIES, *Rhetoric*, 24, 234, 305, 355.

¹¹⁰ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 412.

¹¹¹ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 412. That Stibbe can hardly be accused of a simplistic view of ‘plot’ should be clear from his elaborate use of literary theory, including various notions of ‘plot’, throughout *Storyteller*.

The problem here is that Porter presupposes his own conclusion that in Jn 1:29, 36 Jesus is depicted as the Passover lamb. Once this result is challenged, his argument no longer has the same force. The same can be said about Porter's attempt to link the replacement of the temple by Jesus' body with the Passover motif. This he does by presenting Passover as the climax of the temple's sacrificial system:

'Jesus is depicted as transferring himself by reference to his own body into the equation as the substitute for the temple sacrificial system, that is, the temple system orientated toward the Passover sacrifice.'¹¹²

This raises the question whether the Temple system was indeed *orientated toward* the Passover sacrifice. It might be safer to understand the central and regular offerings in the Temple to point towards all major national festivals and holy days.¹¹³ Peter Walker, who is interested in the ways in which Jesus replaces the Temple and reveals 'his identity through comparing himself with the Temple and its rituals',¹¹⁴ gives three examples. At Tabernacles Jesus says that the water ritual points to him (7:37-38). He then alludes to the lighting of the four great candelabras when he talks about himself being the light of the world (8:12), and in using the 'I am'-formula in 8:58 he might refer to an aspect of the Tabernacles liturgy.¹¹⁵ The link between Temple and Passover does not seem to be significant. The Passover *inclusio* is clearly there, but the text does not entail other signals that would suggest an emphasis of the Passover background. Porter's attempt to find such evidence in the use of the terms πρόβατα and βόας is not convincing for two reasons. (1) His reference to Ex 12¹¹⁶ is an unsuccessful attempt to establish a meaningful link to this foundational OT text, since the presence of sacrificial animals in the Temple is such a normality that it can hardly be understood as a clear textual signal to evoke the link. Even the fact that the animals are not mentioned in the Synoptic account of the Temple incident does not change the normality of their presence. (2) There are at least three significant aspects of the Temple: the presence of Jahweh, the sacrificial system, and the political functions.¹¹⁷ The Temple incident is thus open to be interpreted in the light of all these aspects. If the story is meant to be not only about the replacement of the Temple, but also about *special attention to the replacement of the Passover*, more explicit indications of this are needed. I conclude that the Passover *inclusio* around the incident has to be seen as a meaningful time reference that heightens the significance of Jesus' action in the Temple: it takes place at a time of increased religio-political awareness among the masses of people present in Jerusalem. There is, however,

¹¹² PORTER, 'Exegesis', 412.

¹¹³ So WRIGHT, *JVG*, 409. See also below, section 4.3, on the feast of Tabernacles, which was traditionally understood to be the feast *par excellence* (e.g. 1 Kg 8:2, 65), and was still regarded as 'the holiest and greatest of Hebrew feasts' by Josephus (*Ant.* VIII, iv. 1), a characterization also used by Plutarch, *Conv.* IV, 6. Cf. DE VAUX, *Ancient Israel*, 495.

¹¹⁴ WALKER, *Holy City*, 167.

¹¹⁵ WALKER, *Holy City*, 168, takes up this suggestion of DAVIES, *Gospel*, 295, who refers to *m. Sukk.* 4.5.

¹¹⁶ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 412: πρόβατα is used in Ex 12:3-5, 21, and, together with βόας, in v. 32.

¹¹⁷ See e.g. WRIGHT, *JVG*, 406ff.; SANDERS, *Judaism*, chs. 5-8.

no conclusive evidence that ‘this episode in the temple is depicted as instituting a new Passover ...’.¹¹⁸ This connection is closer in the Synoptics, where the Temple incident is placed near Jesus’ last meal with his disciples and its clear allusions to a Passover meal.¹¹⁹

(2) John 6

Apart from the explicit time reference in 6:4 (ἦν δὲ ἑγγύς τὸ πάσχα, ἡ ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων), Porter sees the following links to the Passover tradition: (1) He accepts the hypothesis that the chapter reflects a form of Christian Passover haggadah, ‘possibly read as a lectionary at Passover celebrations.’¹²⁰ (2) He connects the explicit allusions to the manna in the wilderness (vv. 4-5, 31-33, 34-38, 48-51) with Passover, since both events were part of the Exodus. Of special importance here is v. 51, which he takes as ‘an invocation of sacrificial imagery in terms of the Passover theme.’¹²¹ (3) He takes vv. 53-58 as a reflection of Exodus language (cf. 1 Cor 10:3-4), language that ‘is sacrificial and makes direct appeal to Passover practices in terms of Last Supper imagery, imagery probably maintained throughout the chapter but especially focused on the feeding miracle (see Exod. 12.7,22; 1 Cor. 10.6-22).’¹²²

In response, it is immediately clear that the Passover motif is not an issue as such in John 6; no text about or aspect of the Passover is used directly to illuminate aspects of the events. Strictly speaking, John 6 does therefore not contribute to the issue of ‘John’s use of Passover traditions’. However, as is evident in Porter’s three points above and in the work of other commentators,¹²³ the Passover theme can be easily merged with the manna motif, both being parts of the Exodus experience. Furthermore, since the bread from heaven discourse is certainly open for both christological and eucharistic interpretations,¹²⁴ it is difficult to resist the

¹¹⁸ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 412.

¹¹⁹ See e.g. THEISSEN; MERZ, *Jesus*, 380-383, who interpret the Temple incident in connection with Jesus’ last meal with the disciples. But even in this case it is not merely about instituting a new Passover, but about replacing the whole Temple cult with a new symbolic act: the Eucharist ‘als einer kultstiftenden Symbol- und Ersatzhandlung für den eschatologisch abgewerteten Tempelkult’ (382).

¹²⁰ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 413. For the idea of the Christian haggadah see esp. GÄRTNER, *John 6*; BORG, *Bread*, 1-27; for the lectionary theory, GUILDING, *Worship*, 58-68; BROWN, *John*, 245; for a critique, MORRIS, *Lectionaries*, 64-72; SCHNELLE, *Christology*, 194-208.; THYEN, ‘Literatur’ ThR 43, 338-351.

¹²¹ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 414. Similar WHITACRE, *John*, 143.

¹²² PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 414.

¹²³ See esp. MOLONEY, *Signs*, 30-59.

¹²⁴ Cf. Menken’s balanced conclusion at the end of his discussion of christological and eucharistic readings of John 6: ‘It is quite probable that the evangelist made use here of eucharistic terminology, especially of a version known to him of the words on the bread and the wine, spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper. However, that does not mean that the passage is primarily about the Eucharist.’ (MENKEN, ‘John 6:51c-58’, 201). The distinction between the kind of language used and the main issue discussed in Jn 6 seems to me to be crucial. The eucharistic language might evoke all sorts of eucharistic notions depending on the importance of the Eucharist in the intended readership. The main issue of Jn 6 is, however, not the Eucharist but the person of Jesus, and thus christological.

temptation creatively to connect Passover, manna and Eucharist. A good example is supplied by Carson, who comments on Jn 6:4:

‘The connections become complex: the sacrifice of the lamb anticipates Jesus’ death, the Old Testament manna is superseded by the real bread of life, the exodus typologically sets forth the eternal life that delivers us from sin and destruction, the Passover feast is taken over by the eucharist (both of which point to Jesus and his redemptive cross-work).’¹²⁵

Although connections like these do indeed fit into John’s overall theological framework, one would be hard pressed to find evidence in Jn 6 of more specific ways in which the feast of Passover is used. The connections mentioned in the quotation presuppose again the identification of the lamb of God in 1:29 with the Passover lamb, and they are based on associative thinking triggered by the time reference to Passover. Thus it is wise to restrict oneself with Dodd to two observations. On the one hand, ‘the Christian Passover was the Eucharist, and it is probable that the evangelist intended at the outset to give a hint of the eucharistic significance of the narrative which follows.’¹²⁶ On the other hand, it is clear that despite the connection between Passover and Eucharist, Jn 6 is about the bread of life, but ‘the prototype of the Bread of Life is not Passover but the manna, and there is nothing in it which even remotely suggests the paschal symbolism.’¹²⁷ Even if there is some value in the theories about a Christian Passover haggadah and the Jewish lectionary circle,¹²⁸ the text as such does not explicitly exploit the Passover motif. The reference in Jn 6:4 does, however, play a role in a pattern connected with the Passover feasts to which I will turn shortly. In the meantime further suggestions concerning the relevance of the ‘Passover plot’ have to be examined.

(3) John 11:47-12:8

Here Porter assigns a bridging function to the two references to Passover in 11:55 and 12:1. The words of Caiaphas about the substitutionary death of one man are linked with Jesus’ anointing by Mary. Porter infers that this connection depicts Jesus again as the Passover victim.¹²⁹ Again, there is some validity in this in terms of the narrative function of the Passover feasts, but there is nothing in the text that uses aspects of the Passover tradition to illuminate the scenes.

¹²⁵ CARSON, *John*, 268. Similarly HOSKYNS, *Gospel*, 281.

¹²⁶ DODD, *Interpretation*, 333.

¹²⁷ DODD, *Interpretation*, 234.

¹²⁸ E.g., GÄRTNER, *John 6*, 27-28, suggests a relationship between the fourfold haggadic scheme based on questions and the four questions in Jn 6:28, 30, 42, 52. This is interesting, but insufficient to explain the complex structure of Jn 6 (see below, ch. 3). Besides, to make his theory work Gärtner has to overlook the questions in 6:25,34; cf. the critique in BROWN, *John*, 266-267; MALINA, *Manna*, 102.

¹²⁹ PORTER, ‘Exegesis’, 415-416.

(4) John 13-17

Porter not only agrees with those who understand the meal in Jn 13 as a Passover meal,¹³⁰ but also thinks there is evidence in these chapters that again depicts Jesus as the Passover victim. First, in 13:1 the reference to Passover is linked with Jesus' realization that he must die. Secondly, Porter links the vine imagery in 15:1-10 with the wine at the meal in ch. 13. He refers to 13:2,4,26,30, apparently as evidence for the presence of wine. However, wine is not explicitly mentioned in ch. 13, and it is difficult to see how it can signal a link to ch. 15. The next suggestion, that 'the language that is used in chs. 15-17 is reminiscent of the "bearing" and "taking away" language in 1:29 ...'¹³¹ suffers from lack of evidence. Furthermore, the language of glorification (e.g. 17:5) is taken by Porter not only as a reminder of Is 53, where it apparently originates (see Jn 12:38,41), but also as evidence for the Passover motif, since in 1:29 both the Suffering Servant and the Passover motifs are combined. The problem with this argument is that nothing in the context of ch. 17 suggests Passover, and the mere term *δοξάζω* can hardly establish a Passover allusion. Finally, Porter suggests understanding the prayer in ch. 17 as 'Jesus offering a new prayer of blessing and consecration for the Passover feast – one that he himself is about to re-enact as its victim.'¹³² Again there is no specific evidence that points in this direction. As we will see, a case can be made to link the Farewell Discourses to Moses' farewell in Deuteronomy (see the excursus in ch. 5 below). Passover traditions do not seem to be of special importance in chs. 13-17.

The narrative function of the Passover feasts

Pointing out the problems in Porter's attempt to stress the 'Passover plot' is, however, not meant to deny that *the Passover feasts* do contribute to John's narrative development. The three Passover feasts (2:13; 6:4; 11:55) establish a *story time* of the Gospel of around two and a half years. However, as Culpepper has emphasized, the duration of *narrative time* is quite unevenly spread over these years.¹³³ The scenes in the year after the first Passover (3:22-6:2) occupy only two weeks; the scenes from the second year (chs. 7-12) roughly a month, whereas chs. 13-19 'are devoted to the events of a single twenty-four hour period.'¹³⁴ On the surface, this seems to suggest that the final events of Jesus' life are even more stressed in John than in the Synoptics,

¹³⁰ This is of course a hotly debated issue, including questions of chronology and the relation between John and the Synoptics. If Jesus' last meal with his disciples was 'a *quasi*-Passover meal a day ahead of the real thing' (so the conclusion of WRIGHT, *JVG*, 556), there is not much in Jn 13 to emphasize this.

¹³¹ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 417.

¹³² PORTER, 'Exegesis', 417-418. Similar ideas about the Farewell Discourses and Passover can be found in HOWARD, 'Passover', 335-336.

¹³³ See CULPEPPER, *Anatomy*, 70-73. The differentiation between story time and narrative time is based on GENETTE, *Discourse*.

¹³⁴ CULPEPPER, *Anatomy*, 72.

where Jesus' ministry seems to last only one year.¹³⁵ However, the Farewell Discourses and Jesus' final prayer in chs. 14-17 are mainly responsible for the length of this part of the Gospel. These chapters deal not only with Jesus' death, but also with his return to the Father and the coming of the Spirit and therefore with the future of the disciples in the post-resurrection period. The story-time, based on the three Passovers, cannot therefore be easily used to argue for an emphasis on the passion in John's Gospel. However, Hartmut Thyen understands the significance of the three Passover feasts in the following way:

'Unbeschadet der Frage seiner möglichen literarischen Abhängigkeit von den Synoptikern ... liegt im Johannesevangelium strukturell eine dramaturgische Aufspaltung des einen Todespassa in drei vor. Denn wie bei der Tempelreinigung Jesu Tod assoziiert wird ..., so ist bei dem galiläischen Passa (6,4) neben der Rede vom "Essen und Trinken von Fleisch und Blut des Menschensohns" (6,48ff) auch der Verräter zur Stelle (6,64). Mit diesem "Passarahmen" (Wilkens, Entstehungsgeschichte 123ff) ist das Johannes- ein Passionsevangelium und nicht wie Markus "eine Passionsgeschichte mit ausführlicher Einleitung" (Kähler).'¹³⁶

That the Passover feasts are connected with Jesus' death is also seen by Carson.¹³⁷ At the first Passover Jesus' death is hinted at in the saying about the destruction of the Temple (Jn 2:19ff.). The bread of life discourse near the time of the second Passover leads to the anticipation of Jesus' death in the sayings about the flesh and blood of the Son of Man (Jn 6:51ff.). Finally, the third Passover is the Passover of Jesus' death, and this death is in several ways connected with the death of the Passover lambs, as we saw in the previous section. This connection between the Passover feasts and Jesus' death throughout the Gospel surely invites theological reflection. I will address this question in section 3.2.

Concluding the present discussion, a small, but not insignificant aspect concerning the exact phraseology used in connection with the Passover feasts deserves to be mentioned. The feast is three times specified as τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων (2:13; 11:55), τὸ πάσχα, ἡ ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων (6:4). This specification is also attached to the feast of Tabernacles in 7:2, and 10:22 points out that the feast of Dedication took place in winter. Culpepper is clear about the significance of this for our picture of the implied reader: 'These references leave the clear impression that the reader is not a Jew and that the narrator is placing some distance between himself and Judaism.'¹³⁸ The issue is not that straightforward, however, since

'the significance of the discourses which occur in the context of the festivals can only be grasped fully by readers who know something about the festivals themselves. The discourses therefore seem to presuppose more familiarity with the Jewish festivals than do the narrator's comments.'¹³⁹

¹³⁵ WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 1.34, concludes that the fact that chs. 13-19 cover only a day of narrative time means that esp. Jesus' death is particularly emphasized.

¹³⁶ THYEN, 'Johannesevangelium', 202.

¹³⁷ CARSON, *John*, 268. As is well known, the Synoptics also begin their passion accounts with a reference to Passover (Mt 26:2; Mk 14:1; Lk 22:1). Matthew puts the reference to the feast on Jesus' lips, and links it directly to the crucifixion. GNILKA, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2.383, concludes tentatively that Matthew might have understood Jesus to be the true Passover lamb.

¹³⁸ CULPEPPER, *Anatomy*, 220.

¹³⁹ CULPEPPER, *Anatomy*, 221.

This raises a few questions well stated by Culpepper:

‘Are the comments added for the sake of non-Jewish readers while the heart of the narrative is intended for readers who would know a great deal about the festivals? Is the intended audience heterogeneous? Is the implied reader (projected throughout the narrative by the implied author) more familiar with Judaism than the narratee (who is shaped exclusively by the narrator’s voice)? Or must one resort to a theory of redaction during stages of a long composition history in which the material was fashioned for different audiences?’¹⁴⁰

Once the various possibilities are seen, one should avoid opting for too simple a solution concerning John’s intended audience and their ‘presupposition pool’.¹⁴¹ The present study supports the view that at least part of the intended audience was expected not only to be familiar with the Jewish feasts, but also to pick up the subtle ways in which the author used Old Testament texts in order to illumine the theological significance of Jesus’ ministry. To the significance of the Passover theme I now turn.

3.2 The theological significance of the use of the Passover traditions

The discussion of John’s use of Passover traditions so far has resulted in a multidimensional picture. On the one hand, there are clear indications that Passover motifs are used: the Passover feasts and their connection with Jesus’ death, and the allusions and the quotation in chs. 18-19 that link Jesus’ death with the death of the Passover lamb. Against this background, Passover associations cannot be ruled out when it comes to the ‘Lamb of God’ in Jn 1:29, 36. On the other hand, as the discussion of ‘the Lamb of God’ and also of several of the Passover elements in chs. 18-19 has shown, the Passover motif is often elusive and belongs more to the area of suggestive background; its theological significance is nowhere spelled out in detail. Nevertheless, several factors invite further reflection on the theological implications of Passover traditions in John. The following remarks belong to the discussion of the death of Jesus in John’s Gospel, a disputed area of Johannine research.¹⁴² It is not my intention to enter this discussion in any detail. The observations will be restricted to the relation of Jesus’ death to Passover.

First, there is a connection between fulfilment quotations and Jesus’ death. Of the eighteen OT quotations in John’s Gospel, nine are connected with formulas that indicate the fulfilment of Scripture. Interestingly, these quotations are concentrated in the second part of the Gospel. In the first part, eight quotations are connected with formulas like ‘it is written’.¹⁴³ The following table provides initial orientation and does not reflect the numerous problems John’s use of

¹⁴⁰ CULPEPPER, *Anatomy*, 221.

¹⁴¹ For this concept cf. BROWN; YULE, *Discourse Analysis*, 79-83; COTTERELL; TURNER, *Linguistics*, 90-97.

¹⁴² For a recent treatment cf. DE BOER, *Perspectives*.

¹⁴³ The exception is 12:13, which relates the traditional response of the crowds when Jesus enters Jerusalem in terms of Ps 118:25-26.

quotations poses,¹⁴⁴ but the simple overview is nevertheless given to show the basic pattern before more detailed observations are provided.

¹⁴⁴ For these cf. esp. FREED, *Quotations*; SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*; MENKEN, *Quotations*.

<p>1. 1:23: He [John the Baptist] said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.</p>	<p>Is 40:3: A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."</p>
<p>2. 2:17: His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."</p>	<p>Ps 69:9: It is zeal for your house that has consumed me; the insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.</p>
<p>3. 6:31: Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'</p>	<p>Ex 16:4: Then the LORD said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not.</p> <p>Ex 16:15: When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.</p> <p>Neh 9:15: For their hunger you gave them bread from heaven, and for their thirst you brought water for them out of the rock, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you swore to give them.</p> <p>Ps 78:24-25: He rained down on them manna to eat, and gave them the grain of heaven. 78:25 Mortals ate of the bread of angels; he sent them food in abundance.</p>
<p>4. 6:45: It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.'</p>	<p>Is 54:13: All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the prosperity of your children.</p>
<p>5. 7:38: and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'</p>	<p>no exact OT text; references given in Nestle/Aland²⁶ : Is 43:19; Ez 47:1-12; Joel 4:18; Zech 14:8; Prov 18:4; Song 4:15; Sir 24:40.43 (LXX 30.33)</p>
<p>6. 7:42: Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?</p>	<p>general appeal to Scripture without an actual quotation; texts in the background: 2 Sam 7:12; Micah 5:1; Ps 89:4</p>
<p>7. 10:34: Jesus answered, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, you are gods'?"</p>	<p>Ps 82:6: I say, "You are gods, children of the Most High, all of you;</p>
<p>8. 12:13: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"</p>	<p>Ps 118:25-26: O Lord, save us! ... Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!</p>
<p>9. 12:14-15: Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: 12:15 "Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"</p>	<p>Zech 9:9: Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.</p>

<p>10. 12:38: This was to fulfill the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "Lord, who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"</p>	<p>Is 53:1: Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?</p>
<p>11. 12:39-40: And so they could not believe, because Isaiah also said, 12:40 "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they might not look with their eyes, and understand with their heart and turn-- and I would heal them."</p>	<p>Is 6:10: Make the mind of this people dull, and stop their ears, and shut their eyes, so that they may not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and comprehend with their minds, and turn and be healed."</p>
<p>12. 13:18: But it is to fulfill the scripture, "The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me."</p>	<p>Ps 41:9: Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted, who ate of my bread, has lifted the heel against me.</p>
<p>13. 15:25: It was to fulfill the word that is written in their law, 'They hated me without a cause.'</p>	<p>Ps 35:19: Do not let my treacherous enemies rejoice over me, or those who hate me without cause wink the eye.</p> <p>Ps 69:4: More in number than the hairs of my head are those who hate me without cause; many are those who would destroy me, my enemies who accuse me falsely. What I did not steal must I now restore?</p>
<p>14. 17:12: While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled.</p>	<p>no reference to a special text; but cf. Isaiah 57:4: Whom are you mocking? Against whom do you open your mouth wide and stick out your tongue? Are you not children of transgression, the offspring of deceit--; and Proverbs 24:22a (LXX)</p>
<p>15. 19:24: This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots."</p>	<p>Ps 22:18: they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.</p>
<p>16. 19:28: After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to complete the scripture), "I am thirsty."</p>	<p>no clear reference; cf. Psalm 63:1: O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.; and Psalm 69:21: They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.</p>
<p>17. 19:36: These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken."</p>	<p>Ex 12:46: It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the animal outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones.</p> <p>Num 9:12: They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break a bone of it; according to all the statute for the passover they shall keep it.</p> <p>Ps 34:20: He keeps all their bones; not one of them will be broken.</p>
<p>18. 19:37: And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."</p>	<p>Zech 12:10: And I will pour out a spirit of compassion and supplication on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that, when they look on the one whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.</p>

That there are two basic ways to introduce the quotations, coinciding roughly with the two major parts of John's Gospel, has been established convincingly by Evans¹⁴⁵ and further developed by Porter, who emphasizes the regularity in the use of various grammatical forms.¹⁴⁶ Porter combines three elements: (1) the regularity of the use of introductory formulas; (2) his perception of the use of Passover motifs throughout the Gospel; and (3) the special position of 19:36, 37 as the *final* quotations in John's Gospel. He then concludes: 'A primary motivation for the action of the story is Jesus' death as a substitute and replacement for the Passover sacrifice, seen in his fulfilling various features of that sacrifice.'¹⁴⁷ I have already pointed out above that not all aspects of the Passover motif are equally clear or significant, so that it is too optimistic to speak of 'sustained and consistent use of recognizable Passover language throughout', as Porter does.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, the use of different formulas when referring to Scripture is not quite as regular as Porter wishes to establish. He holds that all direct quotations in the first section are introduced by the perfect participle γεγραμμένον (apart from 1:23 and 12:13, which are different in that they are not spoken by Jesus). This is true for 2:17; 6:31, 45; 10:34; 12:14, the five cases Porter gives. However, in three of these cases γεγραμμένον also does not occur on the lips of Jesus (2:17; 12:14: narrator's comment; 6:31: on the lips of ὁ ὄχλος, cf. 6:22.). Furthermore, Porter puts 1:45; 5:46; 7:42; 8:17 in a single category of examples where 'non-perfect forms of γράφω are used in a quotation formula when no specific citation is produced'.¹⁴⁹ Again, this is true as far as it goes, but it conceals the actual variety of expressions used, even though there are striking similarities between the cases.¹⁵⁰

Concerning the fulfilment quotations, it is correct that the aorist subjunctive πληρωθῆ is used in all instances apart from 12:39; 19:37,¹⁵¹ and 19:28.¹⁵² However, not all of these fulfilment quotations are concerned with Jesus' death in an equally significant way. 12:38-40 is about the reason for the unbelief of many who witnessed the signs of Jesus. 13:18 and 17:12 are about Judas' betrayal, 15:25 is about the hatred of 'the world', and 18:9 is about Jesus taking care of his disciples. To be sure, all of these quotations occur in the context of conflict with 'the Jews' and/or of Jesus' passion, but there is clearly a difference to the quotations in 18:32 (about

¹⁴⁵ EVANS, 'Quotation Formulas'; also EVANS, *Word*, 172-177. It has been taken up by e.g. CARSON, 'John'.

¹⁴⁶ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 402.

¹⁴⁷ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 421.

¹⁴⁸ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 421.

¹⁴⁹ PORTER, 'Exegesis', 402.

¹⁵⁰ Various expressions: 1:45: ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ οἱ προφῆται ... 5:46: εἰ γὰρ ἐπιστεύετε Μωϋσεῖ, ἐπιστεύετε ἀν ἐμοί· περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν. 7:42: οὐχ ἡ γραφὴ εἶπεν ... 8:17: καὶ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ δὲ τῷ ὑμετέρῳ γέγραπται ... Similarities: Both 1:45 and 5:46 depict Jesus as object of Scripture, but different phrases are used. Both 7:42 and 8:17 show Jesus appealing to Scripture in an argument with opponents, but again the expressions vary.

¹⁵¹ Both verses can be considered 'as extensions of the respective formula in 12:38 and 19:39' (EVANS, *Word*, 176), and these verses do have πληρωθῆ.

¹⁵² Here τελειωθῆ is used, probably because of the use of τετέλεσται in 19:28, 30.

the kind of death Jesus was to die), 19:24 (the soldiers at the cross casting lots for Jesus' clothes), 19:28 (Jesus' thirst on the cross), and 19:36-37 (explaining actions at the cross). Only these quotations are directly concerned with Jesus' death. In any case, the fulfilment motif cannot be restricted to the use of the fulfilment quotations in relation to Jesus' death. On the one hand, 2:17 is an example of a quotation without the fulfilment formula, but is nevertheless concerned with Jesus' death. On the other hand, there are further elements of fulfilment neither connected with a fulfilment quotation, nor with Jesus' death. Pancaro refers to the fulfilment of the law in Jesus' works on the Sabbath according to 7:21-23;¹⁵³ to the implicit fulfilment of the prophetic nature of Ps 82:6 LXX in 10:34-36;¹⁵⁴ to the teaching-revelation of Jesus surpassing the traditional teaching of Moses in 7:45-49; 9:24-34;¹⁵⁵ to belief in Jesus as fulfilment of belief in Moses and his writings in 5:45-47;¹⁵⁶ and to the fulfilment of the law in 8:12-20.¹⁵⁷

Thus, although there is a basic pattern at work in John's use of OT quotations, it is not possible to establish too much regularity in the details of this pattern. Furthermore, to link the fulfilment motif as visible in the fulfilment quotations with the Passover motif in the way Porter does ignores the complexity of the fulfilment motif visible in other aspects of the narrative. I therefore consider it better to understand the relationship between the Passover motif and the fulfilment motif as not indicating a deliberate attempt of the author to merge two strands in a climactic moment in ch. 19; there simply are too many ambiguities connected to both motifs. The Passover theme does play a role, but it is of secondary significance when it comes to the meaning of Jesus' death.¹⁵⁸

Is the Passover motif significant in other respects? Since Passover is the feast of remembering God liberating Israel from slavery in Egypt, an obvious question is whether John exploits the idea of liberation when using the Passover motif in relation to Jesus. On the basis of the perceived relation of 1:29 to the Passover allusions in the Passion account, liberation from sin is often understood to be implicit in the connection between Jesus' death and the Passover motif:

'The Passover sacrifice, unlike other sacrifices, was not ordinarily considered to be an offering for sin but a sign of deliverance from death. ... John's Gospel appropriated and modified this understanding of the Passover sacrifice, insisting that the death of Jesus spared people from death *precisely by* delivering them from sin.'¹⁵⁹

¹⁵³ Cf. PANCARO, *Law*, 147, 158-165.

¹⁵⁴ PANCARO, *Law*, 175-192.

¹⁵⁵ PANCARO, *Law*, 330.

¹⁵⁶ PANCARO, *Law*, 331.

¹⁵⁷ PANCARO, *Law*, 331.

¹⁵⁸ The Passover motif is also classified as secondary by LINCOLN, *Truth*, 203. On the fulfilment quotations see e.g. DODD, *Tradition*, 31-49 (focusing on the question of John's dependence or independence from Mark); DE BOER, *Perspectives*, 91-93; FORTNA, *Predecessor*, 207-214, 265-273 (both using source-critical approaches); PANCARO, *Law*, 326-363.

¹⁵⁹ KOESTER, *Symbolism*, 197 (italics original).

‘Exodus was the model redemptive act, bringing Israel from death to life. ... John implies that Jesus himself embodies that redemptive action of God and in laying down his life he would mark the believer with the liberating sign of Passover.’¹⁶⁰

Pancaro, after discussing the Passover theme throughout the Gospel, concludes by commenting on 19:36:

‘The incident shows that the Scripture is fulfilled in a much deeper sense because it indicates that Jesus is the Paschal Lamb, prefigured by the paschal lamb of the Old Covenant. His death is the new Passover, the deliverance from the slavery of sin and the gift of true freedom (Jn 8,33-36) which gives origin to the new Israel.’¹⁶¹

A relation between the liberation aspect of Passover and the question of liberation and the true children of God in Jn 8 has also been suggested by de Boer and Davies.¹⁶² However, neither they nor Pancaro develop this suggestion any further. On the one hand, one could say: rightly so, since Jn 8 does not explicitly establish, let alone exploit, a connection with the Passover motif. On the other hand, since Passover and liberation are closely related as a matter of course, it probably does not need an explicit elaboration in order to lead a reader deeply rooted in Jewish tradition to associate Jn 8 and Passover. If a reader makes the connection, it is interesting that it is again in the area of the question of the true children of God that a Moses tradition becomes relevant, in accordance with our thesis that the use of Moses traditions serves a sociological purpose. However, as Lincoln has shown, Is 40-55 provides an illuminating background to the trial scene in ch. 8. The “I am” formula (8:12, 18, 24, 28; cf. Is 43:10) and the concept of “lifting up” (8:28; cf. Is 52:13) are brought together to reveal Jesus’ true identity: ‘[T]he lifting up on the cross will be the means by which the divine identity and glory of Jesus as the servant-witness will be revealed.’¹⁶³ Once the Isaiah background is seen, new light is also shed on the issue of liberation in 8:32ff.:

‘The message of its [Isaiah’s] trial scenes and their surrounding context comes to those in exile, those in Babylonian captivity, and Yahweh’s self-announcement as “I am” also announces Yahweh as Israel’s sole Savior and Redeemer (e.g., Isa 41:14; 43:14; 44:22-24; 47:4; 48:17, 20; 52:3; 59:20). The notion of redemption includes liberation from slavery and oppression. Yahweh recalls the people to their Abrahamic descent (cf. 41:8; 51:2) and promises to free and restore them (cf. 45:13; 49:6, 25; 51:11, 14; 61:1-4). What is required of them is an acknowledgement of their internal condition of sinful rebellion, which has led to their external condition of slavery (cf. 42:24; 50:1; 53:4-6; 55:6, 7; 59:1-16, 20). The motifs are replayed here as Jesus, after revealing himself in terms of “I am” and as the one who delivers Israel from death in its sins, now presses for an acknowledgment by these particular Jews that they are indeed in a sinful condition and in need of his liberation.’¹⁶⁴

In the face of the strong Isaiah background, Passover associations have to be considered a fairly remote possibility. In the light of this, Bittner’s reference to *m. Pesah.* 10:5 - where the terms freedom, joy, feasting, great light and redemption occur in the context of Passover - does not

¹⁶⁰ SENIOR, *Passion*, 158.

¹⁶¹ PANCARO, *Law*, 350.

¹⁶² DE BOER, *Perspectives*, 280; DAVIES, *Rhetoric*, 234.

¹⁶³ LINCOLN, *Truth*, 89.

¹⁶⁴ LINCOLN, *Truth*, 91.

seem very forceful.¹⁶⁵ There are no signs that John deliberately developed the Passover motif in terms of its liberation aspect.

There are other attempts in the literature on John's Gospel to find significance in John's use of the Passover motif. Boismard compares Jn 13:1 with some passages in Philo, especially *Congr.* 106, where Philo understands death as the Passover of the soul. For Boismard,

[t]he analogy between John 13:1 and this passage from Philo is obvious. On Passover day, Jesus, by dying, is going "to pass" (ἵνα μεταβῆ) from this evil world (1 John 5:19) to the Father. Following Philo, the evangelist must make a connection between the "Passover" and the "passing" of Jesus from this world to the Father.¹⁶⁶

Although an interesting parallel, I restrict myself to the remark that it is far from obvious that the evangelist 'must make a connection'. Rather than focussing on isolated interpretative possibilities like this one, I conclude by summarizing the major elements of significance in John's use of the Passover motif.

3.3 Summary

The following points have been found to be of relevance in the present chapter:

First, Passover allusions occur several times in connection with allusions to other OT texts (see the discussion on 1:29; 19:28-30; 19:36). This indicates that the Passover motif is not a strong independent motif in John's Gospel. However, the theological implications of the combinations as evident in the quotations from Obermann (see above, pp. 67, 69f.) are good examples of the interpretative possibilities of Passover motifs.

Secondly, there are different ways in which Passover is evoked (terminological allusion, chronological references, quotation), and different degrees of clarity and significance of the respective evocation (unclear allusions: 19:31, 34, 39; clear but not very significant: 18:28, 39). Again, it cannot be said that the evidence suggests a strongly independent motif.

Thirdly, the Passover motif is related to Jesus' death. This is done first in a pattern that connects all three Johannine Passovers with Jesus' death. Secondly, not only is Jesus' death related to the death of the Passover lamb, but other elements of the Passion narrative are also related to Passover.¹⁶⁷ Of special significance here is the rejection of the king at Passover and the implication for the covenant status of the people of God. However, despite the fact that 19:14-15 combines the clear chronological reference to Passover with the rejection of the king, there is no comment from the narrator or other elements that elaborate on the implications. Nevertheless, the remarks of Brown and Meeks quoted above (p. 65f.) seem to be sound theological reflections that reinforce my thesis of the sociological function of the use of Moses

¹⁶⁵ Cf. BITTNER, *Zeichen*, 68 n. 29.

¹⁶⁶ BOISMARD, *Moses*, 21.

¹⁶⁷ Against OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 361 n. 73, who sees a contrast: 'In 19,28 [sic! It must be 19,29] wird nicht explizit an Jesus als das (Passa-) Lamm Gottes erinnert, sondern an das sich im Exodusgeschehen vollziehende Heilshandeln Gottes.'

tradition. In 19:14-15, the Passover motif and the kingship motif are linked, and in that the crowd declares that they have no king but Caesar they deny the Davidic covenant and cease to be the covenant people of God. By implication, those who follow Jesus, the rejected king, constitute from now on the covenant people.

Fourthly, in one instance the possibility of the broader evocation of the OT context was discussed (see on 19:36, pp. 70-74). The case proved interesting, but not very clear as to whether a broader evocation is intended and what the significance might have been. In contrast to my discussion of John 1:14-18, 19:36 is closer to the point where the use of the concept of 'metalepsis' turns exegesis into eisegesis.

Fifthly, the Passover motif does open up interpretative possibilities (e.g., the liberation aspect), but the validity of those possibilities depends more on the interests of a given readership than on clear textual evidence in John's Gospel.

The picture of John's use of Passover traditions, therefore, remains multidimensional. Turning now to the wilderness traditions in the background of Jn 6-8, it will be interesting to see whether a more consistent picture emerges or whether diversity in form and function of the various kinds of links to the wilderness traditions is characteristic in that part of the Gospel as well.

4. The wilderness traditions

In this chapter I shall look at the use John makes of several incidents during the time of Israel's wilderness wanderings. Three passages deserve special attention: (1) the use of the story about the brazen serpent in Jn 3:14f., (2) the use of the manna tradition in Jn 6, and (3) less clear allusions to the water from the rock in ch. 7 and to the pillar of fire in the presentation of Jesus as the light of the world in ch. 8, both connected by the common setting of the feast of Tabernacles. Because of the importance of the much discussed sixth chapter of John's Gospel, the significance of this section of the present study is second only to that on the Prologue. I begin with a close look at Jn 3:14f.

4.1 Jn 3:14f. and Num 21:8f.

John 3:14-15 is an example of a clear and undisputed allusion to an OT text, i.e. to the story of the brazen serpent in Num 21:4-9. It is therefore not necessary to present arguments that try to establish the *presence* of the link. Of interest is the specific *nature* of the link, and its theological significance. I will tackle both questions after looking at the Johannine context of this scriptural connection. The OT story as such and its reception in Jewish literature has been dealt with in detail by Maneschg.¹

4.1.1 The Johannine context

Several factors indicate that Jn 3:14-15 holds a special place in the narrative flow of John's Gospel. Moving from general to more specific observations, the following picture emerges: 2:23-25 links the Temple incident at the time of Passover in 2:13-22 with the dialogue with Nicodemus in 3:1ff. This dialogue is of special importance because of at least four textual signals. First, the repetition of the term ἄνθρωπος in 2:25 and 3:1 suggests that Nicodemus should be understood as a representative of those described in 2:23-25: Jews in Jerusalem who believe because of Jesus' signs, but whose faith is rendered insufficient by the reluctance of Jesus to entrust himself to them.² At the same time, Nicodemus speaks as a representative of the Pharisees, indicated by the plural οἴδαμεν in 3:2. Secondly, since Jesus immediately focuses the conversation on the question of new birth, the dialogue can be understood as an explication of the central verses of the Prologue in 1:12-13, which focuses on becoming children of God by being born of God. Thirdly, Jesus addresses Nicodemus, who was already introduced as ἀρχων τῶν Ἰουδαίων in 3:1, as διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ἰσραήλ in v. 10, thereby increasing his importance. Fourthly, this dialogue which turns into a monologue is the first in a series of revelatory discourses in which Jesus explains his own significance. Thus, the representative

¹ See MANESCHG, *Erzählung*. For a shorter, but still detailed account cf. FREY, 'Mose', 154-177.

² With e.g. MEEKS, 'Man', 148f.; FREY, 'Mose', 178; MOLONEY, *Son of Man*, 46f.

function of Nicodemus, the importance of the topic and of Nicodemus himself, and the first revelatory discourse alert the reader to the special significance of Jn 3.

Zooming in to the immediate context, the scriptural allusion is clearly part of several statements introduced by the double ἀμήν in v. 11. The aim of vv. 11-13 is to establish the superior knowledge of Jesus – and of the Johannine community, cf. the plural in v. 11 – because of his heavenly origin as Son of Man. It is this *Stichwort* in v. 14b, not Μωϋσῆς in 14a, that links vv. 14-15 with the preceding verse. Frey accurately captures the implication of this observation:

‘Der Verweis auf die Moseschlange V. 14a ist demnach durch den Kontext der Verse 11-13 nicht irgendwie vorbereitet oder gar nahegelegt, sondern fällt aus der Reihe der Stichwortverbindungen eher heraus. Der Evangelist muß also besonders gute Gründe gehabt haben, um gerade hier, auf dem ersten Höhepunkt des ersten Offenbarungsmonologs Jesu, einen Verweis auf die Schrift, konkret die Schlangenepisode der Mosezeit, einzufügen.’³

There might, however, be another link between vv. 14-15 and v. 13. In an article on Jn 3:13-14, Borgen⁴ elaborates upon a possible background of Jn 3:13 in *Mek. Ex 19,20*, already suggested by Schlatter.⁵ If this link is valid, then v. 14f. contrasts with v. 13 in a striking way: v. 13 seems to presuppose claims about a heavenly ascent of Moses as a *negative* background for the claim that only he ascended who also had descended, namely, the Son of Man. Vv. 14f. then use an incident from the life of Moses in order to illuminate *positively* the saving power of Jesus’ death. Interestingly, Borgen himself does not reflect on the implications of this juxtaposition of two contrasting uses of aspects of Moses tradition. I will return to possible implications after the relation of Jn 3:14f. to Num 21 has been explored in more detail.

In terms of the context of Jn 3:14f., verses 16-21 have also to be taken into account. There are several terminological and structural similarities in the section 3:14-17, as the following text diagram shows:

3·14 καὶ καθὼς Μωϋσῆς ὑψωσεν τὸν ὄφιν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ,
οὕτως ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου,
3·15 ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον.
3·16 Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον,
ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν,
ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ’ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον. 3·17 οὐ γὰρ
ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν εἰς τὸν κόσμον

³ FREY, ‘Mose’, 182. Frey understands the semantically close ἀναβαίνειν (v. 13) and ὑψοῦσθαι (v. 14) as a second *Stichwortverbindung*. However, *GELNT* lists ὑψοῦσθαι under semantic domain 81, ‘Spatial Dimensions’, commenting that ‘[t]he focus of meaning in Jn 3.14 is on the final position and not on the movement itself.’ (p. 708 n. 1). ἀναβαίνειν is listed in domain 15, ‘Linear Movements’ (here it can mean ‘to go aboard, to embark’, e.g., Mt 14:32, as well as ‘to go up, to ascend’, e.g., Acts 1:13), in domain 23, ‘Physiological Processes and States’ (where it can mean ‘to grow’, e.g. Mk 4:7, and ‘to grow up’, e.g., Mt 13:7). (It also occurs in domain 30, ‘Think’, as part of the idiom ἀναβαίνειν ἐπὶ καρδίαν, which is not relevant here). Given this semantic variety and the theological use of ὑψοῦσθαι in John’s Gospel, I consider the terms less likely to provide a *Stichwortverbindung*.

⁴ Borgen, ‘Traditions’, 244ff.

⁵ SCHLATTER, *Evangelist*, 93f.

ἵνα κρίνη τὸν κόσμον,
ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῆ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ.

3:21 ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς,
ἵνα φανερωθῆ αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα ὅτι ἐν θεῷ ἐστὶν εἰργασμένα.

No less than five *theologische Finalsätze*⁶ are assembled in this short passage, four of them giving the positive aim of God's salvific action (3:15, 16c, 17c, 21b), and one indicating what God did not intend by sending the Son (17b). Without going into the details of this highly important passage with its judicial language,⁷ suffice it to say that again a reference to Moses tradition occurs in a theologically significant passage. The significance even increases when one takes into account that 3:14 is the first of three 'lifting up' statements that function as John's equivalent to the synoptic predictions of Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection (Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:33f. and parr.).⁸ The most important aspect of John's statements has been stated clearly by Lincoln: 'Instead of the synoptic pattern of suffering followed by glory, the lifting up of the Son of Man collapses suffering and glory, crucifixion and exaltation, into one.'⁹ Given this highly important immediate and wider context, I shall be exploring the specific contribution of the reference to Num 21 for John's understanding of Jesus' crucifixion-exaltation.

4.1.2 The nature of the link to the OT story

There is no question that Μωϋσῆς ὑψωσεν τὸν ὄφιν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, though not a quotation, alludes clearly to Num 21:4-9. All terms apart from ὑψωσεν occur in the LXX version of the Numbers account. Frey helpfully summarizes the basic nature of the allusion:

'Sprachlich liegt dabei ein *Vergleich* zweier Begebenheiten vor (καθὼς – οὕτως), wobei der Verweis auf die ‚Erhöhung‘ der Moseschlange zur Näherbestimmung der Hauptaussage ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου herangezogen wird. Das *tertium comparationis* ist also das ὑψοῦν bzw. ὑψοῦσθαι, das in Num 21 zwar fehlt, aber das dort erzählte Geschehen präzise zu erfassen vermag und in Joh 3,14 die beiden Vergleichshälften miteinander verbindet: καθὼς ... ὑψωσεν – οὕτως ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ ... In unmittelbare Beziehung gesetzt werden also nicht Mose, der in V. 14a Subjekt ist, und Jesus, der V. 14b grammatikalisch die Objektrolle einnimmt, auch nicht die ‚Objekte‘ der ‚Erhöhung‘, die Schlange und Jesus, sondern die beiden Akte des ‚Erhöhens‘. Das Ereignis der Mosezeit wird herangezogen, um das Geschehen um den Menschensohn, um Jesus, zu veranschaulichen.'¹⁰

⁶ See STAUFFER, art. ἵνα, *TWNT* III, 324ff.

⁷ For perceptive expositions cf. BLANK, *Krisis*, 53-108; LINCOLN, *Truth*, 65-73.

⁸ So e.g. SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium* 1.417f.; BROWN, *John*, 146; LINCOLN, *Truth*, 69.

⁹ LINCOLN, *Truth*, 69. Two factors are in the background of the understanding of crucifixion as exaltation and thus as glorification: 1. Is 52:13 LXX introduces the servant song with ἰδοὺ συνησει ὁ παῖς μου καὶ ὑψωθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται σφόδρα, thus providing a terminological combination John could work with. Cf. e.g. DODD, *Interpretation*, 247; BROWN, *John*, 146; REIM, *Studien*, 174-176; FORESTELL, *Word*, 64f.; MOLONEY, *Son of Man*, 63. 2. Semantically, both Hebrew אָשַׁף and Greek ὑψοῦν, as well as possible Aramaic terms like ܐܫܫܫܩܐ, ܐܫܫܫܩܐ, or ܩܠܩܐ, can be used to refer to a spacial lifting up, or to an elevation to e.g. a higher position. For the relevant literature discussing this issue, see FREY, 'Mose', 187.

¹⁰ FREY, 'Mose', 182f.; similar LINDEMANN, 'Mose', 313. VELLANICKAL, *Sonship*, 200, refers to the seven uses of οὕτως in John's Gospel and says that in all cases more than a simple comparison is involved. 5:21, 26; 12:50; 14:31 are about the union between the Father and the Son, and 3:14 is

Thus the nature of the link is that of a comparison, and the point of the comparison is first of all the act of lifting up. Is it possible to go beyond the characterization in terms of comparison? Can we speak of typology?¹¹ The presence of the καθὼς ... οὕτως - structure seems to point in this direction.¹² However, Lindemann understands the comparison to go beyond typology:

‘Bedeutsam ist der Wechsel vom einfach berichtenden ὑψωσεν bei Mose hin zum theologisch qualifizierten ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ im Blick auf Christus; hier zeigt sich, daß eine Mose-Christus-Typologie nicht im Blick ist. Zwar war das, was Mose einst in der Wüste getan hatte, eine Vorabbildung dessen, was nach Gottes Plan mit Jesus als dem Menschensohn geschehen muß (3,14); aber die in 3,15 sich anschließende Heilszusage ist in dieser Form in der biblischen Tradition ohne Entsprechung.’¹³

The term “typology” is of course a term with a history, and to say whether or not the present comparison should be regarded as part of typological thinking would require a differentiated discussion of current trends of research in this area.¹⁴ However, instead of entering the vast field of hermeneutical reflection about typology, I prefer to concentrate on the comparison itself, and on a simple but important question: what could have caused it?

The first point to note is that ὑψωθῆναι is used in John’s Gospel not only to interpret Jesus’ death as glorification, but also to indicate the kind of death, namely, on a cross. This is quite clear from 12:32-33 and 18:32. In 12:33 the ‘lifting up’ saying of 12:32 is explained by the narrator: τοῦτο δὲ ἔλεγεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ ἠμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν. The phrase is repeated *verbatim* in 18:32.¹⁵ Thus if the narrator is looking for an OT event suitable to be compared with the lifting up of Jesus, he has to look either for an event that plays on the *double entendre* of ὑψωθῆναι, or an event where something is literally being lifted up, such as Moses’ lifting up of the brazen serpent. But how is the comparison between the cross and the pole established, given that ὑψωθῆναι does not occur in Num 21:4-9? Boismard refers to the Targumic rendering of Num 21:8f., which says that the serpent was placed on an elevated place (על אתר תלי) and

classified as typology. 3:8 is understood to be very similar to 15:4, which is identified as allegory. The last point might be considered problematic, the first points seem sound.

¹¹ For MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 291, there is no question: ‘Here is one clear case of typology properly so called ...’

¹² FISHBANE, *Interpretation*, 353, includes כן ... כאשר, ‘just as ... so’, amongst a list of terminology that indicates typological correlation of two events or persons.

¹³ LINDEMANN, ‘Mose’, 314. MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 292, also rejects typology as a helpful category at this point.

¹⁴ The great spectrum of different angles on typology becomes clear from a reading of e.g. BARR, *Interpretation*, 103-148; BULTMANN, ‘Ursprung’; CHILDS, *Biblical Theology*, 13-14; MACDONALD, ‘Philosophy’; OSTMEYER, ‘Typologie’; ALSUP, ‘Typology’, *ABD*, 6.682-685; GOPPELT, *Typos*; Hays, *Echoes*, 95-102; FISHBANE, *Interpretation*, 350-379, 408-440; EVANS, ‘Typology’, *DJG*, 862-866; DAVIDSON, *Typology*; FREI, *Eclipse*, 2ff.; FRYE, *Code*, 78-138. For the phenomenon in Josephus see DAUBE, ‘Typology’. For the most recent monograph, focussing on the development of the exodus motif within the OT as an example of typology, and building on the work of Davidson, arguing for a prospective element in the foundational type, see NINOW, *Indicators*.

¹⁵ The narrator is also interested in the kind of death of Peter, cf. 21: 19: τοῦτο δὲ εἶπεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ δοξάσει τὸν θεόν.

suggests that John got his idea of the cross in terms of $\upsilon\psi\omega\theta\eta\nu\alpha\iota$ from here.¹⁶ However, if one prefers to understand John's 'lifting up' language against the background of Is 52:13, the Targum of Num 21 might be better understood as suggesting a link between the lifting up of the cross and the pole.

However, another reason for the comparison of the lifted-up pole and the lifted-up cross might have been the link between Is 11:10, 12 and Num 21:8 provided by the term נֵי .¹⁷ Is 11, evidently in the background of Jn 1:32-34 and therefore an important text for John,¹⁸ presents the Davidic Messiah, the Spirit-endowed יְשִׁי בְּמִזְעַת (Is 11:1), as נֵי עַמִּים (Is 11:10). Frey comments:

'Als exegetische Methode des Johannes wird auch hier in der Verknüpfung der Schriftstellen eine Art Gezera schawa erkennbar, die auf Verbindungen im hebräischen Text beruht. Der in verschiedenen messianisch gedeuteten Prophetentexten begegnende Terminus נֵי und die Rede von der "Aufrichtung" eines solchen Zeichens der Sammlung und Erlösung bildeten für den Evangelisten die Brücke zu der Erzählung von Num 21, zum Verständnis eben jenes Heilszeichens der Mosezeit, das somit zur typologischen Vorabbildung jenes Ortes der eschatologischen Rettung, des am Kreuz zum Heil aller Glaubenden erhöhten Messias-Menschensohns wird.'¹⁹

If this is considered a probable scenario, we are dealing again with a complex and creative combination of several OT texts, the servant in Is 52:13 providing the background of the lifting up language, the messianic figure in Is 11:10, 12 providing the image of the נֵי עַמִּים , and the lifted-up serpent in Num 21 providing a concrete example of a נֵי that serves as a *Heilszeichen*. However, a note of caution might be in order at this point. Although it is entirely possible that the author had the combination of these texts in mind, it is also possible that the comparison of the lifting up of Jesus on the cross with the lifting up of the brazen serpent was triggered by an imaginative act that created the possibility of a comparison by understanding the serpent as 'lifted up', although the terminology does not occur in the OT text or in its interpretive history.

There is evidence that John saw more in Num 21:4-9 than only a lifted up 'sign'.²⁰ A comparison between Jn 3:15 and Num 21:8 LXX shows the following similarities:²¹

¹⁶ BOISMARD, 'Citations', 378. FREY, 'Mose', 187, judges this to be 'für das Verständnis der johanneischen Konzeption durchaus bemerkenswert', but then prefers the Isaiah background. Cf. PANCARO, *Law*, 333; WINDISCH, 'Angelophanien', 230.

¹⁷ See BITTNER, *Zeichen*, 254f.; FREY, 'Mose', 189-191.

¹⁸ See BITTNER, *Zeichen*, 245-258, for examples of further instances in John's Gospel where Is 11 seems to be in the background.

¹⁹ FREY, 'Mose', 191.

²⁰ Interestingly, John does not use $\sigma\eta\mu\epsilon\iota\acute{o}\nu$ in Jn 3:14f. or anywhere else in the Gospel to refer to the cross as a 'sign'. The earliest evidence for this is *Barn.* 12:5-7, then Justin, *Dial. Tryph.* 91:4; 94:2-3; 112:1-2; *Apol. I*, 60; cf. DINKLER, 'Kreuzzeichen', 38f.; FREY, 'Mose', 191-194. Amongst those who nevertheless understood John to think of the cross as a sign are DODD, *Interpretation*, 439; PANCARO, *Law*, 333.

²¹ Cf. MOLONEY, *Son of Man*, 64; MANESCHG, *Erzählung*, 404; MARRS, 'John 3:14-15', 147; HANSON, *Gospel*, 48; FREY, 'Mose', 183.

John 3:15	Num 21:8
πᾶς	πᾶς
ὁ	ὁ δεδηγμένος
πιστεύων	ιδῶν αὐτόν
ἐν αὐτῷ	
ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον	ζήσεται

Frey comments briefly: ‘Als weitere Elemente der Entsprechung kommen hier die heilvollen Folgen der beiden Erhöhungs-Akte sowie das Anblicken der Schlange und der Glaube an den Gekreuzigten in Betracht.’²² Furthermore, in both cases God initiates the saving acts: in Num 21:8 God tells Moses: ποιήσον σεαυτῷ ὄφιν καὶ θες αὐτόν ἐπὶ σημείου, and in Jn 3:14 ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ conveys the sense of divine necessity.

Thus, the link between Jn 3:14f. and Num 21:4-9 consists of a comparison with four similarities: (1) in both accounts God initiates a salvific action, (2) the means of that action is something that has been/will be lifted up, (3) the potential beneficiaries of the action have to relate to the means of salvation by seeing/believing, and (4) the aim of the action is expressed.²³ It is equally clear, however, that there are important dissimilarities: (1) the means in Numbers is an impersonal object,²⁴ and in John it is the Son of Man who will be crucified. (2) The addressees in Numbers are the rebellious people of Israel; in the context of John’s Gospel πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων has clear universalistic overtones.²⁵ (3) The aim of the salvific action is specified in John’s Gospel as possession of eternal life, whereas in Numbers it consists of physical healing. We will encounter a similar comparison in Jn 6, where the manna that sustained physical life in the wilderness is transcended by Jesus, the bread of life, who gives eternal life. On the basis of these similarities and dissimilarities I now turn to a theological analysis of the comparison in Jn 3:14f.

4.1.3 The theological significance

The first point to be made here is that, as in the case of the Passover traditions, John is using an aspect of Moses tradition, this time the incident of the serpent in the wilderness, to illuminate the death of Jesus. This is clear from John’s use of the term ὑψωθῆναι, which, as we have seen, not only interprets the death as exaltation/glorification but also indicates the kind of death, namely, crucifixion. Thus a pattern seems to emerge: John uses aspects of Moses tradition to

²² FREY, ‘Mose’, 183.

²³ So also MOLONEY, *Son of Man*, 60f. MOO, *Testament*, 332f., sees only the lifting up and possibly the looking upon as points of comparison.

²⁴ According to 2 Kings 18:4, king Hezekiah son of Ahaz destroyed a bronze snake that was believed to be the one Moses has made and that evidently served as a kind of talisman in ancient Israel. By using Num 21 positively for his comparison with the cross, John neglects this aspect of the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the brazen serpent. For literature on the serpent as talisman see FREY, ‘Mose’, 156f.

²⁵ Universalistic notions are visible in Wis 16:5-14. This text contributes to the understanding of the theological implications of John’s use of Num 21, the focus of my next section.

explicate Jesus' death. Moses traditions contribute, therefore, to John's christology and soteriology.²⁶ The connection between Moses tradition and Jesus' death will emerge again in my discussion of wilderness traditions in Jn 6 and Jn 7. Suffice it to say for the moment that already the study of the Passover traditions and the present discussion of Jn 3:14f. show that the event of Jesus' death, foundational for the Johannine Christians, is described and interpreted against the background of foundational events in Israel's history. Since the foundational event of Jesus' death is a decisive identity marker for the Johannine Christians,²⁷ we have another example of a Moses tradition that is used christologically, but serves a sociological function.

For more specific theological implications in Jn 3:14f., some aspects of the interpretation of Num 21 in Jewish sources provide helpful comparative material. The major texts to be considered are 2 Kings 18:4, Wis 16:5-14; *m. Roš Haš.* 3:8; *Mek. Ex* 17:11, and some Targumic traditions.²⁸ It is interesting to see that some authors refuse to see any significance in these interpretations.²⁹ Others point to some aspects from the Jewish tradition and see John to be in line with it. Thus, Lindars thinks that John, by using the serpent as a symbol that is fulfilled in the cross of Christ, continues the tradition of Wis 16. There the embarrassment of the misuse of a serpent as a kind of talisman, hinted at in 2 Kings 18:4, is overcome by exploring the term *σημεῖον* in Num 21:8 LXX:

'In Wisd. 16.6 we can see how an Alexandrian writer can take advantage of the Septuagint rendering to interpret it symbolically, and so he calls it *σύμβολον σωτηρίας*. John stands in line with this tradition. In 3.14 he sees the "symbol" fulfilled in the cross of Christ.'³⁰

There are, however, more aspects of John's use of Num 21 reflected in Jewish sources. There is a clear trend to turn away from any notion of a magical power of the lifted up serpent towards an emphasis on God as the sole source of salvation (cf. esp. Wis 16:7: *ὁ γὰρ ἐπιστραφεὶς οὐ διὰ τὸ θεωρούμενον ἐσώζετο ἀλλὰ διὰ σὲ τὸν πάντων σωτῆρα*) and the obedience of the

²⁶ Confirmation of this conclusion comes from the result of an article on a very different issue. GUNDRY; HOWELL, 'Sense', 24-39, survey the use of *οὕτως ... ὥστε* in ancient Greek sources and in John, concluding that *οὕτως* is better understood to mean 'in this way', not as an intensifying 'so much'. If they are correct, v. 16 is linked to vv. 14f. by saying that the crucifixion, compared to the serpent incident, was God's way of showing his love for the world.

²⁷ Cf. the remarks on p. 66 above.

²⁸ FREY, 'Mose', 164-177, considers also Philo, *Agric.* 95-109; *Leg. All.* II, 71-105 (contrasting the serpent in the Garden of Eden, the 'serpent by the roadside' in Gen 49:16ff., and the brazen serpent); and the haggadic interpretation in *Bemidbar Rabbah* and *Tanchuma* (both interpret the *נֶחָשׁ* of Num 21 as a miraculous sign: Moses throws the serpent in the air and it stood up (in the air?); and they elaborate upon the reason why the punishment came by serpents: because the serpent in Eden started disobedience, and did not learn from it). However, these texts do not contribute much to the understanding of John's use of Num 21. Thus, in the case of Philo, the only conclusion is that John's use is worlds apart from Philo's allegorisation (the serpent in Eden symbolizing lust, the brazen serpent symbolizing self-control and prudence). For a full treatment of all relevant Jewish sources see MANESCHG, *Erzählung*.

²⁹ Thus, MOLONEY, *Son of Man*, 60 n. 97, refers to BARRETT, *St. John*, 178; HAMERTON-KELLY, *Pre-Existence*, 232; THÜSING, *Erhöhung*, 7, and says that they 'rightly point out that John is in no way interested in the Jewish speculation on this OT passage'.

³⁰ LINDARS, *Apologetic*, 236.

heart (*Roš Haš.* 3:8: ‘But could the serpent slay or the serpent keep alive! – it is, rather, to teach thee that such time as the Israelites directed their thoughts on high and kept their hearts in subjection to their Father in heaven, they were healed ...’;³¹ cf. *Mek.* Ex 17:11, and *Tg. Ps.-J.* of Num 21:8f.). In the Mekilta we even find the combination of *seeing* and *believing*, a combination which is important in John’s Gospel, as is well known.³² Although Jn 3:15 mentions only *πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων* as the beneficiaries of salvation, Jn 19:37 refers to the importance of seeing. Although *ὄψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν* is a quotation from Zech 12:10, several authors have suggested a link to Jn 3:14.³³ So by emphasizing believing and seeing, John is in line with trends in Jewish exegesis. But by emphasizing believing in *the Son of Man*, who in the Fourth Gospel is no other than *Jesus*, and seeing *the crucified*, he at the same time understands the saving power which the author of Wisdom ascribed to God as belonging to Jesus. In John’s use of Num 21 as compared to the use in Wisdom, Mishna, Mekilta and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, the power to save is transferred from God to the crucified Jesus. The beneficiaries will not only be physically restored, but the *Heilsgut* is eternal life. The universalistic notion (*πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων*) is hinted at in the description of God as *ὁ πάντων σωτήρ* in Wis 16:7.

A comparison with Wis 16:5-14 proves to be even more fruitful. Frey observes that the introductory *οὐ μέχρι τέλους ἔμεινεν ἡ ὀργή σου* in Wis 16:5, which sets the tone for the following interpretation of Num 21, combines *ὀργή* and *μένειν* in a way that cannot be found either in the LXX, the Pseudepigrapha, Philo or Josephus. Only in Jn 3:36 do we find the same combination: *ἀλλ’ ἡ ὀργή τοῦ θεοῦ μένει ἐπ’ αὐτόν*.³⁴ Frey draws several conclusions from this observation:

‘Der Bezug auf die alttestamentliche Geschichte der Rettung und ihre sapientiale Stilisierung bewahrt nicht nur die Rede von der Erhöhung Jesu, sondern auch die Rede von Leben und Tod vor einer möglichen doketisierenden oder spiritualisierenden Tendenz. Zugleich wird an dem Nachhall der Wüstenepisode in Joh 3,36 noch einmal deutlich, wie sehr der Verweis auf die Moseschlange von 3,14f. nicht nur das gesamte öffentliche Wirken Jesu rahmt und unter das Vorzeichen des Kreuzes stellt, sondern auch den literarischen Kontext von Joh 3, weit über die unmittelbar benachbarten Verse hinaus, prägt.’³⁵

The antidocetic function of the reference to the serpent incident, emphasizing ‘das Konkretum des Kreuzes’³⁶, has also been suggested by Schmithals.³⁷ The reference to the cross framing and overshadowing the earthly ministry of Jesus is based on the repetition of *ὕψωθῆναι* language in

³¹ Transl. by DANBY, *Mishna*, 192.

³² See eg. KOESTER, ‘Hearing’.

³³ E.g., PANCARO, *Law*, 322, 332, 334, 352; MOO, *Old Testament*, 214; FREY, ‘Mose’, 202.

³⁴ FREY, ‘Mose’, 196f.

³⁵ FREY, ‘Mose’, 203.

³⁶ FREY, ‘Mose’, 202.

³⁷ Cf. SCHMITHALS, *Johannesevangelium*, 332. SCHNELLE, *Christology*, 234f., also lists 3:14 among the verses that support his thesis of John’s antidocetism, but he does not elaborate upon the way in which the concreteness of the reference to Num 21 contributes to this.

3:14f. and 8:28, climaxing in 12:32-34.³⁸ The only point where I would disagree with Frey's conclusion is the overall influence of the Wisdom background. Interesting though the observation of the only two examples of the combination of ὄργη and μένειν is, I question whether Jn 3:36 justifies the understanding of the whole context of Jn 3 as being influenced by Wis 16. Since μένειν is one of John's important theological terms which he uses regularly (esp. in the Farewell discourses), it might be coincidental that by relating the term also to ὄργη, John created the second example of this combination. Also, if one does not go for rearrangement theories,³⁹ 3:36 seems to be too far removed from 3:14f. to sustain a coherent interpretation against the background of Wis 16, considering there are no further allusions to the serpent incident in 3:16-35. I see the significance of the Wisdom background to be more restricted to Jn 3:14f., and follow some lines of Pancaro's exposition.⁴⁰

In addition to the above mentioned similarities with other Jewish interpretations of the serpent incident, Pancaro turns his attention to another aspect in Wis 16:6: the function of the brazen serpent as a reminder of the law. Wis 16:6 reads: εἰς νοουθεσίαν δὲ πρὸς ὀλίγον ἐταράχθησαν σύμβολον ἔχοντες σωτηρίας εἰς ἀνάμνησιν ἐντολῆς νόμου σου. Pancaro comments:

'The serpent is a "symbol" of salvation in that it is a "reminder" of the Law; God and his "word" (the Law) are the salvific powers. In ultimate analysis: looking at the serpent means to turn to (cf. 16,7 ὁ ἐπιστραφεὶς) the Law (cf. 16,1.11) and the turning to the Law effects salvation – God or "his word" (the Law) saves those who turn to him (viz., to his Law).'⁴¹

In a further step Pancaro refers to Jn 5:45-47, stating that in John's Gospel belief in Jesus replaces belief in the Law and in Moses. Although fulfilment rather than replacement might be a better concept to use, I agree with the conclusion Pancaro draws:

'The Israelites were saved by the "word of God", the Law (by God himself on the condition that they subjected themselves to him and to his law); the new Israel is saved by God in the Son (on the condition that they look upon the Crucified with faith).'⁴²

The language of 'new Israel' might seem foreign to John's Gospel, but this study, esp. ch. 2, supports the view that John tries subversively to use traditions about the founding moments of Israel to encourage his audience to understand that believing in Jesus means to become children of God, which might justifiably be taken as John's equivalent to 'true Israel' language. The comparison of Jn 3:14f. with Wis 16 seems to add support to this view, and again supports our

³⁸ So also e.g. LINDEMANN, 'Mose', 314 n. 18.

³⁹ See e.g. SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium* I, 374ff. (= IDEM, *Gospel*, 1.360ff.), who places vv. 31-36 between 3:1-12 and 13-21, and BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 92ff. (3:1-21, 31-36, 22-30).

⁴⁰ See PANCARO, *Law*, 332-336.

⁴¹ PANCARO, *Law*, 335. The identification of νόμος and λόγος is based on Pancaro's exploration of the phrase τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον, cf. pp. 403-430, and τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς, pp. 431-451. Cf. also Wis 16:12b, which ascribes healing power to the word of the Lord: καὶ γὰρ οὔτε βοτάνη οὔτε μάλαγμα ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτούς ἀλλὰ ὁ σὸς κύριε λόγος ὁ πάντας ἰώμενος.

⁴² PANCARO, *Law*, 335f.

thesis of the sociological function of the use of Moses tradition: the identity of the believers in Jesus is defined against the background of Israel as the people of God.

Another suggestion of Pancaro follows the same direction. Concerning the lifting up of a standard (סֵלָה), Pancaro observes that this was often connected with the idea of the gathering of the dispersed children of God (Is 11:12; 49:22; 62:10; Jer 50:2 MT; 50:4ff.). Referring to the link between Jesus' death and the gathering of the people of God in Jn 11:50-52, Pancaro concludes that

‘it seems very probable that John considers the lifting up of Jesus on the cross ... the *σημεῖον par excellence*, which effects the gathering in of the children of God, which makes men children of God – through the faith which is engendered by the “Exalted” in those who “look upon” him – and unites them into one.’⁴³

The problem with this view is that John omits a reference to סֵלָה / σημεῖον. This casts doubt not only on the suggestion that John understood the cross as the pre-eminent sign, but also on the possibility of linking 3:14f. with the idea of the gathering of the children of God.⁴⁴ One could at this point make use of the notion of *metalepsis*. As we have seen,⁴⁵ the concept of *metalepsis* denotes the phenomenon that sometimes allusions are intended to evoke more than what is explicitly stated. However, neither the interpretation of Num 21 in other Jewish texts nor the repeated use of ὑψωθῆναι language in John seems to suggest that a transumed,⁴⁶ but nevertheless important reference to סֵלָה / σημεῖον is implied. It seems difficult, therefore, to connect 3:14f. with the idea of the gathering of the people of God in the way Pancaro suggests.

Jn 3:14f. might nevertheless contribute in a simpler way to John's understanding of the followers of Jesus as the true people of God. Regardless of various aspects of the story of Num 21 that are emphasized in the history of its interpretation, the basic transumed element that is everywhere presupposed is the obvious fact that the story is about God saving *his people*. Depending on the aim of a given interpretation, it can be emphasized that the story is meant to encourage obedience to the law (Wis 16), faith in God (Mekilta), or reflection on God's punishment of his rebellious people (Targumim, Tanchuma). Considering that one of John's aims is to show how elements of the Jewish religio-political system are transferred to Jesus, it seems to fit his agenda to imply in his reference to Num 21 the thought of a new salvific action of God for his people, this time connected with the crucifixion of Jesus, the Son of Man. Therefore, we see again that the more obvious christological and soteriological uses of Moses tradition serve a sociological function, here the ecclesiological implication that as the serpent

⁴³ PANCARO, *Law*, 333.

⁴⁴ Compared to the Synoptics, John is less interested in the motif of gathering the children of God, although it does appear in 11:52, and possibly in 6:12f., esp. if compared to Did. 9:3f. The importance of the motif in the Synoptics has been repeatedly emphasized by Gerhard Lohfink (cf. his *Gott*, and earlier *Jesus*, ‘Jesus’, and *Sammlung*).

⁴⁵ Cf. ch. 3, n. 91.

⁴⁶ Cf. HOLLANDER, *Figure*, 115, who says that ‘the interpretation of a metalepsis entails the recovery of the transumed material.’

was the salvific sign for Israel in the wilderness, so now the crucified Jesus becomes a cornerstone for the redefined people of God. Those who look upon Jesus as their saviour are defined as the people of God.

If these theological reflections on the use of the serpent incident in Jn 3:14f. reveal a certain complexity of issues connected with two verses only, the following discussion of the use of the manna tradition in John 6 has necessarily to include an even greater variety of problems.

4.2 The use of the manna tradition in John 6

John 6 has been called ‘the Grand Central Station of Johannine critical issues.’⁴⁷ Significant and complex problems await the interpreter:

‘From comparison/contrasts with Synoptic corollaries – to inferences of narrative and discourse sources – to redaction analyses – to christology, semeiology and sacramentology debates – to text disruption and rearrangement theories – to form-critical midrashic analysis – to reader-response approaches (just to mention some of the obvious critical issues), John 6 has time and again provided the *locus argumenti* for scholars wishing to make a definitive contribution to Johannine studies.’⁴⁸

Against this background and in the presence of major monographs focussing on John 6 only,⁴⁹ the present attempt to illuminate the way in which the manna tradition is used has to be seen as another exercise in deliberate restriction. Even if one focuses on the final form of the text as I do here, enough critical issues are left to be addressed. I will first focus on the function of John 6 in the narrative flow of John’s Gospel. Secondly, I will argue that the manna story of Exodus 16 and aspects of its interpretive tradition are used in combination with the evocation of other aspects from Moses tradition, thus emphasizing the Mosaic atmosphere of John 6. Thirdly, I will focus on the crucial verses 26-35, looking especially at the rhetorical function of the manna background and at the theological implications of Jesus’ response. Since Michael Theobald has recently argued that Jesus’ response in v. 32 implies a negation of the salvation-historical value of the Old Testament, this section calls for special attention.⁵⁰ Fourthly, I will develop some suggestions by Kügler in order to show how the manna background informs both the christological and the eucharistic aspects of John 6.⁵¹

⁴⁷ ANDERSON, ‘*Sitz im Leben*’, 1. For detailed description of the critical issues connected with John 6 see esp. THYEN, ‘Literatur’, 4; ‘Fortsetzung’, 328-359. See also the commentaries by Brown, Schnackenburg, and now Moloney.

⁴⁸ ANDERSON, ‘*Sitz im Leben*’, 1. BORGAN, ‘John 6’, 95, mentions as specific problems the varying collective designations of people, the different meanings of σημεῖον in vv. 2, 14, 26, 30, and the relation of the apparently eucharistic formulations in vv. 51ff. to the rest of the chapter. For a survey of the history of interpretation of Jn 6:22-59, cf. ROBERGE, ‘Discourse’.

⁴⁹ The most significant are BORGAN, *Bread*; ANDERSON, *Christology*, and LABAHN, *Offenbarung*.

⁵⁰ See THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’.

⁵¹ See KÜGLER, ‘Brotspender’, and IDEM, *König*.

4.2.1 The Johannine context

In order to appreciate the full impact of the use of the manna tradition in John 6, it is imperative to read the so-called ‘bread of life discourse’ (6:26-58) within the narrative flow of chapters 5 and 6. In 5:31-40, the focus of Jesus’ response to the Jews’ accusation that he makes himself equal to God (5:18) changes from the emphasis on Jesus’ life-giving power in judgement (5:19-30) to the witnesses testifying on Jesus’ behalf. These witnesses are a mysterious ἄλλος (5:32), John the Baptist (5:33-35), the works the Father gave to Jesus (5:36), the Father himself (5:37f.), and the Scriptures (5:39f.). Not all of these witnesses are of equal value. As Lincoln has shown,⁵² the five witnesses can be focused in a contrast between human and divine testimony. (A) There is the human testimony of John the Baptist which Jesus mentions for the sake of his opponents, but which he himself discounts (5:34: ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου τὴν μαρτυρίαν λαμβάνω, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα λέγω ἵνα ὑμεῖς σωθῆτε.). (B) This is contrasted by the testimony of the Father, the ἄλλος, which comes in two forms: (1) the works he gives to Jesus, and (2) his word, accessible in the Scriptures. The aspect of special importance for my reading of the manna tradition in John 6 is Jesus’ claim in 5:39: ἐραυνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς, ὅτι ὑμεῖς δοκεῖτε ἐν αὐταῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔχειν· καὶ ἐκεῖναί εἰσιν αἱ μαρτυροῦσαι περὶ ἐμοῦ. This claim that the Scriptures testify to Jesus is repeated with a different focus in 5:46: εἰ γὰρ ἐπιστεύετε Μωϋσεῖ, ἐπιστεύετε ἂν ἐμοί· περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν. In the light of this reference to Moses as witness for Jesus, I understand the evocation of the manna story and other elements from Moses tradition in John 6 as a deliberate attempt to provide an example of various ways in which Moses wrote about Jesus. Support for this perspective can also be found in the fact that vv. 39-40 state that life is not found in the Scriptures as such, but in their testimony to Jesus as the source of life:⁵³ the question of the true source of life is central in John 6.

Borgen also observes a link between chs. 5 and 6, understanding it as recalling the theophany at Sinai, which is then the proper scriptural background of 5:37-47 and 6:31-48.⁵⁴ Another connection Borgen notes is that ‘[i]n 6:41,⁵² “the Jews” represent those who, as stated in 5:39, execute (professional) midrashic exegesis of the Scriptures, but refuse to accept that the Scriptures bear witness to Jesus.’⁵⁵ That ch. 6 provides an example of how Moses wrote about

⁵² See LINCOLN, *Truth*, 77-79. For the view that the testimony of the Father takes several forms see CARSON, *Gospel*, 261-266.

⁵³ Cf. LINDEMANN, ‘Mose’, 315, who focuses on the Jews’ hope in Moses (5:45): ‘Inwiefern sich für “die Juden” mit Mose “Hoffnung” verbindet, wird nicht gesagt: Ist gemeint, daß er als Gesetzgeber den Juden “das Gesetz zum Lebensgewinn” gab, ist Mose also “der Heilsgarant”? [ref. to BECKER, *Evangelium*, 1.308] Oder steht im Hintergrund die Vorstellung von Mose als einem himmlischen Fürsprecher? [ref. to SÄNGER, ‘Funktion’, 126 n. 63] Das Verb ἐλπίζειν scheint generell auf eine eschatologische Funktion des Mose zu verweisen, allerdings wohl nicht so, daß eine “Parusie” des Mose erwartet wird, sondern so, daß aus “Mose”, also aus der Tora, die Hoffnung wahren Lebens abgeleitet wird. [ref. to BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 205]’.

⁵⁴ BORGEN, *Bread*, 151.

⁵⁵ BORGEN, ‘John 6’, 221. Cf. also his summary on p. 225f. On p. 227, Borgen goes even further and suggests that 5:36-47 speaks of three witnesses that are reflected in a threefold division of chapter 6 ((1) 5:36: Jesus’ works, exemplified in 6:1-21; (2) 5:37, the Father who sent Jesus, taken up in 6:22-

Jesus has been seen by other authors.⁵⁶ Labahn objects to the idea of a connection between chs. 5 and 6 by saying that in 5:46 Moses functions as witness for Jesus, whereas in 6:32 Moses ‘tritt ... als Inhalt der Schrift auf.’⁵⁷ Although technically correct, this observation of one detail can hardly render invalid the force of both the obvious and the more hidden uses of Moses tradition to clarify Jesus’ identity. To the evidence of the various kinds of uses of Moses tradition I now turn.

4.2.2 *The evocation of the manna story and of other elements of Moses tradition*

The manna story and aspects of its interpretive history form the major OT background of John 6 in terms of Moses tradition. It is evoked both in explicit ways and also more elusively, as we will see shortly. There are, however, other allusions to and uses of Moses traditions that function to reinforce the Mosaic flavour of the chapter. First, I turn to Jn 6:14-15, arguing that the figure of the prophet like Moses is evoked.

Several signals in Jn 6 suggest that the manna story is used in connection with the notion of Jesus as the prophet like Moses, promised in Dt 18:15-18. The major argument to support this view is that the crowd identifies Jesus as ὁ προφήτης ὁ ἐρχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον in 6:14. This is not a straightforward allusion to Dt 18; however, the narrator tells us that the claim is based on the crowd’s perception of the feeding as a sign, and in 6:30f. the request of a sign is connected with the giving of manna in the wilderness. This connection renders it highly likely that the Mosaic prophet is in view in 6:14.⁵⁸ In this case, the term σημεῖον itself might well carry Mosaic undertones, evoking the tradition about the signs Moses did before Pharaoh.⁵⁹

Another element able to carry Mosaic undertones is Jesus’ ascent to the mountain in 6:3, evoking Moses’ ascent to Mount Sinai. This has been suggested by many,⁶⁰ but Labahn highlights the potential significance of this signal in relation to other Johannine texts:

27; (3) 5:39f., 46f., the Scriptures, expanded in 6:28-71). This does not do justice to the presentation of the witnesses in chapter 5, nor to the complex structure of chapter 6.

⁵⁶ E.g. LINDARS, *John*, 50; SASSE, *Menschensohn*, 206; PRYOR, *John*, 28f.; SÄNGER, ‘Funktion’, 125; WELCK, *Zeichen*, 96-98; WHITACRE, *John*, 142.

⁵⁷ LABAHN, *Offenbarung*, 47 n. 32.

⁵⁸ So also e.g. DODD, *Scriptures*, 56; MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 90f.; KÜGLER, ‘Brotspender’, 121; COLLINS, *Things*, 194; BOISMARD, *Moses*, 10: ‘[T]his miracle of the multiplication of the loaves should call to mind, not only the precedent of the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 4:42-44), but also that of Moses feeding the Hebrews in the desert. The whole discourse which is going to follow plays indeed on the antithetic parallelism which exists, in regard to the manna, between Jesus and Moses (6:30ff). There can be no doubt then that, in 6:14, the expression “the Prophet who comes into the world” alludes to the prophet like Moses announced in Deut 18:18-19.’

⁵⁹ On the Mosaic background of the signs cf. BITTNER, *Zeichen*, esp. 151-170.

⁶⁰ For τὸ ὄρος (6:3) as a place of the revelation of the law cf. e.g. BROWN, *John*, 232; SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.18; MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 195f. ; WILCKENS, *Evangelium*, 96; PERRY, ‘Evolution’, 23-25; WITKAMP, ‘Features’, 47. BARRETT, *Gospel*, 273, says that ‘it is not impossible that there is an allusion to Moses and Mount Sinai ...’. MORRIS, *Gospel*, 303, denies any special significance of the term (‘the expression need mean no more than “the hill country.”’). That the mountain functions as a signal intended to evoke Moses tradition is also seen in relation to the

‘Kann man das Bergmotiv ... tatsächlich als einen Hinweis auf einen Ort, an dem Offenbarung geschieht, lesen, so lassen sich zwei Interpretationslinien verfolgen. Es läßt sich zunächst ablesen, daß im folgenden Offenbarung geschieht, und damit wird durch Joh 6,5ff. die Brotrede 6,25ff. präludiert. Andererseits wird der Leser auch an die ‚Arche‘ der Zeichen erinnert, die der Offenbarung der Doxa diene. Ist der Berg Signal des Offenbarungsortes, so ist Joh 6,5ff. auch im Licht von 2,11 zu lesen: Dann offenbart auch das Speisungswunder 6,5ff. die göttliche Doxa des von Gott gesandten Offenbarers, ist signum der göttlichen Nähe in ihm und ist Ausdruck einer tieferen christologischen Wahrheit, die im Irdisch-Materiellen Transzendentes aufscheinen läßt.’⁶¹

Even if the link to the Cana story in ch. 2 is judged too speculative, within the context of John 6 the mountain motif makes sense as an additional element designed to evoke Moses tradition, with the effect that a revelatory quality is not only attached to the discourse, but already to the sign of the feeding itself.

What are the conclusions that can be drawn from the use of Moses tradition so far? First, within the overall use of the manna story, the tradition of the prophet like Moses and the tradition of Moses’ ascent to Mount Sinai is evoked. Secondly, these traditions, as well as the reference to Passover in 6:4, are not developed as independent themes. They function on one level simply to add to the Mosaic flavour of ch. 6. Thirdly, Jesus’ reaction to the crowd’s confession in terms of the prophet like Moses, namely, to escape because of the impression that they would make him king by force (6:15), points to the inadequacy of the evocation of Dt 18 to understand Jesus’ true identity. Thus, a category from Moses tradition is at this point shown to be open to misuse by a crowd that apparently identifies the Mosaic prophet with the Messianic king,⁶² whereby Jesus evidently disagrees with the crowd’s conception of kingship. Fourthly, the revelatory character of the feeding as a sign is emphasized by the evocation of Moses’ ascent on Mount Sinai.

Even though this shows that these aspects of Moses tradition are used to make significant points, it is the manna tradition that is at the center of the use of Mosaic traditions in John 6. The link to that tradition is established beyond doubt by *the explicit reference* to it in 6:31 (οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν τὸ μάννα ἔφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ). The repetition of this phrase in v. 49 (nearly *verbatim*) and in v. 58 (abbreviated) has the effect of holding the whole section together.⁶³ *The OT quotation in 6:31* is the second explicit reference to the manna tradition. Although there is dispute about the precise source of the quotation, all the possible OT texts refer to the giving of manna during the wilderness wanderings of Israel.⁶⁴

Synoptic account of the transfiguration, see e.g. KRAUS, ‘Bedeutung’, 162, and in relation to the Sermon on the Mount, see e.g. ALLISON, *Moses*, 172-180.

⁶¹ LABAHN, *Offenbarung*, 51f.

⁶² MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, provides a superb study of the religio-historical material that illumines the connection between Moses as prophet and king.

⁶³ This should not be taken as an argument that proves the unity of the bread of life dialogue. As Theobald has rightly pointed out, the interpretation of John 6 is often driven by the desire to prove its unity, neglecting interesting features in the process (THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 332). I do not wish to enter the unity debate – as I said above, I restrict myself to observations on the final form of the text.

⁶⁴ The possible LXX sources of the quotation are Ex 16:4,15; Ps 77:24; Neh 9:15; Wis 16:20. See the discussion below.

Also quite obvious is *the repeated use of γογγύζω* in 6:41, 43, 61, echoing διαγογγύζω in Ex 16:2, 7, 8 and γογγυσμός in Ex 16:7, 8, 9, 12 to signify the rebellious dissatisfaction of the Israelites with their situation in the wilderness.⁶⁵ If this element is understood to put Jesus' audience in the same category as rebellious Israel, the point of interest is that not only "the Jews" (vv. 41, 43) but also Jesus' disciples (v. 61) are characterized in this way. This means that the latter are characterized together with the former by their 'unbelieving rebellion'.⁶⁶ Implicitly, this again puts Jesus in the position occupied by God (or by Moses and Aaron as representatives of God⁶⁷) in the manna story, since in John 6 the grumbling is directed against Jesus.

Another link to the manna tradition consists in *the testing motif*. Jn 6:6 says that Jesus tests Philip; beyond this simple fact, more significance might be detected once the manna story is evoked, as Whitacre observes:

'[A]s we see the reaction to his teaching and the events leading up to it, we find that the crowd and the disciples are all being put to the test. As God tested his people in the wilderness, so here the Son of God tests hearts. As with Israel, many grumble and fail, yet Jesus does find some who are receptive enough to pass the test.'⁶⁸

The testing motif is especially interesting, since it functions differently within the manna tradition. In Ex 16:4 Jahweh says that he is testing the people. The objective of the test is to see whether the Israelites obey the instructions for collecting the manna. This line is developed in Deut 8:3f, where the manna incident is given as one example of Jahweh's aim to test Israel's general obedience in the wilderness.⁶⁹ In Ps 78:18, 41, 56 (cf. also Ps 106:14), however, the motif recurs in the form of rebellious Israel testing Jahweh's patience by being disobedient. In

⁶⁵ This does not mean that any use of γογγύζω automatically evokes Moses tradition; however, the verb is used in Jn 7:32, and the only other NT uses are in Mt 20:10; Lk 5:30; and in 1 Cor 10:10, where it is explicitly linked to the wilderness tradition. GLASSON, *Moses*, 101, is on the right track when he concludes: 'Putting the evidence of 1 Corinthians and John together we can say that the rebellious mood of Israel in the wilderness has its counterpart in the attitude of the Jews of our Lord's time; and that, moreover, Christians are warned of the danger of falling into the same snare.'

⁶⁶ ANDERSON, *Christology*, 209.

⁶⁷ Although in Ex 16:2 the Israelites grumble against Moses and Aaron, Ex 16:7 and Num 16:11 make it quite clear that the grumbling is really against God.

⁶⁸ WHITACRE, *John*, 142. The testing motif as a link to Ex 16:4 is also seen by ANDERSON, *Christology*, 173. The move from testing Philip to testing the crowd can be justified by understanding the character of the feeding as a sign to imply the task to find out the true meaning of it, thereby testing the crowd's ability to understand Jesus' intention.

⁶⁹ Cf. FISHBANE, *Interpretation*, 327, on Deut 8: 'In this reworking, with its allusion to the testing tradition of Exod. 16:4, there is no reference to Israel's complaints in the desert. The testing is rather a sovereign – not responsive – act by God, designed to see whether Israel would obey his commandments and recognize him as the source of all sustenance. The people are thus tested in the desert with respect to their observance of all the commandments – not just the Torah-instruction concerning the manna (as in Exod. 16:4). In the aggadic reworking of Deut. 8, the specific testing associated with giving of manna (after a prior – providentially determined! – famine) was designed to bring Israel to recognize that "the creative will of God, in whatever way it may, upon occasion, specifically exert itself, is also a sustaining power, on which man may find himself obliged to rely".' The quotation is from DRIVER, *Deuteronomy*, 197.

the light of this tradition, the fact that Jesus is the one who tests the people is another subtle reminder that he is in God's position – and from the narrator's perspective, rightfully so.⁷⁰

Another element that might echo Ex 16 has been suggested by Swancutt.⁷¹ She sees a link between *the satisfaction with food* in 6:26 and the Israelites eating to the full in Egypt (Ex 16:3) and in the wilderness (Ex 16:8, 12). The problem with this suggestion is that there are no terminological similarities between 6:26 and the three verses from Ex 16.⁷² However, in 6:12 the aor. pass. of ἐμπίμπλημι is used,⁷³ echoing Ex 16:12 more closely. If this link is taken as intended, the following irony is created: In Ex 16:3, the element of abundance is introduced in the Israelites' complaint that in Egypt they had enough food. In Ex 16:8 the motif is taken up, but this time it is part of the giving of meat and bread by God in the wilderness – both gifts being intended to persuade the Israelites that it was God who brought them out of Egypt (cf. 16:6-8). In 16:12 the gift of meat and bread in abundance becomes the basis of an even more general knowledge of God, as God is telling Moses: εἰσακήκοα τὸν γογγυσμὸν τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ λάλησον πρὸς αὐτοὺς λέγων τὸ πρὸς ἐσπέραν ἔδεσθε κρέα καὶ τὸ πρωὶ πλησθήσεσθε ἄρτων καὶ γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν (Ex 16:12). Against this background, the giving of bread in abundance by Jesus in Jn 6:11ff. puts him in the position of the divine provider who gives bread in abundance. The crowd, however, does not draw this conclusion from this link to the Exodus background. According to Jesus' reaction in 6:15 and his response in 6:26, the crowd was interested only in the material advantage, not in the significance of the sign, namely, that it pointed to Jesus as source of life.

The discussion thus far has clearly shown the importance of several links to the manna tradition, even without a closer look at the quotation in verse 31 and Jesus' response in vv. 32ff. However, it is this passage that is usually the focus of discussions of the relationship of John 6 to the manna tradition, since it introduces a strong contrast between the gift of manna in the wilderness and the gift of the true bread of life. To this contrast I now turn.

4.2.3 The function of the quotation in 6:31 and of Jesus' response in 6:32ff.

John 6:31 provides a perfect example of a quotation that is clearly marked by an introduction formula (καθὼς ἐστὶν γεγραμμένον), but whose exact source is nonetheless difficult to pin down with certainty. The following texts have been suggested as possible sources of or influences on John 6:31:

⁷⁰ In all the references to the testing motif, forms of πειράζω are used. The link is thus supported by coherent terminology.

⁷¹ SWANCUTT, 'Hungers', 225.

⁷² Jn 6:26 uses the aor. pass. of χορτάζω, Ex 16:3, 8 uses εἰς πλησμονήν, 16:12 uses fut. pass. of πίμπλημι.

⁷³ The term is used in John's Gospel only here (BROWN, *John*, 234; DODD, *Tradition*, 204). The Synoptics use at this point χορτάζεσθαι.

Ex 16:4:

εἶπεν δὲ κύριος πρὸς Μωυσῆν
 ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἕω ὑμῖν ἄρτους ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ
 καὶ ἐξελεύσεται ὁ λαὸς καὶ συλλέξουσιν τὸ τῆς ἡμέρας εἰς ἡμέραν ὅπως πειράσω αὐτοὺς εἰ
 πορεύσονται τῷ νόμῳ μου ἢ οὐ

Ex 16:15

ἰδόντες δὲ αὐτὸ οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ εἶπαν ἕτερος τῷ ἑτέρῳ τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο οὐ γὰρ ἤδεισαν τί ἦν εἶπεν
 δὲ Μωυσῆς πρὸς αὐτούς
 οὗτος ὁ ἄρτος ὃν ἔδωκεν κύριος ὑμῖν φαγεῖν

Ps 77:24 LXX:

καὶ ἔβρεξεν αὐτοῖς μαννα φαγεῖν
 καὶ ἄρτον οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς

2 Esdras 19:15 LXX

καὶ ἄρτον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκας αὐτοῖς εἰς σιτοδείαν αὐτῶν
 καὶ ὕδωρ ἐκ πέτρας ἐξήνεγκας αὐτοῖς εἰς δίψαν αὐτῶν
 καὶ εἶπας αὐτοῖς εἰσελθεῖν κληρονομήσαι τὴν γῆν ἐφ' ἣν ἐξέτεινας τὴν χεῖρά σου δοῦναι αὐτοῖς

Ps 104:40

ἤτησαν καὶ ἦλθεν ὀρνυγομήτρα
 καὶ ἄρτον οὐρανοῦ ἐνέπλησεν αὐτούς

Wis 16:20

ἀνθ' ὧν ἀγγέλων τροφήν ἐψώμισας τὸν λαόν σου καὶ ἔτοιμον ἄρτον ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ παρέσχες
 αὐτοῖς ἀκοπιάτως πᾶσαν ἡδονὴν ἰσχύοντα καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν ἀρμόνιον γεῦσιν

What does a comparison with John 6:31 yield? The Johannine text reads:

οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν τὸ μάννα ἔφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, καθὼς ἐστὶν γεγραμμένον,
 Ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν.

The first observation is a simple one: no OT text is exactly reproduced in John. The following similarities and dissimilarities emerge:

If John was using Ex 16:4, he used a different verb in a different person (ἔδωκεν instead of ἕω), changed the personal pronoun from 2nd to 3rd person plural (from ὑμῖν to αὐτοῖς), changed the object from plural to singular (from ἄρτους to ἄρτον), and added another infinitive (φαγεῖν). He took over the prepositional phrase ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ without changes.

If he used Ex 16:15, he omitted a demonstrative pronoun (οὗτος), an article (ὁ), a relative pronoun (ὃν), and the subject (κύριος). Also, he changed the personal pronoun from 2nd to 3rd person plural (from ὑμῖν to αὐτοῖς) and added a prepositional phrase (ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ).

If he used Ps 77:24, he added a preposition and an article (ἐκ τοῦ), thereby changing the meaning of the accusative object. He also changed the position of an infinitive (φαγεῖν).

If he used 2 Esdras 19:15, he changed a prepositional phrase (from ἐξ οὐρανοῦ to ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ), he changed the person of the verb (from ἔδωκας to ἔδωκεν), and he exchanged another prepositional phrase with an infinitive (εἰς σιτοδείαν αὐτῶν by φαγεῖν).

If he used Ps 104:40, he used a different verb with a pronominal object in a different case (ἐνέπλησεν αὐτούς instead of ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς), he added a preposition and an article (ἐκ τοῦ), thereby changing the meaning of the accusative object, and added another infinitive (φαγεῖν).

This rather technical description highlights the difficulties involved if one is interested in discovering the exact source of a given quotation. The problems only increase if further Hebrew, Greek or Aramaic versions of the texts in question are postulated – especially if these versions are unknown to us.⁷⁴ If one instead chooses to assess the significance of various changes visible in the comparisons with known texts, one is inclined to favour Ps 77:24 LXX as the most likely source,⁷⁵ since the changes from this text to Jn 6:31 are the least problematic. On the other hand, given the overall importance of the manna story for John 6, it seems difficult to deny the possibility of influences from the foundational text Ex 16 and from other ‘bread from heaven’ texts as well.⁷⁶

If it is therefore difficult to pin down the exact source on the basis of philological observations alone, the situation changes in the context of the development of more comprehensive theories about the nature of the whole passage. This can be seen clearly in two of the most significant approaches to the use of the manna tradition in John 6. In Borgen’s famous form-critical attempt to argue for the unity of John 6:31-58 on the basis of a similar homiletical pattern in John 6, Philo and Palestinian midrashim, Ex 16:4, 15 was favoured as the source of the quotation, since part of Borgen’s proposed homiletical pattern is a quotation from the Pentateuch, followed by a quotation from the prophets (in John 6, the quotation of Is 54:13 in v. 45). Anderson, on the other hand, although agreeing that Jn 6 is homiletical in form, and although using the same Jewish texts as Borgen, detects a different rhetorical pattern which works with Ps 78 as source of the quotation. A closer comparison of their contributions leads us to the decisive points of the use of the manna tradition in John 6.

4.2.3.1 *The approaches of Borgen and Anderson revisited*

As just mentioned, Anderson agrees with Borgen’s major findings:

‘Borgen has demonstrated convincingly that, based upon a “common homiletical pattern” between the use of the manna tradition in the writings of Philo, John, and Palestinian

⁷⁴ It has also been suggested that v. 31 does not quote an OT text at all, but a Palestinian manna tradition (so RICHTER, ‘Zitate’). The major argument against this view is the introductory formula *καθώς ἐστὶν γεγραμμένον*, which usually introduces an OT quotation, so ROSE, ‘Manna’, 96.

⁷⁵ This is the conclusion of e.g. MENKEN, *Quotations*, 47-65; SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*, 33-46; OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 132-135; ANDERSON, ‘*Sitz im Leben*’, 13; LINDEMANN, ‘Mose’, 317; THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 328f. The Psalm was already seen as the *Vorlage* by CALVIN, *John*, 157.

⁷⁶ Thus, SMITH, *John*, 153, wisely argues for a mixed quotation from Ex 16:4, 15; Neh 9:15; Ps 77:24; and Ps 105:40. A mixed quotation is also favoured by e.g. HENGEL, ‘Schriftauslegung’, 267. Cf. also OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 150: ‘Die stereotype Rede vom Himmelsbrot als einer heilsgeschichtlichen Grunderfahrung in der Wüste beim Exodus verbietet – ganz abgesehen von der nicht mit letzter Sicherheit zu lösenden Quellenfrage –, vom johanneischen Zitat ausgehend allein den (LXX) 77. Psalm als Verstehenshintergrund der Adressaten des Joh in den Blick zu nehmen. Die Assoziation der Hörer und Hörerinnen beim Wahrnehmen des johanneischen Zitats wird das Mannawunder insgesamt sein.’ From this perspective, Borgen’s view that Ex 16:4 and 15 are the source of the quotation (see below), could be characterized as the minimalist form of a mixed quotation.

midrashim, the diachronic approaches of Bousset and Bultmann to Philo and John must be called into serious question.’⁷⁷

However, as Richter has shown,⁷⁸ it is also possible to apply the homiletical pattern to Jn 6:31-51a, so that even with Borgen’s homiletical pattern one could still argue for the secondary addition of vv. 51c-58, whether as eucharistic elaboration or otherwise. But, as I said earlier, I will resist entering the unity debate, since it would lead us too far away from the question of the use of Moses traditions.

Secondly, Anderson takes up Borgen’s form-critical result in order to argue that several groups are addressed in John 6:

‘If this section were indeed a homily, preached within the setting of Johannine cultic life, one can detect a transition within Johannine Christianity from the “bread of life” being Torah and wisdom to the bread ultimately embodied in Jesus ... The theophanic presentations of Yahweh in the days of Moses have now been eclipsed by the incarnation, which becomes for Johannine Christians the ultimate theophany. ... [A]s a midrashic homily, the destination and meaning of John 6:31-58 is illuminated, and some of its inconsistencies are explained (p. 184). The evangelist was addressing groups with different needs in his audience, and this accounts for some of the changes of emphasis (sapiential/eucharistic) within the section.’⁷⁹

For the purpose of this study we can leave aside the question of multiple intended audiences.⁸⁰ In terms of the use of Moses tradition, the point of interest is the theophanic character of the incarnation: Jesus as bread of life is the supreme revelation of God, superior to the gift of manna and wisdom. However, since Jesus is not only in the position of the gift, but simultaneously also in the position of the giver (6:27, 33f.), he appears – even more directly – in the position that within the manna story was held by God. This fits with my observations in connection with the crowd’s murmuring, the testing motif, and the giving of bread in abundance.

Thirdly, Anderson agrees that the closest *religionsgeschichtliche* background of John 6 is ‘the concept of agency within the Jewish halakhic tradition, later developed more fully within juridical and Merkabah forms of mysticism.’⁸¹ However, despite this threefold agreement, it is Anderson’s negative critique of Borgen’s study that leads to his own view of the use of the manna tradition. First, Anderson objects that the imprecise meaning of the term ‘midrash’ makes it ‘difficult to see how the identification of John 6:31-58 as a ‘midrash’ is any more significant than regarding the section as an ‘exegetical paraphrase’ or simply a scriptural allusion.’⁸² Secondly, Anderson thinks it likely that

⁷⁷ ANDERSON, *Christology*, 55.

⁷⁸ See RICHTER, ‘Formgeschichte’; cf. also BROWN, *John*, 277, who thinks Borgen’s theory could be equally, if not better, applied to Jn 6:35-50.

⁷⁹ ANDERSON, *Christology*, 55-56.

⁸⁰ This point is developed in an elaborate argument in ANDERSON, ‘*Sitz im Leben*’. Space forbids a detailed discussion of this article. Suffice it to say that I judge Anderson’s theory simply to be too complicated to be persuasive. Cf. the critical remarks in LABAHN, *Offenbarung*, 28 n. 21.

⁸¹ ANDERSON, *Christology*, 56.

⁸² ANDERSON, *Christology*, 56-57. See his notes 7 and 8 on these pages for recent literature on the problem of defining ‘midrash’.

'Borgen has misidentified the homiletical "form" of the way the manna tradition is used in Philo, John, Exodus Mekilta and Midrash Rabbah. Borgen's "homiletical pattern" works well for the midrashim in which Exodus 16:4 is the *primary* text being developed (Exodus Rabbah 25:1-8), but *not* for the rest of the midrashim in which the manna motif is used *nearly always as a secondary text*. ... Apart from the eight midrashic developments of various meanings of "Then the Lord said to Moses: Behold I will cause to rain bread from heaven for you." (Ex. 16:4), the "common midrashic pattern" identified by Borgen does not work for other treatments of the manna motif. In virtually all the other cases in which the manna motif is used midrashically within ancient Jewish or Christian literature, manna is used as a "rhetorical trump" to make a dualistic contrast between that which is of earthly origin and that which is of heavenly origin.'⁸³

Interestingly, the observation that the manna motif is used as a secondary text is based on a slightly different selection of passages from some of the the same texts Borgen used. Thus, Borgen selected *Leg. all.* III 162-168 and *Mut.* 253-263, defending his choice mainly by applying the principle: 'The unit which belongs to a quotation from the Old Testament may be traced by examining the extent to which the paraphrase of that quotation goes.'⁸⁴. Anderson's pattern, on the other hand, is based on his selection of *Leg. all.* III 161-178 and *Mut.* 252-263. One problem with Borgen's selection criterion is that it reflects his resulting pattern to a high degree, so that his argument belies a certain circularity. Anderson's reading of the Philonic texts has the advantage that it highlights an *identical* rhetorical use of the manna tradition: in both Philonic texts the manna reference is introduced as a secondary text in support of a different issue, whereas in Borgen's reading the quotation from Ex 16:4 serves in one case as the primary text of the homily (*Leg. all.* III 162), and in the other case it is a subordinate quotation (*Mut.* 259), a fact that Borgen realizes without seeing the possible significance of it.⁸⁵ That the introduction of the manna motif as a secondary text fits also the narrative flow of John 6 will be shown shortly. It can, however, also be detected in Ps 78, as Anderson shows in the following table:

'The Rhetorical use of Manna Pattern in Psalm 78'⁸⁶

A. *Main point of exhortation*: Put your trust in God, Oh my people, and do not be like your forefathers – a stubborn and rebellious generation (vs. 1, 7f.).

B. *Development of point using either/or categories*: God did many miracles inviting their trust (vss. 11-16), but the sons of Ephraim continued to sin, putting God to the test, demanding the food they craved (vss. 9f., 17-20). Therefore, God's wrath broke out and he sent fire, but they still did not trust (vs. 21f.).

C. *Introduction of manna as rhetorical trump*: God even opened the doors of heaven and rained down manna for people to eat, and he gave them the 'grain of heaven'. Mortals ate the 'bread of the angels' – as much as they desired. He also rained down flesh (flying birds as thick as sand on the shore), satisfying all their cravings, but despite all this, they went on sinning. Even as the flesh was between their teeth God's

⁸³ ANDERSON, *Christology*, 58. The texts that use the manna motif as a secondary text are: Philo, *Leg. All.* III 162-168; *Fug.* 137-142; *Mut. Nom.* 253-263; *Congr.* 158-174; *Vit. Mos.* I 196-205; *Vit. Mos.* II 258-274; *Gen. Rab.* XLVIII.10, LI.2; LXVI.3; *Ex. Rab.* V.9; XXIV.3; XXXIII.8; XXXVIII.4; XLI.1; *Deut. Rab.* X.4; and *Mekilta*, Tractate *Beshallah* I.201.

⁸⁴ BORGEN, *Bread*, 29. Cf. also his remarks about 'The homilies and their literary contexts' on pp. 43-44.

⁸⁵ See BORGEN, *Bread*, 122.

⁸⁶ ANDERSON, *Christology*, 214.

anger rose up against them, putting to death even the strongest of them, and yet they still put God to the test (vss. 23-41).

D. *Continued development and implications*: God did miraculous signs in Egypt (vss. 42-51), he delivered them from the oppressor (vss. 52-55), but they still put God to the test (vs. 56). Therefore, God was angered. He consumed their young men with fire, put their priests to death by the sword, and rejected the tribe of Ephraim, choosing *Judah* instead.

E. *Reiteration of main point*: Therefore, God chose David his servant to be a shepherd to his people, and to lead them with skilful hands (implicit exhortation: be thankful for God's provision through David's kingdom, and not ungrateful as the fathers in the wilderness, who craved something more.) You saw what happened to the Northern Kingdom – will *you* be next?

Ingeniously, Anderson goes on to identify this pattern in two different ways also in John 6. On the one hand, he sees it reflected in the way the introduction of the manna motif by the crowd is structured:

'The Use of Manna as a "Rhetorical Trump" by the Crowd in John 6'⁸⁷

A. *Main point of the crowd's request*: 'How long have you been here?' (implying 'And just how long will it be until we receive another feeding?' vs. 25f.).

B. *Development of point using either/or categories*: In response to Jesus' exhortation to seek not the food which produces death, but that which is life-producing, the crowd asks, 'What must we do in order to do (get?) the works of God?' (and thus receive the life-producing food, vs. 27f.)?

C. *Introduction of manna as rhetorical trump*: 'Then what sign will *you* do for us? Our fathers ate *manna* in the desert.' (vs. 30f.) The challenge is clear, the gauntlet is thrown down.

D. *Continued development and implications*: 'As it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat."' In other words, 'If you really claim to be a Prophet like Moses (Elisha), show us another sign – after all, *he* gave us bread from heaven (the food of angels) to eat' (vs. 31f.). 'Are you what you claim to be, or not?

E. *Reiteration of main point*: Therefore, they said to him (regarding the bread which comes down from heaven), 'Lord, give us this bread all the time.' (vs. 34)

On the other hand, Anderson sees the pattern reflected in the whole structure of the dialogue:

'The Rhetorical Structure of the Christocentric exhortation in John 6'⁸⁸

(A) The main point is the exhortation to work not for the food which spoils, but for the food which endures eternally, given by the Son of Man (vs. 27; cf. Deut. 8:2f. and Is. 55:1f.).

(B) The objections are threefold: 'Our fathers ate manna in the wilderness.' (vs. 31); 'How can he say he came down from heaven?' (vs. 41f.); 'How can this one give us his flesh to eat?' (vs. 52). (The first objection (vss. 25-34) employs the standard rhetorical use of manna pattern (Table 1, above)⁸⁹, using the manna scripture as a secondary proof-text.)

(C) The christocentric development of the life-producing bread is also threefold: 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry ...' (vs. 35); 'I am the bread of life ... coming down from heaven, which one may eat and not die.' (vss. 48, 50f.); and, 'Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.' (vs. 54).

(D) The death-producing results of the objections are also described: 'Your forefathers ate manna in the wilderness, and yet they died.' (vss. 49, 58); '... the flesh profits nothing.' (vs. 63).

(E) The basis for the main exhortation is summed up: 'This is the bread which came down from heaven; not like that which the fathers ate, and died. Whoever eats this bread will live eternally.' (vs. 58); and, 'My words are spirit and life.' (vs. 63).

⁸⁷ ANDERSON, *Christology*, 215.

⁸⁸ ANDERSON, *Christology*, 60.

⁸⁹ This refers to the table containing the general pattern, which is the first of the tables quoted above, p. 109.

Whether or not one judges this perception of a structural parallelism between Jn 6 and Ps 78 to be convincing, the first point to notice is that Anderson unintentionally provides an example of *interpretation* not only being *a* factor in the process of *identifying* the source of a quotation; his coherent interpretative perspective becomes *the* major factor in favour of a suggested source. Having said this, although I am impressed by Anderson's ingenuity, the problem seems to be that if this kind of parallelism were present to the author of John's Gospel, it would require a very perceptive kind of reader, let alone hearer, who would be able to pick up the connection. The communicative value of Anderson's proposal seems therefore to be significant for a special kind of audience only. Furthermore, even if one were to agree that Anderson's pattern reflects a plausible reading of the Psalm's structure, considerable differences between the form and content of the Psalm and the form and content of John 6 still remain. I therefore conclude that Anderson's view of the link between John 6 and Psalm 78 is illuminating; whether or not it can be considered as deliberately intended by the author of John 6 seems impossible to say.

Turning back to Borgen's approach, his homiletical pattern is comparatively simple and therefore easier to recognize by an intended audience or intended readers:

'The pattern consists of the following points: (1) The Old Testament quotation. (2) The interpretation. (3) The objection to the interpretation. (4) Point (2), the interpretation, freely interpreted and questioned. (5) The answer which can conclude with a reference to point (2), the interpretation.'⁹⁰

The major problem with this pattern is that it requires Borgen to understand Jn 6:31 as the beginning of the homily on the bread from heaven, and this does not seem to reflect the narrative flow of the chapter.⁹¹ Although there is no shortage of suggestions as to how to divide John 6 best,⁹² to understand v. 31 as the beginning of the homily, 'linked to the traditional idea of the request for a sign, v. 30',⁹³ and to hold that 'verses 26-29(30) form the transition from the narratives to the homily',⁹⁴ seriously underestimates the significance of the verses in question.

⁹⁰ BORGEN, *Bread*, 85.

⁹¹ On this point cf. also THYEN, 'Literatur, 4. Fortsetzung, 339f.

⁹² Cf. e.g. the proposals of CROSSAN, 'Analysis' (structuralist reading); SASSE, *Menschensohn*, 203ff. (simple division into two parts (vv. 32-46 and vv. 47-58), entailing several interesting observations, e.g. the themes of both parts (the first part being about the giver of bread from heaven, the second about the eating of the gift) being emphasized in the framing sentences of the respective parts); BEUTLER, 'Structure' (concentric structure; cf. also for bibliographical information on the structure issue); and esp. THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 331-344, who presents a complex structure, taking into account five 'strukturbildende Faktoren': apart from the midrashic homily as structural element, which he dismisses, he discusses the respective structural contribution of the six *Redewechsel*; the four amen-sayings; the deliberate use of the lexeme-combination 'seeing' and 'believing' in the transitional verses 30, 36, 40, 46f.; and the repetition of sentences or parts of sentences. The conclusion of his sensitive application of these factors to the text is that he classifies the text as a dialogue, not a homily, and that the center of the dialogue is the ἐγώ εἰμι saying in 6:35. For literature on the wide variety of dialogue forms in antiquity see THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 334 n. 39. Although I agree with Theobald's views on form and structure, I have strong reservations against his interpretation of the theological implications of John's use of the manna tradition, as will become clear shortly.

⁹³ BORGEN, *Bread*, 45.

⁹⁴ BORGEN, *Bread*, 46.

In terms of the narrative flow of John 6 these verses hold a key position, for they contain sayings of Jesus in vv. 26-27 and 29 that already entail the decisive elements of the unfolding dialogue. The purpose of the next section is therefore to list the important correlations between 6:26-29 and 6:30-58.

4.2.3.2 *The links between 6:26-29 and 6:30-58*

In 6:26 Jesus rebukes those who witnessed the miraculous feeding, accusing them of being interested in him as provider of *bread* for the satisfaction of physical hunger, and in nothing else: ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ζητεῖτέ με οὐχ ὅτι εἶδετε σημεῖα, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐφάγετε ἐκ τῶν ἄρτων καὶ ἐχορτάσθητε. Two aspects are important to notice: First, ἄρτος, a central term both in the feeding story (see 6:5, 7, 9, 11, 13) and in the following dialogue (6:31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 41, 48, 50, 51, 58), is used here on the lips of Jesus with the effect that the feeding miracle and the ensuing dialogue are linked. This also means that the term is not introduced by the quotation in v. 31, as one would expect on the basis of Borgen's approach. Secondly, by using the term σημεῖα, Jesus takes up the notion that the feeding should point beyond the satisfying of hunger, although not in the direction of an "earthly" kingship, as in 6:14. I understand v. 27 to spell out the direction in which the feeding as a sign should have pointed, namely, that there is another kind of food that really deserves to be desired: ἐργάζεσθε μὴ τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν ἀπολλυμένην ἀλλὰ τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν μένουσαν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον (6:27ab).

This exhortation introduces a *contrast* that functions in several ways.⁹⁵ First, following directly after v. 26, v. 27a classifies the bread of the feeding miracle as ἡ βρῶσις ἡ ἀπολλυμένη, thereby playing down the importance of material bread. Secondly, the notion of two kinds of food is taken up in the dialogue by Jesus' differentiation between ὁ ἄρτος ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ and ὁ ἄρτος ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὁ ἀληθινός in 6:32. Furthermore, the contrast occurs again in 6:49-50: οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν ἔφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ τὸ μάννα καὶ ἀπέθανον· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβαίνων, ἵνα τις ἐξ αὐτοῦ φάγη καὶ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ, and in 6:58: οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, οὐ καθὼς ἔφαγον οἱ πατέρες καὶ ἀπέθανον· ὁ τρώγων τοῦτον τὸν ἄρτον ζήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. This observation means that the function of the manna motif is completely reversed: whereas Jesus' dialogue partners introduce the manna motif in v. 31 as a positive example of the kind of sign they expect from Jesus, the motif is placed in a completely negative category not only through Jesus' response in v. 32, but previously through the initial contrast in v. 27, which is applied to the manna motif in vv. 49f. and 58.

⁹⁵ The contrast is part of the Johannine dualism and, expressed in metaphorical language using the semantic field of food/drink, especially anticipated in John 4. The most important Scriptural background is Is 55:1. An interesting Synoptic parallel is Lk 12:29. See e.g. BROWN, *John*, 264. See also p. 267, where Brown sets Jn 6:25, 27, 30-34 alongside Jn 4:9, 13, 11f, 14f., using the parallelism as an argument against GÄRTNER, *Passover*, who relates the pattern of questions and answers in John 6 to the Jewish Passover Haggadah.

That the manna is put in a negative category has been observed by many; Anderson, however, who connects the present point with his perception of the rhetorical structure of John 6 on the basis of his comparison with Psalm 78, seems to overstate the case by emphasizing the uniqueness of John's procedure:

'[I]t is Jesus' association of manna with death-producing food which is so striking – and indeed *unique*. For the first time in the history of the use of the manna motif within Jewish/Christian writings is manna regarded as *inferior* to another kind of bread. In effect, what the evangelist has done is to portray a situation in which the manna motif is used rhetorically by Jesus' discussants, but which the Johannine Jesus reformulates in the form of a threefold christocentric exhortation, using the imagery of the "bread of life" being given by God, received by believers, and ingested by those who would be his disciples. In doing so, John's reformulation of the manna-rhetoric is highly significant. Whereas the crowd employs the manna motif as a rhetorical trump (C) in order to persuade Jesus to provide them with more bread (A), the evangelist has moved the manna motif (vs. 31) to the place of the first and primary objection (B) and has placed Jesus as the life-producing bread (vs. 35) in the pivotal position (C), formerly occupied by the manna from heaven ...'⁹⁶

The problem is that there are other instances where 'manna [is] regarded as *inferior* to another kind of bread.' Joshua 5:10-12 relates the ceasing of the giving of manna the day after the Passover celebration of Israel at Gilgal. Vv. 11-12 imply a contrast between the unleavened bread and roasted grain (מַצּוֹת וְקִלְיִי), the produce of Canaan, and the manna, a contrast that could be construed as a devaluing of the manna. If this seems too speculative, more persuasive evidence can be found in Numbers 11:4-9. Here the manna is clearly perceived by the rebellious people in the desert as inferior to the food they ate in Egypt. The most explicit devaluation of the manna, however, occurs in Num 21:5, 'the foremost instance of Israel's spurning of Yahweh's provision of manna.'⁹⁷ Here the manna is called לֶחֶם הַקֶּלֶקֶל, 'miserable bread'.⁹⁸ Martin Rose detects here a strand of tradition that compares the manna to the bread of the period after the settlement in Canaan:

'Das Manna ist Symbol der Erbärmlichkeit der Existenz in der Wüste ... Maßstab ist also das Brot der seßhaften Bevölkerung. So verwundert es auch nicht weiter, daß nach Num 11,8 das Manna demselben Verfahren unterzogen wird, wie man es für die Zubereitung von Brotfladen praktiziert: man mahlt und zerstößt das Manna, als handele es sich um eine Art von Getreidekörnern.'⁹⁹

The first major conclusion with respect to the use of the manna tradition in John 6 is thus that although introduced by Jesus' dialogue partners as an example of a positive sign, the manna motif comes down on the side of death-producing food. Although a depreciation of the manna is

⁹⁶ ANDERSON, *Christology*, 60. See also his exegetical observations on pp. 203f.

⁹⁷ O'Connell, art. קֶלֶקֶל, *NIDOTTE*, 3.934.

⁹⁸ O'Connell, art. לֶחֶם, *NIDOTTE*, 2.790. The LXX translates ὁ ἄπτος ὁ διακένοσ, 'empty, hollow bread'.

⁹⁹ ROSE, 'Manna', 79. Philo, *Rer. Div. Her.* 78-80, uses Num 11:5 as an example of the people putting manna in the category of inferior food, thereby revealing their inability to appreciate the divine word for which the manna is a symbol. The most comprehensive work on manna, looking mainly at Exodus 16, but also at other OT texts, at the etymological question and at evidence from natural science, is the two-volume dissertation by MAIBERGER, *Manna*. On the tradition history see also MALINA, *Manna*.

not unknown in the tradition, the negative reversal of the perspective on the manna in Jn 6:26-32 can be seen as the climax of the strand of tradition that reflects a critical understanding of manna.

There are, however, more elements in 6:26-29 that are taken up in various forms in 6:30-58, and these elements illumine further the way in which the manna tradition is completely overshadowed. The food that is to be desired is specified in 6:27c as that ἦν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὑμῖν δώσει. The notion of *giving* occurs several times in the dialogue with several subjects and objects. In 6:31 it occurs within the OT quotation about the giving of the bread from heaven to the fathers in the desert. The subject of the giving seems to be Moses, as is implied in Jesus' response in v. 32.¹⁰⁰ Here Jesus contrasts the past gift of bread from heaven with the present gift of *the true* bread from heaven by his father. V. 33 further specifies the true bread: ὁ γὰρ ἄρτος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστὶν ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ζωὴν διδούς τῷ κόσμῳ. Several points are implied in this verse: First, the notion of descent from heaven, although grammatically ambiguous, is best taken to indicate that Jesus himself is the bread from heaven, since the phrase ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ has already been used with reference to Jesus as the Son of Man in 3:13, and is applied to Jesus in 6:38, 41f., 50f., 58. Furthermore, in v. 35 Jesus reveals the crowds' desire to secure a never-ending supply of bread (v. 34) as a misunderstanding by identifying himself with the true bread, making it highly likely that he was the referent of the bread of God already in v. 33.¹⁰¹ Secondly, not only is Jesus the bread of God and thus a gift from God, He is also the giver of life *to the world*. The universal aspect offers a clue for the connection between manna, the true bread of God that has come down from heaven in Jesus, and Torah, as Borgen has shown.¹⁰² The power to give life to the world, assigned to Jesus in v. 33b, is assigned to the Torah in e.g. *Tanh. Shemoth 25; Mek. Ex 15,26; Ex. Rab. 29:9; cf. Deut. Rab. 7,3*. In this way, the motif of Jesus replacing the Torah recurs also in the context of the use of the manna tradition.¹⁰³ Thirdly, the aspect that the bread gives *life* takes up the thought in

¹⁰⁰ That Moses is the implied subject in v. 31 is held e.g. by LINDEMANN, 'Mose', 317 (since the request is about a legitimizing sign by a person); THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 345; MENKEN, *Quotations*, 54; RICHTER, 'Zitate', 211-219; ROSE, 'Manna', 97f. For Jewish sources that present Moses as giver of manna see MALINA, *Manna*, 86-88.

¹⁰¹ SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.56, argues the other way around: 'Das Mißverstehen der Juden (V34) bezieht sich nicht auf die Person Jesu, sondern (wie bei der Samariterin 4, 15) auf die verheißene Gabe. Erst in V 35 identifiziert sich Jesus selbst mit jenem Brot.' This is a valid alternative, esp. since καταβαίνω was used in Num 11:9, as was the Aramaic equivalent throughout the Targums, even where the MT used "rained down" (see MALINA, *Manna*, 53ff, 84, 105); this means that it does not necessarily have to be taken to refer to the Johannine Son of Man, a point that will become important in the discussion of Theobald's approach below.

¹⁰² See BORGAN, *Bread*, 148f.; also SCHLATTER, *Evangelist*, 173.

¹⁰³ Of course, manna and bread as such function as a symbol for God's word, wisdom and Torah in several ways already in the OT (Dt 8:2-3; Sir 24:20-23; Wis 16:26) and in later Jewish writings (see e.g. PANCARO, *Law*, 455ff.), so that Torah critique could be postulated to be implicit in presenting Jesus as the true bread. Also, the life-giving quality of the food that the Son of Man gives (v. 27) evokes the law as a provider of life (Sir 17:11; 45:5; *Mek. Ex 15:26; Ex. Rab. 29:9; Deut. Rab. 8:3*; see MOLONEY, *Signs*, 44). In this light, the universal aspect of the effect of the bread of God in v. 33 seems to confirm and focus the evocation of the Torah in a special way.

6:27 that the Son of Man gives τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν μένουσαν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον. This thought is further developed, including the universal aspect of v. 33, in 6:51c, where Jesus says that ὁ ἄρτος δὲ ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω ἢ σὰρξ μου ἐστὶν ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς. Whether or not 6:51c-58 are considered a secondary addition, it seems impossible to read these verses without thinking of the eucharist, despite the terminological differences to other eucharistic passages.¹⁰⁴ For the present question of the use of manna tradition, it is important to note that the introduction of more explicit eucharistic language is linked to the manna motif not only through the comparison with the wilderness generation in v. 58, but also through the motif of giving as just explained.

To conclude the present discussion of elements from 6:26-29 that recur in 6:30-58, the last element is that of *believing in the one sent from God*, as is visible in Jesus' response to the dialogue partners' question about the work of God: Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα πιστεύητε εἰς ὃν ἀπέστειλεν ἐκεῖνος (6:29). In v. 30, the dialogue partners ask for a sign in order that they may believe in Jesus (Τί οὖν ποιεῖς σὺ σημεῖον, ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεύσωμέν σοι;). In v. 35, arguably *a*, if not *the*,¹⁰⁵ climax of the whole dialogue, the notion of believing in Jesus recurs after he explicitly identified himself as the bread of life for the first time. The combination of seeing and believing recurs in v. 36 and 40. Thus, believing in Jesus occurs here in connection with Jesus' identification as the true bread from heaven, linking the manna motif with one of the main themes of John's Gospel. Borgen provides an even closer link between seeing and believing in v. 36 and the interpretation of the manna tradition in v. 32. He translates v. 36 in the following way: 'But I said "you", because *you* have seen me and yet do not believe.'¹⁰⁶ He understands this as a comment on the change of the personal pronoun from αὐτοῖς in 6:31 to ὑμῖν in 6:32. Not only does this reading fit nicely with the stress on the present action in Jesus' response in v. 32, it is visible also in the use of δίδωσιν in the last part of v. 32. It also accounts for the position of v. 36 as the continuation of v. 35: ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ἐμὲ in v. 35b is paralleled by ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ in v. 35c; coming to Jesus means believing in him, and in v. 36 Jesus presents the crowds' refusal to believe as the reason for his addressing them directly in v. 32. Thus, their refusal to believe is linked to the direct and personal force of Jesus' interpretation of the manna tradition.

Having now seen how important elements of the dialogue are already introduced in vv. 26, 27 and 29, the OT quotation in 6:31, although it introduces the manna motif explicitly, has to be understood in the context of John 6 to provide additional terms¹⁰⁷ to a discussion in which the

¹⁰⁴ On 6:51c-58 see below, part 4.2.4.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. the argument of THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 331-345, concluding that v. 35 is the central 'Logion' of the dialogue.

¹⁰⁶ BORGAN, *Bread*, 74.

¹⁰⁷ Interestingly, in his article on 'John 6: Tradition, Interpretation and Composition', first conceived in 1975, and developed further in 1993 and finally in 1996, Borgen also points to elements from vv. 28-29 that are taken up in the discussion, e.g.: 'In John 6:35b-40 the identification of the manna/bread with Jesus (v. 35a) is related to the main point in the dialogue of vv. 29-30, believing in him whom the Father has sent.' Thus Borgen realises that the discussion goes beyond the words and phrases of

most obvious use of the manna tradition is the rhetorical reversion of the manna from a positive example into a negative foil. I therefore agree with Lincoln who says that

‘the commentary on the Scripture text of Exod 16:4, 15, cited in John 6:31, is interwoven with, yet made to serve, the commentary on the saying of Jesus himself in 6:27. Scripture has to be understood in the light of the word of Jesus, which supersedes it.’¹⁰⁸

The notions of manna as a ‘negative foil’ and of the supersession of Scripture lead to the final aspect of the present section: what precisely is implied in Jesus’ response in v. 32 to the OT quotation in v. 31?

4.2.3.3 *The theological implications of Jesus’ response to the OT quotation in 6:31*

It is the complexity of the contrast between the quotation and Jesus’ reply that necessitates the precise formulation of one’s understanding of the relationship between the manna and the true bread from heaven. Various attempts have been made to pin down the force of v. 32.

(1) Hanson, in harmony with his conclusion from the discussion of e.g. Jn 1:18; 5:37ff., namely, that OT theophanies were really christophanies, says that the point of Jesus’ response in v. 32 is not only that *God*, not Moses gave the bread, but that ‘if only Israel realized it, Christ has already given them bread from heaven, for it was he who was the source of manna in the wilderness.’¹⁰⁹ The problem with this statement is that it is difficult to see the focus of v. 32 being on Christ as the giver of manna in the wilderness.

(2) Others have opted for a typological interpretation, pointing out that 6:32 implies that the manna is ‘only a foreshadowing of the real bread from heaven which is Jesus’ own teaching.’¹¹⁰ Here two problems present themselves: first, what kind of a foreshadowing is in view? Is it a positive analogy, a negative typological relationship, or does not v. 32 indicate the ‘Zerbrechen des (heilsgeschichtlich-) typologischen Denkens’?¹¹¹ Secondly, the emphasis on Jesus’ teaching as the tenor of the ‘true bread’ metaphor seems an unnecessary restriction in the light of the whole dialogue. Believing in Jesus, which is the thrust of the metaphor “eating the bread from heaven”, involves trust and loyalty to Jesus even in the face of threats of exclusion from the synagogue and potentially deadly persecution (see Jn 9:22; 12:42; 15:18-21; 16:2); mere acceptance of Jesus’ teaching is only the basis of a relationship involving life-changing

v. 31, but still holds that that verse is the sole basis of the discussion in 32-58. The above presentation of the links between vv. 26-29 and 30-58 renders his position highly unlikely.

¹⁰⁸ LINCOLN, *Truth*, 55. The only modifications I would suggest concern the source of the quotation (not only Ex 16 might be in view), and the addition of v. 29 as part of the words of Jesus that provide the basis of the dialogue.

¹⁰⁹ HANSON, ‘Technique’, 160. For his view that the OT theophanies were christophanies see HANSON, *Gospel*, 73-83.

¹¹⁰ BROWN, *John*, 266. Typological foreshadowing of the true bread in the manna is the view of e.g. BARRETT, *Gospel*, 290; it is rejected by LINDEMANN, ‘Mose’, 317 n. 33.

¹¹¹ THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 356. On typology see nn. 14, 140 in the present chapter.

experiences, of which John's presentation of Peter is the prime example (see Jn 18:15-18, 25-27; and 21:15-19).

(3) Going beyond any typological understanding, Theobald presents detailed structural and linguistic observations of John 6, and of 6:31f. in particular, using especially the *Thema/Rhema* relation as part of the concept of *funktionelle Satzperspektive* as developed by Dressler.¹¹² The result of Theobald's approach is that he takes Jesus' response in v. 32 to imply a denial of the salvation-historical value of the wilderness feeding. Before Theobald's approach is discussed in detail, the following observations are intended to present a fresh look at the possible implications of the contrast between v. 31 and v. 32.

In 6:32, Jesus' response to the OT quotation is put as follows:

- (A) οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ,
 (B) ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου δίδωσιν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸν ἀληθινόν.

Compared to the OT quotation the crowd introduces in v. 31 (Ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν), Jesus changes or introduces eight aspects: (1) The subject, only implied in the verb ἔδωκεν of the quotation, is made explicit and negated: οὐ Μωϋσῆς. (2) The tense of the verb is changed from aorist ἔδωκεν to perfect δέδωκεν. (3) The dative object is changed from third person plural αὐτοῖς to second person plural ὑμῖν. (4) The article τὸν is attached to the accusative object ἄρτον. (5) The infinitive φαγεῖν is omitted. Furthermore, Jesus is not content with mere negation, but adds a statement that makes the issue relevant for his present audience: (6) He supplies another subject: ὁ πατήρ μου. (7) He again changes the tense of the verb, this time to the present δίδωσιν. (8) He qualifies the accusative object τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ by adding the adjective τὸν ἀληθινόν.

In order to understand the force of Jesus' response in v. 32f., it is necessary to understand the significance of each of the eight alterations. This is not to say that each alteration is of special importance – one has to avoid the danger of over-interpretation. On the other hand, it would not be good enough to interpret Jesus' response along fairly general lines like typology and/or transcendence of the manna miracle without properly observing what the response actually says. One way to understand what v. 32 suggests is to put before one's eyes various statements that John did *not* make. Two examples are supplied by Pancaro:¹¹³

- οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ,
 ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.

In this case, the response would focus solely on the change of the subject: it was not *Moses*, but *my Father* who has given you the bread from heaven. Although a contrast between the subjects is present in v. 32, one has to ask what this change of subject involves, especially in the light of the change of tense from δέδωκεν to δίδωσιν. The view that the crowd implies that Moses was the giver of the manna, which is then corrected by Jesus, seems to overlook two

¹¹² Cf. DRESSLER, *Einführung*, 41.

¹¹³ See PANCARO, *Law*, 462f.

factors. On the one hand, for the crowd to understand Moses to be the subject of δέδωκεν most likely did not imply their denial of *God's* involvement in the manna incident. As far as I am aware, there is no clear evidence in other sources for such a view.¹¹⁴ On the other hand, the alternative subject Jesus introduces is not θεός, but ὁ πατήρ μου. If the disagreement was about a human versus a divine subject, Jesus could have simply used ὁ θεός to identify the divine subject. However, ὁ πατήρ μου might well be part of the different aim of present actualization: the intention to make the issue relevant to his present hearers is clearly visible in the change of the dative object, and in the present tense δίδωσιν. I would thus take (A), the first half of the response, as a subtle reminder of something both dialogue partners agreed upon: it was not Moses, but God who gave the bread from heaven (as no one wishes to deny); the second half (B), however, is emphasizing that *now* it is Jesus' Father (stressing Jesus' special relationship to this God!¹¹⁵) who *gives* the *true* bread from heaven!

Pancaro's second example of what we do not find in John 6 reads:

ὁ ἄρτος ὃν (τὸ μάννα ὃ) δέδωκεν ὑμῖν Μωϋσῆς οὐκ ἦν ἄρτος ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.
ὁ ἄρτος ὃν δίδωσιν ὑμῖν ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ ἄρτος ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (ὁ ἀληθινός) ἔστιν.

If this were John's sentence, one could agree with Theobald that John is denying that the manna was actually 'bread from heaven', thereby denying the revelatory quality of the supply of manna in the wilderness.¹¹⁶ Pancaro does not really address this implication; instead he turns his attention to the addition of the article τὸν in v. 32 as an often overlooked factor, commenting:

'The emphasis is on the fact that Moses did not give *the* (true) bread from heaven – whatever may have been the case with the manna. Jn is not interested in entering upon a discussion about whether the manna was bread from heaven or not, whether it was given by God through Moses or not. This is simply taken for granted, presupposed as true. What Jn does wish to say is that the bread Moses gave (God gave through Moses) is not the *true* bread from heaven, is not *the* bread from heaven which the Father *gives* and, therefore, that *the* bread the Father *gives* is *not* given by Moses.'¹¹⁷ (italics original)

The major thrust of this comment seems reasonable – as we have seen above, Jesus' reply clearly emphasizes the *true* bread from heaven that is *presently* given by the Father. The question, however, is whether the status of manna as bread from heaven really is of no interest. The problem becomes especially acute once one takes into account the metaphorical value of

¹¹⁴ For rabbinic texts that present Moses as giver of the manna see MALINA, *Manna*, 87 n. 6; that the manna was given by God as a reaction to Moses' intercession is stated in Philo, *Migr. Abr.* 121; Josephus, *Ant.* 3,1,6; Pseudo-Philo, *Bib. Ant.* 20,8 (see THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 345 n. 75; RICHTER, 'Zitate', 217-219). PANCARO, *Law*, 462, says that 'the Jews, in affirming that Moses gave bread from heaven, certainly did not wish to deny that it came from God.' Cf. also ROSE, 'Manna', 99: '[E]s genügt diesem Text nicht, darauf zurückzulenken, daß (statt des Mose) *Gott* der Geber des Himmelsmanna ist – eine solche Polemik wäre recht wirkungslos verpufft, denn die jüdische Auslegungstradition hätte eine solche Alternative nicht ernsthaft behauptet.' I think that this holds true even in the light of tendencies to deify Moses, cf. e.g. Philo, *Vit. Mos.* I, 155f., 201f.; II, 267; see MENKEN, *Quotations*, 61.

¹¹⁵ Cf. ROSE, 'Manna', 99: 'Das Eigentliche Gottes kann nur in seiner Beziehung mit Jesus erkannt werden.'

¹¹⁶ On this see section 4.2.3.4 below.

¹¹⁷ PANCARO, *Law*, 463.

manna, bread from heaven, as a symbol for Torah.¹¹⁸ In this case it is crucial to understand what Jesus is implying about the manna. Is he or is he not denying that it was “bread from heaven”? If he is denying it, does this amount to a denial of the revelatory value of the OT? Since these questions are of immense importance and are part of Theobald’s approach, his contribution merits special attention.

4.2.3.4 Theobald’s perception of the implications of Jesus’ reply

Theobald presents a detailed interpretation of the use of the OT quotations in John 6, based on very perceptive observations concerning the structure of the chapter, the changes of the text form of the quotations, and the linguistic significance of the changes and their hermeneutical implications. His argumentation entails both formal elements and a particular perception of the content of the passage.

A. Formal elements:

First, he observes that the combination of several structural markers¹¹⁹ suggests that the OT quotations do not occupy the central position Borgen’s approach implies, but that the focus of the dialogue is on the ἀμήν- and ἐγώ εἰμι-sayings of Jesus, especially in v. 35. With respect to v. 32 this means that here we are not dealing simply with an alternative interpretation of Scripture, but with a ‘vollmächtige Äußerung eigenen Rechts (»amen, amen, ich sage euch«) ...’¹²⁰ This means that the word of Scripture is not ‘einfach überholt’ or ‘vorläufig abgetan’;¹²¹ its true meaning is established for the first time by Jesus:

‘Erst im Licht des Jesus-Worts gibt dieses Schriftwort seinen wahren Sinn preis, ja in ihm wird dieser erst Wirklichkeit, weshalb man sagen muß: Das Jesus-Wort überholt das Schrift-Wort nicht, es konstituiert vielmehr allererst seinen Sinn mit der Folge, daß jenes Schriftwort allein im Horizont des Jesus-Worts Bestand hat.’¹²²

This conclusion is not only based on the impact of the ἀμήν-saying in v. 32, but also on observations concerning the shape of the OT quotation in v. 31. Taking Ps 77:24 LXX as the source of the quotation, Theobald argues that the addition of ἐκ in the phrase ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ is not due to influences from other OT manna texts, but due to the fact that

¹¹⁸ Cf. the connection between manna and the word of God in Deut 8:2f.; Wis 16:20-26; between “bread from heaven” and wisdom in Philo, *Mut. Nom.* 259-260; between manna and Torah in *Mek. Ex* 13:17. Cf. BORGEN, *Bread*, 2, 114, 149, 152; THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 352 n. 101; PANCARO, *Law*, 455ff. Cf. also the comments above, n. 57.

¹¹⁹ THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 334-345, discusses the relative structural value of (1) the dialogical nature of 6:25-58, (2) the four ἀμήν-sayings and their relation to the ἐγώ εἰμι-sayings, (3) the use of lexemes and their repetition at key points in the discourse, (4) the repetition of sentences and parts of sentences.

¹²⁰ THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 346.

¹²¹ So DIETZFELBINGER, ‘Aspekte’, 205.

¹²² THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 346.

‘er [the evangelist] seine christologische Grundüberzeugung bezüglich Jesus als des »aus dem Himmel« (ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ) herabgestiegenen Menschensohns in den Schrifttext zurückprojiziert hat; dieser spricht nach seiner Meinung immer schon vom »Brot aus dem Himmel« im freilich jetzt erst aufgedeckten vollen christologischen Verständnis.’¹²³

To this Theobald adds a further supportive argument: he takes the added article before ἄρτον in v. 32 as anaphoric, referring back to the bread mentioned in v. 31, the point being:

‘Das Brot, von dem das von euch beigebrachte Psalm-Zitat in Wahrheit spricht, hat euch nicht Mose gegeben ... Mit anderen Worten: Die Volksmenge zitiert zwar das Psalm-Wort, versteht aber überhaupt nicht, was sie zitiert!’¹²⁴

In response to Theobald’s formal observations it has to be said that his perception of the structure of the dialogue seems to be sound. The OT quotations do not occupy the central position Borgen’s approach implies.¹²⁵ Also, the impact of the ἀμήν-saying in combination with Theobald’s reasons for the addition of ἐκ and the article τὸν provides a coherent and meaningful reading of the passage. The only reservation I want to voice at this stage is against his conclusion that Jesus’ reply for the first time establishes the meaning of the Psalm. This seems to be an unnecessary deduction, and I will argue in due course that allegorical interpretation provides an alternative approach that allows for a deeper sense in Jesus’ reply without denying a valid meaning of the Psalm at the time before Jesus. Next, however, I turn to Theobald’s perception of the content of the passage. Here his reflections entail several unnecessary deductions with serious hermeneutical consequences.

B. Observations regarding the content of John 6:25-58

What is the dialogue really about? Theobald thinks that the confrontation of the OT quotation with the authoritative Jesus-word can be described as ‘Destruktion eines fälschlicherweise mit diesem [the quotation] verbundenen jüdischen Erwartungshorizontes und Freisetzung seines eigentlichen Sinns.’¹²⁶ The false expectation is based on an analogical thought pattern that expects the eschatological prophet to perform a sign analogous to the manna miracle in the wilderness.¹²⁷ That Jesus did already perform a sign that led the crowds to perceive him as the

¹²³ THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 347.

¹²⁴ THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 347. In n. 81 he adds: ‘Das Psalmwort bezieht sich im Verständnis des Evangelisten also nur *scheinbar* auf das Manna!’, and comments on Barrett’s invocation of typology as an illuminating concept: ‘Was hier verkannt wird, ist die völlige Neukonstituierung des Textsinns von Ps 78(77),24 durch den Evangelisten samt Destruktion seines ursprünglichen Sinns (Manna!).’

¹²⁵ Another valid critique of Borgen’s midrashic approach is that it is not really the verb φαγεῖν that stands in the center of vv. 48-58, but rather the contrast between dying and living is the focus of vv. 47-51, see THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 333. The contrast reappears in v. 58. For detailed critique of Borgen’s overall thesis cf. THYEN, ‘Literatur, 4. Fortsetzung’, 38-352; RICHTER, ‘Formgeschichte’.

¹²⁶ THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 347-348.

¹²⁷ See 2 Bar. 29:8; *Sib. Or.* 7:148f.; *Midr. Qoh.* 1:9. An alternative to understanding these as false expectations corrected by Jesus is to understand Jesus as the true bread to be a symbolic fulfilment of the promises, so VAN DER WATT, *Family*, 221.

promised prophet raises the question: What else could the crowds have expected?¹²⁸ Theobald suggests that the point of the expected sign lies in its lasting effects:

‘Die Menge möchte einen »Beweis, daß wirklich die messianische Heilsfülle angebrochen ist; nicht nur ein einzelnes Wunder wollen sie sehen, sondern das goldene Zeitalter dauernden Überflusses«.‘¹²⁹

Theobald defends this perception of the point at issue with four arguments: (1) The desire to make Jesus king in 6:15 reflects the desire for something that guarantees lasting blessings. (2) Theobald sees this confirmed by the fact that the experience of being fed is taken up in 6:26: ‘Diese Erfahrung ist es, die bei ihnen nach Mehr schreit.’¹³⁰ (3) 6:34 voices explicitly the desire for repeated feedings: Κύριε, πάντοτε δός ἡμῖν τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον. (4) 6:35 takes up the notion of a permanent feeding, but transcends the crowds’ expectation: ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ἐμὲ οὐ μὴ πεινάσῃ, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ μὴ διψήσῃ πώποτε. Theobald comments: ‘Ist ihr leiblicher Hunger unstillbar, so erlangen sie die Erfüllung ihres darin sich äußernden Lebens-Hungers nur im Überstieg in eine *andere* Dimension.’¹³¹

The point of all of this is that Jesus’ reply in 6:32f. has to be understood against this *Erwartungshorizont* of the crowds: they are looking for permanent satisfaction of physical hunger, and Jesus is destroying their expectations. This destruction, already anticipated in the contrast between τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν ἀπολλυμένην and τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν μένουσαν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον in v. 27, is most clearly expressed in vv. 32-33. Theobald divides the verses into four sections:

¹²⁸ Alternative interpretations of this aspect include Schnackenburg’s distinction between the crowd’s misunderstanding of the signs in vv. 2 and 15, and the evangelist’s view in vv. 14 and 31 (SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.31-32, 53). A more convincing suggestion is the following one, since it takes seriously that on the level of the text as it stands both in 6:14 and 6:30 the crowd’s reaction to and request for a sign is in view: MENKEN, ‘Remarks’, and BORGAN, ‘John 6’, 103, understand the change from the identification of Jesus as prophet in 6:14, to the introduction of the Son of Man in v. 27 as the key to the request for the same kind of sign they had just seen: ‘In their [the crowd’s] view, since Jesus already had legitimated himself as a prophet by the feeding miracle, they now needed another sign which would demonstrate that he was the one sent by the Father, that is the Son of Man who was sealed by the Father, God (vv. 27-29). The correct meaning of vv. 14-15 and vv. 30-31 is then: since the feeding miracle was the eschatological manna miracle, Jesus had legitimated himself as the prophet-like-Moses. Now in vv. 27-29 he seemed to imply that he was the Son of Man, the Father’s (heavenly) commissioned envoy. Therefore there was the need for (another) sign which would demonstrate that this was the case.’ The obvious difficulty, why the request for another manna-like miracle should now prove the legitimacy of the Son of Man claim, is avoided in that vv. 30-32 are given an unexpected force, visible in this paraphrase by BORGAN, ‘John 6’, 104: ‘The crowd said, “What sign do you do so that we may see, and believe that you are God’s heavenly-sent envoy, the Son of Man, who is sealed by the Father? The manna sign which we experienced in the feeding miracle was a sign which, in our mind, showed that you were the prophet-like-Moses, but it did not legitimate you as God’s heavenly-sent envoy, the Son of Man.” Jesus answered, “You have misunderstood the manna miracle. It was not given by Moses, nor now by the prophet-like-Moses, but it was the gift from heaven, given by the Father, and I am (myself) the manna/bread.”’ For the movement from the (inadequate) identification of Jesus as prophet like Moses to the (adequate) identification as Son of Man see DE JONGE, *Jesus*; MARTYN, *History*, chs. 6 and 7.

¹²⁹ THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 348. The citation is from SCHWANK, *Evangelium*, 212. For a similar interpretation see BLANK, *Evangelium* 1a, 355f.

¹³⁰ THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 349.

¹³¹ THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 349.

- (A) εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἀμήν ἀμήν λέγω ὑμῖν,
 (B) οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ,
 (C) ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου δίδωσιν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸν ἀληθινόν
 (D) ὁ γὰρ ἄρτος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ζωὴν διδοὺς τῷ κόσμῳ.

Employing the category of 'funktionelle Satzperspektive' with its distinction between 'Thema' (the topic which serves as starting point or basis of the sentence) and 'Rhema' (the new information given about the 'Thema'),¹³² Theobald reasons as follows: The 'Thema' (τὸν) ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ is taken up from the quotation, so that the 'Rhema', the new information, is in the subject, positioned at the beginning of B and C to stress its importance: not Moses, but my Father ... To conclude from this that the point is only to make clear that God is the real giver of bread from heaven¹³³ is not enough for Theobald. For him the meaning of τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ is always the same, that manna is not in view at all, but the *true* bread is the referent already in the Johannine understanding of the quotation in v. 31, as we saw above. This leads Theobald to see in part B an implicit denial of God's involvement in the manna miracle, implicit because the force of the sentence is in contrasting Moses and the Father, but the change of tense is taken to imply what C states explicitly: the manna was not the *true* bread from heaven, the manna was only 'vergängliche Speise' (v. 27). It is at this point that Theobald concludes:

'Inbezug auf das Manna-Wunder in der Wüste wird hier implizit verneint, daß es bei ihm »Brot vom Himmel« zu essen gab; das Manna konnte nichts anderes als »vergängliche Speise« sein, was auch von den Broten und Fischen zu gelten hat, die Jesus der Volksmenge gereicht hatte. Der lebensspendende Gott – so darf man zugespitzt formulieren – war in jenes Wunder der Mosezeit nicht involviert!'¹³⁴

Having analysed the details of Theobald's argumentation, it has to be said that his approach represents the most penetrating and linguistically sophisticated reading of the passage. However, a real problem is the unwarranted leap, visible in the last part of his conclusion, from the observation that the manna is not the *true* bread from heaven, to the denial of God's involvement in the manna incident. The comparison to the feeding miracle of Jesus reveals this leap as unnecessary, for on Theobald's reasoning one would have to say that God was also not involved in that miracle, since it produced only 'food that spoils' (6:27). Theobald is silent on this point – presumably even he does not want to deny God's involvement in Jesus' miracle. If one would do so, further problems would arise: The unity between Jesus' works and God's works, as stated in e.g. 5:19f., 30, would break down precisely in the case of this not

¹³² See DRESSLER, *Einführung*, 41: 'In der Terminologie der funktionellen Satzperspektive kann Thema erstens soviel wie Ausgangspunkt oder Basis des Satzes bedeuten, ähnlich dem *topic* der meisten amerikanischen Linguisten. Uns interessiert hier aber mehr die kontextuelle bzw. ko-textuelle (textuelle, textinterne) Bedeutung von Thema als das Bekannte oder Gegebene im Gegensatz zu Rhema als der neuen Information. Ein Thema wird also kontextuell aus der Situation oder ko-textuell aus einem vorangegangenen Textstück (desselben Textes) durch Korrierung gewonnen. Im zweiten Fall gehört das Thema also dem Bedeutungsfeld (Wortfeld) eines oder besonders des vorangegangenen Satzes an.'

¹³³ As we saw earlier in Pancaro's interpretation; similarly e.g. SCHWANK, *Evangelium*, 212.

¹³⁴ THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 351.

unimportant sign.¹³⁵ This problem could not even be solved by recourse to the differentiation between a sign's source and its use in the Gospel, since it is part of this particular sign itself, not its interpretation in the following discourse. Against Theobald I therefore suggest that the fact that the manna is not the *true* bread from heaven does not exclude God being involved in the manna incident, any more than the fact of the multiplied bread and fish not being the *true* bread excludes God being involved in Jesus' feeding miracle.

Theobald's contribution merits special attention not only because of its exceptionally detailed observations, but also because of the hermeneutical deductions he draws from them. After discussing also the use of Is 54:13 in Jn 6:45, he points out two aspects of John's use of Scripture in John 6 which he understands to be paradigmatic for the whole Gospel. The first one is the familiar conclusion that the citations function as prophetic witnesses for Christ, rightly to be understood only from a post-Easter perspective.¹³⁶ The second aspect is more controversial, since it is presented by Theobald as the specifically *Johannine* contribution, and it entails a negation of the reality of the salvation-historical value of the OT:

'Die Kehrseite der Medaille ist die mit a) [the prophetic witness] verbundene Entkoppelung der Schrift als eines exklusiv christologisch beanspruchten *Textes* von der ihm ursprünglich inhärierenden *Geschichte* Israels. Diese wird abgestoßen und in den Raum theologischer Irrelevanz entlassen: Was einst der Wüstengeneration unter Mose widerfuhr, hat – gemessen an der soteriologischen Exklusivität des »Christusereignisses« - mit Heil oder ζωή im (johanneisch strengen) Sinne nichts zu tun.¹³⁷

Theobald sees this conclusion confirmed by Jn 5:37-40, where he also perceives a negative counterpart to the positive use of Scripture as witness to Christ:

'Die Kehrseite dieser exklusiven Fixierung der »Schriften« auf das in ihnen enthaltene Christuszeugnis wird in v. 37b greifbar, wo Jesus den »Juden« erklärt: »Weder habt ihr seine [s.c. des Vaters] Stimme je gehört noch seine Gestalt gesehen«. »Daß Israel Gottes Gestalt nicht gesehen hat, ist gut jüdisch-orthodox«. Daß es aber Gottes Stimme nie vernommen habe, was polemisch voransteht, setzt eine jüdische »Grundüberzeugung« außer Kraft. Mit anderen Worten: Eine authentische Gotteserfahrung (sei sie auditiv oder visionär vermittelt) wurde den Juden überhaupt nie zuteil!¹³⁸

This leads him finally to characterise John's use of Scripture as destructive:

'Mit Faktor a steht das vierte Evangelium auf dem Boden der frühchristlichen Tradition; mit Faktor b dagegen, der nicht nur die *soteriologische Relativierung der Tora* oder die *Behauptung ihrer Insuffizienz*, sondern darüber hinaus eine *heilsgeschichtliche Entleerung der in den Schriften bezeugten Geschichte Israels* (samt ihrer zentralen Institution des Tempels als des jüdischerseits behaupteten dichtesten Ortes der Gegenwart Gottes) signalisiert, tritt das dem vierten Evangelium eigene spezifische Profil eines destruktiven Schriftumgangs ins Blickfeld.¹³⁹

¹³⁵ On works and signs cf. esp. ENSOR, *Jesus*; BITTNER, *Zeichen*.

¹³⁶ THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 361. Similar e.g. LINCOLN, *Truth*, 54f.; HANSON, *Gospel*, passim.

¹³⁷ THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 362.

¹³⁸ THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 363. His citation is from BLANK, *Krisis*, 206 n. 66.

¹³⁹ THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 365. Similarly SAITO, *Mosevorstellungen*, 110 (although Saito retains the notion of manna as 'Vorbild des Lebensbrottes vom Himmel'), and esp. DIETZFELBINGER, 'Aspekte', 205: 'Nicht damals in der Mosezeit verwirklichte Gott seine Heilsgabe; das tut er jetzt in der Sendung Jesu. Dem Manna wird also der Charakter des vom Himmel gekommenen heilvollen

These are highly provocative conclusions, and Theobald is under no illusion about their potentially unhelpful contribution to contemporary Jewish-Christian dialogues;¹⁴⁰ nevertheless, in his opinion one cannot ignore these results, and he does not accept references to the situation of the Johannine community being under pressure from the synagogue as an adequate explanation of John's use of the OT. For him there is no way of avoiding 'das *Sachproblem* der johanneischen Fassung des »Solus Christus«'.¹⁴¹

The question, however, is whether Theobald's conclusions are based on the most persuasive reading of the evidence. I suggest that his whole interpretation, sophisticated as it is, is marred by unwarranted leaps and extreme conclusions. One such example is his proposal that the fact that the manna is not the *true* bread from heaven implies a denial of God's involvement in the wilderness miracle. Another decisive step is his suggestion that the introduction of ἐκ into the quotation from Ps 77:24 LXX is due to a *Rückprojektion* of the Son of Man ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς (Jn 3:13) into the Psalm. For Theobald this *Rückprojektion* means that John is denying that the Psalm talks about the manna, and that therefore the Psalm is separated from the history it literally refers to. One of his hermeneutical conclusions is therefore:

'Ps 78 (77), 24 bezieht sich in Wahrheit *nicht* auf die Wüstenzeit Israels, sondern exklusiv auf das Christusgeschehen; *der Schrifttext wird damit dem vorfindlichen Israel genommen.*'¹⁴²

Here again an unjustified leap occurs. The fact that the ἐκ might be due to a *Rückprojektion*¹⁴³ does not necessarily mean that the Psalm has to be taken as referring *exclusively* to Christ. The *Rückprojektion* might as well be taken as anticipation of the deeper meaning of the manna

Lebensbrot abgespröchen. Damit setzt sich die Erzählung nicht nur in Widerspruch zu Ex 16,4, sondern auch zu Ps 105,40f., Neh 9,15; Sap 16,20, und es ist nicht zu bezweifeln, daß man wußte, was man tat. Durch die Prädikation ἀληθινός (v. 32) wird letzte Klarheit darüber hergestellt. In solch destruirender Interpretation bleibt der Mosegeschichte nicht einmal die Funktion des Typos der in Jesus sich erfüllenden Geschichte.' Dietzfelbinger is right, however, in his rejection of typological interpretation (as held by e.g. BARRETT, *Gospel*, 290; ALETTI, *Discourse*, 170; PRYOR, *John*, 32), as is THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 355; but both do not consider allegorization as a meaningful interpretation, which I will develop below. For an attempt to make typology work in this context cf. HAHN, 'Motive', 349, who concludes on Jn 6:31ff.: 'Das bedeutet aber dann, daß die Typologie hier keineswegs die Analogie betont und allenfalls das Motiv der Steigerung impliziert; der Antitypos ist in einem radikal antithetischen Sinne dem alttestamentlichen Typos gegenübergestellt. Daraus folgt jedoch nicht, daß der Typos ohne Belang wäre, wohl aber ist hiermit zum Ausdruck gebracht, daß angesichts des offenbar gewordenen Antitypos der Typos selbst jede Heilswirklichkeit verloren hat.' If typology is normally used to emphasize historical analogies, but is also used when neither analogy nor supersession is in focus, the device comes close to being useless. SAITO, *Mosevorstellungen*, 110, uncritically accepts Hahn's statement, while at the same time saying that here Jesus is not related typologically to Moses.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. his comment to this effect on p. 365.

¹⁴¹ THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 366. KRAUS, 'Johannes', gives a sociological explanation.

¹⁴² THEOBALD, 'Schriftzitate', 356.

¹⁴³ In what follows I go along with the assumption of the *Rückprojektion*; however, as we have seen, the ἐκ might as well be due to influence from other OT texts; also, the notion that the manna came *from heaven* recurs again and again in the haggadic manna tradition, see BORGAN, *Bread*, 7f.; MALINA, *Manna*, 53ff., 84, 105; SCHNACKENBURG, 'Brot', 130. Thus, recourse to *Rückprojektion* does not strike one as a necessary interpretation in the first place, but I will show that even on this assumption one does not have to agree with Theobald's conclusions.

which is made explicit in v. 32f., namely, that in Jesus the *true* bread from heaven is given. In other words, if one understands Jesus' response in v. 32f. as an allegorical interpretation of the OT text quoted in v. 31, the *Rückprojektion* could be part of that allegorization, a possibility quickly dismissed by Theobald.¹⁴⁴ Understood as allegorical interpretation, however, v. 32 does not necessarily imply a denial of the historical referent of Ps 78:24 – it is the “deeper” sense of a given passage that is of interest.¹⁴⁵ Whether or not allegorical interpretation entails a denial of the historical referent of the interpreted text seems to depend on the purpose of a given case of allegorization.¹⁴⁶ The cases in which allegorical interpretation implies a denial of a literal, historical meaning of a text have to do with the embarrassment some texts caused for later rationalistic interpreters.¹⁴⁷ The manna incident does not seem to have been a source of such embarrassment; despite its potential to point beyond itself, the allegorical interpretations of the manna, e.g. in Philo, do not imply that God was not involved in the miracle nor that it had no significance in the history of Israel.

The key element that leads to an interpretation of Jesus' response as allegorization is the introduction of ἀληθινός in v. 32, as has been pointed out by Rose:

‘Der Streit um die Auslegung erfaßt nicht nur das “er” im biblischen Zitat, sondern auch das *Objekt* des Gebens: es geht darum, das “wahre” (ἀληθινός) Brot aus dem Himmel zu erkennen. Solche Akzentuierung mit ἀληθινός ist durchaus typisch für die allegorische Auslegung, die damit ein *nur* wörtliches und historisches Verständnis des biblischen Textes ausschließen möchte; der tiefste Sinn des Textes (sein “wahrhafter” Sinn) ist nur zugänglich, wenn man sich vom historischen, “irdischen” und konkreten Geschehen freimachen läßt. Damit wird also nicht negiert, daß das Manna des Mose und der Wüstenwanderungszeit “Brot aus dem Himmel” gewesen sei – eine solche Negierung setzte sich in den Gegensatz zu den Texten der Tora! –, aber mit dem einfachen Erzählen von diesem Geschehen mag sich diese (allegorische)

¹⁴⁴ Cf. THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 356, n. 114: ‘Es ist also keineswegs so, daß der Evangelist neben dem »tieferen« Verständnis des Schriftwortes auch noch dessen »literarischen« Sinn als legitim zuließe.’ Theobald is thus denying the possibility of Jesus' response being an allegorical interpretation, while at the same time using allegorical terminology himself (cf. ‘in Wahrheit’ in the quotation in the text above; cf. also the conclusion on p. 354, where Theobald talks about ‘*das Schriftzitat selbst mit seinem tieferen Sinn ...*’ (italics original).

¹⁴⁵ This interpretation fits with the context of the feeding as a sign: for John, miracles are “Zeichen”, die etwas Bedeutsames bekunden, einen tieferen Sinn veranschaulichen wollen.’ (BAUER, *Johannesevangelium*, 95). Similar BROWN, *John*, 264.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. THISELTON, *New Horizons*, 158: ‘In assessing the purpose for which allegorical interpretation functioned in the history of the subject, we may compare the “*demythologizing*”, *de-objectifying*, or *de-particularizing* purpose which marks most pre-Christian Greek and Jewish allegorical interpretation with the Christian, Patristic, and mediaeval purpose of “*spiritualizing*”, or providing *Christological or moral particularization and application*.’ Allegorical interpretation is about ‘an extension of meaning in terms of parallels, analogies or correspondences’ (p. 163); denial of a historical referent is not a defining characteristic.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. the following examples in CAIRD, *Language*, 167: ‘Philo of Alexandria in his allegorical treatment of the Jewish laws occasionally discloses just such a rationalistic streak. It is foolish to think that the world was literally created in six days (*L.A.* I.ii.2), mythical nonsense to speak of God planting a garden (*L.A.* I.xiv.43); and the idea that Cain built a city “runs counter to reason itself” (*Post.* xiv.50).’ Caird identifies five kinds of allegorization: rationalist, moralist, atomic, exegetical, and polemical, see pp. 167-171.

Auslegungstradition keinesfalls begnügen, sondern sie fragt nach der “Wahrheit”, d.h. nach dem (geistlichen) Sinn dieses Manna für die Gegenwart.¹⁴⁸

I therefore conclude that it is not necessary to draw the same radical conclusions from the observations Theobald presents. I would contend that the cumulative force of his arguments supports his conclusion that John’s use of Scripture, as exemplified in Jn 6:31ff., does indeed entail a ‘*soteriologische Relativierung der Tora*’ and ‘*die Behauptung ihrer Insuffizienz*’, but not the ‘*heilsgeschichtliche Entleerung der in den Schriften bezeugten Geschichte Israels*’.¹⁴⁹ As I have shown above, the christological interpretation of the manna tradition in Jn 6:31ff., including its allegorization, neither implies that God was not involved in the manna incident nor that that incident has no place in salvation history.

Excursus: The legitimacy and illegitimacy of uses of Scripture

One further theological conclusion of far-reaching hermeneutical consequences has to be addressed. This concerns the view that according to Theobald, John’s use of the Scriptures implies that they are inappropriately taken away from Israel.¹⁵⁰ In the background of this view stands the conviction, shared e.g. by Walter¹⁵¹ and Obermann,¹⁵²

‘daß eine christliche Interpretation des Alten Testaments nur unter der Voraussetzung des (mindestens) “doppelten Ausgangs des Alten Testaments in Judentum und Christentum” geschehen darf.’¹⁵³

Since one cannot ignore the reality of the two religious communities, it is vital for this approach to secure the possibility of valid readings of the Scriptures for both of them. This in turn means that one has critically to examine all uses of the Scriptures, starting with the uses of the OT in the NT, in order to find out whether there are uses that threaten the validity of readings of the Scriptures by the other religious tradition. Thus, the use of the Scriptures in the NT has to be differentiated in acceptable and unacceptable uses, as Walter says:

‘Die Bestandsaufnahme und Deutung der Arten und Weisen der Schriftverwendung, des Schriftbezugs im Neuen Testament selbst kann für die Frage nach der Art einer legitimen christlichen Bezugnahme auf das Alte Testament nur ein Ausgangspunkt, nur eine Vorarbeit sein; für sich allein ergibt sie nicht schon einen “Kanon” solcher “re-lecture”, sondern unterliegt zunächst einmal einer theologisch-kritischen Prüfung. Schlichter gesagt: nicht jede Form von Schriftverwendung im Neuen Testament ist allein schon dadurch, daß es sie gibt, ja daß sie gelegentlich mit Nachdruck betrieben wird, theologisch zureichend legitimiert.’¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁸ ROSE, ‘Manna’, 99. For his understanding of the allegorization of manna texts in Philo cf. the insightful remarks on pp. 89-95.

¹⁴⁹ All phrases in THEOBALD, ‘Schriftzitate’, 365.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. again his remark on p. 356: ‘*der Schrifttext wird damit dem vorfindlichen Israel genommen.*’

¹⁵¹ See WALTER, ‘Problematik’.

¹⁵² See OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, esp. 425-430.

¹⁵³ WALTER, ‘Problematik’, 353f. The citation is the title of an article by K. Koch in *JBTh* 6 (1991), 215-242. A collection of articles on this issue can be found in the *Festschrift* for Rolf Rendtorff (see BLUM, ET AL., *Bibel*).

¹⁵⁴ WALTER, ‘Problematik’, 344.

The main criterion for the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate uses seems to be whether or not they reveal a kind of *exclusiveness* that amounts to a Christian usurpation of the Scriptures. Thus, Walter detects behind some of Matthew's fulfilment quotations a perspective,

'die Israel sein Recht auf "die Schriften" aberkennt und nur noch die christliche Gemeinde als Erbin des "recht verstandenen" Alten Testaments anerkennt.'¹⁵⁵

Taking this to be unacceptable, he suggests the following approach, which is clearly shaped by contemporary and *wirkungsgeschichtliche* issues:

'Statt dessen müßte m.E. gelten: Unsere "Verwandtschaft" und zugleich unsere Nichtidentität mit Israel muß es uns verbieten, Israel's "Schriften" uns in einer Weise anzueignen, die auf die Enteignung Israels hinausläuft, weil eben eine solche Art der Aneignung den Anspruch erhebt, daß nur das christologische Verständnis des Alten Testaments als in Jesus von Nazareth "erfüllte" Schrift als legitim anzusehen ist. Wir sehen heute klarer als noch vor etwa 30 Jahren, welche schrecklichen wirkungsgeschichtlichen Folgen auch diese christliche In-Besitz-Nahme der Schriften Israels hatte.'¹⁵⁶

The final aim of this project is a redefinition of the relation between the church and the OT, taking into account the respective rights of Jews and Christians to use the Scriptures:

'Insofern müßte eine neue Definition des Verhältnisses der Kirche zum Alten Testament gefunden werden, die dem Eigenrecht Israels an seinen "Schriften" gerecht wird und doch zugleich daran festhält, daß auch für die Christen ein relatives, aber doch legitimes Recht am Alten Testament als einem Teil des christlichen Bibelkanons zu begründen ist.'¹⁵⁷

Although I am deeply sympathetic to the conciliatory aim of this approach, I cannot conceal my suspicion that it comes close to attempting to square the circle, and it raises all sorts of questions that cannot possibly be dealt with adequately in the present study. The following remarks are intended to point out some of the problem zones that would have to be tackled in a proper response.

First, one would have to include discussion of the truth claims behind various Jewish and Christian readings of Scripture, including readings of the OT in the NT. Walter does not address this question directly, but it seems that his position excludes exclusive truth claims *per*

¹⁵⁵ WALTER, 'Problematik', 353. That this kind of use of the OT is unacceptable for a 20th century exegete is clearly stated on p. 343f. where he says about the Christian use of the Scriptures, 'daß es sich also keinesfalls um eine vor-kritische Vereinnahmung dieser Schriften für die christliche Kirche handeln darf, weil dies ein Akt von Usurpation wäre, der – gewollt oder nicht gewollt – auf eine Aberkennung und postulierte Wegnahme dieser Schriften aus der Hand des Gottesvolkes des "Alten Bundes" hinauslaufen würde. Eine solche Haltung oder Auffassung aber würde jedes sinnvolle theologische Gespräch zwischen Christen und Juden von vornherein belasten, ja unmöglich machen.'

¹⁵⁶ WALTER, 'Problematik', 353.

¹⁵⁷ WALTER, 'Problematik', 357. Cf. also, in a broader discussion of the exclusiveness of Johannine christology, KÜGLER, *König*, 68-71, who suggests that the question of the significance of the Moses tradition is a critical issue after Auschwitz. In accordance with the document *Nostra aetate* of Vatican II he thinks that what is needed is the 'Entradikalisierung der soteriologischen Exklusivität der johanneischen Christologie' (p. 71). One of the motivations in the background is to develop an adequate theology of Judaism and of religions in general: 'Vermutlich ist die prinzipielle Anerkennung einer nichtchristlichen Heilsmöglichkeit nötig, um eine angemessene Theologie des Judentums – und nichtchristlicher Religionen überhaupt – entwickeln zu können.' (p. 70). Cf. also the debate between SCHONEVELD, 'Thora', and VON DER OSTEN-SACKEN, 'Logos', about the consequences of different understandings of Jn 1:17 for Jewish-Christian dialogue.

definitionem as unacceptable. However, the question of how to validate truth claims is not solved by ignoring it.

Secondly, the whole issue of the relationship between Israel and “the church”¹⁵⁸ has to be raised. For Walter any understanding of the church as the “true Israel” is unacceptable because of negative historical effects connected with it.¹⁵⁹ However, violent misuse of the concept of “the true Israel” by Christians or abandonment of any exclusive claims by Christians might not be the only alternatives available. It surely is possible for Christians, especially if they follow Jesus’ ethic of non-violence, to understand themselves as ‘true Israel’ and to make exclusive claims about Jesus without becoming a violent threat to Jews.

Thirdly, the question of Christian mission has to be addressed, since for Walter the inclusion of Gentiles into Christian communities marks a development foreign to Judaism and is therefore to be considered a decisive element in the separation between Jews and Christians:

‘Es ist von hohem Gewicht, daß im Blick auf die Ausweitung der Mission über die Grenzen des Judentums hinaus ein das Judentum verfremdendes, daher zur Trennung von ihm hinführendes Motiv wirksam wurde.’¹⁶⁰

To understand the inclusion of Gentiles as a ‘verfremdendes ... Motiv’, seems only possible at the expense of the universalistic implications of creation theology, of Abraham’s call and the promises given to him, and of Isaiah’s eschatological visions. On what basis are “Christian” interpretations (starting with Paul) judged to be “un-Jewish”?¹⁶¹ Is it the assumption that they do not reflect truthfully the intentions of Old Testament texts, or is it the fact that there is another religious tradition, Judaism, where these texts are interpreted differently? If the latter, on what basis are these interpretations judged to represent “normal” Jewish sensitivity? In the former

¹⁵⁸ The term “the church” seems to me inadequate in a discussion of the phenomena within the New Testament, since the connotations of the term are completely overshadowed by nearly 2000 years of church history. A discussion of the relationship between Israel and “the church” in the NT should include a clarification of the semantic range of the terms and metaphors for “church” in their New Testament contexts.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. his remarks on p. 356f.: ‘Daß die spätere Kirche um ihres Bezugs zu den “Schriften” Israels willen sich je länger je mehr als das “wahre Israel” verstand, woraus unter den Bedingungen einer neuen geschichtlichen Epoche fast automatisch die Tendenz folgte, dem “real existierenden” Israel sein Existenzrecht abzuerkennen, ist eine Folge dessen, daß die hier beschriebene Problematik des christologischen Schriftbezuges nicht erkannt, sondern christologisch überspielt wurde.’

¹⁶⁰ WALTER, ‘Problematik’, 356. In n. 36 he adds: ‘Selbst wenn man in deutero- bzw. trito-jesajanischen Texten ausdrückliche Ansätze für eine über den Rahmen Israels hinausreichende Heilsbotschaft oder -erwartung erkennen kann, um derentwillen die prophetischen Autoren auch den Glauben an den Schöpfer betonen, (Jes 42.5-8, 45.18-22 u.a.), dann handelt es sich doch um eine innerhalb des Alten Testaments sich erst andeutende Besonderheit, die vom “normalen” – insbesondere später vom rabbinischen – Judentum nicht weiter ausgebaut wurde, da sie mit dem Bewußtsein der göttlichen Erwählung Israels (aus den “Völker” heraus) entscheidend kollidierte.’ This statement does not take into account (a) other elements of a global perspective within the OT, e.g. the promises of the covenant with Abraham in Gen 12; (b) the question of the purpose of election: does it exclude the expectation of salvation beyond the confines of Israel, as Walter seems to imply? For a completely different account of the implications of the concepts of monotheism, election and covenant, see WRIGHT, *NTPG*, ch. 9.

¹⁶¹ To refer to but one example: according to Acts 13:46-47, Paul and Barnabas interpreted Is 42:6 as God’s command to them to preach the Gospel to Gentiles (after first having addressed Jews).

case, one would have to discuss which aspects of Christian interpretation of the OT are not truthful to the OT, and why. In the latter case, the self-defeating circularity of the position is obvious.¹⁶²

It therefore seems difficult to avoid the problem of different religious traditions both claiming the truthfulness of their interpretations of the OT by declaring aspects of one interpretative tradition (e.g. the inclusion of Gentiles as in line with OT traditions) as foreign to Judaism, thereby dismissing as invalid the readings of the OT of a Jew like Paul, who evidently thought Gentile mission not only possible, but necessary to remain true to his Jewish heritage. I suggest that if it is rightly judged unacceptable to try to solve Jewish-Christian disputes by violating the rights of Jews, it should also be judged unacceptable to try to solve them by declaring some NT uses of the OT un-Jewish without engaging in the difficult evaluation of their truth claims.

This discussion illustrates the limits of academic discourse. The introduction of the reality of different religious groups into the discussion of interpretative issues raises all sorts of new questions difficult to account for in purely scholarly discussions. I suggest that a Christian approach that takes seriously the complete range of uses of the OT in the NT, even those unacceptable in the eyes of Walter, has to include not only hermeneutical reflections but also the real life praxis of both Christian and Jewish communities. The following remarks by Richard Hays on the authority of Scripture may be useful also in discussions of the present issues:

‘[T]he most powerful argument for the truth of Scripture is a community of people who exemplify the love and power of God that they have come to know through the New Testament. Apart from the witness of such communities, formal arguments for the authority of Scripture carry little weight.’¹⁶³

In a different context, Andrew Lincoln reaches the following conclusions at the end of his discussion of the truth of the Fourth Gospel’s narrative of the trial of truth:

‘Our historical investigations will continue, but they will not be the determinative criteria of truth by which we judge the Gospel. The truth of this witness can only be discovered by participating in it. We are back to faith seeking understanding as the only appropriate stance toward this sort of truth. ... Those who have this faith seeking understanding affirm the truth of the Gospel’s testimony by participation in its story, by telling it and living it as part of the community that is willing to risk following the witness of Jesus’ suffering love.’¹⁶⁴

In the light of these perspectives, one could say with respect to the current discussion that the legitimacy of uses of Scripture cannot simply be decided with recourse to formal arguments alone; the reality of the communities who claim to follow a certain way of reading the Scriptures has also to be taken into account. Obviously, the invocation of community praxis in

¹⁶² For relevant literature in this area see esp. MCKNIGHT, *Light*, and now SCHNABEL, *Mission*.

¹⁶³ HAYS, *Vision*, 10. Cf. the statement on p. 7: ‘The value of our exegesis and hermeneutics will be tested by their capacity to produce persons and communities whose character is commensurate with Jesus Christ and thereby pleasing to God.’ It would be interesting to ask about the referent of the personal pronoun ‘our’ in Hays and ‘unser’ in Walter (see the quotations above): who are the audiences they envision?

¹⁶⁴ LINCOLN, *Truth*, 397.

discussions of truth claims is always ambiguous (is e.g. the Johannine claim that the death of Jesus is the true revelation of God's love not true if it is not embodied in a given community?), and it seems impossible to decide which praxis is representative of a particular religious tradition (who can claim to have an overview of all Christian and all Jewish communities in all parts of the world during the last 2000 years?). However, Walter himself introduces a particular experience of community praxis, namely, the horrors of Nazi Germany.¹⁶⁵ To my mind it should be possible to ask about the extent to which the effects of *the use of some parts of the New Testament* by some German Christians at a particular time in history shape the presuppositions of Walter's views about the legitimacy or illegitimacy of *various uses of the OT in the NT*. Of course, one can easily find other examples of terrible effects of Christian readings of both the OT and the NT throughout the last 2000 years; however, if one decides to include such effects into a discussion of interpretative questions concerning the uses of the OT in the NT, justice seems to demand more than just examples of negative effects, as well as equal participation from both of the two major religious traditions involved in the interpretation of the Scriptures. However, developing these hermeneutical questions further would require another study altogether, so I now return to the discussion of the use of the manna tradition in John 6, in which a final aspect that needs to be addressed is the relationship of this tradition to possible eucharistic layers of meaning in the text.

4.2.4 *The manna motif and the 'eucharistic overtones' of John 6:51c-58*

Before one considers the relationship between the manna and the 'eucharistic overtones'¹⁶⁶ in John 6:51c-58, one must ask the question whether this text points to the Eucharist at all. The debate, whether this section talks about the Eucharist or is an extension of the christological implications of the bread of life metaphor, or whether it is possible to combine both interpretations, is an old¹⁶⁷ and presumably never-ending one. Since the problems have been dealt with numerous times,¹⁶⁸ I here present only a sketch of the main issues of the debate. The aim of this section is to show in what ways the manna motif might be connected with the Eucharist, if at least some eucharistic overtones are allowed to be present in Jn 6:51c-58.

¹⁶⁵ This is not a theme explicitly developed in his article, but it surfaces in n. 31 on p. 353, where he says: 'Wer die theologische Diskussion um die Stellung Israels in christlicher Sicht seit dem Ende des 2. Weltkriegs noch in Erinnerung hat, weiß, daß selbst das Bewußtsein des nazistischen Völkermords an Israel keineswegs sofort schon eine grundsätzliche theologische Neubesinnung im Blick auf das christlich-jüdische Verhältnis zur Folge hatte.'

¹⁶⁶ Cf. BROWN, *John*, 274, who sees 'eucharistic undertones' in vv. 35-50, but thinks that vv. 51-58 are explicitly eucharistic. I choose the term 'overtones', since I am concerned only with possible additional eucharistic connotations; it is not clear to me whether Brown, by using 'undertones', wants to say that the eucharist is the more profound level of meaning in vv. 35-50.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. CAVARELLA, 'L'interpretation', about the controversy over John 6 at the Council of Trent.

¹⁶⁸ For literature and discussion see MENKEN, 'John 6:51c-58'.

Whether the passage should be read as referring to the Eucharist or ‘as a logical continuation of the preceding christological part of the discourse’¹⁶⁹ depends on one’s views concerning various issues. First, one has to decide how the metaphorical language works. Is it referring to believing in Jesus (as in 6:35, 50, 51ab), is the metaphor developed with the Eucharist in mind in 6:51c-58, or are there eucharistic overtones throughout the whole discourse?¹⁷⁰ Secondly, the similarities and differences between supposedly eucharistic language in the present passage and in other eucharistic texts in the New Testament have to be accounted for: are the differences due to the Johannine context, or do they suggest that Jn 6:51c-58 is not about the Eucharist at all?¹⁷¹ Thirdly, if one goes for a eucharistic reading of 6:51c-58, new questions arise. How does the eucharistic part relate to the christological focus of the preceding verses? Is it possible to relate the two emphases meaningfully, or are we confronted with two radically different christological and soteriological conceptions?¹⁷² To answer these questions leads into a discussion of the Johannine understanding of sacraments, and into questions of secondary (here: eucharistic) additions.

¹⁶⁹ MENKEN, ‘John 6:51c-58’, 184f.

¹⁷⁰ CARSON, *John*, 278, seems to confuse categories when he says that ‘the language should be taken metaphorically, not sacramentally’, since even in a sacramental reading σάρξ and αἷμα remain metaphors for the eucharistic bread and wine. Eating, to be understood literally in case of a eucharistic reading, is taken as a metaphor for believing in a christological reading on the basis of the parallelism between v. 48 and v. 58 (so VAN DER WATT, *Family*, 223f.). For a comprehensive study of Johannine uses of metaphor see VAN DER WATT, *Family*; cf. also KYSAR, ‘Faith’, 173-177.

¹⁷¹ Similarities: cf. already εὐχαριστεῖν in 6:11, 23; in 6:51ff.: διδόναι ἄρτον, φαγεῖν, πίνειν, ὑπέρ, αἷμα (cf. Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:17-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26; however, these texts contain terminology completely missing in John 6, e.g., ποτήριον, ἡ καινὴ διαθήκην). Dissimilarities: the fourfold τρώγειν in 6:45ff.; and esp. σάρξ in 6:51ff. (cf. σῶμα in the Synoptics and in Paul; however, e.g. BAUER, *Johannesevangelium*, 99, points to passages in Ignatius and Justin using σάρξ in eucharistic contexts; if this reflects influence from John, this would be early evidence for a eucharistic understanding of John 6:51c-58. Others, e.g. BROWN, *John*, 285, take σάρξ to be more faithful to the Aramaic spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper, since Aramaic does not have an equivalent to σῶμα. On this account, John would reflect the most reliable historical tradition). For links between the Eucharist and the multiplication narrative see BROWN, *John*, 246ff.: (1) Jesus distributes the bread in v. 11, just as he did at the Last Supper; (2) ὡς δὲ ἐνεπλήσθησαν in v. 12 is echoed in the eucharistic liturgy in Did. 10:1, as are κλάσμα, συνάγειν, and εὐχαριστεῖν in Did. 9:4 (see MOULE, ‘Note’); (3) the care taken of the eucharistic fragments in the early church and the phrase ἵνα μὴ τι ἀπόληται in 6:12; (4) the use of barley for the Eucharist in the early church and ἄρτος κριθίνος in 6:9, 13. For possible links to the Eucharist in 6:35-50 see BROWN, *John*, 274: (1) identification of Jesus with the bread goes beyond ch. 4, where Jesus is *not* identified with the living water; this fits with the eucharistic motif; (2) hunger and thirst in v. 35 fit with eucharistic language; (3) manna was associated with the Eucharist (1 Cor 10:1-4). The first two are easily explained on the basis of the sapiential connections (e.g. Sir 24:21), which Brown realizes; however, he maintains that there are ‘secondary, eucharistic undertones’ even in vv. 35-50, which in his view become primary in vv. 51-58.

¹⁷² BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 162, strongly argues that vv. 51c-58 are eucharistic and reflect a completely different soteriology and eschatology that can only be the work of the *kirchliche Redaktion*. For a very detailed defense of the secondary origin of the eucharistic passage see RICHTER, ‘Formgeschichte’. For a completely different approach, which takes into account the community background of the eucharistic praxis of the Johannine Christians in the situation of conflict with the synagogue, see RENSBERGER, *World*, ch. 4; ANDERSON, ‘*Sitz im Leben*’. The Eucharist as a public act of faith and love with serious consequences for those who take part in it was already emphasized by NEUGEBAUER, *Entstehung*, 18ff.

It is obvious that complex issues (metaphorical language, eucharistic language, christology, soteriology, sacraments) are in the background of these three circles of questions. For the purpose of the present section I restrict myself to taking up the following balanced conclusion of Menken:

‘John 6:51c-58 should be considered as an integral part of John 6. It is quite probable that the evangelist made use here of eucharistic terminology, especially of a version known to him of the words on the bread and the wine, spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper. However, that does not mean that the passage is primarily about the Eucharist. Jesus’ “flesh” and his “blood” indicate here the crucified Jesus, and the “bread” mentioned in v. 51c is not the eucharistic bread, but the bread of life with which Jesus already identified himself. There is a logical transition, in v. 51c, from the Father’s present gift of Jesus to Jesus’ future gift of himself. Eating Jesus’ flesh and drinking his blood in vv. 53-56 stand for belief in him as the one who dies for the life of the world. The entire passage, including the misunderstanding in v. 52, can be understood as a discussion with a Jewish point of view concerning Jesus’ death. Numerous parallels, elsewhere in John, to the various aspects of John 6:51c-58 just mentioned, support this christological interpretation.¹⁷³

Using Menken’s conclusion as a hypothesis that allows for the notion of ‘eucharistic overtones’ in Jn 6:51c-58, the following perspective on the relationship between the manna tradition and the Eucharist might, if judged persuasive, in turn be used as an argument to strengthen the eucharistic allusions within an overall christological passage.

Before I turn to a closer look at the relationship between manna and Eucharist, one theological inference has to be mentioned that holds true for both a christological and an eucharistic reading. This concerns the fact that whether directly (in the former case) or indirectly (in the latter case), in v. 51c the death of Jesus is in view. Although we saw in connection with John’s use of the Passover tradition and of the brazen serpent incident in Jn 3:14f. that Moses traditions inform John’s presentation of the death of Jesus, I do not want to suggest that there is an elaborate theological rationale behind the connection between Moses traditions and Jesus’ death. However, it is difficult to deny the simple fact that in John 6:51c again a Moses tradition illuminates an allusion to Jesus’ death.¹⁷⁴ I suggest that the very fact that this connection is neither especially emphasized nor elaborated, but appears more or less in passing, does not mean that it is insignificant, but reflects the underlying strong conviction that the death of Jesus functions as a foundational event for the Johannine community in a way comparable to the foundational function of Moses traditions for Israel. Thus we have again a confirmation of the sociological function of the use of Moses traditions: Jesus’ death is

¹⁷³ MENKEN, ‘John 6:51c-58’, 201f. Cf. similarly MOLONEY, *Signs*, 58f, who argues that ‘throughout the discourse Jesus is presented as the true bread from heaven, replacing the former bread from heaven, the manna of the Law. ... But the Christian reader asks: Where do I encounter this revelation of God in the flesh and blood of the Son of Man? By means of the underlying eucharistic language the author insinuates the answer: It is in the Eucharistic celebration that one can encounter the flesh and blood of Jesus the Christ.’

¹⁷⁴ That Jesus’ death is in view becomes clear especially if one compares other significant uses of ὑπέρ in John (11:11, 15: 11:50ff.; 15:13; 17:19). For discussion cf. BARRETT, *Gospel*, 298; CARSON, *Gospel*, 295; and SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.282-284, who shows, taking up SCHÜRMAN, ‘Joh 6,51c’, how the reference to Jesus’ death does not necessarily rule out eucharistic overtones.

foundational for the identity of the Johannine community, and this death is here illuminated with recourse to the manna tradition. As I said above in my discussion of the brazen serpent incident, this aspect will be taken up in the concluding theological reflections at the end of this study. At this point, the impact of the manna tradition in an eucharistic reading of Jn 6:51c-58 deserves special attention.

4.2.4.1 *The manna tradition in Jn 6:51c-58: first observations*

The manna tradition recurs explicitly only at the end of the passage.¹⁷⁵ In v. 58, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, a nearly verbatim repetition of v. 50a (οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβαίνων), is followed by οὐ καθὼς ἔφαγον οἱ πατέρες καὶ ἀπέθανον· ὁ τρώγων τοῦτον τὸν ἄρτον ζήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. This recalls the contrast of v. 48-51b:

48 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς.
 49 οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν ἔφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ τὸ μάννα καὶ ἀπέθανον·
 50 οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβαίνων,
 ἵνα τις ἐξ αὐτοῦ φάγη καὶ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ.
 51 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ζῶν ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς·
 ἐάν τις φάγη ἐκ τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου ζήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

Thus, vv. 48-51b and v. 58 provide an *inclusio* by contrasting the manna which the fathers ate in the wilderness, but who nevertheless died, with the bread that comes down from heaven, the eating of which will result in the possession of eternal life.¹⁷⁶ Although the negative aspect of the fathers eating and dying recurs only at the end, the positive aspect of eating and having eternal life is repeated with varying terminology throughout vv. 53-57. This implies that if the Eucharist is understood to be at least alluded to in a secondary way in these verses, the negative foil in the background is the manna experience of the fathers. Kügler, however, has suggested more positive connections between manna and the Eucharist.

4.2.4.2 *Manna, wisdom, logos, kingship: Some light from Philo on manna and eucharist in John 6*

The starting point of Kügler's reflections is the combination of the two presentations of Jesus as bread of life (= the gift), and Jesus as giver of the bread of life. The question is,

¹⁷⁵ MOLONEY, *Signs*, 54 n. 87, suggests that μάχομαι in v. 52 'continues the theme of the "grumbling" from Ex 16. It appears in Exod 17:2, with the same meaning as the verb *gongyzein* in Exod 16:7-8 and John 6:41, 43. See also Num 11:4.' Thus, we would have another link to the manna background in the "eucharistic" passage. However, I do not think the link significant enough to place any argumentative weight on it.

¹⁷⁶ This *inclusio* questions the majority view that a new section starts with 51b or c. See e.g. TEMPLE, 'Key', (secondary section starting with v. 48), and recently SASSE, *Menschensohn*, 203ff. (vv. 47-58).

‘ob es nicht theologische Vorarbeiten gab, die überhaupt erst die Bedingung der Möglichkeit für die kombinatorische Arbeit der Redaktion schafften.’¹⁷⁷

In answering this question, Kügler ingeniously connects various aspects of wisdom theology in Proverbs and Wisdom of Solomon with some aspects of Philo’s understanding of wisdom, logos and manna. He then uses this background to illuminate John’s link between the manna tradition and the Eucharist, including a link to John’s Logos-christology and his *Königschristologie*, which is visible in John 6 in the connection between the bread miracle and Jesus’ perception that the crowds want to make him king.¹⁷⁸ Kügler’s suggestions deserve to be quoted in full because of their significance for the present discussion of the use of manna traditions in John 6. Wisdom theology provides the immediate background behind the combination of gift and giver:

‘In der Weisheitstheologie ist es ja selbstverständlich, daß die Gabe der Weisheit Weisheit ist. Die Weisheit kann Geberin und Gabe zugleich sein, weil zu ihrem Wesen das Oszillieren zwischen Person (Spr 8,1-9,18; Weish 8,2-4) und Pneuma (Weish 7,22-26) gehört. Auch Philo kann die Weisheit und den Logos sowohl apersonal als Nahrung der Seele (Mut. 259; All. 3,169-173) wie personal als geistliche Nährmutter bzw. Lehrer (Det. 115f.; Her. 191) sehen. Diese Grundstruktur weisheitlicher Theologie wird freilich im Johannesevangelium in einer ganz bestimmten Fassung aufgegriffen. Wie die Leser schon im Prolog lernen können, ist Jesus ja der fleischgewordene Logos. Daß der Logos himmlische Nahrung ist, ist für Philo ein vertrauter Gedanke. In seiner allegorischen Auslegung ist das Manna des Mose eine himmlische Seelenspeise (τῆς ψυχῆς τροφή), als welche der göttliche Logos sich selbst gibt (Fug. 117; Det. 118; All. 3,169-173). Diese Vorstellung von einer unvergänglichen Seelenspeise, welche mit dem Logos Gottes identisch ist, entspricht sehr gut der Lebensbrotchristologie der johanneischen Vorlage, die der Evangelist in Joh 6 verarbeitet hat. Jesus als der in die Welt gekommene Logos offenbart sich als das Brot des Lebens, welches den Glaubenden hier und jetzt Leben schenkt. Dazu präsentiert der Evangelist eine eucharistische Weiterführung, die betont, daß der Fleischgewordene in Brot und Wein als Fleisch und Blut real zu essen und zu trinken ist. Trotz dieser unterschiedlichen Akzentsetzung bewegen sich beide, Tradition und Redaktion, im Rahmen einer hellenistisch-jüdischen Theologie, die von der Sophia bzw. dem Logos als pneumatischem Ernährer und Nahrung der Menschen spricht. Da dem Logos als Erstgeborenem des Vaters, als Sohn Gottes und Herrscher des Alls königliche Qualität zukommt, kann der Evangelist bei der Verknüpfung der Brotrede mit dem aus synoptischem Material heraus entwickelten Brotwunder das kulturelle Wissen vom König als Brotgeber aufgreifen, um in ironischer Brechung auf die Königswürde Jesu hinzuweisen. Die Würde Jesu vollendet sich für den Evangelisten allerdings in der Erhöhung am Kreuz. Dann erst gibt Jesus sein Fleisch für das Leben der Welt (Joh 6,51), und dann erst ist die ganze Wahrheit über das Königtum Jesu offenbar gemacht (Joh 18,36; 19,19-21). Wer Jesus dagegen am Kreuz vorbei zum König machen will – und sei es aufgrund wunderbarer Erfahrungen – verfehlt die Wahrheit Jesu und seines Gottes.’¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ KÜGLER, ‘Brotspender’, 123.

¹⁷⁸ For the Greco-Roman background of the giving of bread as a royal prerogative see e.g. VEYNE, *Brot*, esp. 390-440. BERGER, *Manna*, 121ff., relates the phenomenon of the *congiarium*, the free provision of grain which since Caesar was the right of the Princeps only, to John 6: ‘Ein anderer als der römische Kaiser speist die Massen mit Brot, und daraufhin wollen sie ihn zum König machen. Hier wird somit die Furcht bestätigt, die römische Kaiser dazu bewog, die kostenlose Abgabe von Brot(getreide) anderen (potentiellen Rivalen) zu verbieten. ... Joh 6,15 macht daher deutlich, daß ein enger Zusammenhang besteht zwischen der Brotvermehrung und der Hinrichtung Jesu als »König der Juden«. Denn die Erzählung von der Speisung des Volkes ist der »geborene Anlaß« dazu, daß Jesus sich als Volkskönig etablieren und den Römern gefährlich werden konnte. Denn nirgends ist es so deutlich wie im JohEv, daß Jesus den Römern »in den Rachen geworfen« wird.’ (p. 123; on the last point cf. 11:50; 19:12, 15). For the connection between provision with bread and kingship cf. also *Jos. and As.* 4:7; 25:5; see KÜGLER, ‘Brotspender’, 118-120; BERGER, *Manna*, 124. For John’s *Königschristologie* see esp. KÜGLER, ‘König’, and IDEM, *König*.

¹⁷⁹ KÜGLER, ‘Brotspender’, 123f.

The significance of the wisdom background of John 6 is acknowledged by virtually all commentators; also, Philo's connection of wisdom, logos and Torah is part of the evidence behind the suggestion that in John 6 Jesus replaces the law. It is, however, through the emphasis on the manna = logos¹⁸⁰ as food for the soul that the Philonic background illumines how 'eating the bread from heaven' presents not only a suitable metaphor for 'believing in Jesus', but also for the literal eating of the σάρξ of Jesus in the Eucharist (σάρξ in this case being a metaphor for whatever is actually eaten in the Eucharist). If Kügler's reflections are judged to be persuasive, and I think they are, we have here another example of a complex combination of various important elements from John's *religionsgeschichtliche* context.

4.2.5 Summary

The discussion of the use of the manna tradition in John 6 started by arguing that in the narrative flow of the Gospel, John 6 provides several examples of how Moses can be a witness for Jesus, as claimed in 5:39, 46. Several elements in John 6 show that the manna tradition is combined with allusions to other aspects from Moses tradition (the Mosaic prophet-king, the ascent to the mountain, the signs). It was argued that the Mosaic flavour of the whole chapter was thus emphasized. Next, the manna tradition itself was shown to be used in several ways: there are explicit references to it (6:31, 49, 58), an OT quotation refers to it (6:31), and there are terminological allusions to it (the grumbling of the dialogue partners and the disciples; the testing motif, the aspect of satisfaction with food). In the case of all three terminological allusions it has been suggested that these links to the manna tradition implicitly put Jesus in the place God held in the manna story in Ex 16. The important contributions of Anderson and Borgen were introduced as examples of elaborate interpretative theories supporting different sources of the quotation in 6:31. It was argued that Anderson's suggestions of the use of manna as a rhetorical trump is too complex to be of great communicative value. However, his suggestion of the complete reversal of the manna from its introduction as an example of a positive sign to its position as a negative foil for Jesus' claim to be the true bread from heaven was justified by a simpler reading of Jn 6:26-58. This reading was based on the links between vv. 26-29 and vv. 30-58, the links being (1) the contrast between bread/food that perishes and bread/food that effects eternal life; (2) the giving of the bread, and (3) believing in Jesus as the tenor of the 'eating the bread' metaphor. These links reveal not only more details of the use of the manna tradition (its rhetorical function, the implicit motif of the replacement of the Torah,

¹⁸⁰ On the identification of manna and logos in *Leg. All.* III 169 see ROSE, 'Manna', 90f., who rightly points out that Philo arrives at it, not by changing the wording of the quotation from Ex 16:15-16a, but by a 'eigenwillige Abgrenzung der Sinn- und Satzeinheiten': Philo abruptly ends the quotation with Ex 16:16a, thus putting the phrase 'this is the word of God which God commanded you' in parallel to 'this is the bread which God gave you to eat' (Ex 16:15), although in Ex 16:16 the former phrase introduces the following command of God to gather the manna.

its link to the eucharistic elements of the dialogue, and its potential to illuminate one of John's most important aims, believing in Jesus), but at the same time they show how John 6:26-58 interweaves aspects from the OT quotation with aspects from Jesus' words in vv. 26-27, 29.

In dialogue with the significant contribution of Theobald, several unwarranted leaps in his approach were pointed out, arguing that his extreme conclusion that Jesus' response in 6:32 entails a negation of the salvation-historical value of the OT was unnecessary even on the basis of his own detailed observations. Alternatively, Jesus' response was understood as an allegorical interpretation of the OT quotation in v. 31, aiming to point out the significance of God's present action in giving Jesus as the true bread from heaven.

Finally, some reflections by Kügler were introduced as an example of how the manna tradition can be combined with elements from wisdom tradition and Philo's logos speculation in order to illuminate an eucharistic reading of 6:51-58. Also, it was shown that whether or not a eucharistic reading is judged to be persuasive, in 6:51c the death of Jesus is in view, which means that Moses tradition is again used in John's presentation of Jesus' death. This was again connected with the thesis of the sociological function of Moses traditions, since Jesus' death is foundational for the Johannine Christians and therefore shapes their identity in an important way.

From the relative complexity of the discussion of the manna tradition in John 6 I now turn to the possible impact of further elements of the wilderness tradition in John 7 and 8, where Jesus is presented at the feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. It will become clear that other scriptural backgrounds are more prominent in these chapters. Nevertheless, the setting of Tabernacles and Jesus' use of water and light symbolism suggest that the wilderness tradition adds to an understanding of these chapters.

4.3 The rock in the wilderness and the pillar of fire in John 7-8

The setting of John 7 and 8 is the feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. The feast was characterized by at least three essential functions:¹⁸¹ (1) remembrance of the wilderness generation living in huts (the past), (2) joyous thankfulness for the harvest and prayers for rain (the present),¹⁸² and (3) hope looking forward to God's kingship being finally acknowledged by all the nations (the future).¹⁸³ Thus, already the wilderness associations of this feast imply an allusion to Moses tradition. However, two parts within chs. 7 and 8 have been taken as allusions to specific incidents during the period of the wilderness wanderings. First, it is claimed that Jesus' talk about the living water in 7:37f. alludes to the rock Moses smote in the wilderness (Ex 17:1-7; Num 20:1-13). Secondly, the light metaphor of the 'I am'-saying in 8:12 has been understood to allude to the pillar of fire leading the Israelites during the wilderness wanderings (Ex 13:21-22; 14:24). Since the issues involved in both suggestions raise fairly different questions, I discuss them separately. I will argue that the link between Jn 7:37ff. and the wilderness rock is most persuasive within a coherent interpretative perspective, in this case provided by the lawsuit motif from Is 40-55 and Ex 17. Concerning Jn 8:12, I will show that it cannot convincingly be argued that the pillar of fire is specifically alluded to. I therefore disagree with the observation mentioned at the very beginning of this study that John 6-8 is deliberately designed to evoke the three wilderness gifts, i.e., the manna, the water from the rock, and the pillar of fire.¹⁸⁴ Despite this partly negative result, the following discussion addresses several important questions and reveals multiple aspects of theological importance.

4.3.1 John 7:37-39 and the rock in the wilderness

As will become clear, it is again not possible strictly to separate the question of the *presence* of the link from the question of the *interpretation* of the link. However, the following two

¹⁸¹ Cf. e.g. the short overview in BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 113-114. For comprehensive studies of the feast of Tabernacles see BORNHÄUSER, *Sukka*; ULFGARD, *Story*; RUBENSTEIN, *History*; and VICENT, *Fiesta*. Cf. also MACRAE, 'Meaning'; SANDMEL, *Judaism*, 214-216; BODI, 'Hintergrund', 139-142.

¹⁸² BODI, 'Hintergrund', 139f.: 'Das Laubhüttenfest war früher das Erntefest (Ex 23,16), ein bäuerliches Fest im Herbst, und der Brauch, Hütten aus Zweigen zu errichten, entspringt offensichtlich der bäuerlichen Sitte, die Gärten während der Ernte und Lese zu bewachen. ... Der Ritus des Errichtens von Hütten erlaubte es, dieses erst mit der Geschichte vom Auszug aus Ägypten in Verbindung zu bringen (Lev 23,42-43; Ex 23,16; Deut 16,13) und so einen Aspekt des Aufenthaltes in der Wüste zu feiern. Wahrscheinlich seit dem Exil hat sich das Laubhüttenfest als Gedenken an den Aufenthalt des Gottesvolkes in der Wüste eingebürgert.'

¹⁸³ For Tabernacles and eschatology against the background of Zech 14 see esp. BERGLER, 'Jesus', 148-155; HARRELSON, 'Celebration'; SCHAEFER, 'Ending'. For the eschatological significance of various Tabernacle symbols see GOODENOUGH, *Symbols*, 4.144-166; ROTH, 'Symbols', 154. ULFGARD, *Story*, 213 and *passim*, also points to the association of Tabernacles with Solomon's Temple inauguration (1 Kgs 8; 2 Chr 5-7), with the Temple rededication in Ezra 3 and 2 Macc 10, and with the patriarchs in *Jub.* 16 and 32.

¹⁸⁴ See above, Introduction, p. 1-2.

subsections try to distinguish both questions as far as possible. In contrast to the clear use of the manna tradition in John 6, it is by no means obvious whether or not an allusion to the rock in the wilderness is intended in John 7:37-39, as is clear from a simple reading of the text:

7:37 Ἐν δὲ τῇ ἑσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ μεγάλῃ τῆς ἑορτῆς εἰστήκει ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἔκραξεν λέγων, Ἐάν τις διψᾷ ἔρχέσθω πρὸς με καὶ πινέτω 7:38 ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ, καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή, ποταμοὶ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ ῥέουσιν ὕδατος ζῶντος. 7:39 τοῦτο δὲ εἶπεν περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ὃ ἐμελλόν λαμβάνειν οἱ πιστεύσαντες εἰς αὐτόν· οὐπω γὰρ ἦν πνεῦμα, ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὐδέπω ἐδοξάσθη.

Discussion of this text has usually focussed on several well-known questions: the punctuation of vv. 37-38, the referent of αὐτοῦ in v. 38, and the source of the Scripture quotation.¹⁸⁵ I will deal with these issues only insofar as they contribute to a possible link to the rock in the wilderness.

4.3.1.1 Arguments for the presence of the link

Among the authors who argue in favour of a link between Jn 7:37ff. and the rock in the wilderness, Glasson deserves a prominent place. His argument entails five elements. First, he points to the fact that the manna and the water from the rock in the wilderness are often mentioned together, e.g. in Neh 9:15; Ps 78:20, 24; 105:40f.; 1 Cor 10:3f.¹⁸⁶ This observation occurs again and again in the commentaries,¹⁸⁷ but it has to be said that it does not seem to carry a lot of weight. It is hardly surprising that two significant incidents from the wilderness wanderings, presented in sequence in Ex 16 and 17, occur right next to each other in retellings of the wilderness period. However, mentioning both events next to each other in retellings of the story is very different from the juxtaposition of the clear and pervasive use of the manna tradition in John 6 and the supposed allusion to the rock in Jn 7:38. Therefore, this argument is not very significant with respect to *establishing* the presence of the link to the wilderness rock.

Glasson's second element concerns a central question. Given the Tabernacle setting, it is nearly universally understood that Jesus' words in Jn 7:37f. allude to the daily ritual of the water libation at that feast.¹⁸⁸ This ritual 'is thought to have originated in a quasi-magical attempt to

¹⁸⁵ Patristic views on the punctuation question (the "Christological interpretation" vs. the "Eastern interpretation") are reviewed in RAHNER, 'Flumina'; MENARD, 'L'interprétation'; BOISMARD, 'Ventre'. For particularly perceptive discussions of these and further questions see SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.211-218 (who adds specifically the question of the meaning of the picture); CARSON, *Gospel*, 321-329; BURGE, *Community*, 88-95; HANSON, *Gospel*, 99-115 (who adds the question whether καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή refers to the preceding part or the following part of the sentence, and the question whether Jesus could have uttered these words).

¹⁸⁶ GLASSON, *Moses*, 48.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. e.g. BROWN, *John*, 322.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. e.g. the comments *ad loc.* by Carson, Moloney, Smith. However, HOSKYNS, *Gospel*, 320f., following Bernard and Wellhausen, argues against an allusion to the water ceremony. Cf. also BAUER, *Johannesevangelium*, 112: 'Ob die Sitte der Wasserspende am Laubhüttenfest, die weder das AT noch Josephus kennen, die vielmehr erst im Talmud vorkommt, den Anknüpfungspunkt für

ensure rain for the coming season, and prayers for rain are still associated with this feast.¹⁸⁹ If one wishes to establish that Jn 7:37ff. alludes to the wilderness rock, it would be helpful to present some evidence that connects the water ceremony with this rock.¹⁹⁰ Glasson, knowing that there is not much Rabbinic evidence to this effect, nevertheless points to one source in which the link is made: *TosSuk* 3:3, 11-13.¹⁹¹ Thus, a piece of evidence is presented that could provide the basis for an argument in favour of an allusion to the wilderness rock in Jn 7:38. However, it has to be said that there is no widespread tradition testifying to the link between water libations at Tabernacles and the wilderness rock. It therefore seems doubtful whether the text from the Tosefta adds any force to the suggestion that Jn 7:38 alludes to the rock. Indeed, Glasson himself says that an allusion to the wilderness rock might simply be due to the fact that it was part of the wilderness experiences commemorated at Tabernacles.¹⁹²

The third element of his argumentation leads Glasson to a consideration of the text's punctuation. There are two possibilities:

(A) The Eastern interpretation:

Ἐάν τις διψᾷ ἐρχέσθω πρὸς με καὶ πινέτω.
7:38 ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ, καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή,
ποταμοὶ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ ῥεύσουσιν ὕδατος ζῶντος.

(B) The Western or christological interpretation:

Ἐάν τις διψᾷ ἐρχέσθω πρὸς με
καὶ πινέτω7:38 ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ.
καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή,
ποταμοὶ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ ῥεύσουσιν ὕδατος ζῶντος.

Those who see an allusion to the rock in the wilderness usually opt for the christological interpretation, since it more obviously understands Christ as the source of the streams of living water and therefore lends itself more easily to the link with the rock in the wilderness, especially in the light of 1 Cor 10:3f. However, Glasson holds that '[w]hichever punctuation be preferred, the reference of the whole passage 7.37ff. to the water from the rock is not necessarily in doubt.'¹⁹³ Why that should be so Glasson does not say. The problem has been addressed e.g. by

die folgende Rede abgab, ist mindestens höchst zweifelhaft. Zum Trinken diente das in jenen Tagen feierlich aus dem Siloah geschöpfte Wasser jedenfalls nicht.' ULFGARD, *Story*, 248, while acknowledging that it is not clear when the water-drawing became part of the Tabernacle celebrations in the Temple, takes Jn 7:37-39 as 'the earliest implicit indication of the rite.'

¹⁸⁹ GLASSON, *Moses*, 49. ULFGARD, *Story*, 248, says that 'the water-drawing and ensuing libation at *sukkot* was popularly understood as a kind of rain-charm.' Cf. also RUBENSTEIN, *History*, 163-179, on the tannaitic understanding of the connection between Tabernacles and rain.

¹⁹⁰ BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 114, states that the libations did allude to the rock in the wilderness without providing any evidence. Similarly CARSON, *Gospel*, 322.

¹⁹¹ See GLASSON, *Moses*, 58-59, for the text and his notes. Similar WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 1.292.

¹⁹² See GLASSON, *Moses*, 50.

¹⁹³ GLASSON, *Moses*, 51.

Grelot¹⁹⁴ and by Allison¹⁹⁵, who try to show how the punctuation of the Eastern reading can be reconciled with the view that Jesus, not the believer, is the referent of αὐτοῦ in v. 38. Already Bauer understood the text in this way, reflected clearly in his paraphrasing translation of vv. 37-38:

‘An dem letzten Tage, dem großen des Festes, stand Jesus da und rief also: wenn jemand dürstet, der komme zu mir und trinke. Wer an mich glaubt (, der wird erleben, daß es so zugeht,) wie die Schrift gesagt hat: »Ströme werden aus seinem (des Erlösers) Leibe fließen lebendigen Wassers.«¹⁹⁶

Despite Bauer’s explanations, his reading remains somewhat artificial, and Hanson’s comments on Grelot’s approach reveal that a lot of assumptions are at work in the combination of punctuation (A) with taking Jesus as referent of αὐτοῦ:

‘Grelot does not explicitly accept punctuation B [the christological interpretation], but he believes that αὐτοῦ refers to Christ, and that there *must be* a connection with the riven rock. The rock was associated with the well of Numbers 21.16-18. The form of the text in 7.38 *must be* influenced by some sort of targumic recension, *perhaps a more ancient midrash on Psalm 8 than any we possess*. In his second article he connects the stricken rock with Ezek. 47 and Zech. 14.8.¹⁹⁷ (Italics added).

As the italicised phrases indicate, this view seems to rest more on what *must be* or *could be* the case, than on clear evidence. Furthermore, one has to be careful not to confuse two separate issues. On the one hand, the question is whether it is possible to understand Jesus as referent of αὐτοῦ even on the basis of the punctuation preferred by the Eastern interpretation. This is possible, but unlikely, as Bauer’s translation and his explanations show. On the other hand, the question is whether or not the rock of the wilderness is in the background even if Jesus were the referent of αὐτοῦ in both cases. The above quotation from Glasson does not show enough awareness of this distinction.

The fourth element in Glasson’s presentation concerns the often mentioned link between Jn 7:37-38 and Jn 19:34. Glasson lists several references from the patristic period that indicate that Jn 19:34 was understood to be the fulfilment of the rock in the wilderness, and that Jn 19:34 was linked to Jn 7:37f.¹⁹⁸ The implication seems to be that because 19:34 can be linked to the rock in

¹⁹⁴ GRELOT, ‘Ventre’; IDEM, ‘Jean VII, 38’.

¹⁹⁵ ALLISON, ‘Water’.

¹⁹⁶ BAUER, *Johannesevangelium*, 112. The problem with this translation is that ὁ πιστεύων in punctuation A. functions as *nominativus pendens* within the figure of anacoluthon, which means that ὁ πιστεύων anticipates αὐτοῦ, see BDR, §466; HOFFMANN; VON SIEBENTHAL, *Grammatik*, §147b; §292e. However, Bauer tries to get around this problem by saying that the quotation following καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή is ‘überliefertes Gut’: ‘Daß hier überliefertes Gut vorliegt, ergibt sich auch aus dem Umstand, daß der Evangelist 39 ausdrücklich eine Deutung zufügen zu müssen meint. Haben wir es aber mit einem festgeprägten und so übernommenen Satz zu tun, so braucht das αὐτοῦ keineswegs – was sonst das Gegebene wäre – auf ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ bezogen zu werden. Vielmehr müssen wir das Schrifwort aus dem ganzen Zusammenhang, dem es dienen soll, erklären. In ihm ist aber offenbar nur von Jesus als dem Übermittler des Trunkes die Rede. Auf ihn also muß das αὐτοῦ nach Meinung des Evangelisten gehen.’ (p. 113). The complexity of this reading renders it rather unpersuasive.

¹⁹⁷ HANSON, *Gospel*, 104.

¹⁹⁸ See GLASSON, *Moses*, 52-53.

the wilderness, and 7:37f. can be linked to 19:34, the rock must also be in the background of 7:37f.

This argument gains force by Glasson's fifth element, which consists in a reference to a Jewish tradition already observed by John Lightfoot in his *Horae Hebraicae*. This tradition, explicit in *Ex. Rab.* 122a and in *Tg. Ps.-J.* of Num 20:11, holds that blood and water came forth from the rock when Moses smote it.¹⁹⁹ This tradition seems indeed to provide the most probable background to the unusual scene in Jn 19:34. However, this still does not mean that the rock of the wilderness is also in view in 7:37f., since here only ὕδωρ ζῶν is mentioned, not αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ. Therefore, the allusion to the rock could only become clear retrospectively, after the connection has been spotted in 19:34. This is of course possible, but it would render the allusion to the rock in 7:37f. clearly secondary. Without the help of 19:34, other allusions seem to be more easily detectable in 7:37ff, if one considers these verses in their own context. In particular, with Jesus teaching in the temple in the context of the feast of Tabernacles and its eschatological connotations, the living water that will flow from Jerusalem (Zech 14:8; LXX: ὕδωρ ζῶν. Cf. the references to Tabernacles in Zech 14:16, 18, 19) and the stream of water coming from the Temple (Ez 47:1-12) seem to suggest themselves more naturally.

What is missing in Glasson's discussion is an overall interpretative perspective which binds the various elements of his argument together in a coherent way, especially the link between 19:34 and 7:37f., a link that is not obvious to everyone.²⁰⁰ Such a perspective is provided by Lincoln, who is led to the story of the rock in the wilderness via a completely different route, namely, in his search for links that root John's cosmic lawsuit in Scripture, a lawsuit which he understands to be the major theological framework of John's Gospel. According to Lincoln, the main scriptural background of the lawsuit is provided by Is 40-55.²⁰¹ However, as is well known, Deutero-Isaiah itself repeatedly points back to Exodus motifs, among them the rock in the wilderness (Is 48:21). Going back to Ex 17 itself, Lincoln observes that the framework of this story is that of a lawsuit:

'In Ex 17:2 the people are said to file a complaint or bring a suit against Moses. The NRSV translation "The people quarreled with Moses" does not capture the legal force of the Hebrew text's use of the root כִּיב, *rib*, which is reinforced in the name given to the place by Moses in 17:7 – Meribah. As we noted earlier, *rib* is the term used elsewhere for the covenant lawsuit, usually brought by Yahweh against Israel. Both verses (17:2, 7) see the incident also as testing of Yahweh, hence the other place name – Massah (17:7; cf. also Deut 6:16). But to test Yahweh by bringing a suit against Moses is to put Yahweh on trial. So Meribah turns out to be Israel's suit against Yahweh.'²⁰²

After adding further observations as to how this trial works out in detail, focussing especially on the identification of Yahweh with the rock, Lincoln concludes:

¹⁹⁹ See GLASSON, *Moses*, 54f.

²⁰⁰ Cf. MORRIS, *Gospel*, 375, who simply labels the connection between 7:38 and 19:34 as 'farfetched'.

²⁰¹ Cf. the presentation of the links in LINCOLN, *Truth*, 38-51.

²⁰² LINCOLN, *Truth*, 51.

‘So, when Moses is told to strike the rock on which Yahweh stands, in this legal setting Yahweh is receiving the sentence of judgment that the people wish to carry out on Moses. And when the true judge takes the penalty the rebellious people deserve, provision is made for them and a stream of life-giving water gushes out from the rock.’²⁰³

Lincoln then brings home the significance of this background for John 7, where he sees the same pattern at work:

‘At the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus announces that he is the provision for those who are thirsty and that, in fulfillment of Scripture, out of his belly will flow rivers of living water. The narrator then explains that this is a reference to the Spirit that believers would receive when Jesus was glorified (7:37-39). Later, when Jesus is glorified through his death by crucifixion, blood and water flow from his side, and the reader is reminded of his earlier promise. In this way, when the true judge accepts the verdict of condemnation at the hands of those who deserve this verdict, once more the situation is reversed and the positive verdict of life is made available.’²⁰⁴

The strength of Lincoln’s case lies in his ability to bring various observations together in a coherent interpretative perspective. Is 40-55 provides not only the most significant background for the overall covenantal lawsuit motif and points to the Exodus background, it also gives evidence for the combination of the two backgrounds commonly suggested as the source of the quotation in Jn 7:38. On the one hand, texts about the rock in the wilderness have been suggested (Ex 17:6; Num 20:8, 11; Deut 8:15; Ps 78:15-20; 95:8, 9). On the other hand, as mentioned above, the eschatological texts about water flowing from Jerusalem and its Temple are a highly likely background in the Tabernacles setting of Jn 7 (Zech 14:8; Ez 47:1-12). Lincoln points out not only that both traditions are linked in Is 43:20, but also that Is 44:3 links the giving of water with the outpouring of the Spirit, which according to the narrator’s aside in Jn 7:39 is the referent of Jesus’ words in 7:37f.²⁰⁵ Finally, he includes (a) the observation that John 7 follows the use of the manna tradition in John 6, and (b) the Jewish tradition about the blood and the water behind 19:34 as compatible with his interpretation, without placing any weight on both aspects in terms of the initial identification of the link. I therefore consider Lincoln’s coherent interpretative perspective to provide the most persuasive argument in favour of the presence of an allusion to the rock in the wilderness in John 7:37f. Nevertheless, it has to be admitted that only a reader already alive to the Johannine use of the lawsuit motif and equipped with an intimate knowledge of Isaiah and Exodus will be able to see the connections Lincoln suggests. The fact that John 7 itself can be construed as a trial of Jesus, containing both forensic elements and the aspect of honour challenges,²⁰⁶ might increase the probability that such a reader is led in the direction of the lawsuit background.

Another suggestion supporting the link to the wilderness rock is supplied in Meeks’ discussion of the conflict over Jesus’ identity in terms of Christ and Prophet in Jn 7.²⁰⁷ The

²⁰³ LINCOLN, *Truth*, 52.

²⁰⁴ LINCOLN, *Truth*, 52.

²⁰⁵ See LINCOLN, *Truth*, 53.

²⁰⁶ See NEYREY, ‘Trials’.

²⁰⁷ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 32-61.

decisive point for the present purpose is the argument that in analogy to 6:14, where the people understand Jesus to be the Mosaic prophet after witnessing the bread miracle, here again some think Jesus is the Mosaic prophet, presumably after they took Jesus' words to allude to Moses and the rock in the wilderness. Of course, this suggestion depends on the validity of the claim that in both cases the Mosaic prophet promised in Dt 18 is in view. For the present purpose it is sufficient to note that Meeks' observation, if judged to be persuasive, can easily be seen as complementary to Lincoln's overall approach, making the latter's case even stronger.

Finally, a word has to be said as to the possible source of the OT quotation in 7:38, not least because some commentators have connected the search for the most likely source of the quotation with the question of the link to the wilderness tradition.²⁰⁸ The problem is that it is impossible to argue persuasively for any one text as the most plausible source of Jn 7:38. Obermann simply omits Jn 7:38 in his detailed discussions of the OT quotations in John because the verse does not fulfill his criteria for a meaningful discussion of John's use of OT quotations.²⁰⁹ Jn 7:38 therefore provides the clearest case of an OT quotation the source of which is impossible to locate on the basis of philological comparisons. Nevertheless, the text clearly intends to evoke an OT background, or several OT backgrounds, and the above discussion of the lawsuit background of Ex 17 and Is 40-55 serves as another example of how a coherent interpretative perspective can function as an important factor in the process of locating a plausible OT reference point.

²⁰⁸ E.g. BROWN, *John*, 322: 'It is perhaps in the poetic commentaries found in the Psalms on the water-from-the-rock theme that we have the best parallels to the wording of John VII.' He refers to Ps 105:40-41; 114:8, but also to Is 43:20; 44:3; 48:21; Deut 8:15. However, even these texts are not very close in wording to Jn 7:38, as the following overview shows:

John 7:38: ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ, καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή, ποταμοὶ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ ῥέουσιν ὕδατος ζῶντος.

Ps 104:40-41: ἤτησαν καὶ ἦλθεν ὀρυγομήτρα καὶ ἄρτον οὐρανοῦ ἐνέπλησεν αὐτούς 104:41 διέρρηξεν πέτραν καὶ ἔρρῆσαν ὕδατα ἐπορεύθησαν ἐν ἀνύδροις ποταμοί.

Ps 113:8: τοῦ στρέψαντος τὴν πέτραν εἰς λίμνας ὑδάτων καὶ τὴν ἀκρότομον εἰς πηγὰς ὑδάτων.

Is 43:20: εὐλογῆσει με τὰ θηρία τοῦ ἀγροῦ σειρήνες καὶ θυγατέρες στρουθῶν ὅτι ἔδωκα ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ὕδωρ καὶ ποταμούς ἐν τῇ ἀνύδρῳ ποτίσαι τὸ γένος μου τὸ ἐκλεκτόν.

Is 44:3: ὅτι ἐγὼ δώσω ὕδωρ ἐν δίψει τοῖς πορευομένοις ἐν ἀνύδρῳ ἐπιθήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τὸ σπέρμα σου καὶ τὰς εὐλογίας μου ἐπὶ τὰ τέκνα σου.

Is 48:21: καὶ ἐὰν διψήσωσιν δι' ἐρήμου ἀξεί αὐτούς ὕδωρ ἐκ πέτρας ἐξάξει αὐτοῖς σχισθήσεται πέτρα καὶ ῥησεται ὕδωρ καὶ πίεται ὁ λαός μου.

Deut 8:15: τοῦ ἀγαγόντος σε διὰ τῆς ἐρήμου τῆς μεγάλης καὶ τῆς φοβερᾶς ἐκείνης οὗ ὄφις δάκνων καὶ σκορπίος καὶ δίψα οὗ οὐκ ἦν ὕδωρ τοῦ ἐξαγαγόντος σοι ἐκ πέτρας ἀκροτόμου πηγὴν ὕδατος.

²⁰⁹ See the arguments in OBERMANN, *Erfüllung*, 72, esp. nn. 48-50. Jn 7:38 is also omitted by SCHUCHARD, *Scripture*, and MENKEN, *Quotations*. HANSON, *Gospel*, 109-112, devotes a section to the question of the source of the quotation, which consists largely in references to a variety of texts suggested by an even greater variety of interpreters. Unsurpassed, but nevertheless inconclusive, is FREED, *Quotations*, 21-38, who discusses the following texts as possible sources: Deut 18:15-16; Ps 36:9-10; 46:5-6; Joel 3:18; Zech 13:1; Prov 5:15-16; 18:4 LXX; Sir 15:3; 24:28-32; Cant 4:15; Is 32:1-2; 35:5-7; 41:18; 43:19-21; 49:10; Jer 2:13; 17:13; Ezek 36:25-27; 47:1-12; Jub 8:19; *1 Enoch* 17:4; 22:9; 96:6; Rev 7:16-17; 21:6; 22:1, 17. I do not intend to improve upon this. For a recent survey of the options cf. BIENAIME, 'L'annonce', 418-431.

4.3.1.2 *The theological significance of the link*

Several aspects are regularly emphasized when it comes to the theological significance of Jn 7:37-39. One obvious element in the context of Jesus' teaching in the Temple at Tabernacles is *the Temple replacement motif*. As Smith says with reference to John's special emphasis on Jesus' relationship to several Jewish feasts, 'these festival appearances at least dramatize Jesus' position as an alternative center of authority and worship in Judaism.'²¹⁰ In the case of Tabernacles, this aspect is supported by the background of Zechariah 14 and Ezekiel 47. As mentioned above, Zech 14:8 is one of the most likely texts alluded to in 7:38,²¹¹ and *TosSuk* III 3 combines Ez 47:2 with Zech 14:8.²¹² The Temple replacement motif is prominent in John from ch. 2 onwards, and it is interesting that Zech 14:21 is already used in Jn 2:16.²¹³

Closely connected to the Temple replacement motif is the notion of *the fulfilment of the feast of Tabernacles*: 'Jesus is the source of living water for all who believe in him ...; he perfects and transcends the ritual of the Jewish feast.'²¹⁴ Furthermore, Jn 7:37-39 is, of course, important for any discussion of Johannine *pneumatology*,²¹⁵ and in connection with the suggested link to 19:34 one has to reflect on the implications of the verses for John's understanding of *Jesus' death*.²¹⁶ In the light of the above discussion of the link to the wilderness rock from the perspective of the lawsuit motif, one would have to add the notion of *Jesus' identity* to the theological implications of this text. As pointed out in the quotations from Lincoln, the comparison with Ex 17 via Is 40-55 results in Jesus taking the place of God. This

²¹⁰ SMITH, *John*, 167. Implicit is the close connection between the Temple building, the major Temple festivals, and the Temple cult (worship and sacrifice). Cf. the statement by DUNN, *Partings*, 93, who says about John that '*the movement for which he speaks has parted company with mainstream Judaism precisely at the point of the cult.*' (italics original). On the role of the Temple in John see e.g. COLOE, *God*; ÅDNA, *Stellung*; FRÜHWALD-KÖNIG, *Tempel*; MCCAFFREY, *House*; BUSSE, 'Tempelmetaphorik'; MICHAELS, 'Temple'; HANSON, 'Theme'; LIEU, 'Temple'.

²¹¹ So e.g. BERGLER, 'Jesus', 170.

²¹² BERGLER, 'Jesus', 170 n. 95; ULFGARD, *Feast*, 145.

²¹³ Observed by e.g. SMITH, *John*, 167.

²¹⁴ MOLONEY, *Signs*, 86. For Moloney, the notion of perfection is paramount, never mind the precise background of Jn 7:37-39, as is obvious from his comments on the meaning of ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ in 7:38: 'There is little need to determine whether the expression means "heart" or "belly", whether it is the translation of an Aramaic *gûph*, a memory of the rock in the wilderness, or a reference to a rock of the Temple. For the reader, the meaning is clear; the living waters flow from within Jesus. "John used this word as a means to transfer the prophecy from the city to the person." [quoting BARRETT, *Gospel*, 328]. His person is now the origin of life-giving water, perfecting all that has been promised by the water celebrations of the feast of Tabernacles, the symbol of the definitive mediator of God's gift of water from the well that is the Torah.' (MOLONEY, *Signs*, 87). A statement like this is likely to be judged as too vague by some, and by others as adequately capturing the wealth of water symbolism in Judaism that is possibly evoked in Jn 7:37ff.

²¹⁵ See e.g. BURGE, *Community*, 87-95. A rabbinical tradition attests the connection between the water libation and the outpouring of the Spirit (γ. *Sukk.* 5:1, 55a; *Ruth Rab.* 4:8 on Ruth 2:9).

²¹⁶ E.g., Wengst sees an allusion to Jesus' death in the future tense βέσσωσιν, and in the term κοιλία, asking with respect to the latter: 'Soll mit ihm – als dem Vergänglichem besonders eng verbunden – der Tod Jesu angedeutet werden?' (WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 1.293). He also observes, as does e.g. BRUCE, *John*, 182, that for the first time in John's Gospel, v. 39 speaks of Jesus' glorification, which of course includes his crucifixion.

aspect, prominent also in John's use of the manna tradition in John 6, here occurs as part of the lawsuit metaphor and informs the understanding of Jesus' death in terms of the judgement of the judge. Thus, it can again be argued that the use of a Moses tradition reveals, albeit here in a more hidden way than in Jn 3:14f. and Jn 6, a deeper level of the Johannine understanding of Jesus' death. Since the death of Jesus functions as identity marker for the believing community, the sociological function of the use of Moses tradition is also indirectly confirmed.

4.3.2 John 8:12 and the pillar of fire

If a connection between 7:37f. and the rock in the wilderness is most convincing within the interpretative perspective of the covenant lawsuit, then a connection between 8:12 and the pillar of fire could similarly only be established on the basis of a coherent interpretative approach that strongly suggests such a link. This is mainly due to the terminology of this 'I am' saying:

Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου·
ὁ ἀκολουθῶν ἔμοι
οὐ μὴ περιπατήσῃ ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ,
ἀλλ' ἔξει τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς.

The verse contains several significant elements and important terminology. First, it is the second 'I am' saying after 6:35.²¹⁷ Secondly, the contrast between light and darkness and the universalistic notion takes up terminology already introduced in the prologue (1:4f., 9f.).²¹⁸ Thirdly, although John typically speaks of believing in Jesus which results in eternal life (3:15, 16, 36; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 20:31), the notion that whoever follows Jesus will have the light of life refers to the same issue,²¹⁹ an issue that is at the heart of the purpose of this Gospel (20:31). Thus, the significance of this prominent Johannine saying is not in doubt, and it is further highlighted by the fact that it builds an *inclusio*²²⁰ with the absolute use of 'I am' in 8:58, stressing that Jesus' identity is the major issue in the disputes of ch. 8.

²¹⁷ On the 'I am' saying cf. esp. BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 167f. n. 2; SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.59-70. On the I am sayings in general cf. SCHWEIZER, *Ego Eimi*; BALL, *I am*; and now WILLIAMS, *I am*.

²¹⁸ On light and darkness and the Johannine dualism see esp. BLANK, *Krisis*, 96-108.

²¹⁹ SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.241, argues that the notion of the *Nachfolge Jesu* originated in the synoptic accounts of the call of the disciples, and was then related also to the audiences of the Gospels before John closely linked it to believing: 'Joh hat den letzten Schritt vollzogen und das Nachfolgen selbst als Glaubensanschluß erklärt, der alle Zeit möglich und von jedem Menschen für sein Heil gefordert ist. Doch umschließt diese Glaubensnachfolge auch weiterhin den Willen, Jesus auf seinem Weg über den Tod in die Herrlichkeit zu folgen (12, 26), unter Umständen auch auf dem Weg des Martyriums (13, 36f; vg. 21, 19. 22). Der besondere joh Akzent ist durch den Offenbarungsgedanken gegeben: Nachfolgen bedeutet, gläubig und gehorsam auf die Stimme des Offenbarers zu hören und sich so als ihm zugehörig zu erweisen (vg. 10, 4. 5. 27).' For the combination of this 'I am' saying with a 'Nachfolge-Spruch' see also BLANK, *Krisis*, 184-186.

²²⁰ Observed by e.g. SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.238; LINCOLN, *Truth*, 84.

As is well known, the symbolism of light and darkness is used in such a great variety of religious traditions²²¹ that it is difficult to pin down a specific allusion intended in 8:12. Even if one narrows down the possible sources of influence to the Old Testament, various options present themselves:

‘The light metaphor is steeped in Old Testament allusions. The glory of the very presence of God in the cloud led the people to the promised land (Ex. 13:21-22) and protected them from those who would destroy them (Ex. 14:19-25). The Israelites were trained to sing, “The LORD is my light and my salvation” (Ps. 27:1). The word of God, the law of God, is a light to guide the path of those who cherish instruction (Ps. 119:105; Pr. 6:23); God’s light is shed abroad in revelation (Ezk. 1:4, 13, 26-28) and salvation (Hab. 3:3-4). “Light is Yahweh in action, Ps. 44:3” (H. Conzelmann, *TDNT* 9, 320). Isaiah tells us that the servant of the LORD was appointed as a light to the Gentiles, that he might bring God’s salvation to the ends of the earth (Is. 49:6). The coming eschatological age would be a time when the Lord himself would be the light for his people (Is. 60:19-22; cf. Rev. 21:23-24). Perhaps Zechariah 14:5b-7 is specifically significant, with its promise of continual light on the last day, followed by the promise of living waters flowing from Jerusalem – this passage probably forming part of the liturgical readings of this Feast ... The great, burning lights of the Feast of Tabernacles resonate with such strains.’²²²

Another background not easily dismissed is the association of wisdom with light; Wis 7:22ff. describes wisdom as light.²²³ Notwithstanding this rich OT background, attempts to argue for a special link to the pillar of fire have been made. However, as the following discussion will show, the arguments brought forward lack persuasiveness.

4.3.2.1 *The argument for the presence of the link to the pillar in the wilderness*

As in the case of 7:37f., it is Glasson who tries to make a case for this link. Incidentally, his discussion is very similar to the one on the rock in the wilderness, and therefore open to the same criticism. The basis of his discussion is the often observed possibility that Jesus’ words in 8:12 allude to the nightly light celebrations at Tabernacles.²²⁴ Initially, Glasson admits that there is no rabbinic evidence that explicitly links the lighting of the four huge lamps in the women’s court of the Temple at Tabernacles (*mSuk.* 5:1-4) to the pillar of fire.²²⁵ Nevertheless, he refers to Godet and Westcott who both made the connection, and he thinks that the suggestion has

²²¹ For discussions of various backgrounds see e.g. BAUER, *Johannesevangelium*, 119-121 (references to Babylonian and Egyptian sacred language; to Mandaean and other Gnostic sources; to sun gods that became popular during the time of the Roman Caesars; to Philo’s comparison of the *logos* with the sun, *Som.* I 85); DODD, *Interpretation*, 201-205 (with reference to Zoroastrianism, to Plato, to the OT, esp. Ps 26:1 and its use in the Corpus Hermeticum and in Philo, *Som.* I 75; to Rabbinic sources) ASHTON, *Understanding*, 208-214 (on the moral dualism of light and darkness, with special reference to Qumran).

²²² CARSON, *John*, 337-338. On Torah as light see esp. LINDARS, *John*, 313-315.

²²³ WITHERINGTON, *John’s Wisdom*, 175. See also SCOTT, *Sophia*, 119-121.

²²⁴ This connection is made by e.g. BERGLER, ‘Jesus’, 171; BORNHÄUSER, *Sukka*, 38f., 154f.; TALBERT, *John*, 152f.; MOLONEY, *Signs*, 93f.; MALINA; ROHRBAUGH, *John*, 156. It is briefly mentioned by ULFGARD, *Story*, 258, but not commented on in his discussion of the significance of Tabernacles in John’s Gospel, pp. 258-263.

²²⁵ GLASSON, *Moses*, 62.

some force simply on the basis of the wilderness associations of Tabernacles, the pillar of fire being part of the wilderness events. More recently, Talbert advocated the same point:

‘At a festival that looked backward to the time of wandering in the wilderness, the light ceremony could not have avoided associations with the pillar of fire (Exod 13:21; 14:24; 40:38) that went before the people. Since the pillar of fire and cloud was expected to return in the endtime (Isa 4:5; Baruch 5:8-9; *Song of Songs Rabbah* 1:8 [R. Akiba]), it is difficult to believe that the light ceremony would not have evoked this eschatological hope. In saying, “I am the light of the world,” in this context, Jesus claims to be the fulfillment of the hopes for light associated with Tabernacles. In so doing he gives a warrant by his own words for the supersession of Tabernacles in the worship of the Johannine community centered around him. This indeed would be provocative.’²²⁶

Reasonable though this sounds, it is interesting that no specific evidence for the connection between the light celebration and the pillar of fire is given. The question surfaces, then, as to how unavoidable the connection really was. It is interesting that it was possible to think of Tabernacles without reference to the wilderness period at all, as is clear in Jubilees, where Abraham and Jacob are presented as those who first celebrated the feast.²²⁷ Thus, while the connection between the light at Tabernacles and the pillar of fire might well have been part of the popular associations in the imagination of those celebrating this feast, in the absence of explicit evidence one cannot build too much on the suggestion that tries to establish that Jn 8:12 intends the connection between Jesus’ use of the light metaphor, the light celebrations of Tabernacles, and the pillar of fire.

The next argument consists again in the fact that several OT and rabbinical texts mention the manna, the water from the rock, and the pillar of fire in close connection (Neh 9:12; Ps 105:39-41; *Mek* on Ex 16:28-36; *Num. Rab.* 1:2; *Song Rab.* 4:5; *Lev. Rab.* 27:6). As has been said in relation to the suggested link to the wilderness rock in 7:37f., the mere reference to these texts does not take into account the difference between calling to mind major wilderness events in historical reminiscence, and the very different kinds of uses of wilderness traditions in Jn 6, 7, and 8, if indeed there is such a use in ch. 8 at all.

Glasson then picks up a suggestion of Bornhäuser who thinks that the light symbolism alludes to sunlight at the beginning of the New Year. He objects that ‘no one follows the sun’, and states that the interpretation of 8:12 would be more consistent ‘when we think of the fiery pillar of the wilderness giving its guiding light to those who followed.’²²⁸ Glasson concludes that if the allusion to the pillar of fire is taken for granted, then we have in John 6, 7, and 8 ‘the

²²⁶ TALBERT, *John*, 153. Whereas in Is 4:5 and *Song Rab.* the allusion to the pillars of cloud and fire is clear, Bar 5:9 talks more generally about God leading Israel μετ εὐπροσύνης τῷ φωτὶ τῆς δόξης.

²²⁷ *Jub.* 16 and 32; see ULFGARD, *Story*, 154-173, for the ideological implications of this use of Tabernacles.

²²⁸ GLASSON, *Moses*, 63. This argument was also put forward in LAMPE; WOOLLCOOMBE, *Essays*, 47; DANIELOU, *Sacramentum Futuri*, 139. Of course, the notion of following is implied in the fact that the pillar was leading the Israelites, but the notion of following is not explicit in the relevant texts (Ex 13:21-22; 14:24; Num. 14:14). Also, the pillar of fire is always mentioned together with the pillar of clouds, whereas the latter is also mentioned without the former, cf. Ex 14:19; 33:9-10; Num 12:5; Dt 31:15. This does not suggest any special significance of the pillar of fire either.

Christian fulfilments of the three great wilderness gifts.’²²⁹ This would indeed be the case, given the presence of the link to the pillar of fire is judged to be persuasive. In the light of the evidence just reviewed, it has to be said that the case seems to be driven more by the desire to arrive at the attractive result to find ‘the three great wilderness gifts’ in John, than it is supported by evidence that might suggest the third gift in the first place. In the presence of the great variety of possible OT backgrounds, and in the absence of any convincing evidence that clearly points to the pillar of fire, I conclude that the argument for this link cannot be sustained.

4.3.3 Summary

The results of the discussion of John’s use of the wilderness traditions can be summarized with respect to the following categories. First, with respect to *the form and nature of the links*, wilderness traditions are used in a variety of ways. The story of the brazen serpent is clearly alluded to in Jn 3:14f., the nature of the link being a comparison between an action of Moses and an action suffered by Jesus. The manna tradition is evoked in several ways (explicit references, a quotation, terminological allusions), and Jesus’ response to the OT quotation was understood as an allegorical interpretation. Furthermore, the wilderness traditions are used always in some combination with other OT traditions, especially with wisdom texts and with aspects of the figure of the servant of the Lord.

Secondly, there is *a variety of theological implications* to be inferred from the use of various aspects of wilderness traditions. In the use of the brazen serpent incident, there is (1) the desire, similarly visible in several Jewish sources, to turn away from a magical understanding of the serpent incident in favour of an understanding that emphasizes God as the sole source of salvation, but now with Jesus at the center of that salvation. There is also (2) an antidocetic implication.

Thirdly, there are *recurring theological implications* in the established uses of wilderness traditions: (1) the illumination of Jesus’ death; (2) the clarification of Jesus’ identity: he is the subject of actions related to God in the OT stories (or in their interpretative traditions); (3) the replacement of the Law by Jesus as a secondary implication; (4) in the case of the brazen serpent and the manna, a secondary implication was found regarding the view of the followers of Jesus as the true Israel, supporting the thesis of a sociological function of the use of Moses traditions: just as Israel in the wilderness was saved by looking upon the serpent, so one has to look now upon the crucified Jesus to be part of the people of God.

Fourthly, *the connection between the identification and the interpretation of OT sources* has again been highlighted, especially in the use of the manna tradition and in the discussion of the link to the rock in the wilderness. Also, the lack of a coherent interpretative perspective,

²²⁹ GLASSON, *Moses*, 63, picked up by MORRIS, *Gospel*, 388.

together with the lack of clear terminological allusions to the pillar of fire, was shown to render the suggested link to the pillar in Jn 8:12 implausible.

We now turn to the final important area in which Moses traditions play a significant part. As mentioned at the beginning of my introduction, various major studies look at the relationship between Moses and Jesus and the christological implications. The following chapter will analyze the ways in which Moses traditions are suggested to be used in this area, and whether there are similarities to what we have found so far about John's use of other Moses traditions. The focus will be on the use of Dt 18:15-20, on the possibility of traditions about Moses as shepherd in the background of John 10, and on the comparison between Moses' farewell according to Deuteronomy and the farewell discourses in John 14-17.

5. The use of Moses traditions and the comparison of Jesus and Moses

To complete our discussion of the ways in which Moses traditions are used in John's Gospel, attention has to be paid to one more area. The relevant literature suggests numerous ways in which Moses and Jesus are compared as persons or in which the prophet like Moses is supposed to be evoked. The comparison of Jesus and Moses was tacitly part of some texts we have already discussed (esp. Jn 3:13f. and Jn 6). However, the issues involved in these texts go well beyond a personal comparison, as we have seen. The focus of this final chapter will be on texts that seem primarily to compare Jesus and Moses. The problem one has to face in this area is the sheer number of suggestions in the relevant literature. The following lists from Petersen and Glasson provide a taste of the kinds of links that have been seen between Johannine and Pentateuchal texts.

Aspect/Motif	Moses	Jesus
Not seeing God	Ex 3:6b	Jn 1:18; 6:46
Speaking in God's name	Deut 18:19	Jn 5:30-47; 7:16-18; 17:7-8
The sending motif	Ex 3:10	Numerous verses in John
Signs about a promised event that comes to pass	Ex 3:11-12; Deut 18:21-22	Jn 13:19; 14:29; probably 8:28
Revelation of God's name	Ex 3:13-16	Jn 17:6, 11-12 ¹
Signs intended to lead to faith	Ex 4:1-9, 17	Jn 4:48
Ability to speak	Ex 4:10	Jn 7:46
Speaking God's words	Ex 4:10-16; Deut 18:18	Jn 3:34; 7:16-18; 8:26-27, 31, 47; 12:44-50; 14:24b; 15:10, 15; 17:8, 14, 19-20 ²

¹ Petersen is of course not the only one who observed these kinds of links. For example: the revelation of God's name to Moses was linked to John 17 by MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 290-291, 302-303.

² Details in PETERSEN, *Sociology*, 92-93. On pp. 94-95 he adds three points: (1) He sees Ex 20:19 and Deut 18:16 alluded to in Jn 5:37b and Deut 18:19 in Jn 5:38. (2) He links Moses' 40 days and nights on the mountain receiving commandments, the last of which concerns keeping the Sabbath (including the death penalty for those who break the Sabbath), to Jn 5:16; 7:19-23; 9:16a; 24-33, where Jesus is rejected because he breaks the Sabbath: 'This conclusion is also a judgement that Jesus is a false prophet when judged according to the image of a prophet like Moses.' (p. 94). (3) Moses' interceding (Ex 32:11-14, 30-35) is inverted in Jn 5:45: Moses as accuser (p. 95). His general conclusion is: 'From these points, the principal characteristics of a prophet like Moses will be that he is one who is sent by God (and will therefore have come from him), who spoke to him and gave him his, God's name, the words he is to speak, and signs that will make people believe what he says. John uses all of these terms in his characterization of Jesus, and he thereby renders Jesus as a prophet like Moses.' (p. 93). However, John does not present Jesus simply as a prophet like Moses, as the present chapter will show from the perspective of the use of Moses traditions. That the matter is complicated appears also from christological approaches. Martyn suggested a pattern that leads from the presentation of Jesus as prophet like Moses to Son of Man. MOLONEY, *Son of Man*, 19, helpfully summarizes Martyn's pattern in this way:

Jesus as Mosaic Prophet-King	Midrashic discussion	Jesus as the Son of Man
3,2	3,4 (see 9,9)	3,13
3,14a		3,14b
6,14	6,30ff.	6,35.38.53; see 6,27
7,31.40	7,52; see 7,42; 8,13	8,12.28
9,17	9,28ff.; 9,34	9,35ff.

Glasson presents a different but partly overlapping list, based on the notion of “Mosaic language”: He proposes that language with a particular Johannine flavour derives from the Pentateuch.³ Although strictly speaking his suggestions go beyond the comparison between Jesus and Moses, they are close enough to serve here to underline the variety of possible allusions to further aspects of Moses traditions.

Example	Pentateuchal	Johannine
‘hearing the voice’	Ex 4:1	Jn 5:37; 10:3, 16, 27; 18:37
distinction between belief in the person and belief in the signs/works	Ex 4:8	Jn 10:38; 14:11
know, sent me, do these works, not of myself	Num 16:28	Jn 13:35; 8:28; 5:30; 7:28; 8:42; 14:10; 5:36; 7:3; 10:25, 37; 15:24; 17:4
expressions associated with Deut 18: ‘to speak in the name of the Lord’ (18:19) and ‘to speak all that I shall command’ (18:18)	Deut 18:18-19	Jn 5:43; 8:28; 7:16; 12:49; 17:8
The sequence ποιέω – δείκνυμι – πάντα	Ex 25:9 LXX	Jn 5:19f.
‘going out and coming in’	Num 27:17; cf. 27:21	Jn 10
Faithlessness despite signs	Num 14:11	Jn 12:37
Righteous judgement	Deut 16:18	Jn 7:24 ⁴

It would expand the present study beyond its limits if we went through all these suggestions and assessed their validity, applying our threefold method of looking first at the Johannine context, then at the identification of the links and finally at their theological significance. However, to remain within the limits of the present project, I will select four texts where particularly strong links to Pentateuchal texts have been suggested. I will first turn again to Jn 7 and to several suggestions of allusions to Deut 13 and 18. Another allusion to Deut 18, this time in Jn 12:47-50, will be the focus of the second section. Thirdly, possible links between Jn 14:1-6 and Deut 1:29-33 will be discussed, followed by an excursus on a general comparison between Moses in Deuteronomy and Jesus in the Farewell Discourses Jn 14-17. Finally, a detail from the scene of Jesus’ crucifixion involving two men in Jn 19:18 will be juxtaposed with Ex 17:12, where

Interestingly, Martyn refrains from a detailed explication of the pattern. This might be due to the fact that a detailed discussion would show that the variety of the actual processes at work is greater than the argument for a consistent pattern suggests. If this movement from some form of evocation of the Mosaic prophet-king to a fuller understanding of Jesus as Son of Man is judged persuasive, it has to be acknowledged that it is fairly hidden in the structure of the texts.

Cf. also Boismard’s argument for a development from the Prophet like Moses to the Son of God through several redactional stages; see the summary in BOISMARD, *Moses*, ch. 7.

³ See GLASSON, *Moses*, 79-81, the section called ‘Where Johannine = Pentateuchal’.

⁴ Already DODD, *Interpretation*, 79.

Moses is placed between Aaron and Hur. Several of the above texts will be mentioned at the places where they relate to these four texts.

Furthermore, there are various suggestions by Meeks in his groundbreaking study *The Prophet-King* that deserve mention here. Most of them I have already tackled in previous chapters.⁵ One particular suggestion is considered to be weak by Meeks himself: the ascent of Moses on Sinai as background to Jn 3:13. This is clear from his comparison of this aspect of the Moses tradition with Mandaean sources:

‘Now just as in the Moses traditions⁶, an essential aspect of the ascension of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is his enthronement as king of Israel, as the trial and crucifixion narratives demonstrate. However, the enthronement of the returning messenger in the upper world is [a] very important feature in the Mandaean myths as well, and these provide in this respect a closer analogy to the Johannine theme than do the Moses legends. As in the gnostic myths, the *ascent* of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel cannot be separated from his prior *descent*: “No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended ...” (3.13); “What if you should see the Son of Man ascending *where he was before?*” (6.62). This pattern of descent / ascent of a heavenly messenger has no direct parallel in the Moses traditions (except for an isolated statement by Philo [*Sac.* 8-10]); it has been and remains the strongest support for the hypothesis that the Johannine christology is connected with gnostic mythology.’⁷

Another, stronger suggestion by Meeks is not about an allusion to a Pentateuchal text but to later traditions. The depiction of Moses as shepherd in several Jewish sources may well be part of the background of Jn 10. I will deal with this suggestion presently and then turn to the comparison of Pentateuchal and Johannine texts that compare Jesus and Moses as persons.

The notion of Moses as shepherd is not unknown in the NT. It may well stand behind Heb 13:20, which alludes to Is 63:11 LXX.⁸ That Moses was prepared to die for Israel is said in *Deut. Rab.* 3:17 – Meeks takes this as the closest parallel to Jesus’ readiness to die as a shepherd for his sheep in Jn 10:11, 15, 17f.⁹ Also relevant are Num 27:16ff.;¹⁰ Ps 77:21; *Ex. Rab.* on Ex 2:2; Philo *Vit. Mos.* I.60-62 (the last two on Moses’ preparation as a shepherd); Eccl 12:11 on ‘one shepherd’ is applied to Moses in *Num. Rab.* on Num 14:4; cf. also Pseudo-Philo, *Bib. Ant.* 19:3. More rabbinical evidence can be found in *Tanh.* on Ex 3:1; *Shemot Rab.* 2,3; Proem V on *Ruth Rab.*; *Esther Rab.* 7:13¹¹; *MekhJ Beschallach* on Ex 14:31.¹² Glasson also mentions a tradition that understands Moses as eschatological shepherd (cf. Rev 7:17) and another one that

⁵ Cf. the discussion of the direct mention of Moses’ name in 1.4; the section on John 6 in 4.2 and the section on John 7 in 4.3.

⁶ The tradition in question concerns Moses’ meeting with God on Mount Sinai, which is understood in numerous sources as his enthronement in heaven; cf. Meeks’ discussions of the sources on pp. 110f, 117, 122-125, 141, 147-149, 156-159, 205-209, 232-236, 241-244.

⁷ See MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 297.

⁸ See GLASSON, *Moses*, 22, who approvingly quotes Westcott’s commentary on this verse: ‘The work of Moses was a shadow of that of Christ: the leading up of him with his people out of the sea was a shadow of Christ’s ascent from the grave: the covenant with Israel a shadow of the eternal covenant.’

⁹ Cf. also GLASSON, *Moses*, 27.

¹⁰ This text is referred to by e.g. NEWBIGIN, *Light*, 127; WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 1.380 n. 355.

¹¹ For the rabbinical evidence cf. MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 196-197.

¹² Quoted in German by WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 381-382.

emphasizes that Moses did not lose a single sheep (cf. Jn 10:28f.; 17:12; 18:19), but he does not say where these traditions can be found.¹³

Meeks tries to connect the Shepherd discourse in various ways with Moses traditions. Two of his suggestions deserve to be mentioned here. He observes that the emphasis on “hearing Jesus’ voice’ in the shepherd discourse recalls the Mosaic prophet,

‘for in Deuteronomy 18:15 Moses says: “The Lord your God will raise up a prophet like me ...; him you shall heed (αὐτοῦ ἀκούσθε).” Furthermore, the prophet’s words are identified with God’s own words, just as Jesus’ words are throughout the Fourth Gospel. Finally, divine judgement hangs upon whether one hears the prophet’s words in Deuteronomy 18:19, just as it depends on hearing Jesus’ words in John.’¹⁴

Furthermore, in *Mek.* on Ex 12:2 Moses is said to offer his life for Israel, with the phrase נפש נתן being the precise equivalent to τὴν ψυχὴν τιθέναι.¹⁵ However, even Meeks is cautious as to the value of the derivation:

‘These analogies are not adequate to suggest that the whole discourse, John 10.1-18, was derived exclusively from Moses traditions. On the contrary, the central themes of the discourse are most likely the product of specifically Christian reflection on the passion tradition. Moreover, the figure of the shepherd is too widespread in the Old Testament and in older and younger literature throughout the Mediterranean religious and political world for one to insist on an exclusive derivation of the Johannine figure from any single tradition. Nevertheless, the analogies suggest that Moses tradition did provide some of the material for the Good Shepherd symbolism, adding another element to the cumulative evidence for the Mosaic background for the prophet-king christological images in the gospel.’¹⁶

This is a balanced conclusion that puts the contribution of Moses tradition to Jn 10 in perspective. We now turn to the suggestions that include clearer comparisons between Johannine and Pentateuchal texts. Since the first two examples include allusions to details from Deut 18:15-20, I give the text in Hebrew and Greek, list the main points of the text and include some general observations.

Deut 18:15-20¹⁷

נָבִיא מִקִּרְבְּךָ מֵאַחֶיךָ כְּמֹנִי יָקִים לְךָ
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵלָיו תִּשְׁמָעוּן:
 כָּל אֲשֶׁר-שָׁאַלְתָּ מֵעַם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּחֹרֵב
 בְּיוֹם הַקָּהֵל לֵאמֹר לֹא אִסֹּף לְשַׁמֵּעַ אֶת-קוֹל
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֶת-הָאֵשׁ הַגְּדֹלָה הַזֹּאת לֹא-אֶרְאֶה עוֹד וְלֹא אָמוּת:
 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָי הִיטִיבוּ אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְוּ:

¹³ See GLASSON, *Moses*, 95f. For the derivation of the shepherd imagery from Moses tradition cf. also SCHLATTER, *Sprache*, 124; ODEBERG, *Fourth Gospel*, 138f.; 314f.

¹⁴ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 67. For the identification of Jesus’ words with God’s words see Jn 3:34; 8:47; 10:3; 12:47-50; 14:10; 17:8; 18:37. Cf. the discussion in MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 45f.

¹⁵ So MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 312.

¹⁶ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 312-313.

¹⁷ Deut 18:21-22 belong also to the passage; these verses specify how Israel can determine what is a word from God and what is not, the criterion being the realization of the prophetic utterance. I leave these verses out because they are not alluded to in John.

נְבִיא אֲקִים לָהֶם מִקֶּרֶב אֲחֵיהֶם כְּמֹדֶךָ
וְנִתְּנָה דְבָרֶיךָ בְּפִיו וְדִבְרָךְ אֵלֵיהֶם אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶנּוּ:
וְהָיָה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִשְׁמַע אֶל-דְּבָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר
יְדַבֵּר בְּשֵׁמִי אֲנֹכִי אֲדַרְשׁ מֵעַמּוֹ:

15 προφήτην ἐκ τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου ὡς ἐμὲ ἀναστήσει σοι κύριος ὁ θεός σου
αὐτοῦ ἀκούσεσθε

18:16 κατὰ πάντα ὅσα ἠτήσω παρὰ κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου ἐν Χωρηβ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς
ἐκκλησίας λέγοντες οὐ προσθήσομεν ἀκούσαι τὴν φωνὴν κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ τὸ
πῦρ τὸ μέγα τοῦτο οὐκ ὀψόμεθα ἔτι οὐδὲ μὴ ἀποθάνωμεν

18:17 καὶ εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς με ὀρθῶς πάντα ὅσα ἐλάλησαν

18:18 προφήτην ἀναστήσω αὐτοῖς ἐκ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτῶν ὥσπερ σὲ
καὶ δώσω τὸ ῥῆμά μου ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ

καὶ λαλήσει αὐτοῖς καθότι ἂν ἐντείλωμαι αὐτῷ

18:19 καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὃς ἂν μὴ ἀκούσῃ ὅσα ἐὰν λαλήσῃ ὁ προφήτης ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι
μου ἐγὼ ἐκδικήσω ἐξ αὐτοῦ

18:20 πλὴν ὁ προφήτης ὃς ἂν ἀσεβήσῃ λαλήσαι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι μου ῥῆμα ὃ οὐ
προσέταξα λαλήσαι καὶ ὃς ἂν λαλήσῃ ἐπ' ὀνόματι θεῶν ἑτέρων
ἀποθανεῖται ὁ προφήτης ἐκεῖνος.

The text contains the following important elements with respect to the prophetic mission:

(1) God will raise a prophet like Moses in the midst of Israel (15a, 18a)

(2) Israel has to listen to the prophet (15b), because God will put his words in his mouth (18b),
and the prophet will speak everything that God commands (18c)

(3) Anybody who does not listen when the prophet speaks God's words will be punished
(ἐκδικέω) by God (19)

(4) A prophet who speaks what God did not command or who speaks in the name of other Gods
shall be put to death (20)

(5) As McConville emphasizes, the key idea is that Israel should listen to God's word delivered
by the prophet, since the whole passage stands in contrast to Deut 18:14, which says that the
nations listen to soothsayers and diviners, something Israel is forbidden to do.¹⁸

Allison shows that this text was understood in at least four different ways, which can be
summarized as follows:¹⁹ (1) The text is understood to promise a succession of prophets or an
institution of prophets.²⁰ (2) Meeks found an interpretative tradition that understood Deut 18 to

¹⁸ MCCONVILLE, *Deuteronomy*, 302f. Cf. p. 285: 'Following the laws concerning judge, priest and king, we now have the law of the prophet, or, better, about the true way of hearing the voice of Yahweh.'

¹⁹ See ALLISON, *Moses*, 74-75. Cf. also MARTYN, *History*, 106-109, for a summary of various interpretations of Deut. 18:15-20 in Ps 74:9; 1 Macc 4:46; 14:41; 1QS 9:10f.; 4QTest IV; cf. also pp. 109-111 on Samaritan and Rabbinical sources. Martyn emphasizes that the Samaritans and the Rabbis developed the concept of the Mosaic Prophet-Messiah, with *Qoheleth Rab.* 1:8 as a late but clear example of the link between Moses and Messiah.

²⁰ E.g., DRIVER, *Deuteronomy*, 229; KRAUS, *Worship*, 105-112. MCCONVILLE, *Deuteronomy*, 303; HAHN, *Hoheitstitel*, 356. BITTNER, *Zeichen*, 152, holds that '[d]ie vom masoretischen Text Deut 18,15 nahegelegte Deutung, dass dieser Prophet "je und je" erstehen soll, hatte im Judentum zur Zeit

promise a succession of prophetic rulers, i.e. prophet-kings.²¹ (3) Another tradition finds the promise of an eschatological prophet like Moses in Deut 18.²² (4) In early Christianity we find the view that the prophet like Moses is the Messiah, a view most clearly expressed in Acts 3:17-26 and, according to Allison, also in Matthew, a view which he thinks did not originate in Christian circles.²³ In addition to these categories, Allison points out that there was also the expectation of the return of Moses, and that some traditions seem to merge this expectation with Mosaic-messianic or Mosaic-prophetic traditions.²⁴ Although there are still several problems to be clarified,²⁵ it is safe to conclude with Allison that

‘the expectation of an eschatological prophet like Moses, founded upon Deut. 18:15-18, was not little known, or just the esoteric property of the Qumran conventicle and Jewish-Christian churches. It was instead very much in the air in first-century Palestine and helped to instigate several short-lived revolutionary movements.²⁶ Jesus was far from being the only individual thought of as the eschatological fulfillment of Deut 18:15 and 18. Indeed, there were several men who bravely, if in the event foolishly, set out to hasten divine intervention by imitating

Jesu keinerlei Bedeutung. Man hat dieses Wort als Verheissung eines eschatologischen Befreiers verstanden.’

²¹ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 189. Cf. e.g. Eupolemus in Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 9:30:1-3.

²² Cf. 1QS 9:11 in the light of 4QTest. See VAN DER WOUDE, *Vorstellungen*, 75-89; TEEPLE, *Prophet*; SCHNACKENBURG, ‘Erwartung’; HAHN, *Hoheitstitel*, 351-404; MIRANDA, *Vater*, 308-388. It is disputed how widespread the expectation of a Mosaic prophet or prophet-king was; cf. e.g. FRANKFURTER, ‘Origin’, 349: a well known expectation; similar HAHN, *Hoheitstitel*, 351: ‘Die Vorstellung vom eschatologischen Propheten hat im Judentum der Zeit Jesu eine nicht geringe Rolle gespielt ...’, and HORSLEY, ‘One’, 441-443: comparatively marginal. ALLISON, *Moses*, 77f., refers to 1 Macc 4:46; 14:41, and to *T. Benj.* 9:2-3 as inadequate evidence for a Mosaic eschatological figure (similar HAHN, *Hoheitstitel*, 352), but to Josephus, *Ant.* 18:85-87; 20:97-99; 167-168; 188; *J.W.* 2:261-263; 6:284-287, as conclusive evidence that the expectation of a Moses-type prophet(-king) stands in the background of would-be deliverers like Theudas, the Egyptian prophet, and others who most probably fashioned their actions on Moses as a model: ‘Now a man who came from Egypt (cf. *Ant.* 20:169), who led the people in the desert, who made himself out to be a prophet, and who sought to rule Israel (*tou demou tyrannein*) – how could such a one not have been perceived as another prophet-king like Moses?’ (ALLISON, *Moses*, 79, on the Egyptian).

²³ See ALLISON, *Moses*, 75, and *passim*.

²⁴ See ALLISON, *Moses*, 75f.

²⁵ E.g., the relationship between the Mosaic eschatological prophet and Elijah as prophetic forerunner of the Messiah (see BLENKINSOPP, *Prophecy*, 87, who thinks that the author of Mal 4:4-5 had Deut 18:15-18 in mind), or the question whether the Teacher of Righteousness was considered to fulfill Deut 18:15-18 (see the literature and discussion in ALLISON, *Moses*, 84 n. 196).

²⁶ Here the reports of Josephus in *Ant.* 20:97-99; *J.W.* 2:261-263 (= *Ant.* 20:169-172); *Ant.* 20:167-168; *Ant.* 20:188; *Ant.* 18:85-87 are relevant, on which Allison comments in summary: ‘In first century Palestine there were ostensible prophets who, following a more or less fixed scenario, led people into the desert, where miracles of deliverance like those of Moses and his imitator, Joshua, were to be enacted. In view of the clear application of Deut. 18:15 and 18 to an eschatological prophet like Moses in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament, in view of the evident prominence of the *goētes* themselves (they were prophets and leaders who had not only great popular appeal but the authority to command their followers at risk of death), and in view of the New Testament’s testimony that popular opinion often settled upon “prophet” or “the (Mosaic) prophet” as explanation of out-of-the-ordinary religious activity [note: Mk 6:15; 8:28; Jn 6:14], why resist the inference that Theudas, the Egyptian, and the hapless others like them provoked speculation regarding the fulfillment of Deut. 18:15 and 18?’ (ALLISON, *Moses*, 81-82). Cf. also HAHN, *Hoheitstitel*, 361, who points out that Josephus explicitly designates these “revolutionaries” as prophets in *Ant.* 20.97, 169; *J. W.* 2.261.

Moses in their deeds. Which is to say: emulation of the lawgiver was not limited to literature: it was also a fact of extratextual experience.’²⁷

The clearest NT evidence for the identification of Jesus with the prophet like Moses is indeed Acts 3:17-26.²⁸ That Jesus was understood in terms of the prophet like Moses in earliest christological strands of the tradition is held by Hahn, who says:

‘Die Menschensohnavorstellung war mit dem apokalyptischen Endgeschehen verbunden, die Messiasvorstellung setzte die Übernahme einer wirklichen Königsherrschaft voraus und die hohepriesterliche Messianologie lag völlig fern, da priesterliche Züge dem irdischen Jesus fremd waren. Die Anrede Jesu mit “Rabbi” und “Herr” war ursprünglich weder Würdebezeichnung noch mit irgendeiner Heilsvorstellung verknüpft. So blieb nur die Erwartung eines neuen Mose.’²⁹

When it comes to John’s Gospel, the eschatological prophet like Moses is evoked in various ways. The studies of Glasson, Meeks and Boismard present a wealth of material relevant in this area. I will here focus on four examples. They are selected because they involve detailed comparisons of OT and NT texts, and because the kinds of links that can be established display a certain variety. Also, the final example is chosen to highlight the limits of attempts to construct parallels between Jesus and Moses.

5.1 John 7 and Deut 13 and 18

With John 7 we return to the scene at the feast of Tabernacles (cf. the introductory remarks in chapter 4, section 3). According to Pryor, ‘it is in chapter 7 that the Deut 18 allusions find their strongest echo.’³⁰ I suggest a modification of this statement: it is not only Deut 18:15-20, but also Deut 13:1-6 which provides a vital background to John 7. The following observations support this claim:

The first statement that evokes Deut 13:6 is in Jn 7:12.³¹ The introductory passage relates that Jesus did not go up to Jerusalem because of his brothers’ logic (7:2-9). Instead, he comes secretly, so that the Jews had to look for him (7:10-11). Next, verses 12-13 make three points: (1) Jesus was something like a celebrity (γογγυσμός περί αὐτοῦ ἦν πολὺς ἐν τοῖς ὄχλοις, 7:12a); (2) it was dangerous to talk about Jesus publicly (οὐδεὶς μέντοι παρρησίᾳ ἐλάλει περί αὐτοῦ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, 7:13); (3) Jesus divided the people: οἱ μὲν ἔλεγον ὅτι Ἄγαθός ἐστιν, ἄλλοι [δὲ] ἔλεγον, Οὐ, ἀλλὰ πλανᾷ τὸν ὄχλον (7:12bc). The last phrase evokes Deut 13:6,³² which says that a prophet who leads the people astray has to die: καὶ ὁ προφήτης ἐκεῖνος ἢ ὁ τὸ

²⁷ ALLISON, *Moses*, 83.

²⁸ On this text see ALLISON, *Moses*, 88f.; MARSHALL, *Acts*, 92-96; SCHNEIDER, *Apostelgeschichte*, 322-331.

²⁹ HAHN, *Hoheitstitel*, 382.

³⁰ PRYOR, *John*, 119.

³¹ Seen by e.g. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 107, who also refers to the later life of the charge that Jesus was a deceiver in Justin, *Dial. Tryph.* 69; and in *Sanh.* 43a, 107a and *Sota* 47a.

³² The link is suggested by e.g. WHITACRE, *John*, 181; see esp. MARTYN, *History*, 64-81; 151-154.

ἐνύπνιον ἐνυπνιαζόμενος ἐκεῖνος ἀποθανεῖται ἐλάλησεν γὰρ πλανῆσαι σε ἀπὸ κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου τοῦ ἐξαγαγόντος σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου τοῦ λυτρωσαμένου σε ἐκ τῆς δουλείας ἐξῶσαι σε ἐκ τῆς ὁδοῦ ἧς ἐνετείλατό σοι κύριος ὁ θεός σου πορεύεσθαι ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ ἀφαιεῖς τὸν ποιηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν (Deut 13:6 LXX). Thus, once more in John's Gospel the question of Jesus' true identity is on the table. In 7:12 the options are that some regard Jesus as a good man,³³ while other regard him as a deceiver who leads the people astray. Later the difference of opinion returns in terms of prophet and Christ, explicitly stated in 7:40-41: Ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου οὖν ἀκούσαντες τῶν λόγων τούτων ἔλεγον, Οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ προφήτης: 7:41 ἄλλοι ἔλεγον, Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός, οἱ δὲ ἔλεγον, Μὴ γὰρ ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ὁ Χριστός ἐρχεται; Concerning the prophet we notice again that a form of πλανάω is used in 7:47: the Pharisees ask their servants³⁴ who did not arrest Jesus: Μὴ καὶ ὑμεῖς πεπλάνησθε,³⁵ Finally, the issue of the prophet is taken up again after Nicodemus tried to take a stand for Jesus, but is rebuked by the Pharisees: Μὴ καὶ σὺ ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας εἶ; ἐράυνησον καὶ ἴδε ὅτι ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας προφήτης οὐκ ἐγείρεται (John 7:52). Arguably, in both 7:40 and 7:52 the prophet like Moses is evoked, since 7:40 follows Jesus' words about the living water which evokes the rock in the wilderness, as I have shown above (see chapter 4, section 3). 7:52 makes most sense if a prophet like Moses evocation is assumed, since other prophets did come from Galilee.³⁶

However, these are not the only evocations of the prophet like Moses. Deut 18:15-20 is also alluded to in 7:14-18.³⁷ Here Jesus repeatedly emphasizes that his teaching is not from himself:³⁸

Ἡ ἐμὴ διδαχὴ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐμὴ ἀλλὰ τοῦ πέμψαντός με. (7:16)

περὶ τῆς διδαχῆς πότερον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστὶν ἢ ἐγὼ ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ λαλῶ. (7:17)

ὁ ἀφ' ἐαυτοῦ λαλῶν τὴν δόξαν τὴν ἰδίαν ζητεῖ. (7:18)

Although there is no exact terminological similarity to Deut 18:15-20, Meeks links the two passages, because (a) the point of both passages is to emphasize the divine origin of the message

³³ MORRIS, *Gospel*, 356, says that to call Jesus a good man 'indicates an awareness of his character and a lack of perception of his Person'. Even more negative is BARRETT, *Gospel*, 314, who says that for the people 'to say simply ἀγαθός ἐστιν (cf. Mark 10:17) is beside the point.' He characterizes ὁ ὄχλος as 'an independent but uninstructed party' – possibly an apt description, but I would judge ἀγαθός ἐστιν to be an uninformed, but positive statement. MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 240, takes ἀγαθός to indicate 'a reliable authority' over against the designation of a false teacher. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, thinks that ἀγαθός ἐστιν renders those who held this opinion sympathetic to Jesus.

³⁴ οἱ ὑπηρέται (John 7:45); cf. EDNT 3.400.

³⁵ The charge that Jesus was a deceiver who led the people astray continued its life in e.g. Justin, *Dial. Tryph.* 69, 108; *b.Sanh.* 43a; 107a; *b.Sota* 47a. It is also found in Mt 27:63 (Pharisees refer to Jesus as a deceiver), and in Lk 23:2 (that Jesus "perverted the people" is a formal charge in the trial before Pilate). For more rabbinical evidence cf. WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 1.275 n. 18.

³⁶ Cf. SMITH, *John*, 177.

³⁷ See GLASSON, *Moses*, 30; taken up and developed by MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 45-47.

³⁸ That the Mosaic prophet was understood to be also a teacher is pointed out by MARTYN, *History*, 116; BORNKAMM, 'Paraklet', 20 (with respect to 3:2, Nicodemus' identification of Jesus as teacher). That the Teacher of Righteousness was linked to the Mosaic prophet can be seen in CD 6:11. Moses is called teacher in e.g. *T. Mos.* 11:16; cf. also Eupolemus in *Praep. Ev.* 9.26.1, the tradition that Moses first taught the alphabet [or script or grammar; cf. OTP 2.865, note e.] to the Jews, who taught it to the Phoenicians, who in turn gave it to the Greeks.

of the Mosaic prophet and of Jesus, and because (b) the Deuteronomic background helps to understand why in Jn 7:19 Jesus suddenly asks why the crowd want to kill him:

‘[T]he Deuteronomic passage speaks not only of the true prophet like Moses, but also of *false* prophets who may arise to lead the nation astray from the worship of Yahweh, and who must be put to death. If verses 14-18 suggest that Jesus is the prophet like Moses, then the official plot to kill Jesus implies the accusation that he is the false prophet.’³⁹

In this way, an insight helpful for the *interpretation* of the text serves to support the hypothesis of the *presence* of a link to Deut 18. However, although the result of Meeks’ interpretation is not unattractive, precise terminological links to Deut 18 are missing.⁴⁰ The strength of Meeks’ case depends therefore on the persuasiveness of the combination of a conceptual similarity (the divine origin of the message) and an interpretative insight (the question about the killing in v. 19 against the background of the issue of the false prophet based on Deut 18).

It is helpful to compare Meeks’ case with Boismard’s attempt to argue for Num 16:28 as the most likely OT text behind Jn 7:16-17. The text reads: ἀπεκρίθη οὖν αὐτοῖς [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν, Ἡ ἐμὴ διδασκαλία οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐμὴ ἀλλὰ τοῦ πέμπαντός με· 7:17 ἐάν τις θέλῃ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν, γινώσεται περὶ τῆς διδασκαλίας πότερον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστὶν ἢ ἐγὼ ἀπ’ ἐμαυτοῦ λαλῶ. Boismard thinks the relation to Num 16:28 is clear, and points also to *Sipre Deut.* 5 to support the link to Moses.⁴¹ The link to Num 16:28 consists in the terminological similarity in which the sending motif is expressed: καὶ εἶπεν Μωυσῆς ἐν τούτῳ γινώσεσθε ὅτι κύριος ἀπέστειλέν με ποιῆσαι πάντα τὰ ἔργα ταῦτα ὅτι οὐκ ἀπ’ ἐμαυτοῦ (Num 16:28 LXX). Compared to Meeks’ case Boismard’s argument is less persuasive. First, the sending motif is similar, but the terminology is different (πέμπω in John and ἀποστέλλω in Numbers). This is similar to the connection between Jn 7 and Deut 18, where exact terminological similarity is also missing. Secondly, the focus of Jesus’ words in Jn 7:14-18 is the origin of his teaching, not the question who sent him. Thus, Meeks is right to link the text to Deut 18:15-20 where also the origin of the prophetic message is in focus.

From the observations of the kind of links between Jn 7 and Deut 13 and 18 we now progress to ask about the theological significance. Here much work has been done concerning the question of Jesus as a deceiver, a false prophet who leads the people astray, particularly by Meeks.⁴² Meeks first gathers rabbinical⁴³ and NT evidence⁴⁴ about the false prophet and distills

³⁹ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 47. Cf. also his view on the false prophet in various Jewish sources, and his discussion of ‘the prophet’ and ‘the Christ’ as ordering themes of John 7 on pp. 47-61. The issue of the false prophet was also seen by GLASSON, *Moses*, 30; and is taken up e.g. by ASHTON, *Understanding*, 311.

⁴⁰ This is the difference to the above link between Jn 7:12, 47 and Deut 13:6 LXX: in all of these verses πλανῶ is used to describe what the false prophet is doing. See PETERSEN, *Sociology*, 92; WHITACRE, *John*, 181, 184.

⁴¹ BOISMARD, *Moses*, 17. He gives the following translation of *Sipre Deut.* 5: ‘Moses said: It is not on my own that I speak to you, but I speak to you from the mouth of God.’

⁴² See MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 47-61. Cf. also MARTYN, *History*, who uses Jn 7 and the question of the false prophet in a complex argument to support his thesis of John as two-level drama.

⁴³ *m. Sanh.* 11,5; *b. Sanh.* 89a and b (MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 47-48).

the two common characteristics of the figure: '(1) that he will lead astray the nation(s) and (2) that he will perform "signs".'⁴⁵ Against Bousset's theory that a historicized form of the ancient myth of the chaos-dragon is the enigmatic figure behind these texts,⁴⁶ Meeks argues that Deut 13:1-6 and Deut 18:18-22 provide the better background. He then continues to gather evidence for the false prophet in Qumran,⁴⁷ the Sibylline Oracles 3.63-70, and from Mandaean sources.⁴⁸ After illuminating Jn 7:19 by referring to *Sanh.* 43a; 107b and *Sota* 47a, he argues that "prophet" and "Christ" are the ordering themes in John 7.⁴⁹ He then takes up Dodd's suggestion⁵⁰ that the central theme of Jn 7 and 8 is Jesus' open manifestation (cf. the framing ἐν κρυπτῷ in 7:4 and ἐκρύβη in 8:59; but Jesus teaching ἐν παρρησίᾳ in 7:4, 26; cf. Jesus ἔκραξεν in 7:28, 37). That Jesus was teaching openly occurs again in 11:54 where the end of Jesus' public ministry is signaled, and in 18:19-24, the interrogation before the High Priest. Meeks notes that the Johannine account of this interrogation leaves out the question σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός; and argues that this omission might be due to the fact that the interrogation is about the false prophet, the christological question being reserved for the trial before Pilate:

'But why is it only about Jesus' disciples and his teaching that the High Priest inquires? If the trial is understood as a case of the "false prophet," then the question is entirely appropriate. Of the false prophet it is required to determine whether he teaches words which have not come from God (Deuteronomy 18:20) and whether he has "led astray" others (Deuteronomy 13:1-6). If the trial before the High Priest is a trial of Jesus on the charge of being the false prophet, then the two trials deal with exactly the same two questions raised about Jesus in chapter 7: Is he the Prophet? Is he the Christ?'⁵¹

In this way Meeks links John 7 and John 18 on the basis of the *Stichwortverbindung* παρρησίᾳ, and concludes that the two identifications "the Prophet" and "the Christ" from chapter 7 are the leading categories of the two trials in John 18 and 19.⁵² Thus it is clear that the categories of the prophet like Moses and the false prophet do not occur just in passing in Jn 7, but provide the background to one of the two final trials of Jesus in John's Gospel: the Moses traditions Deut. 18:15-20 and 13:1-6 provide the major category for the interrogation before the High Priest.

⁴⁴ Mt 24:11; Mk 13:22; Rev 19:20; 2 Thess 2:8-12.

⁴⁵ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 49.

⁴⁶ BOUSSET, *Antichrist*.

⁴⁷ The "man of lies" in 1QpHab 2.2; 5.11; CD 20.15; the "preacher of lies" in 1QpHab 10.9; CD 8.13; cf. CD 1.15; the "man of scoffing" in CD 1.14; the "removers of the boundary" in CD 5.17b-6.2a.

⁴⁸ See MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 53-55.

⁴⁹ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 55-58.

⁵⁰ DODD, *Interpretation*, 345-354.

⁵¹ MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, 60-61.

⁵² Incidentally, another aspect supports the link between chs. 7 and 18: the High Priest inquires about Jesus teaching (Ὁ οὖν ἀρχιερεὺς ἠρώτησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν περὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῆς διδαχῆς αὐτοῦ., John 18:19), and we have seen that the issue of teaching/speaking the words of God is prominent in Jn 7:16-18.

However, more can be said if one includes some of Pancaro's observations about "The charge of false teaching".⁵³ Pancaro emphasizes that the teaching of Jesus in public in John 7 and 8 is identical with his self-revelation. Since "teaching" in a Jewish context is necessarily connected with the law as the object of teaching, Jesus goes well beyond traditional teaching of the law in that he himself and his relationship to the Father become the object of his teaching.⁵⁴ A comparison between Jn 7:45-49 and Jn 9:24-34 reveals the same conclusion as the connection between Jn 5:45-47 and Jn 9:28-29 that was discussed in my introduction above:

'In virtue of the "Traditionsprinzip", the μαθηταί of Jesus, like their master, have deviated from orthodox doctrine. To be a disciple of Moses is considered incompatible with becoming a disciple of Jesus. The view of Jn, on the contrary, is that, if one is a true μαθητής of Moses, one should become a μαθητής of Jesus.'⁵⁵

In this way, Jn 7 also affirms the sociological implication of the use of Moses tradition: Jn 7:45-49 present two groups, the Pharisees and High Priests on the one hand, and their servants on the other hand. When the latter are asked why they did not arrest Jesus, ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ ὑπηρέται, Οὐδέποτε ἐλάλησεν οὕτως ἄνθρωπος. Pancaro shows that λαλεῖν becomes synonymous with διδάσκειν in John 7, and Jesus' teaching is his revelation from the Father.⁵⁶ However, the Pharisees accuse the servants: Μὴ καὶ ὑμεῖς πεπλάνησθε; (7:47). This accusation of being led astray is in v. 48 correlated with believing in Jesus (μὴ τις ἐκ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἐπίστευσεν εἰς αὐτὸν ἢ ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων;), and associated with ὁ ὄχλος οὗτος ὁ μὴ γινώσκων τὸν νόμον ἐπάρατοί εἰσιν (John 7:49). Thus, according to the Pharisees it is the people who do not know the law⁵⁷ who follow Jesus, whereas they as educated interpreters of the law reject Jesus. Ironically, in 7:22-24 Jesus had shown that the Pharisees do not display a deeper understanding

⁵³ See PANCARO, *Law*, 77-116. The first part of Pancaro's detailed study is structured according to the charges the Jews bring up against Jesus, i.e. breaking the Sabbath (Jn 5 and 9), blasphemy (Jn 5:17-18; 8:58; 10:24-38), false teaching (Jn 7; 9:24-34; 18:19-24), and enemy of the nation (11:47-52).

⁵⁴ See PANCARO, *Law*, 77-87, on 'Teaching and the Law in Jewish Tradition' and on 'Διδάσκειν in Jn'

⁵⁵ PANCARO, *Law*, 109. Cf. my remarks in the Introduction, section 1.4.

⁵⁶ See PANCARO, *Law*, 102, the comments on the chain διδαχὴ τοῦ θεοῦ = ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ οὐ λαλεῖν = ἀληθῆς εἶναι = τὴν ἀλήθειαν λαλεῖν.

⁵⁷ Cf. CARSON, *Gospel*, 331: 'This is an exact representation of the way many learned rabbis viewed the common folk, "the people of the land" (Heb. 'am hā'āres) as they condescendingly labelled them. The label had originally been applied to the entire nation of Israel (e.g. Ezk. 22:29), but came in time to refer to the common people over against the leaders (Je. 1:18), and then to the mixed population that settled in Samaria and Judea during the exile, in distinction from the pureblood Jews who returned after the exile (Ezr. 10:2, 11). Amongst the rabbis "the people of the land" always refers to the people who do not know the law, i.e. the law of Moses both as it is found in the Hebrew Scriptures and as it was thought to be preserved in oral tradition; and if they do not know it, they cannot keep it. Since the law is the law of God, the "people of the land" are characterized by both ignorance and impiety.' Carson also sees the connection to Jn 9:34, where the Pharisees are 'stung by the impertinence of this untrained member of the common herd (...) arguing with them and besting them at their own game ...' (CARSON, *Gospel*, 375). See my comments on John 9 below. Later evidence for the low esteem the "people of the land" were held in can be found in e.g. *b. Pesah* 49b.

of the law⁵⁸ when they accuse Jesus of breaking the Sabbath, and in 7:50-51, it is Nicodemus, ironically εἷς ὧν ἐξ αὐτῶν, who points to another aspect of the law (the necessity of a formal trial before judging someone, v. 51⁵⁹) that the Pharisees do not take into account. The Pharisees therefore remain in a position of not really understanding what is going on.

The similarity to Jn 9 is obvious. There the Pharisees present themselves as τοῦ Μωυσέως μαθηταί, i.e. persons that stand in the tradition handed down from Moses, and Moses was taught by God (Μωυσεῖ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός, if we accept that λαλεῖν is synonymous with διδάσκειν in John). The formerly blind man, on the other hand, is described as μαθητῆς Ἰησοῦ in 9:28, and, after the healed man explained himself, he is simply rejected on the basis that ἐν ἀμαρτίαις σὺ ἐγεννήθης ὅλος καὶ σὺ διδάσκεις ἡμᾶς; (v. 34). It is therefore clear who for the Pharisees is in a position to teach, and who is not. However, as 9:35-41 make clear, it is the healed man who not only regained physical sight, but who starts to believe in Jesus, and it is the Pharisees who remain in their sins because they do not see their blindness.

It is clear that sections like Jn 7:45-49 and Jn 9:28-41 invite readers to decide to which group they want to belong.⁶⁰ Thus, the sociological impact of the use of Moses tradition is not only visible in the text, but reaches out beyond the text into the lives of the readers.⁶¹

5.2 John 12:48-50 and Deut 18:18-19

Of all the suggested allusions to parts of Deut 18:15-20, the most persuasive link is the one between Deut 18:18-19 and Jn 12:48-50.⁶² If these verses can be shown to evoke the Mosaic prophet, other proposed connections might gain force, not least because of the significant position of Jn 12:48-50: the text completes Jn 12:37-50, the important conclusion of Jesus' public ministry. At the beginning in vv. 37-40 John uses two quotations from Isaiah to explain

⁵⁸ "The law" here must mean the oral law, since, as MACCOBY, 'Talmud', *DNTB*, 900, points out, nowhere in Scripture can we find that circumcision overrules the Sabbath, but *Mek. Abbata* on Ex 31:13 presupposes that ruling.

⁵⁹ CARSON, *Gospel*, 332: 'There is no explicit Old Testament text that makes the point Nicodemus raises (though cf. Dt. 1:16); the closest rabbinic rule that has come down to us is probably this: "Unless a mortal hears the pleas that a man can put forward, he is not able to give judgment" (*Exodus Rabbah* 21:3, a rabbinical commentary on Ex. 14:15).' WHITACRE, *John*, 201, refers to Deut 17:2-5 and 19:15-19 as texts that imply a hearing of the accused.

⁶⁰ HARSTINE, *Moses*, 74, points in this direction by saying that 'this conflict is not about Jesus and Moses; they are in concord. The conflict occurs in the lives of those who must respond to Jesus. The character of Moses functions to introduce the critical ingredient of conflict to the narrative.'

⁶¹ Cf. MOLONEY, *Signs*, 90, who argues that the reader is invited to make a different judgement: 'As Jesus is being judged by the characters in the story and found wanting to such an extent that they plan to kill him (...), the reader is judging the characters in the story and finding them wanting as they refuse to accept the word of Jesus.' Moloney's reading implies that all characters in Jn 7 get it wrong with Jesus, whereas the comparison of 7:45-49 and 9:28-41 shows that some get it at least partly right, even if they do not break through to a full confession of the christological and soteriological significance of Jesus.

⁶² The link was suggested by e.g. O'CONNELL, 'Concept'; BROWN, *John*, 491f.; taken up by e.g. WHITACRE, *John*, 326.

why the people did not believe in Jesus despite his signs. However, many of the leaders (ἀρχόντων πολλοί) did believe (12:42a), but did not confess publicly because of fear of the Pharisees (John 12:42b: διὰ τοὺς Φαρισαίους οὐχ ὠμολόγουν ἵνα μὴ ἀποσυνάγωγοι γένωνται). Boismard suggests that vv. 48-50 allude to Deut 18:18-19. In order to demonstrate the connection, he presents vv. 49-50 of the Johannine text as a chiasm:

12:48 ὁ ἀθετῶν ἐμὲ καὶ μὴ λαμβάνων τὰ ῥήματά μου ἔχει τὸν κρίνοντα αὐτόν· ὁ λόγος δὲ ἐλάλησα ἐκεῖνος κρινεῖ αὐτόν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

A 12:49 ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐξ ἑμαυτοῦ οὐκ ἐλάλησα,

B ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ αὐτός μοι ἐντολὴν δέδωκεν

C τί εἶπω καὶ τί λαλήσω.

D 12:50 καὶ οἶδα ὅτι ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐστίν.

C' ἄ οὖν ἐγὼ λαλῶ,

B' καθὼς εἶρηκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ,

A' οὕτως λαλῶ.

The Hebrew text of Deut 18:18-19 reads:

נְבִיא אֲקִים לָהֶם מִקֶּרֶב אֲחֵיהֶם כְּמֹדֶי
וְנִתְּתִי דְבָרִי בְּפִיו וְדִבַּר אֲלֵיהֶם אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶנּוּ׃
וְהָיָה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִשְׁמַע אֶל-דְּבָרֵי אֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר בְּשֵׁמִי אֲנֹכִי אֲדַרְשׁ מֵעַמּוֹ׃

The LXX presents quite a literal translation, but with a few significant changes:

18:18 προφήτην ἀναστήσω αὐτοῖς ἐκ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτῶν ὥσπερ σὲ

καὶ δώσω τὸ ῥῆμά μου ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ

καὶ λαλήσει αὐτοῖς καθότι ἂν ἐντείλωμαι αὐτῷ

18:19 καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὃς ἐὰν μὴ ἀκούσῃ ὅσα ἐὰν λαλήσῃ ὁ προφήτης ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου ἐγὼ ἐκδικήσω ἐξ αὐτοῦ

The first change Boismard notes is that the piel form of דַּבַּר is translated not by λέγειν, but by λαλεῖν. In order to make the difference appear in English, he translates the Hebrew by ‘to say’, and the Greek by ‘to speak’.⁶³ The second point concerns a syntactical change in Deut 18:18. Whereas the Hebrew text has a direct object with the preposition לְ after “and he will say to them”, the LXX ‘introduced a conjunction indicating the comparison: “and he will speak to them as (καθότι ἂν) I will command him.”⁶⁴ The point Boismard wishes to make is that the ‘curious redundance’⁶⁵ in Jn 12:49c (τί εἶπω καὶ τί λαλήσω) could be explained by John following both the MT and the LXX:

⁶³ This is justified if the piel stem of דַּבַּר is normally translated by λέγειν in the LXX, so that we would have an exception here. If we restrict ourselves to Deuteronomy, it has to be said that דַּבַּר occurs 69 times in the piel stem. Most of the times it is translated by λαλεῖν (e.g., 1:1, 3, 6, 11, 14, 43; 2:1, 17; 3:26; 4:12, 15, 33, 45; 5:4, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28 (2 times), 31; 6:3, 7, 19; 9:10; 10:4; 11:19), and sometimes by λεγεῖν (e.g., 1:21; 5:28; 9:3, 28; 10:9). Thus the first aspect of Boismard’s argument is not necessarily persuasive.

⁶⁴ BOISMARD, *Moses*, 12.

⁶⁵ BOISMARD, *Moses*, 13.

'TM	and <i>he will say to them</i> everything <i>which</i> I will command him
Jn 49	He commanded me <i>what I should say</i>
Jn 50	as the Father spoke to me, so <i>I speak</i>
LXX	<i>he will speak to them as</i> I have commanded him

At v. 49, we have the verb "to say" followed by a direct complement, as in the TM; but at v. 50, it is the verb "to speak" followed by a conjunction indicating a comparison. This fact cannot be attributed to chance. The Johannine text follows both the Hebrew text ... and that of the Septuagint.⁶⁶

Apart from this syntactical detail, the comparison of Dt 18:18-19 in the MT, the LXX, and *Tg. Neof.*, is of interest thematically, because two major themes from Dt 18 occur in John 12:⁶⁷ the prophet speaking the words that God orders, and the theme of punishment of those who do not listen. Thus, there is a clear thematic link between Jn 12:48-50 and Deut 18:18-19.

Furthermore, Boismard explains two elements in Jn 12:48 with reference to the Targums:⁶⁸

(1) Both *Neofiti* and *Pseudo-Jonathan* include in Dt 18:19 a reference to *the word* which God has spoken, and a reference to *the word* of Jesus occurs in Jn 12:48 (ὁ λόγος ὃν ἐλάλησα). Both in the Targums and in John the word has the function of judging (*Neofiti*: 'I, by my word, will take vengeance on him'⁶⁹), which strengthens the link between Jn 12:48 and Deut 18:19. Schnackenburg refers to Boismard's use of the Targums which were first published in RB 66 (1959), but he rejects the link on the basis that in the Targums *memra* stands for God: '[I]n den Targumen wird die Memra statt Gott selbst genannt, um Gottes Transzendenz zu wahren; bei Joh steht eine Theologie des Offenbarungswortes Jesu dahinter.'⁷⁰ This does not seem to be a valid objection. One could argue that a reader of John's Gospel used to the Targumic reading of Deut 18:19 in the synagogue would understand that Jesus' word takes on the judging function normally reserved for God, and this might just be the point John wishes to make.

(2) Whereas the LXX of Dt 18:19 has 'the man who will not listen ...' (ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὃς ἐὰν μὴ ἀκούσῃ ὅσα ἐὰν λαλήσῃ), *Pseudo-Jonathan* does not use MT's שמע, as does *Neofiti*, but uses קבל, which can also mean 'to listen to', but which means especially 'to receive', which occurs in Jn 12:48 (καὶ μὴ λαμβάνων τὰ ῥήματά μου).

Even if the finer points of Boismard's comparison are judged to entail a certain degree of speculation, and the targumic evidence is rejected because of dating problems,⁷¹ still the main argument seems to be convincing: The relation to Dt 18 can be based on the allusion to the twin

⁶⁶ BOISMARD, *Moses*, 13.

⁶⁷ The following points were first suggested by BOISMARD, 'Citations', 376-378, and O'CONNELL, 'Concept', 352, and met with approval in BROWN, *John*, 491-493, who adds that Jn 12:48-50 is also very similar to Deut 31:19. SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.529, acknowledges the possibility of the allusion, but emphasizes that Jesus cannot be put in the same category as Moses, a point to which I will return shortly.

⁶⁸ Both points in BOISMARD, *Moses*, 13-14.

⁶⁹ BOISMARD, *Moses*, 13.

⁷⁰ SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.528 n. 2.

⁷¹ The Targums are from the end of the third century A.D. (Onqelos) and later. See CHILTON, 'Rabbinic Literature: Targumim', in *DNTB*, 902-909. On the use of the Targums in NT studies cf. CHILTON, 'Reference', 77-81.

themes of speaking God's words and punishment of those who do not receive the word.⁷² Within the context of Jn 12:44-50, the connection to Dt 18 highlights an element of the 'paradoxical character'⁷³ of John's Christology. On the one hand, Jesus is sent by God and is obedient to God, visible in vv. 44f, 49, 50. On the other hand, Jesus appears more or less identified with the one who sent him (again vv. 44f.), which is underlined by the fact that in vv. 47-50 Jesus' words are identified with God's words. Although both elements are present, the force of the passage seems to emphasize the theme of the unity between the Father who sends and the Son who is sent. As Whitacre says:

'The final words of the public ministry emphasize that the foundation for Jesus' statements, and for his whole ministry, is his oneness with the Father.'⁷⁴

However, the focus on the oneness is not undisputed. An interesting discussion is provided by Wilckens and Wengst who include further theological inferences in their contributions to this question. Wilckens comments already on 12:43:

'Es ist die Einheit Jesu mit Gott, die dem christlichen Gottesglauben die gleiche Exklusivität, Radikalität und Ganzheitlichkeit gibt, wie sie dem Glauben der Juden an den einen-einzigen Gott eigen sind. Eben dies ist der letzte und eigentliche Grund der Ablehnung und Bekämpfung des christlichen Glaubens von Seiten der pharisäischen Synagoge – damals wie im Grunde noch heute.'⁷⁵

Objecting to this kind of interpretation, Wengst wants to use 12:44 to emphasize the difference between the sender and the sent one, in order to allow for the possibility that rejection of Jesus does not mean rejection of God:

'Die Ignorierung Jesu seitens des Judentums darf nicht als Ignorierung Gottes verstanden werden. Die Möglichkeit, hier auch im Blick auf das Johannesevangelium zu differenzieren, bietet die in V.44 beobachtete Differenz zwischen dem Boten und dem, der ihn gesandt hat, zwischen Gott und Jesus. Die Ignorierung Jesu seitens des Judentums ist dann keine pauschale Ignorierung Gottes, sondern Ignorierung eines bestimmten Auftrags, der sich in seinem geschichtlichen Effekt als Dienst an der Völkerwelt herausgestellt hat. Wie das Judentum diesen Auftrag wahrnimmt und welche Sicht Jesu es damit gewinnt, hängt davon ab, wie die Kirche als „Leib Christi“ sich dem Judentum gegenüber verhält, wie sie ihm in ihrem Verhalten Jesus begegnen läßt.'⁷⁶

This interpretation seems to reflect more clearly the agenda of the commentator than the most plausible force of the text.⁷⁷ Even if one agrees that vv. 44f. do not emphasise oneness, but are

⁷² If the allusion to these themes is considered valid at this point, one might be justified to hear Mosaic overtones at other places in John where these themes occur: (1) Jesus speaking not his own words, but the words of God: Jn 3:34; 5:19, 30 (because of the association of speech and deed in 14:10); 7:17f.; Jn 8:28; 14:10; 17:8; (2) punishment of those who reject Jesus' teaching: Jn 3:36 in relation to 3:32f.; 5:24 (judgement implicit by way of contrast); 5:28-29.

⁷³ SMITH, *John*, 245.

⁷⁴ WHITACRE, *John*, 326. Cf. SMITH, *John*, 246, with reference to v. 50: 'If Jesus brings the commandment of God, which is eternal life, and in obedience delivers that commandment, he in effect becomes God for us.'

⁷⁵ WILCKENS, *Evangelium*, 201.

⁷⁶ WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 281.

⁷⁷ Wengst's agenda that surfaces time and again in his commentary is to show that the Johannine text does allow for a Jewish reader not to become a follower of Christ and still remain a member of the people of God. The alternative view, supported by the present study, is that the Johannine text

an expression of the agency motif, as does e.g. Schnackenburg,⁷⁸ still the point is that faith in Jesus is presented as the condition for communion with God:

‘Wenn Jesus der eschatologische Gesandte Gottes ist, in welchem Gott ganz anwesend ist, muß man an ihn glauben, um die Gemeinschaft mit Gott zu haben (vgl. 14, 8-11; 1 Joh 2, 23).’⁷⁹

I therefore conclude that it is the oneness motif that is focussed in Jn 12:44ff. If both the oneness of Jesus and the Father and an allusion to Dt 18:18-19 are present in Jn 12:44-50, the result is a double *inclusio* with the prologue, in which the oneness motif (in 1:1-2) and allusions to a Moses tradition (in 1:14-18) are also prominent. Also, the oneness motif might provide a clue why John does not present a straightforward quotation of Dt 18:18-19, but an allusion to its main themes: Jesus’ ministry does accomplish the aims of the prophet promised in Deuteronomy, but he does not fulfill Dt 18:18-19 as exactly the kind of prophetic figure envisaged there. He is one with God, and whatever this means in ontological, functional or identity terms, it does not mean that he is just a prophetic figure – he surpasses even the eschatological prophet, in whatever shape or form this figure was expected in various strands of Jewish tradition.⁸⁰

Finally, we note an additional suggestion by Boismard concerning the center of the chiasm, v. 50a: καὶ οἶδα ὅτι ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐστίν. Boismard says that the idea that we obtain eternal life by keeping the commandments is frequently expressed in the Bible, but suggests that Deut 11:8 is especially close to Jn 12:50a. If this link is valid, it has to be to Deut 11:8-9, since the idea of life occurs only in v. 9. However, Deut 11 talks about long life in the promised land, not eternal life in the Johannine sense. Thus, the link would only reveal that again a Johannine concept surpasses a Deuteronomic theme.

Additional note: Further allusions to Deut 18

In footnote 72 I refer to other texts that relate to the themes of Jesus not speaking in his own name and punishment of those who reject Jesus’ teaching. There are two more examples of texts that have been suggested as alluding to Deut 18. The first set of texts are those that mention “the” or “a” prophet. I include them because it can convincingly be shown that they all evoke the prophet like Moses. The second example is included to show the limit of attempts to find an evocation of the prophet like Moses in John.

reflects a renewal of the people of God around Jesus, with allegiance to him as the central defining category of belonging to the renewed Israel.

⁷⁸ SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.525f.

⁷⁹ SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.526.

⁸⁰ SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.529, equally stresses the element of supersession involved in presenting Jesus against the background of Deut 18:18-19.

(1) “The prophet” and “a prophet”

At several points in John’s Gospel, mention is made of “the prophet” or “a prophet”. In the following subsections I present the arguments for and against the evocation of the prophet like Moses in these cases.

(A) John 1:21

καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτόν, Τί σὺν; Σὺ Ἡλίας εἶ; καὶ λέγει, Οὐκ εἰμί. Ὁ προφήτης εἶ σὺ; καὶ ἀπεκρίθη, Οὐ.

According to John Ashton, it is ‘universally agreed’⁸¹ that the prophet in 1:21 is the prophet promised in Dt 18:15-20. If so, one would have to assume that the intended reader/hearer of the Gospel would be quite familiar with the expectation of the prophet like Moses, so that mentioning only the words ὁ προφήτης would be sufficient to evoke the expectations based on Deut. 18:15-20. As shown by Allison and others, the expectation of the prophet like Moses was alive and well in various forms among various Jewish and Samaritan groups,⁸² so that it is by no means implausible that Jn 1:21 could allude to Deut 18:15-20, or at least that it could evoke the expectations of an eschatological prophet based on Deut 18. In terms of John’s narrative, however, some further aspects have to be considered. Since 1:21 follows immediately after the “Mosaic passage” 1:14-18, with Moses explicitly mentioned in 1:17, “the prophet” in 1:21 could easily evoke Deut 18 for a reader who picked up the Mosaic background of the final part of the prologue. On the other hand, it has to be remembered that “the prophet” is introduced by priests and Levites sent by ‘the Jews’ from Jerusalem, which, as the narrative quickly makes clear, represent the group most antagonistic towards Jesus, so that we are not dealing in 1:21 with the point of view of the narrator. Also, they are addressing of course John the Baptist, so that his denial of being the prophet could at the most be taken to raise the question: does this mean that Jesus is the prophet like Moses? This question is clarified a few verses later, when Philip introduces Jesus to Nathanael. John 1:45 reads:

εὕρισκει Φίλιππος τὸν Ναθαναὴλ καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, Ὅν ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ οἱ προφῆται εὕρηκαμεν, Ἰησοῦν υἱὸν τοῦ Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ.

⁸¹ ASHTON, *Understanding*, 256. He also mentions the allusions to Dt 18 in Acts 7:37, the quotation in Acts 3:22 and in the Pseudo-Clementines 3:53; 36:2; 39:3; 43:1-2. Those in favor of an allusion to the prophet like Moses include GLASSON, *Moses*, 28ff.; BITTNER, *Zeichen*, 156. The problem that the prophet is distinguished from the Messiah in 1:21ff. and 7:40ff., but apparently identified in 6:14f., has been explained e.g. with reference to different groups (as Lagrange pointed out, both in ch. 1 and 7 people from Jerusalem are in view, in ch. 6 we are in Galilee where there might have been more support for an understanding of the Mosaic prophet-king as a single figure). GLASSON, *Moses*, 29, thinks that it would be wrong to expect a consistent scheme of Messianic ideas.

⁸² See above, pp. 156ff., and in addition esp. JEREMIAS, ‘Μωϋσῆς’, *TDNT*, 4.852-878; GLASSON, *Moses*, 15-26; MEEKS, *Prophet-King*, passim; ALLISON, *Moses*, 73-84. Cf. more generally studies on the wilderness and new exodus typology in the NT, esp. MAUSER, *Christ*; WATTS, *New Exodus*. With respect to the well known comparison between Moses as first redeemer and the eschatological redeemer in *Eccl. Rab.* on Eccl 1:9, GLASSON, *Moses*, 24, refers to GFRÖRER, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, vol. II, from 1838, as the first scientific work to explore its significance for the NT.

It is Boismard who presents the most elaborate argument in favour of an allusion to Deut 18:15ff. in Jn 1:45. His arguments can be summarized as follows: (1) The phrase *ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ οἱ προφῆται* is different from the formula *ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται*, understood by e.g. Bultmann, Schnackenburg and Haenchen as a formula referring to the whole OT revelation. Instead, Jn 1:45 is clarified by 5:46, which clearly points to the Pentateuch as the referent of *ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ*. (2) Unlike Gen 49:10 and Num 24:17, two potential alternatives from the Pentateuch, Deut 18 is not about a royal figure, but about a prophetic figure, and that Jn 1:45-49 envisions a prophetic figure is suggested by (a) the aspect of supernatural knowledge which is the key to Jesus' encounter with Nathanael; (b) the parallelism between 1:41-42, which is about the Messiah, and 1:45-47, which, if a reference to the prophet, fits nicely with the juxtaposition of Messiah and prophet in 7:40-41, and the similar confessions in 6:14 (prophet) and 11:27 (Christ); (c) the parallel to 7:52, which is similar to 1:46 in that both verses expound the problem of Jesus' Galilean origins ('Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' taken as an objection 'based on the fact that Nazareth is found in Galilee.'⁸³); (d) the antithetical parallelism between John the Baptist, who is neither Messiah nor the prophet (1:20f), and Jesus, who is confessed to be the Messiah in 1:41, and would be confessed as the prophet if the allusion to Deut 18:15ff. is granted; and finally (e) the sequence of Philip's profession of Jesus as prophet and Nathanael's profession 'You are the king of Israel', which reminds again of Jn 6:14-15.⁸⁴

Even if Boismard's argument is judged to be persuasive, the very complexity of it raises several questions. If the point of 1:45 was to identify Jesus as prophet like Moses via an allusion to Deut 18:15-20, why did the narrator choose the phrase *ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ οἱ προφῆται* to evoke that text? Did he expect the intended reader to pick up the connection simply by using the phrase? Did he deliberately choose an ambiguous phrase, intended to make the readers wonder what figure was in view, leading them to construct complex connections like Boismard did? The fact that he did not choose to quote parts of Deut 18:15-20 may mean that he was either reluctant to make the connection explicit, or that he indeed thought the allusion was clear enough anyway. Also, the fact that the phrase occurs on the lips of one of the first disciples of Jesus early on in the narrative suggests that even if a specific allusion to the prophet like Moses was intended, it is neither clear whether this reflects the narrator's point of view, nor that Jesus' identity is properly described with reference to that figure. Indeed, as the sequence of the titles given to Jesus in John 1 suggests, if the figure of the prophet like Moses is evoked in 1:45, it is surpassed by Son of God and King of Israel in 1:49. In any case, with respect to the question of the use of Moses tradition, it can only be concluded that if 1:45 evokes Deut 18:15-20, it does so by using a phrase that is either intentionally vague and makes the reader think

⁸³ BOISMARD, *Moses*, 29.

⁸⁴ All points in BOISMARD, *Moses*, 25-30. As far as I can see, Boismard's points have never been discussed in detail.

whether the prophet like Moses is indeed referred to, or by using a phrase that was so clear to the reader that an explicit quotation of at least parts of Deut 18:15-20 was judged unnecessary. As I have shown above (see Introduction, section 1.4), my own reading of 1:45 in connection to 5:45-47 suggests an understanding of Ὁν ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ more broadly as referring to Pentateuchal texts that the author of John's Gospel understood to talk about Jesus, texts that are the subject of the present study. However, this does not mean that 1:21 does not in itself evoke the prophet like Moses. The connection in 1:21 may be based on the general expectation of the Mosaic prophet and on the fact that he is clearly evoked in the summarizing passage Jn 12:48-50.

(B) *John 4:19*:

λέγει αὐτῷ ἡ γυνή, Κύριε, θεωρῶ ὅτι προφήτης εἶ σύ.

Can this statement of the Samaritan woman at the well be understood as an allusion to Deut 18? Several observations render it likely that “the prophet like Moses” is particularly in view at this point. First, the identification of Jesus as προφήτης is based on his supernatural knowledge of the woman's marital situation. This is not something especially “Mosaic” like the bread miracle in ch. 6, but it is a prophetic characteristic (cf. the use of the same argument by Boismard in the preceding section). Secondly, the fact that προφήτης is anarthrous is in itself not a compelling argument against an allusion to Deut 18. Grammatically, it is possible to render the statement: “Sir, I can see that you are the prophet.”⁸⁵ Thirdly, the fact that the term προφήτης occurs on the lips of a Samaritan woman leads to the reflections about the expectation of the Mosaic prophet in Samaritan theology:⁸⁶

‘Because the Samaritans accepted only the books of the Pentateuch as canonical (...), they understood the words of Deuteronomy 34:10, “no prophet has arisen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face”, to be absolute and in force until the coming of the prophet like Moses (Dt. 18:15-19 ...), the second Moses, the Taheb (...). If there cannot be another prophet between the first Moses and the second Moses, then to call Jesus “prophet” is virtually to call him “the prophet”.’⁸⁷

Carson himself rejects finally the link to Deut 18:

‘However, in view of v. 25 it is unlikely that the Samaritan woman is in v. 19 making so clear a confession. The word “prophet” was used to refer to a wide range of “gifted” people, and at this point it may not, in the woman's mind, denote a full-orbed Old Testament prophet, let alone a messianic figure.’⁸⁸

⁸⁵ So CARSON, *Gospel*, 221. Grammatically, the Greek does not have an article when a word functions as predicate nominative, as is the case in Jn 4:19; cf. HOFFMANN; VON SIEBENTHAL, *Grammatik*, §129a.

⁸⁶ E.g., BOISMARD, *Moses*, 3-4.

⁸⁷ CARSON, *Gospel*, 221.

⁸⁸ CARSON, *Gospel*, 221. Similar WHITACRE, *John*, 105: ‘[S]ince she is not calling Jesus the Messiah (cf. 4:25), she probably does not use the word prophet in this Samaritan sense. She is engaging in

The problem with Carson's logic is that in the first quotation he shows how "a prophet" in Samaritan thought can only be "the prophet", while in the second quotation he refers to 'a wide range of "gifted" people' that the first statement seems to exclude for Samaritans. It seems that the first quotation is valid in the case of the Samaritan woman. Another supporting argument is the fact that in Samaritan thought the prophet like Moses 'would have been expected to settle legal questions, whence the logic of the implicit question in vs. 20.'⁸⁹ I conclude that the prophet like Moses (i.e. the Taheb)⁹⁰ is in view in Jn 4:19, and I take 4:25 as a second attempt of the woman to allude to the Taheb.

(C) *John 6:14*

Οἱ οὖν ἄνθρωποι ἰδόντες ὃ ἐποίησεν σημεῖον ἔλεγον ὅτι Οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ προφήτης ὁ ἐρχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

In Jn 6:14, the crowd who has just witnessed the miraculous feeding proclaim that Jesus is ἀληθῶς ὁ προφήτης ὁ ἐρχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον. Within the context of John 6 and its use of the manna tradition it is highly likely that the Mosaic prophet is evoked, as our discussion in chapter 4 has shown.

(D) *John 7:40:*

Ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου οὖν ἀκούσαντες τῶν λόγων τούτων ἔλεγον, Οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ προφήτης·

Another allusion to Deut 18 has been seen in the question whether Jesus is the prophet (7:40), or whether he is the Messiah (7:41). Again, it is only the term ὁ προφήτης that is judged to be sufficient to evoke Deut 18. A supporting argument for the presence of the allusion in this chapter comes from the fact that an important aspect of the identity of the Mosaic prophet is his role as teacher.⁹¹ Incidentally, the teaching of Jesus is emphasized in John 7: various forms of διδάσκω, with Jesus as subject, occur in 7:14, 28; cf. 8:20, 28 (Jesus speaks what the Father taught him). Also, of the three occurrences of the noun διδαχὴ in John's Gospel, two appear in 7:16, 17.⁹² As we have seen above (section 5.1; cf. section 4.3), the identification comes after the rock-in-the-wilderness-allusion, so that an allusion to the Mosaic prophet seems clear.

ecumenical dialogue, using the word prophet more like a Jew would, to signify a holy man rather than the expected one.'

⁸⁹ BROWN, *John*, 171. He refers to BOWMAN, 'Eschatology', 63, who points out that the Samaritans expected the Taheb to restore proper worship.

⁹⁰ See HAHN, *Hoheitstitel*, 362, for the identification of the Taheb with the prophet like Moses.

⁹¹ See above, p. 159.

⁹² PRYOR, *John*, 38f. See esp. PANCARO, *Law*, 77-116, on teaching and the charge of false teaching against Jesus in John.

(E) *John* 7:52:

ἐραύνησον καὶ ἴδε ὅτι ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας προφήτης οὐκ ἐγείρεται.

It is highly likely that the original reading included the article⁹³ – but even without the article, the allusion to Deut 18 is possible. As we have seen, the question about Jesus’ origins also favours the possible allusion to Deut 18 (cf. section 5.1): it would not be true that no prophet comes from Galilee; Jonah was from Gathhepher, a Galilean town (2 Kings 14:25).⁹⁴ So the best reading of v. 52 is that the Pharisees suggest that the prophet like Moses does not come from Galilee. Carson captures the implication well:

‘If the definite article is retained, then all the “Johannine irony” found in v. 42 returns. The Old Testament does not tell us where the eschatological prophet would be born. The officials of the Sanhedrin, reflecting the deep biases against Galilee entertained by Judeans, simply cannot believe that the prophet could come from such an area. But in reality, Jesus is not so much a son of Galilee as the authorities think. By voicing themselves so strongly, they succeed only in displaying their ignorance of his true origin.’⁹⁵

To conclude the discussion of the five occurrences of “the” or “a” prophet, it has been shown that all instances show signs of the evocation of the prophet like Moses as promised in Deut 18.

I now turn to one more Johannine text where commentators have seen a link to Deut 18.

(2) *John* 5:43

ἐγὼ ἐλήλυθα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρὸς μου, καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε με·
ἐὰν ἄλλος ἐλθῆ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τῷ ἰδίῳ, ἐκεῖνον λήμψεσθε.

Is *John* 5:43 ‘a clear allusion to Dt 18:20’?⁹⁶ And what would its theological significance be?

Pryor finds here a clear example of Johannine irony:

‘The presumed heirs and disciples of Moses are found to be rejecting the one who comes (and speaks) in the name of God, and who is thus the true Mosaic prophet, while at the same time they are willing to give ear to others (possibly scribal teachers) who come in their own name, thus being the false prophets of whom Moses has forewarned.’⁹⁷

⁹³ So GLASSON, *Moses*, 29-30; BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, ad loc.; BROWN, *John*, 325.

⁹⁴ BROWN, *John*, 325; ZAHN, *Evangelium*, 404. Alternatively, one could argue that irony is at work in that those who despise the crowd for not knowing the law turn out to be ignorant of the Scriptures themselves.

⁹⁵ CARSON, *Gospel*, 332-333.

⁹⁶ So PRYOR, *John*, 118.

⁹⁷ PRYOR, *John*, 118. The referent of ἄλλος in 5:43 is understood to be similar to the false messiahs of the synoptics (e.g., Mk 13:6, 22) (so e.g. BAUER, *Johannesevangelium*, 90f.; BROWN, *John*, 226; CARSON, *Gospel*, 265); some thought of Bar-Kochba (Schmiedel in *Encyclopedia Biblica* (1902), 2551. ZAHN, *Evangelium*, 315f., took it as a real prophecy of Jesus, which came true 100 years later). For messianic claimants cf. e.g. Josephus, *Ant.* 20.97-99; 171-172; *J. W.* 2.258-265; cf. Barnett, *NTS* 27 (1980-81), 679-697. In patristic exegesis (and now again in MORRIS, *Gospel*, 294 n. 123), the anti-Christ is often in view (references in BAUER, *Johannesevangelium*, 90). ODEBERG, *Gospel*, 226, thinks the devil is in view. BULTMANN, *Evangelium*, 203, agrees, but adds that this includes historical persons in which the devil is embodied. CALVIN, *John*, 142, although at first thinking of false prophets, also brings the devil into the equation and is bold enough to underline the contemporary significance by referring to the pope. At the other end of the spectrum, some think no particular figure is in mind (e.g., BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 79; RIDDERBOS, *Gospel*, 206).

The ‘clear allusion’ has to be the phrase ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι, since this is the only phrase that is similar to Deut 18:20 (and 18:19, for that matter), which has ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι. If this is judged to be a clear allusion, the case seems to be similar to 1:21, the assumed allusion to Deut 18 via the term ὁ προφήτης. Much depends on the strength of the expectation based on Deut 18. If judged plausible, the significance is obvious: John will at this point have linked the sending motif, one of his key christological motifs, to a Moses tradition. If so, it is surprising that he did not make more of it. Although the sending motif is expressed at numerous points using various terminology, 5:43 is the only place where the particular phrase ἐγὼ ἐλήλυθα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρὸς μου occurs. Interestingly, the point Pryor wants to make is not that 5:43 is about the sending motif, but that the verse is part of the motif of “speaking in the name of the Father”, “speaking, what the Father commands”, as the first brackets in the above quotation show. The problem is that 5:43 does not use the language of “speaking”, but of “coming”, thus being closer to the spatial categories of the sending motif. I therefore conclude that 5:43 cannot be seen as a particularly convincing link to Deut 18.

5.3 John 14:1-6 and Deut 1:29-33

Deut 1:29-33:

καὶ εἶπα πρὸς ὑμᾶς μὴ πτήξετε μηδὲ φοβηθῆτε ἀπ’ αὐτῶν 1:30 κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν ὁ προπορευόμενος πρὸ προσώπου ὑμῶν αὐτὸς συνεκπολεμήσει αὐτοὺς μεθ’ ὑμῶν κατὰ πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησεν ὑμῖν ἐν γῆ Αἰγύπτῳ 1:31 καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ταύτῃ ἣν εἶδετε ὡς ἐτροφοφόρησέν σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὡς εἶ τις τροφοφορήσει ἄνθρωπος τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ κατὰ πάσαν τὴν ὁδὸν ἣν ἐπορεύθητε ἕως ἡλθετε εἰς τὸν τόπον τοῦτον 1:32 καὶ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τούτῳ οὐκ ἐνεπιστεύσατε κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ ὑμῶν 1:33 ὃς προπορεύεται πρότερος ὑμῶν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐκλέγεσθαι ὑμῖν τόπον ὁδηγῶν ὑμᾶς ἐν πυρὶ νυκτὸς δεικνύων ὑμῖν τὴν ὁδὸν καθ’ ἣν πορεύεσθε ἐπ’ αὐτῆς καὶ ἐν νεφέλῃ ἡμέρας .

In the context of Deuteronomy, Moses reminds the Israelites how he encouraged them after the return of the spies from ‘the hill country of the Amorites’ (Deut 1:20) with the worrying news about the strength of the inhabitants of that land (Deut 1:28). Boismard sees this text in the background of Jn 14:1-6, pointing to the following connections:⁹⁸

(1) The preparation of a place: πορεύομαι ἐτοιμάσαι τόπον ὑμῖν in Jn 14:2f. ‘is a quasi-quotation of Deut 1:33’,⁹⁹ not of the LXX, however, but of *Tg. Neof.*, which has ‘to prepare a place’ (רדבר קדמיכון בארחה למתקנה לכון אתר) instead of MT’s ‘to seek you out a place’ (ההלך לפניכם בדרך לתור לכם מקום).

(2) The motif of the way occurs in Deut 1:33, and is prominent in Jn 14:4-6. This motif is expressed with the same terminology in both LXX and John (ἡ ὁδός)

⁹⁸ The relation to Deut 1:29-33 was also seen by DE LA POTTERIE, ‘Voie’, who followed Boismard’s article in RB 78 (1961), 520ff. SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 3.75, rejects the link to Deuteronomy and opts for Gnostic sources in the background of John’s motif of “the way”. However, Schnackenburg does not engage with the other connections between Jn 14:1-6 and Deut 1:29-33.

⁹⁹ BOISMARD, *Moses*, 21.

(3) The problem of the fear: *Μὴ ταρασσέσθω ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία* in Jn 14:1 recalls *μὴ πτήξετε μηδὲ φοβηθῆτε ἀπ’ αὐτῶν* in Deut 1:29, cf. the *inclusio* with *μὴ ταρασσέσθω ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία μηδὲ δειλιάτω* in Jn 14:27. The motif is not expressed with the same terminology.

(4) The issue of faith: *πιστεύετε εἰς τὸν θεόν καὶ εἰς ἐμὲ πιστεύετε* in Jn 14:1 recalls *οὐκ ἐνεπιστεύσατε κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ ὑμῶν* in Deut 1:32 – again a case of terminological similarity.¹⁰⁰

If these links are considered to be valid, what does the connection between the two texts do? In general, the situation of the disciples at the moment of Jesus’ imminent departure is correlated with the situation of the Israelites when they were about to enter the promised land. Thus the disciples take the place of the Israelites – another element that is part of the renewal motif: the followers of Jesus are renewed Israel. Again, the sociological function of a Moses tradition is confirmed. As to the four points above, the following picture emerges:

First, the preparation of physical places on Israel’s way is correlated with the preparation of a place beyond time and space, the place where Jesus is going.¹⁰¹ Some see this in the light of an important theological turning point: the ideology of “the land” seems to be put aside. As Walker comments:

‘This Moses-Jesus parallelism strongly suggests that John saw the theme of the “promised land” as typologically fulfilled in Christ – in a way that no longer related to the physical land of Palestine. There could be little doubt that Christians, although not yet reunited with Jesus (14:1-3), were in some profound sense already in the “promised land” – wherever they were living in the world. If the Johannine Jesus emphasized not the slavery of Israel in Egypt but the slavery (even of his contemporary Israel) “to sin” (8:34-35), then those who were “set free” by “the Son” were even now in the “promised land”. Jesus offered “a new exodus from sin and death”.’¹⁰²

Secondly, the motif of the way occurs in different ways: in Deuteronomy, the way refers to the physical way through the wilderness on which God guided the Israelites. In John, “the way”

¹⁰⁰ All four points in BOISMARD, *Moses*, 21f. Again, I could not find his arguments discussed in the relevant literature.

¹⁰¹ On the basis of the parallels in *1 Enoch* 39:4f.; 41:2 (cf. the throne visions in *1 Enoch* 14:15-23; 71:5-10; cf. also 71:14, 16; 4 Esr 7:80; *Jos. and As.* 8:11; 22:9) it is likely that *ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς μου μοναὶ πολλαὶ εἰσιν* (John 14:2a) refers to heavenly places. Cf. also Philo, who thinks along the Greek lines of the immortality of the soul, and speaks of the “fatherly house” (οἶκος) as the place to which the soul returns in *Somn.* I, 256. Cf. also *Confus. Ling.* 78, where the heavenly realm is called *πατρὶς*. For Mandaean parallels cf. SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 3.68. A different interpretation proposes that Jesus wants to gather the disciples not in heaven, but in the “Raum der Liebe” (HEISE, *Bleiben*, 100), which transcends heaven and earth (SCHAEFER, ‘Sinn’, 213); similar GUNDRY, ‘Father’s House’, but with the inclusion of the final union of Christ and his disciples in heaven. The whole range of possible backgrounds to 14:2-3 is treated in FISCHER, *Wohnungen*, and MCCAFFREY, *House*. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 249, refers to Heb 12:22 and Rev 21:9-22:5 as relevant texts that also present ‘a pictorial representation of the transcendent dwelling of God.’

¹⁰² WALKER, *Holy City*, 186-188, links the Moses-Jesus parallelism (Deut and FD as explored by Lacomara; see the excursus below) with the question of the land. (For the quotation see WALKER, *Holy City*, 188, quoting MOTYER, *Father*). Similar: MORGAN, ‘Fulfillment’, 159: ‘as Moses, the shepherd of God’s flock, led the nation out of slavery into the “promised land”, so Jesus leads the new Israel out of the bondage of sin into the pasture of new life and freedom.’ Cf. also BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 76: ‘through his sacrificial death and risen life he enacts the Second Exodus and opens for all mankind the promised kingdom of God.’

is an enigmatic entity: When Jesus says in Jn 14:4: καὶ ὅπου [ἐγὼ] ὑπάγω οἶδατε τὴν ὁδόν, he alludes in a veiled manner to his glorification, his exaltation via the cross.¹⁰³ However, the allusion is somewhat hidden, so that Thomas asks in Jn 14:5: Κύριε, οὐκ οἶδαμεν ποῦ ὑπάγεις· πῶς δυνάμεθα τὴν ὁδὸν εἰδέναι; Jesus' reply in vv. 6f. does two things: first, by saying 'Εγὼ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ· οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ δι' ἐμοῦ (Jn 14:6), he changes the reference of "the way": it is no longer Jesus' way to the Father, but Jesus as the way that leads to the Father. Secondly, vv. 6f. lead away from the issue of "the way" to the aspect of Jesus' oneness with the Father (14:8-11). Thus "the way" is used in two ways in John 14:4-6. Compared to Deuteronomy, the physical way through the wilderness becomes Jesus' way via the cross into the Father's house, and by going this way Jesus becomes himself the way on which one can get access to the Father. A reference to a physical entity becomes first a metaphor for Jesus' exaltation, and the metaphor is then spiritualized and refers to Jesus' function in the establishment of a relationship between believers and the Father.

Thirdly, the whole situation is characterized as a situation of fear in both texts, a fear that both Moses and Jesus are addressing by their speeches. The fear in Deuteronomy is triggered by the reports about the giants in the promised land. The reason for the disciples' fear can be found in the antagonism they have experienced between Jesus and the Jewish authorities. Later in the Farewell discourses, it is explicitly stated that the disciples have to face the same antagonism as their master (15:18-21; 16:2-3)

Fourthly, the issue of faith is raised in different ways. Whereas Moses reproaches the Israelites because they did not believe even though God was leading them (Deut 1:32-33), Jesus exhorts his disciples to believe in him and to believe in God (Jn 14:1¹⁰⁴). Thus, the Deuteronomic text would in this case serve as a negative foil against which the positive Johannine exhortation gains force. In contrast to the missing faith of the Israelites in Deut 1, Jesus is asking his disciples to believe both in God and in him.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ This can be inferred from statements about Jesus' return to the Father (10:38; 12:27-28; cf. MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 394), in combination with texts about his 'exaltation', e.g., in 12:32-33. In 12:33 the 'lifting up' saying of 12:32 is explained by the narrator: τοῦτο δὲ ἔλεγεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ ἡμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν. The phrase is repeated *verbatim* in 18:32. That the destiny of Jesus' way is his being with God after his death is seen by e.g. WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 119; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John*, 249.

¹⁰⁴ There is debate whether the first πιστεύετε in 14:1 is an indicative or an imperative. SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 65 n. 31, helpfully summarizes the options: 'Schon Origenes verstand die Satzfolge als Hypotaxe: "Da ihr an Gott glaubt, glaubt (oder: glaubt ihr) auch an mich" (GCS IV, 489). Faßt man jedoch V 1 und V 2 im Sinne einer Aufforderung und Motivation auf, so legen sich zwei Imperative näher. Noch anders BULTMANN 463: „Glaubt ihr an Gott? Dann glaubt ihr auch an mich; denn an Gott könnt ihr ja nur glauben durch mich!“ Auch bei dieser Erklärung ist die Verbindung mit dem Folgenden außer acht gelassen.'

¹⁰⁵ WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.116-117, refers to Ex 14:31 as another possible link to a Moses tradition. After the experience of the rescue through the sea, 14:31 says that the Israelites believed in Adonai and in Moses: εἶδεν δὲ Ἰσραὴλ τὴν χεῖρα τὴν μεγάλην ἃ ἐποίησεν κύριος τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις ἐφοβήθη δὲ ὁ λαὸς τὸν κύριον καὶ ἐπίστευσαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ Μωυσῆ τῷ θεράποντι αὐτοῦ. He also refers to *MekhJ Beschallach* (Wajehi) 6 (cf. HOROVITZ; RABIN, *Mechilta*, 114f.) which presents a special

In summary, the link between Jn 14:1-6 and Deut 1:29-33 is convincing on the basis of the kinds of connections that establish the link (terminological similarities; similar motifs; cf. the first four points above). Thus, one does not need interpretative insights to identify the link in the first place. However, once identified, the link yields a fruitful interpretative result, including again the sociological aspect, this time in the renewal motif: the disciples take on the role of the Israel of renewal. Thus, the comparison between the Deuteronomic and the Johannine texts contributes in its own way to the sociological function of the use of Moses traditions.

Excursus: Deuteronomy and the Farewell discourses

Two attempts to correlate Deuteronomy as a whole (or at least Deut 32) with the Farewell Discourses have to be mentioned here, one briefly and one in more detail. Glasson points out that either Deuteronomy as a whole or Deut 32 in particular correspond to a farewell discourse.¹⁰⁶ He notes ‘several points of contact’ with Deuteronomy and thinks that they establish ‘a connexion of some kind.’¹⁰⁷ The links are:

(1) *Tg. Yer. I* renders Deut 32:1: ‘And when the last end of Moses the prophet was at hand, that he should be gathered from the world ...’ The fragmentary *Tg. Yer. II* has: ‘When the end of Moses came, that he should be removed from the world ...’ Glasson suggests a comparison with Jn 13:1, but does not pursue it himself.

(2) The following footwashing ‘presents a curious parallel with a story about Moses’ (p. 74). In a midrash on Num 27:15-23, it is said that Moses served Joshua, preparing a basin of water.¹⁰⁸

(3) The link between love and keeping the commandments (Jn 14:15, 21, 23; 15:10) and Deut 7:9; 5:10; 11:1, 22; 13:3-4; 19:9; 30:16; the phrase ‘to keep commandments’ occurs only in one other place in the Gospels, Mt 19:17.

(4) Jn 14:1, 27 (“let not your hearts be troubled” plus “neither be afraid” in v. 27) recall Deut 31:8; cf. 1:21, 29; 7:18.

(5) The choosing of the disciples, ‘especially when we remember that Jesus is ratifying a covenant with the New Israel which they represent.’ Jn 15:16, 19 recall Deut 4:37; 7:6-7; 10:15; 14:2; cf. 21:5. Deut 7:6; 10:15; 14:2 “out of the world” is even closer to Jn 15:19.

(6) The term for “abide” (μένειν) is translated by Salkinson and Ginsberg *dabaq*, even *dabaq b* (= μένειν ἐν) in Jn 15:4, 7; this recalls Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; 30:20 (the last three have also: “keeping the commandments” and “loving the Lord”). Glasson comments:

song about the faith of Israel on the basis of Ex 14:31. If this link is considered to be valid, Jesus even more directly takes the position of Moses in Jn 14:1.

¹⁰⁶ GLASSON, *Moses*, 74.

¹⁰⁷ GLASSON, *Moses*, 74.

¹⁰⁸ GLASSON, *Moses*, 82. In n. 1 on that page he refers to WÜNSCHE, *Lehrhallen*, 148-150, as evidence for the midrash. Unfortunately, I was unable to trace that reference.

'The Johannine idea of mutual indwelling does, of course, go beyond anything we find in Deuteronomy. At the same time the richer concept in John may be based upon the Pentateuchal concept, a Christian expansion, as it were. Even in the Old Testament there is frequent reference to God dwelling among or in the midst of his people; the New Testament deepens this, making the union much closer. There is no doubt of the fact that the two ideas are related; Paul in II Cor. 6:16 says, "we are a temple of the living God", and he continues immediately, "even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (Lev. 26.11-12).'¹⁰⁹

(7) Glasson suggests the following parallels in Jn 17: (a) 17:8 and Deut 33:3; (b) 'Holy Father' in 17:11; 'Righteous Father' in 17:25 and Deut 32:4 LXX; (c) 17:6, 26 (the name) and Deut 32:3; 33:9; (d) "making known the name" also in Ex 6:3; 33:19; (e) 17:24 'you loved me before the foundation of the world' and *As. Mos.* 1:14 'he prepared me before the foundation of the world, that I should be the mediator of his covenant'; (f) the angel unable to obtain Moses' soul¹¹⁰ and Jn 14:30.

(8) Jn 14:1 and Ex 4:31; Jn 14:11 and Ex 4:8.¹¹¹

Again, it would be worthwhile to go through all these suggestions and test their validity in terms of the identification and interpretation of the links. Space forbids such an exercise at this point. Instead I now turn to another, more broadly constructed attempt to compare Deuteronomy and Jn 14-17. Before this a short summary of the main features of the farewell speech genre is in order.

It is fairly well established¹¹² that the Johannine Farewell discourses in Jn 14-17 belong to the literary genre of the farewell speech. This genre can already be found in the OT¹¹³ and in late biblical and intertestamental literature.¹¹⁴ A comparison of these farewell speeches with Jn 14-17 is fruitful, as Brown has shown. He lists the following common features of the farewell genre:

(1) the situation: 'a great man who gathers his followers (his children, his disciples, or the people) on the eve of his death to give them instructions that will help them after his

¹⁰⁹ GLASSON, *Moses*, 76.

¹¹⁰ Cf. *TDNT* IV, 858.

¹¹¹ All eight points and quotations in GLASSON, *Moses*, 74-78. The penultimate reference is to Ex 4:31, but clearly Ex 14:31 is meant, as appears from Glasson's comment: 'It is, of course, obvious that the Johannine faith in Christ is a much deeper matter than the Israelites' belief in Moses, but the coincidence in phrasing is interesting. The latter kind of faith may be compared with the reference in the Dead Sea Scrolls to belief in the Teacher of Righteousness [ref to 1QpHab 2:4]; neither here nor in the case of Moses is the Christian connotation of a personal trust and committal implied.' Glasson thinks that Jesus' special regard for the book of Deuteronomy can be seen in his responses in the temptation story in Mt and Lk, where he uses Deut 8:3; 6:13; 6:16, GLASSON, *Moses*, 78 n. 2.

¹¹² I here follow BROWN, *John*, 597-601, who follows MUNCK, 'Discours', and STAUFFER, 'Abschiedsreden'. Cf. also the material in STAUFFER, *Theologie*, 327-330; SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 3.63-64.

¹¹³ Cf. Jacob's blessings Gen 47:29-49:33; Joshua's farewell Jos 22-24; David's farewell 1 Chron 28-29; and, 'most important' (BROWN, *John*, 598): Deuteronomy.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Tobit's farewell to Tobias in Tob 14:3-11; *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*; Enoch: *1 Enoch* 91ff.; Ezra: 2 Esdr 14:28-36; Baruch: *2 Bar.* 77ff.; Noah: *Jub.* 10; Abraham: *Jub.* 20-22; Rebecca and Isaac: *Jub.* 35-36; Moses: Josephus *Ant.* 4.8.45-47; # 309-326; Paul: Acts 20:17-38; 2 Tim 3:1-4:8; Peter: 2 Peter.

departure.¹¹⁵ (2) announcement of departure;¹¹⁶ (3) sorrow and reassurance;¹¹⁷ (4) OT: recalling God's deeds; intertestamental literature: recalling the great man's life (Mattathias in *Ant.* 12.6.3; #279-284); John: recalling what Jesus said (13:33; 15:20); recalling his words and deeds in general (14:10; 15:3; 17:4-8); the Paraclete: interpreter of Jesus' deeds and words (14:26; 16:14-15); (5) keeping God's commandments;¹¹⁸ (6) command to love one another;¹¹⁹ (7) unity;¹²⁰ (8) future fate of children/disciples;¹²¹ (9) cursing of persecutors, rejoicing in the tribulations of the just;¹²² (10) calling down peace (*Jub.* 21:25); promising ultimate joy in the next life (*Enoch* 103:3; *T. Jud.* 25:4; in John: 14:27; 16:33 (peace); 16:22 (joy)); (11) immediacy of God's presence;¹²³ (12) endurance of the name;¹²⁴ (13) successor: Moses and Joshua (Deut 31:23); Jesus and Paraclete in John; (14) closing prayer.¹²⁵

Focusing on the common features of the Farewell speech genre is one way to illuminate the background of John 14-17. Another way is to attempt a comparison of one farewell speech with John 14-17. This has been done in an article by Alred Lacomara. He choose to compare the whole of Deuteronomy with the Farewell Discourses in John. I will first summarize his observations and then give an evaluation of his work.

Lacomara does not want to use Deuteronomy to impose a literary pattern upon John like Enz,¹²⁶ Sahlin,¹²⁷ or Smith.¹²⁸ Instead he wants to focus on

'the more general claim that the fourth gospel, whenever it presents the person and mission of Jesus in a context of Moses- and exodus-typology is influenced, at least in part, by the OT forms and theology that are implicit in the presentation of Moses and his mission.'¹²⁹

In his article he wants

¹¹⁵ BROWN, *John*, 598. This setting is connected with a final meal in John, in *Jub.* 35:27 (Rebecca); 36:17 (Isaac); and in *T. Naph.* 1:2.

¹¹⁶ Jn 14:2-3; 13:33; 16:16; cf. *Jub.* 36:1; *T. Zeb.* 10:4.

¹¹⁷ Jn 14:1, 27; 16:6-7, 22; cf. *Jub.* 22:23; *1 Enoch* 92:2; *T. Zeb.* 10:1-2 (incl. Assurance of resurrection; cf. Jn 14:3, 18; 16:16; joy at his return in 15:11; 16:22).

¹¹⁸ *Jub.* 21:5; Deut 30:16; *1 Enoch* 94:5 ("Hold fast my words!"); Jn 14:15, 21, 23; 15:10, 14.

¹¹⁹ *Jub.* 20:2; 36:3-4; Jn 13:34; 15:12f.

¹²⁰ *Jub.* 36:17; *Ant.* 12.6.3 # 283; *2 Bar.* 78:4; *T. Zeb.* 8:5-6; *T. Jos.* 17:3; Jn 17:11, 21-23

¹²¹ *1 Enoch* 91:1; Jn 16:13.

¹²² *1 Enoch* 95:7; 98:13; 100:7; in John: persecution (15:18, 20; 16:2-3); the world rejoicing at Jesus' death (16:20).

¹²³ *T. Jos.* 10:2; 11:1; Jn 14:23.

¹²⁴ *Jub.* 22:24; Jn 17:6, 11-12; 14:13, 14; 15:16; 16:24, 26.

¹²⁵ Deut 32; *Jub.* 22:28-30; Jn 17.

¹²⁶ Cf. ENZ, 'Book', who sees an unconvincing parallelism of order and content between John and Exodus.

¹²⁷ Cf. SAHLIN, *Typologie*, who uses Ex to 1 Kg 8 as sources for rather forced parallelisms.

¹²⁸ Cf. SMITH, 'Exodus', who, although criticizing the use of "typology" in Enz and Sahlin, himself reads too much into the parallelism between the Mosaic signs in Ex 2:23-12:51 and Jesus' signs in John.

¹²⁹ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 65.

'to indicate elements of this influence on the Farewell Discourse (FD) in Jn 13-16. Here, however, it is not the Moses of Ex but the Moses of Dt who is in question.'¹³⁰

He formulates his thesis in the following way:

'It is the figure of Moses as he presents the ultimate refinement of the Old Testament Law in Dt who is the type of Jesus as he presents the new commandment of love in Jn.'¹³¹

Lacomara sees the following similarities: (1) similarities concerning the circumstances that form the setting of both Deut and FD, which he calls 'external resemblances': (a) both are composed as farewell discourses spoken by leaders to groups they are about to leave; (b) the immediate future of both groups: the Israelites entering Canaan; the disciples becoming Jesus' definitive community: 'in both cases it is the establishment of a *covenanted* community that is in question.'¹³² (c) both groups are in need of consolation and encouragement because they are facing a struggle against enemies; (d) both groups need instructions about the basis of their social structure, i.e. how they are to act towards one another (all points on p. 66).

(2) Apart from these external similarities, it is in the internal, properly thematic resemblances that the significant similarities are to be found. *First*, Lacomara focuses on *the person of the mediator*: Deuteronomy is 'the most "mediated" covenant in the OT',¹³³ because it is a series of discourses of Moses, so that the 'I-thou' form of address is not of Yahweh and his people, but of Moses and Israel. Moses is the mediator because he is the confidant of Yahweh.¹³⁴ Similarly, in the FD it is Jesus who speaks, who mediates the new commandment and who is thus the lawgiver (13:34; cf. 14:15; 15:12, 14). What in 5:24; 8:28; 12:49f. is said in general about Jesus speaking the words of God, is in 14:10, 24; 15:15 said especially about the commandments.¹³⁵ Also, the basis of Jesus' unique status is his intimate knowledge of the Father, so that the disciples need only to see him, not the Father.¹³⁶ For the uniqueness of Jesus' knowledge of God 1:18 and 14:9 can be seen in parallel with Dt 34:10 'and hence with Num 12:6-8'.¹³⁷

Secondly, he turns his attention to *the motivation for keeping the law*. In Deuteronomy, allusions to Yahweh's favours in the past are the primary motivation, historico-religious motivation focused in the signs and wonders of the Exodus (Dt 4:34; 6:22; 29:2ff.) and in the wilderness (8:2-5). This is indicated by 4:39f. as conclusion to 4:32-40; 8:6 concluding 8:2-5;

¹³⁰ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 65.

¹³¹ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 66.

¹³² LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 66 n. 8.

¹³³ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 67.

¹³⁴ Cf. Moses' intimate knowledge of God in Deut 34:10 and the remarks of BUIS, *Deutéronome*, 452-453; MCCONVILLE, *Deuteronomy*, 477f.

¹³⁵ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 67.

¹³⁶ Lacomara sets this in parallel to Deut 5:27 (Go near, you yourself, and hear all that the LORD our God will say. Then tell us everything that the LORD our God tells you, and we will listen and do it.), although he realizes that this is not really the same as the relationship between Jesus and the Father in John in n. 13. On 14:8-10 see BROWN, *John*, 632, who points to the similarities with Dt 18:18.

¹³⁷ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 68.

29:5b as logical conclusion of 29:2-7. He also points out that signs are revelatory (Dt 8:3), and that faith is based on them. The similarities in the FD are obvious: 'Jesus alludes very pointedly to his words and deeds in the past as proof of his right to demand faith.'¹³⁸ Thus in 14:9-12 Jesus himself is the sign of God's presence: 'it is Jesus himself who is equivalent, and more than equivalent, to the significant wonders recalled in Dt.'¹³⁹ The signs in John reveal characteristics of Jesus and are therefore parallel to the revelatory function of signs in Deuteronomy (p. 70). Jn 15:22-24 points to the uniqueness of Jesus' works, and Moses points to the uniqueness of Yahweh's signs and wonders in Deuteronomy. Here Lacomara refers to 34:10-12 which is about Moses' signs; no reference is given to texts that display Moses appealing to the uniqueness of Yahweh's deeds. However, the reason why the signs are given is the same in Deuteronomy and John: to prove the presence of God (pp. 70-71). But one can go beyond the external signs and wonders:

'In both Dt and the FD are detailed the more intimate, and more spiritual, blessings that God has granted to those he has chosen. In both, they are substantially the same, and in both they are alleged as motives for keeping the respective commandments.'¹⁴⁰

Thirdly, the function of the commandment in Deuteronomy and John is discussed (pp. 73-77). Lacomara emphasizes that the centrality of the commandment to love God (Dt 6:4f.) is unique in the Pentateuch, cf. Deut 10:12; 11:1, 13, 22; 13:4; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20. In the FD we do not find a quotation of Deut 6:4f., as in the Synoptics (Mt 22:35-40; Mk 12:28-34; Lk 10:25-28), but this is not a problem for Lacomara: 'But, in fact, there is no omission, for if Dt is not quoted, its teaching nevertheless pervades the final instruction of Jesus to his disciples.'¹⁴¹ Concerning the FD he says: 'Love for Jesus is, in the FD, the same fundamental motive for human action that love for God is in Dt.'¹⁴² He also points out that love is expressed in obedience: in Dt 11:1 and Jn 14:15f., 21, cf. 23f.; and in 13:35 as basic stipulation of the new covenant.¹⁴³ In the FD, love is the imitation of Christ: 15:13-16; cf. walking in the ways of Yahweh in Deut 8:6; 10:12; 11:22; 19:9; 26:7; 28:9; 30:16.¹⁴⁴ Implicit in the aspect of imitation is the idea of the revelatory function of the commandment: it reveals something of the character

¹³⁸ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 70.

¹³⁹ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 70.

¹⁴⁰ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 71-72. Examples: (1) the closeness of Yahweh and his people in terms of mutual possession (Dt 7:6; 14:2; 26:18); cf. Jn 15:19; (2) election, as result of love (7:6; cf. 10:15; 4:37; on love see 7:7f.); cf. Jn 15:16; love as motivation for obedience: Dt 7:7f. and Jn 15:9, 12, 13; 16:27; this is unique in Dt among the law-codes of the Pentateuch (DRIVER, *Deuteronomy*, 100; BUIS, *Deutéronome*, 210).

¹⁴¹ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 74.

¹⁴² LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 74.

¹⁴³ On this point see also BROWN, *John*, 614.

¹⁴⁴ These texts were understood as imitation of Yahweh by O'CONNELL, 'Concept', 381, followed by Lacomara on p. 76. However, more persuasive is the use of Yahweh as an example to follow in Deut 10:17-19; 15:12-16; 24:17f.: Israel shall be merciful with strangers because God was merciful with them when they were strangers in Egypt.

of God/Jesus (p. 76). Lacomara reasons that Dt 6:4f. is not quoted in John because there the cross is the new measure for love, thus making the commandment of love a *new* commandment.

The fourth similarity consists in *the promised rewards* (pp. 78-81): Lacomara holds that the blessings promised in Deut have spiritualized counterparts in FD. The possession of land in Deut 4:1; 8:1 is mirrored by the dwelling-place in Jn 14:2f.; cf. 17:24. The promise of abundant fruitfulness under the condition of covenant observance in Deut 7:12f.; cf. 11:13ff.; 28:3-6, 11-13 finds its counterpart in the fruitfulness when the disciples abide in Jesus (Jn 15:5, 8, 16). The theme of rest in Deut 12:10; cf. 3:20; 25:19 is similar to the idea of peace in Jn 14:27. Brown¹⁴⁵ also understands the peace concept to reflect covenantal mentality, but links it to Ez 37:26. Lacomara responds:

‘However, in view of the influence of Dt on other themes of the FD, it seems preferable to see the FD’s “peace” as related to Dt’s “rest” even though the concept has been developed beyond its original scope in Dt.’¹⁴⁶

Another aspect of the reward motif is that prayers will be heard (Deut 4:7. The problem with this reference is that it emphasises God’s presence, not answering prayers. Lacomara realizes this, but does not address the point adequately.). In the FD there is ‘[a]n even greater readiness to answer prayer, coupled with a more intimate presence of God to the disciples’.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, Lacomara includes God’s presence (Deut 4:7; 7:21) and the dwelling of his name (Deut 12:11; cf. 12:5, 21; 14:23f.; 26:2) amongst the rewards; the counterpart in the FD is the promised spirit (Jn 14:15-17), and that both Jesus (14:18) and Father (14:23) will be with the disciples.

Finally, Lacomara points to *the constant presence of word and work* in both Deuteronomy and John. In Deuteronomy, the words and works of God should be conserved and handed on to future generations (31:9-13, 24-27), particularly the command to love (6:5; 10:12; 11,1, 13). Important was the living memory, not only the written code.¹⁴⁸ In the FD, the commands of Jesus shall be known and transmitted with the help of the Spirit (15:26-27; 14:16, 26; 16:3).

All of this leads Lacomara to the following conclusion:

‘The many similarities that we have seen between Dt and the FD are surely more than coincidental. They demonstrate the close relationship between the two works. We conclude, therefore, that it was principally Dt and its prophecy of a “new Moses” which the author of Jn had in mind when he gathered the sayings of Jesus into a final instruction to the disciples. In this sense, the deuteronomic discourses of Moses were the model for the FD. The unique nature of the mediation, and of the mediators, in both presentations of the law; the prominence of the notion of God’s love for men; the emphasis given to the necessity of men’s love for God as the basis of obedience to the law; law as the expression of love; the reference to “signs” as proof of God’s presence and indications of his nature; the imitation of God; “command” as revelatory of God’s nature – all of these themes are common to the FD and to Dt. And they are all either

¹⁴⁵ BROWN, *John*, 653.

¹⁴⁶ LACOMARA, ‘Deuteronomy’, 79 n. 52.

¹⁴⁷ LACOMARA, ‘Deuteronomy’, 80; cf. Jn 15:7; cf. 14:13f.; 15:16; 16:23f.

¹⁴⁸ LACOMARA, ‘Deuteronomy’, 81, without references or further explanation.

unique to, or highly characteristic of, Dt among the law-codes of the OT. It can only have been by design that they are all found in Jn's presentation of the law of faith and love.'¹⁴⁹

As a consequence Lacomara infers that John intended to present the new covenant in the FD. He used elements of the covenant-form, not the covenant-form itself, because of 'the desire to avoid giving too legalistic a setting to the presentation of this covenant of love.' (p. 83) This stands in tension to Lacomara's earlier presentation of Deuteronomy's emphasis on love and obedience of the heart (Dt 30:11, 14): apparently he thinks that Dt is not legalistic despite its covenant-form. A better reason for the omission of the covenant-form in John has to be sought.

As further indications of the presence of the new covenant, Lacomara points to the exodus themes in the rest of the Gospel, and to the new Moses typology, climaxing in the sacrifice of the new paschal lamb in 19:36:

'In such an overall exodus setting, failure to include the new covenant would seem a major omission, especially since it has been mentioned nowhere else in the gospel. In these circumstances, Dt served as the best model for the covenant's presentation. It was the final discourse of Moses, as Jn 13-16 is of Jesus.'¹⁵⁰

Another indicator of the covenantal motif is the setting in Jn 13-19:

'We have in these chapters of Jn, then, a purification ceremony, a meal elsewhere characterized as a covenant meal, a discourse which contains all the basic elements of a covenant-form, and a sacrifice. These features, in conjunction, can indicate only the making of a covenant.'¹⁵¹

Finally, he proposes a correlation between John 6 and the FD:

'We suggest that as in Jn 6 we have an extended commentary on the words "this is my body; this is my blood," so in the chapters of the FD we have an extended commentary on the words "of the new covenant."¹⁵²

In my evaluation I would like to distinguish between the comparison of Deuteronomic and Johannine texts, the comparison of Jesus and Moses, and the inferences about the new covenant. This comparison of texts is not a case of "parallelomania"; even the correlation of spiritualized blessings in the FD with physical blessings in Deuteronomy seems to be based on legitimate theological reflection.

With respect to the comparison of Moses and Jesus as persons, it has to be said that it is based on one element from the comparison of Deuteronomy and the FD as texts (the person of the mediator), and on a general inference: if the FD are judged to reflect central elements from Deuteronomy's language and theology, it might well imply that Moses is the 'type of Jesus'.¹⁵³ Thus, Lacomara's close correlation between the comparison of texts and the comparison of Moses and Jesus as person seems to be justified.

¹⁴⁹ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 82-83.

¹⁵⁰ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 83-84.

¹⁵¹ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 84 n. 60.

¹⁵² LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 84.

¹⁵³ LACOMARA, 'Deuteronomy', 66. As far as I can see, Lacomara's article has never been discussed in the literature; ASHTON, *Understanding*, 471 n. 57, briefly summarizes Lacomara's main points.

Concerning the inference about the new covenant, the matter seems difficult to decide. On the one hand, to conclude from the many similarities between Deuteronomy and the FD that the latter also has a covenantal flavour seems again to be within the range of legitimate theological reflection. On the other hand, the obvious question is why the Johannine text does not display more overtly a covenantal setting or form if the new covenant was intended as an important theological point. Also, on close inspection the chain Lacomara presents in one of the above quotations – “purification ceremony - covenantal meal - discourse including crucial elements of the covenantal form - sacrifice” – is difficult to maintain in the Johannine text. First, the purification ceremony (footwashing) does not take place before the meal, but in the middle of it. Secondly, the meal serves only as the backdrop for the footwashing, and it is unclear whether it is a Passover meal because of the Johannine chronology. Thirdly, there are covenantal *themes* in the Farewell Discourses, but not elements of a covenant *form*. Thus, it seems best to agree with Lacomara’s general observations concerning the similarities between themes and motifs in Deuteronomy and the Farewell Discourses, but to disagree with his new covenant inference.

From this excursus we now turn to the final example of a Johannine text where an allusion to a Moses tradition has been suggested.

5.4 John 19:17-18 and Moses praying on the hill (Ex 17:8-16)

The story of Israel’s victory over the Amalekites with Moses praying, while stretching out his arms with the help of Aaron and Hur, was used in *Barn* 12:9; Justin, *Dial. Tryph.* 49:8; 90:4; 94; 97; 112; 131:4-5; Cyprian, *Exhortation to Martyrdom* 8; *Testimonies* II 20-22; Irenaeus, *Haer.* IV 24 to interpret Jesus’ death, hanging with outstretched arms on the cross, as victory over the powers of evil, demons, and fallen angels.¹⁵⁴ Boismard suggests that this tradition can already be found in John. In 12:31-32 the judgment of the Satan, the ruler of this world, is linked to the lifting up of Jesus, which, as we have seen, alludes to the paradox of Jesus’ glorification via the cross.¹⁵⁵ Thus, the cross is instrumental in the defeat of Satan, an element supported also by Jn 13:27, 30; 14:30-31. Boismard then turns to the crucifixion as depicted in Jn 19:17-18. He first notes that the Synoptics have two thieves crucified next to Jesus, expressed in almost the same words (‘one at (his) right and one at (his) left’, cf. Mt 27:38; Mk 15:27; Lk 23:33). John,

¹⁵⁴ The story is connected with the brazen serpent incident, as it was already in *Mek.* on Ex 17:11, and later in *m. Roš Haš.* 3:8, see GLASSON, *Moses*, 40-44. Glasson also refers to *Sib. Or.* 5:256-259, which includes the phrase ‘who stretched forth his hands upon the fruitful tree’, which is, however, most likely a Christian interpolation. Apart from Glasson, the possibility of a link between the crucifixion and Ex 17 was already discussed by CHAVASSE, ‘Jesus’, 295 (who could not find it in the Gospels), and by MANSON, ‘Argument’, 129ff. (who thought John linked only the brazen serpent incident with the cross). Glasson also refers to Is 65:2, which might explain why the Fathers do not refer to the fact that Moses was positioned between two others, but referred instead to the stretching out of the hands.

¹⁵⁵ See above, n. 103. For Boismard’s argumentation, entailing text-critical remarks on his preference of βληθήσεται κάτω over ἐκβληθήσεται ἔξω in 12:31, see BOISMARD, *Moses*, 18f.

however, does not say that the men were thieves, but says that ὅπου αὐτὸν ἐσταύρωσαν, καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἄλλους δύο ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν, μέσον δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν (19:18). The element that points to Ex 17 is the phrase ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν, a Semitism corresponding to **דָּהָא הַמִּזְחָל דָּהָא הַמִּזְחָל** in Ex 17:12 MT, which the LXX translates by ἐντεῦθεν εἰς καὶ ἐντεῦθεν εἰς. On the basis of these observations, Boismard asks:

‘Why does John differ here from the synoptic tradition? Why does he insist on the fact that Jesus was “in the middle”? Why above all does he here use a Semitic formula in a passage which contains no other? Presumably because, for a reader used to the Jesus/Moses parallel, which runs throughout the gospel, he wants to insinuate that Jesus, arms stretched out on the cross, has overcome Satan just as Moses, his arms outstretched and supported by Hur and Aaron, overcame the Amalekites.’¹⁵⁶

If Boismard’s argumentation is judged to be convincing, it is another example of a link between a Johannine and a Pentateuchal text where the identification and the interpretation of the link go hand in hand. One way to challenge Boismard’s suggestion would be to come up with better answers to his questions in the above quotation. The commentaries mainly address the question why John insists that Jesus was “in the middle”, referring to the difference to the Synoptics only by saying that the Synoptics identify those crucified with Jesus.¹⁵⁷ The question about the middle position is answered by Schnackenburg with reference to Jesus’ royal honour even during his crucifixion: ‘Jesus hat den Ehrenplatz inne, er ist auch in dieser makabren Szenerie der König, wie dann der Titulus bestätigt.’¹⁵⁸ Calvin interprets the middle position exactly in the opposite direction:

‘As if the severity of the punishment was not enough in itself, Christ is hanged in the middle, between two robbers, as if he not only had deserved to be classed with robbers, but had been the most wicked and the most detestable of them all.’¹⁵⁹

Moloney understands the middle position to emphasize that ‘[t]he focus is on Jesus, occupying a central place among the crucified.’¹⁶⁰ He refers approvingly to Brodie, who says that Jesus, being in the middle, is already drawing people to himself (cf. 12:32).¹⁶¹ Brown refers to Num 22:24 for the Semitism ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν, and to Ps 22:17(16), “a company of evildoers

¹⁵⁶ BOISMARD, *Moses*, 20. He adds two details which fit this interpretative perspective: First, Ex 17:8-13 took place on the top of a hill, and the crucifixion at the place of the skull (εἰς τὸν λεγόμενον Κρανίου Τόπον, ὃ λέγεται Ἐβραϊστὶ Γολγοθα), the point for Boismard being that ‘[i]n Aramaic, the same word means “head” and “top” or “summit”.’ Secondly, ‘Jesus, like Moses, remained with his arms extended until sunset (Exod 17:12; cf. John 19:31ff.).’

¹⁵⁷ They are called δύο λησταί in Mk 15:27; Mt 27:38, and ἕτεροι κακοῦργοι δύο in Lk 23:32f.

¹⁵⁸ SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 3.314. Similarly SENIOR, *Passion*, 103; SCHLATTER, *Evangelist*, 348; WENGST, *Johannesevangelium*, 2.251; HOSKYNS, *Gospel*, 528.

¹⁵⁹ CALVIN, *John*, 428. Similarly MORRIS, *Gospel*, 713: ‘This [Jesus’ middle position] may have been meant as a final indignity; Jesus was among criminals as he died, and in no sense separate. But John probably records the fact in order to bring out the truth that Jesus was one with sinners in his death.’ Both Calvin’s and Morris’ interpretation assume that John knows the synoptic tradition that the two men were “criminals”.

¹⁶⁰ MOLONEY, *Gospel*, 502. Similarly ZAHN, *Evangelium*, 652: the attention is focused on Jesus.

¹⁶¹ BRODIE, *Gospel*, 545. The connection to 12:32 (among other references) was already seen by HOSKYNS, *Gospel*, 528.

[*ponēreuomenoi*] encircle me.”¹⁶² From these parallels it is quite clear that the phrase is not unusual for talking about things or people on either side of the main object of attention.

Another way to challenge Boismard is to question his procedure in establishing the link. He starts with the theological interpretation in later sources and goes back to John's Gospel. The first Johannine text he discusses, however, is not Jn 19:17-18, but Jn 12:31-32. It remains unclear how a reader gets from 12:31-32 to 19:17-18, and even more unclear how one can make the connection between 19:17-18 and Ex 17, if one does not know about the theological interpretation of the link in the first place. If one starts with 19:17-18, it is extremely difficult to see how one gets to Ex 17 just on the basis of the phrase *ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν*, since no further elements from Ex 17 are alluded to in John: no mention of Jesus' outstretched arms, no mention of support from those on either side, no mention of intercession.

On the basis of these observations, I judge that Boismard's case is an example that shows the limits of the use of interpretative aspects in the process of the identification of a suggested link to an OT text. If one starts with the theological interpretation and includes a terminological similarity only as a secondary element, but cannot show how the terminological similarity establishes the link without knowing first about the interpretation, the whole case is based on reading back an interpretation in a text that does not entail the interpretation.

5.5 Summary

The discussion of four selected examples of uses of Moses traditions in the area of the comparison of Jesus and Moses as persons has led to the following results:

(1) In John 7,12 and 47 we detected a terminological allusion to Deut 13:6. The charge against Jesus that he leads astray the people has to be understood against the background of the false prophet in Deut 13:1-6.

(2) In addition to this link, we observed a connection to Deut 18:15-20 in Jn 7:14-19. This connection consists in a thematic similarity (speaking/teaching the words of God) and was supported by an interpretative insight (the illumination of the question about the attempt to kill Jesus in Jn 7:19 against the background of the death penalty for the false prophet in Deut 18:20). In this case, we saw again how the identification and the interpretation can go hand in hand in the handling of an allusion to a Moses tradition.

(3) In terms of the theological significance of the links in Jn 7 we saw that the link to Deut 18 means that the charge of being a false prophet provides the background to the trial of Jesus before the High Priest in Jn 18. The connection between Jn 7 and Jn 18 was based on the *Stichwortverbindung* *παρησιᾶ* in Jn 7:4, 26 and Jn 18:20, and on the motif of Jesus' teaching which is prominent in Jn 7:14-18 and in the question of the High Priest in Jn 18:19.

¹⁶² BROWN, *John*, 900.

(4) Another theological implication occurred in the comparison between Jn 7:45-49 and Jn 9:28-41. In both texts the use of Moses traditions is part of the confrontation between two antagonistic groups of people, i.e. those who are sympathetic towards Jesus, and those who are not. In Jn 7 these are parts of the crowd on the one hand, and the leading Jerusalem authorities on the other. In Jn 9, as we already saw in the introduction (see 1.4), the groups are explicitly characterized as disciples of Jesus and disciples of Moses. Thus, what becomes explicit in Jn 9 emerges incipiently in Jn 7, namely, that the Jerusalem authorities cannot see that being a disciple of Moses should lead them also to acknowledge Jesus and therefore to make them part of the group of the followers of Jesus. We also saw that the antagonism of the two groups leads readers or hearers of John's Gospel to ask themselves to which group they want to belong. In this way, the sociological implication of the use of Moses tradition reaches beyond the text into the lives of those who read or listen to the text.

(5) Concerning the link between Jn 12:48-50 and Deut 18:18-19 we saw that it can be based on thematic similarities (speaking God's words and punishment of those who reject the teaching of God's word), and on grammatical and syntactical comparisons with the Hebrew and Greek text of Deuteronomy and with the Targumic renderings. The interpretation of the link, which in this case comes in addition to the identification, not as part of it, showed that the Moses tradition highlights the oneness motif prominent in Jn 12:44ff. This leads to a double inclusion with the prologue, in which also the oneness motif and a Moses tradition plays a significant role. Also, we saw that the oneness motif might provide a reason why Deut 18:18-19 is not explicitly quoted, since it emphasises that Jesus, while similar to the Mosaic prophet, in the end surpasses this category because of his oneness with the Father.

(6) In an additional note we discussed the instances in which Deut 18 might be evoked only by mentioning the term "the prophet" or "a prophet". We concluded that in all cases it can be convincingly argued that the link is likely valid. This does not mean however that John simply presents Jesus as the prophet like Moses. As we saw, none of the instances promote the ideological point of view of the narrator, and there are always other christological categories that surpass the prophetic category.

(7) Jn 5:43 was briefly dealt with as an example of an unconvincing link to Deut 18.

(8) Especially fruitful was the comparison of Jn 14:1-6 and Deut 1:29-33. The link was based on terminological similarities (including the Targumim), and thematic similarities. The interpretation showed that the renewal motif was highlighted (the disciples of Jesus are renewed Israel), and physical entities in Deut were spiritualized in Jn (the preparation of a place; the motif of the way). The fear of the giants in the promised land was correlated with the fear of the disciples of the Jewish authorities, and Moses reproaching the Israelites for their lack of faith became the negative foil against which the positive exhortation to believe in Jesus and in God is set.

(9) The general comparison of Deuteronomy and the Farewell Discourses in Jn 14-17 by Lacomara was presented and found convincing. The further result of the comparison, i.e. that John 13-19 presents a new covenant, was rejected.

(10) Finally, the comparison of Jn 19:17-18 and Ex 17:8-16 highlighted the limits of the use of interpretative insights in the process of establishing a link to an OT text. It was shown that Boismard started with an interpretative insight: Jesus' death on the cross is understood in connection to Jn 12:31-32; 13:27-30; 14:30-31, as victory over Satan, just as Moses was victorious over the Amalekites. The mere phrase ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν was introduced only secondarily as a terminological similarity to Ex 17:12. Since it was unclear how the terminological link could be established without first knowing the interpretation, the link to Ex 17 was found to be unconvincing.

With this summary I conclude my investigation into the ways Moses traditions are used in John's Gospel. In the final section I will summarize the main results of the study.

6. Conclusion

What are the main results of the present study? Before presenting more detailed conclusions that emerge from the preceding discussions of Moses traditions, the following overview recalls the instances of uses of Moses tradition in narrative order.

The first instance of the use of a Moses tradition is in 1:14-18 where we detected several allusions to Ex 33-34. The use is significant in that it informs a confessional claim and in that it occurs in the Prologue which serves as a *Leseanweisung* that directs the expectations of the reader for the following narrative. Similarly, the allusions to Ex 19-24 which we found in Jn 1:19-2:11 serve to guide the reader at this starting point of the narrative. Also in Jn 1 we found the evocation of the prophet like Moses (verse 21), and in verse 29 an allusion, though not very clear, to the Passover lamb. Allusions to the prophet like Moses occur again in 4:19, 6:14, 7:40 and 7:52. The allusion to the Passover lamb is supported by the Passover allusions in the passion account, especially by the quotation of Ex 12:10, 46 in Jn 19:36.

The next use of a Moses tradition is the explicit allusion to the brazen serpent incident of Num 21 in Jn 3:14f. Its narrative significance lies in the fact that it occurs in the first revelatory discourse of Jesus, and that it informs the death of Jesus. The next instance of narrative importance comes in chapter 5. In Jn 5:45-47 the important theological rationale is given that from the ideological point of view of the narrator, the writings of Moses entail testimony on Jesus' behalf. We took this rationale to mean that the actual use of Moses traditions in John provide examples of the Mosaic testimony to Jesus (see section 1.4).

In Jn 6 the important and multifaceted use of the manna tradition was traced. Again the most important aspects of this use occur in a revelatory discourse on the lips of Jesus. Also, the close connection to the "I am" saying renders this instance highly significant. In Jn 7 we found the use of the tradition about the rock in the wilderness, and further allusions to Deut 18:15-20 in vv. 14ff., 40 and 52. Also, in 7:12, 47 we detected an allusion to Deut 13:2-6.

In Jn 8 we found the suggested link to the pillar of fire in verse 12 to be unconvincing.

In Jn 9 the conflict between the disciples of Moses and the disciples of Jesus is made explicit in verses 27-29. From the relation of 5:45-47 to 9:27-29 we inferred the thesis that the main impact of the christological use of Moses traditions is that it serves a sociological function, namely, to support the new identity of the followers of Jesus as the true followers of Moses. Also, it was suggested that a possible secondary aim may be to convince followers of Moses to join also the followers of Jesus.

Arriving at Jn 10, we discussed the suggestion that Moses as shepherd might inform the presentation of Jesus as the good shepherd. We concluded with Meeks that on balance there is strong influence from other OT texts like Ezek 34, so that it is difficult to argue for a sustained use of Moses tradition at this point.

Jn 11 is the only chapter where no suggestion as to the use of Moses tradition has been made.

In Jn 12:48-50 we found the clearest example of an evocation of the prophet like Moses in Deut 18:15-20. It occurs at a significant point in the plot development of John's Gospel, namely, in the summarizing section at the end of the first phase of Jesus' public ministry to Israel (the trial before Pilate and the crucifixion being the second part of his public ministry).

In the Farewell Discourses Jn 14-17 we followed Lacomara in his detection of several themes and motifs from Deuteronomy which put Jesus in the place of Moses and the disciples in the place of Israel.

By way of a *Stichwortverbindung* between Jn 7 and Jn 18:20 (παρρησία) we found that the question of the true or false prophet from Deut 18:15-20 is at issue in Jesus' interrogation before Annas in 18:19-24.

Finally, in Jn 19 several Passover connections were discussed. It was argued that one has to assess the Passover allusions each on its own merit, since only some of them are actually theologically important (informing the death of Jesus), while others serve only to indicate Passover as the time frame of the actions.

This overview shows that only Jn 8, 10, 11, 20, and 21 are without any clear traces of Moses traditions. The first conclusion therefore has to be that the study of Moses traditions in John's Gospel revealed the pervasive use of the traditions in most parts of the Gospel. Furthermore, since the allusions in 1:14-18 and 12:48-50 form an *inclusio*, it can be argued that the use of Moses traditions is important from a narrative critical point of view, since Moses tradition is used both in the prologue that functions as *Leseanweisung*, and in the summary section in ch. 12.

The second area in which several results can be summarized is the area of *identification* and *interpretation* of links to Moses traditions. The following ways and forms of evocation of Moses traditions were found.

(1) There are *explicit references* to Moses traditions in 1:17 (the law was given through Moses, evoking the Sinai revelation), in 3:14 (the brazen serpent incident), and in 6: 31, 49, 58 (the giving of the manna in the wilderness). Another form of explicit references are the chronological references to the feast of Passover in Jn 2:13, 23; 4:45; 6:4; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:[28], 39; 19:14.

(2) In three cases, *OT quotations* evoked a Moses tradition (6:31; 7,37f.; 19:36). In these cases, the exact sources of the quotations are not entirely clear, and we may well be dealing with more than one source in each case.

(3) In several cases, *terminological similarities* helped to establish a link to a Moses tradition: χάρις καὶ ἀληθεία in Jn 1:14, 17 and Ex 34:6; γογγύζω in Jn 6:41, 43, 61, echoing διαγογγύζω in Ex 16:2, 7, 8 and γογγυσμός in Ex 16:7, 8, 9, 12; ἡ ὁδός in Jn 14:4-6 and Deut 1:33; πιστεύω in Jn 14:1 and Deut 1:32.

(4) *Similar motifs* were detected: the testing motif in Jn 6:6 and Ex 16:4; Deut 8:3f.; Ps 78:18, 41, 56; speaking God's words and punishment of those who do not receive the word in Jn 12:48-50 and Deut 18:18-19; the fear in Jn 14:1 and Deut 1:29.

(5) In two cases, *the density of the combination of significant terms and concepts* in the NT text and in an OT *Vorlage* served to strengthen the case for the presence of the links: cf. the links between Jn 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34, and the links between Jn 14:1-6 and Deut 1:29-33.

(6) In one case, *theological reflection* led the way to an OT *Vorlage*: cf. the theological significance of ἐξηγέομαι in Jn 1:18 through the lens of Job 28:27 and Sir 1:9 that leads to Ex 33-34.

(7) Also in one case, *the importance of the linking elements* in both NT text and OT *Vorlage* was significant for the probability of these elements: cf. the rejection of one element in the comparison of Jn 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34.

(8) Finally, *the support of a terminological allusion to a specific foundational text of the OT by the evocation of this text in the prologue that guides the reader* was found to be significant in the establishment of the reference of “on the third day” in Jn 2:1.

Apart from these more technical ways of detecting links to Moses traditions, time and again it was found that the *interpretation* of a suggested link played a role in the *identification* of the link. The following instances provide examples of this aspect.

(1) The first example is the attempt of Olsson to construct a connection between the obedience motif in Jn 2:5; Ex 19:8; 24:3, 7 and the description of the true disciples of Jesus as those who keep Jesus’ words or Jesus’ commandment (Jn 13:34; 14:15, 21, 23, 24; 15:10, 12, 17).

(2) Another example is the purification motif in Jn 1:19ff. and Ex 19:14f.; 24:5-8.

(3) The communicative function of textual characteristics was found to be an important indicator. If a considerable number of significant elements in a NT text can be illuminated with reference to a coherent perspective derived from the comparison with a particular OT *Vorlage*, the interpretative illumination renders the identification of the link more probable. This is the case in Olsson’s suggestions concerning the ‘Sinai screen’ behind Jn 1:19-2:11.

(4) The meaningful theological interpretation of Ex 12:22 as a possible background of Jn 19:29 supports the presence of the link which is difficult to establish clearly on other grounds.

(5) Ex 12:10 and Num 9:12 as sources of the quotation in 19:36 are supported by Longenecker’s suggestion that the OT cotexts have to be taken into account.

(6) The lawsuit setting that connects Jn 7:37f. to Ex 17, as explored by Lincoln, was considered a significant linking framework.

(7) The absence of a coherent interpretative perspective, the absence of evidence of the link between Tabernacles and the pillar of fire, and the multifaceted use of the light metaphor in OT texts have led to the rejection of the suggestion that the pillar of fire is alluded to in Jn 8:12.

(8) The reason for Jesus’ reference to the attempt to kill him in 7:19 is explained with reference to the death penalty of the false prophet in Deut 18:20.

Although similar attempts to relate the identification and the interpretation of OT *Vorlagen* have been made in the study of Matthew and Paul (see especially ALLISON, *Moses*, and HAYS, *Echoes*), the present study is the first in Johannine studies which treats this aspect explicitly.

The next area where the study has yielded a number of results is the area of the theological interpretation of the links to Moses traditions. In this area, the following picture emerges:

(1) The comparison of Jn 1:14-18 to Ex 33-34 showed how the story of Moses' struggle to experience the presence of God in seeing God's glory is contrasted by the simplicity of access to God's glory in Jesus.

(2) The denial of the reality of the Sinai revelation as God's revelation that Theobald saw implicitly at work in the link to Ex 33-34 was countered with reference to Hanson's theory of Israel's encounter of the pre-existent Logos in OT times and with reference to detailed observations concerning the parallelism in 1:17. The result was that Theobald's view is unwarranted. This result was also reached in a section on Theobald's perception of the use of the quotation in Jn 6:31.

(3) The link between Jn 1:14-18 and Ex 33-34 reveals the motif of the covenant as important to John: the presence of the covenant God, formerly located in the Tabernacle and then in the Jerusalem Temple, is now perceived in Jesus Christ by those who believe in him.

(4) The use of the manna tradition in Jn 6 shows that the giving of manna in the wilderness, introduced by the crowd in 6:31 as a positive example of a sign of God, is turned into a negative foil against which the present giving of the true bread from heaven, which is Jesus himself, is emphasized. In dialogue with Theobald's sophisticated approach to Jn 6 it was argued that Jesus' response to the quotation in 6:32ff. does entail a '*soteriologische Relativierung der Tora*', but not the '*heilsgeschichtliche Entleerung der in den Schriften bezeugten Geschichte Israels*' (both are Theobald's phrases, see above, p. 128).

(5) The oneness motif in 12:48-50 is qualified against the background of Deut 18:18-19: Jesus is the prophet like Moses, but more important is that he is one with God and surpasses the category of the prophet.

(6) At several points, the use of Moses traditions revealed that Jesus occurs in the place held by God in the OT *Vorlage*. This was especially the case in John 6, where the motif of the murmuring and the testing motif put Jesus in God's position.

Apart from these theological aspects, the main impact of the use of the Moses traditions was found to be the sociological function of the christological use of the Moses traditions. This is to say that by illuminating aspects of the person of Jesus with reference to Moses tradition, the identity of the followers of Jesus as the true followers of Moses is strengthened. This sociological function was seen at work in the following ways:

(1) In the confessional context of the use of Ex 33-34 in 1:14-18.

(2) In the Cana story against the Sinai screen, because the element of change in and with the people of God is emphasized.

(3) In the time of Jesus' death at the moment the slaughtering of the Passover lambs starts (19:14-15). Jesus' death is foundational for the believing community, so that indirectly the sociological function of the use of a Moses tradition is confirmed. Also: Jn 19:14-15 combines the Passover motif and the kingship motif, so that the status of the covenant people is highlighted – and again the sociological function of a Moses tradition is confirmed.

(4) In the comparison of Jn 19:36 with *Jub.* 49:13. The latter contains the promise of God's care for Israel if they observe the Passover stipulations – in John this would be transposed into God's care for the followers of Jesus as the true followers of Moses.

(5) In 3:14f., where again the death of Jesus is illuminated with reference to a Moses tradition.

(6) In 3:14f. compared to Wis 16:6, because of the fulfilment of the law for the new Israel.

(7) In the comparison of 3:14f. to Num 21, because in both cases a redemptive action for the people of God is in view.

(8) In the link of the manna tradition with Jesus' death in 6:51c.

(9) In the illumination of Jesus' death against the lawsuit framework that is in the background of the comparison of Jn 7:37ff. to Ex 17.

(10) In the comparison of those who follow Jesus and those who do not in 7:45-49 compared to 9:24-34.

(11) Finally, it is visible in the disciples taking the place of Israel in the comparison of Jn 14:1-6 to Deut 1:29-33.

As the results show, the investigation of the use of Moses tradition proved fruitful not only in the area of the technicalities of the use of the OT in the NT, but especially in the area of theological reflection upon that use and its sociological setting. The theological questions would have to be taken up in proper discussions of Johannine Christology, theology and soteriology. Suffice it to say at this point that it is clear from the above discussions that the use of Moses tradition supports those studies of Johannine Christology which emphasize John's "high" Christology, since, as we have seen, the identification of Jesus with the prophet like Moses is never the final valid identification in the contexts in which it appears. The central Johannine Christological assertion is that Jesus the Son is one with God, a oneness that is in passing confirmed by those uses of Moses tradition that put Jesus in the position God held in the OT *Vorlage*.

Also, the sociological impact would have to be taken up by future studies on the setting and audience of the Gospel. The study confirmed the view of those who see the Gospel originating in a situation of severe conflict between Jews who believed in Jesus and Jews who did not. This conflict is displayed in the Gospel foremost as a conflict between disciples of Moses and disciples of Jesus. However, the problem of community identity can also be depicted in terms of who are the true children of Abraham, as Jn 8 shows. Future studies would have to include the question of the relation between the children of Abraham (both σπέρμα and τέκνα) and the disciples of Moses. This study strongly suggests that one of the main aims of John's Gospel is to argue that the true followers of Moses should also join the ranks of the followers of Jesus.

This aspect leads us finally into the area of Jewish-Christian dialogue and the relation between the two testaments. As I showed in the excursus in chapter 4 above (see pp. 128 ff.), this is a difficult area in which questions of conflicting truth claims cannot be avoided. It is the hope of the present author that future contributions in this area might be informed by detailed exegetical studies like the present one.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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