

Daniel Rathnakara Sadananda
The Johannine Exegesis of God

Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die
neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
und die Kunde der älteren Kirche

Herausgegeben von

James D. G. Dunn · Carl A. Holladay
Hermann Lichtenberger · Jens Schröter
Gregory E. Sterling · Michael Wolter

Band 121



Walter de Gruyter · Berlin · New York

Daniel Rathnakara Sadananda

The Johannine Exegesis of God

An Exploration into the
Johannine Understanding of God



Walter de Gruyter · Berlin · New York

⊗ Printed on acid-free paper which falls within
the guidelines of the ANSI to ensure permanence and durability.

ISBN 3-11-018248-3

Bibliographic information published by Die Deutsche Bibliothek

Die Deutsche Bibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed
bibliographic data is available in the Internet at <<http://dnb.ddb.de>>.

© Copyright 2004 by Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG, D-10785 Berlin
All rights reserved, including those of translation into foreign languages. No part of this book may
be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including
photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in
writing from the publisher.

Printed in Germany
Cover design: Christopher Schneider, Berlin

*Dedicated to the loving memory of
my parents*

Reverend James Lawrence Sadananda

and

Jessie Jemima Sadananda

in whose parental love and care

I got the first foretaste of

God's self-emptying love.

Acknowledgements

The “Johannine exegesis of God” – an exploration into the Johannine understanding of God – is a slightly revised and updated version of my inaugural dissertation accepted by the Kirchliche Hochschule, Bethel, Bielefeld, Germany in summer 1997.

I express my profound gratitude to Professor Dr. Andreas Lindemann, my ‘Doktorvater’, in whom I found a mentor and guide ‘par excellence’. I treasure the stimulating and enriching discussions we shared, and the able supervision and faithful scholarship he offered. The cordial atmosphere and freedom he provided moulded this work. It is his understanding, advice, patience and personal involvement that are responsible in bringing this research to fruition. His perseverance, insistence, eagerness, and technical assistance have finally resulted in the publication of this work. I deem it a God-given gift that our academical partnership has evolved into an affectionate friendship.

My thanks are due to Professor Dr. François Vouga, the co-referent, for his comments and constructive criticism that have enriched the work. The fraternity of the Kirchliche Hochschule in Bethel provided a stimulating and congenial atmosphere for research. The faculty, library personnel and administrative staff have at all times extended a helping hand and friendship that was inspiring.

It was an educative and enriching, at the same time a humbling experience to read the multitude of authors who have worked on the Fourth Gospel. They provided new insights and opened up new perspectives to unravelling the mysteries of the Fourth Gospel. All that I could say on the subject is what I learnt from these Johannine experts, whose exegetical experiments greatly enhanced the outcome of this work.

I am indeed grateful to Dr. Gerhard Wehmeier, the then *Probst*, Evangelische Kirche Kurhessen-Waldeck, Kassel, Germany, who is responsible for bringing me in contact with Professor Lindemann at the Kirchliche Hochschule Bethel for doctoral research. My thanks are due to the Diakonisches Werk of the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) for making

this study possible through the award of a scholarship between February 1993 and July 1997. Reverend Helmut Staudt, the then scholarship Secretary needs special mention for his concern and keen interest.

Professor Dr. Traugott Staehlin and Professorin Dr. Petra von Gemünden need special mention for their encouragement and support. I am grateful to Dr. Andreas Mueller for his readiness to read through and correct the manuscript before its submission as dissertation. My thanks are also due to Professor Dr. Hans-Joachim Bischof, University of Bielefeld for his interest and help extended during the final stages of editing.

A special thanks to Professor Dr. Michael Wolter, Professor Dr. James D. G. Dunn, Professor Dr. Richard B. Hays and Professor Dr. Hermann Lichtenberger, the editors of the "Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft" (BZNW) for accepting this work for publication. I am indeed indebted to Dr. Claus-Jürgen Thornton of the Walter de Gruyter Verlag, Berlin, who demonstrated enduring patience, and provided the most sophisticated professional expertise, guidance and help in getting this work through the process of publication. I am grateful to the publishers Walter de Gruyter, Berlin for beautiful printing and making this work available to a wide readership.

I am indebted to my uncle, Professor Dr. John Sadananda, who not only guided my theological journey, but also has always been a pillar of strength and inspiration to me.

Without the total commitment and involvement of my wife Monika this project would not have become a reality. Our daughter Sthuthi showed a lot of understanding, and was a source of inspiration while preparing this work for publication.

This work is dedicated to the loving memory of my parents, James and Jessie Sadananda in whose parental love and care I got the first foretaste of God's self-emptying love.

"Now to God who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever."

Contents

Acknowledgements	VII
------------------------	-----

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 The Quest	1
1.2 The Problem of the Theology of the New Testament	1
1.3 The Theological Re-Reading.....	2
1.4 Theology in Christological Captivity?.....	4
1.5 Travails of a Theological Quest—Compositional History of the Fourth Gospel.....	6
1.6 Theologising History—Historicity of the Fourth Gospel.....	9
1.7 Theological Re-Reading of the Fourth Gospel— Towards Understanding the Johannine Exegesis of God	11

Chapter Two: Is Jesus God?

Thomas' Confession in the Light of the Passion Narrative

2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Thomas' Confession—"My Lord, My God"	14
2.3 Self-Giving Jesus—Composure and Sovereignty in the Midst of Betrayal and Arrest	19
2.4 Jesus—The Pascal Lamb	21
2.5 The Trial of Jesus—The Man, The King.....	30
2.6 Mission Completed—Jesus Heralds Victory Even in Death	37
2.7 That You may Believe—Jesus the Christ, the Son of God.....	39
2.8 Summary and Conclusions.....	43

Chapter Three: Theology in Conflict—Is Jesus Equal to God? (John 5:17–30)

3.1 Introduction	45
3.2 Order of Chapters Five and Six	46
3.3 The Pericope.....	47

3.4	The Structure.....	48
3.5	The Context.....	51
3.6	Exegesis.....	52
3.6.1	Verses 17–18: Overture—Is Jesus Equal to God?.....	52
3.6.2	Verses 19–30: The Father and the Son— Relationship Explained.....	59
3.6.2.1	Verses 19–20: Theological Introduction— The Father’s Self-Emptying in the Son and the Absolute Dependence of the Son upon the Father.....	59
3.6.2.2	Verses 21–22: The Father’s Self-Emptying—Basis of the Son’s Authority to Give Life and to Judge.....	64
3.6.2.3	Verse 23: Theological Reflection—The Honour Due the Son because of his Relationship with the Father....	67
3.6.2.4	Verses 24–25: The Son as Life-Giver and Judge— Eternal Life and Judgement as the Present Reality.....	69
3.6.2.5	Verse 26: The Son has Life in Himself.....	70
3.6.2.6	Verse 27: The Son’s Authority to Judge as the Son of Man.....	71
3.6.2.7	Verses 28–29: The Open Eschatology— The Son as Judge with Life-Giving as a Sub-Theme.....	74
3.6.2.8	Verse 30: Theological Conclusion— The Absolute Dependence of the Son on the Father.....	79
3.7	Summary and Conclusions.....	79

Chapter Four: Theology in Conflict—Is Jesus Pre-existent? (John 8:12–59)

4.1	The Literary Structure.....	81
4.2	The Context.....	83
4.3	Exegesis.....	84
4.3.1	Verses 12–20: Jesus the Light of the World— the Authority of Jesus’ Witness.....	84
4.3.2	Verses 21–30: Jesus the One from Above— The Origin of Jesus’ Authority.....	89
4.3.2.1	Verses 21–22: Jesus’ going away—Jesus is sought.....	89
4.3.2.2	Verse 23: Jesus is from above.....	90
4.3.2.3	Verse 24: Belief in Jesus.....	91
4.3.2.4	Verses 25–27: Jesus’ Authority.....	92
4.3.2.5	Verses 28–30: The revelation of the Son of man.....	94

4.3.3 Verses 31–34: Truth and Liberation.....	98
4.3.3.1 Remaining in the Word	98
4.3.3.2 Truth.....	99
4.3.3.3 Freedom	103
4.3.4 Verses 35–36: Operation Liberation	107
4.3.5 Verses 37–47: God’s Party and the Devil’s Party	107
4.3.6 Verses 48–59: Jesus the Pre-existent Son is the Revealer and Embodiment of Salvation.....	108
4.3.6.1 Verses 48–50: Jewish Allegation—Jesus a Samaritan, and Possessed.....	108
4.3.6.2 Verses 51–55: Is Jesus greater than Abraham?	110
4.3.6.3 Verses 56–57: Abraham’s Joy to see the Day of Salvation.....	111
4.3.6.4 Verses 58–59: Pre-existence of God’s Universal Salvific Purpose	113
4.4 Summary and Conclusions.....	116

Chapter Five: Theology in Conflict—Are Jesus and the Father One?
(John 10:22–39)

5.1 The Context.....	117
5.2 The Structure.....	117
5.3 Exegesis	118
5.3.1 Verses 22–30: Oneness of the Father and the Son	118
5.3.1.1 Verses 22–24: The Question.....	118
5.3.1.2 Verses 24–30: The Claim.....	119
5.3.2 Verses 31–39: Mutual In-dwelling of the Father and the Son	123
5.3.2.1 Verses 31–33: The Jewish Anger	123
5.3.2.2 Verses 34–36: Johannine Appeal to the Scripture	123
5.3.2.3 Verses 37–39: The Second Claim.....	130
5.4 Summary and Conclusions.....	130

Chapter Six: The God of the Johannine Jesus:

Characterisation of God in the Prayer of Jesus (John 17:1–26)

6.1 Introduction	133
------------------------	-----

6.2 Exegesis	134
6.2.1 Verses 1–5: The True God	134
6.2.2 Verses 6–10: The God who gives identity.....	139
6.2.3 Verses 11–15: The God who protects	141
6.2.4 Verses 16–19: The God who sanctifies	143
6.2.5 Verses 20–23: The God who unites.....	145
6.2.6 Verses 23b–26: The God who loves.....	148
6.3 Summary and Conclusions.....	149

Chapter Seven: Incarnate Logos as Historical Theophany (John 1:1–18)

7.1 Integrity of the Prologue.....	151
7.1.1 In Search of a pre-Johannine Hymn	151
7.1.2 The Prologue is a Unity	157
7.1.3 Analysis.....	161
7.1.4 A Possible Solution	163
7.2 The Logos—A Search for a Mythological Context	163
7.2.1 The Origin.....	164
7.2.2 Old Testament Wisdom Tradition?	164
7.2.3 Philonic Exegesis of the Old Testament?	166
7.2.4 Targumic Traditions?.....	167
7.2.5 Gnosticism?.....	167
7.2.6 Analysis.....	170
7.3 Exegesis	173
7.3.1 Verses 1–2: The Logos and God	173
7.3.2 Verses 3–5: The Logos and the World.....	180
7.3.3 Verses 6–8: Witness to and Interpreter of God’s Acts in the World—God’s Human Instrument ‘the Man’ John.....	186
7.3.4 Verses 9–13: God’s A-historical Presence and Covenant with the World through the Logos	187
7.3.5 Verses 14–18: The Incarnation and the Exegesis of God— a Historical Theophany	194
7.4 Summary and Conclusions.....	215

Chapter 8: Theology in Dialogue—Dialogue with the Considerate Jews (John 3:1–21)

8.1 Introduction	219
------------------------	-----

8.2 Exegesis	221
8.2.1 Verses 3–6: God Creates a New Eschatological Community ..	221
8.2.2 Verses 7–8: A New Community—The Sign of God’s Freedom to Act	225
8.2.3 Verses 9–15: Jesus—The Normative Determinant to Understand God’s Action	226
8.2.4 Verses 16–17: Jesus—The Metaphor of the Self-emptying God	227
8.2.5 Verses 18–21: Only a Self-emptying Community Can Represent a Self-emptying God	229
8.3 Summary and Conclusions.....	230

Chapter Nine: Theology in Dialogue—Dialogue with the Samaritans
(John 4:1–42)

9.1 Introduction	231
9.2 Exegesis	233
9.2.1 Verses 5–6: The Place of the Dialogue.....	233
9.2.2 Verses 7–15: Dialogue on God’s Gift which Transcends all Traditions.....	235
9.2.3 Verses 16–26: Dialogue on God’s Worship, the Centre of a New Tradition	238
9.2.4 Verses 27–38: Dialogue on God’s Will— The Basis of New Traditions	251
9.2.5 Verses 39–42: The Dialogue’s Ultimate Goal— Recognising the God-sent Saviour and Confessing the Saviour-hood of God	253
9.3 Summary and Conclusions.....	254

Chapter Ten: Revelation Continued—the Authentic Theology:
The Paraclete and the Understanding of God

10.1 Composition of the Farewell Discourses.....	255
10.2 The Paraclete—God’s Comforting and Challenging Presence	256
10.3 The Paraclete—Re-enactor of God’s Revelation in Teaching and Remembering.....	260
10.4 God Creates the Possibility of ‘Authentic Witness’ in the Face of the World’s Vicious Contempt through Paraclete	264

10.5	The Paraclete Creates a 'Mirror Model' of God's World	266
10.6	The Paraclete—the Sign of God's Revelation Continued	269
10.7	Summary and Conclusions	272

Chapter Eleven: Conclusion: Johannine Exegesis of God

11.1	The Characterisation of God in the Fourth Gospel	275
11.2	Johannine Theo-centric Christology	280
11.2.1	Agent Christology	280
11.2.2	Mediator Christology	281
11.2.3	'I am' Christology	282
11.2.4	Oneness Christology	284
11.3	Theological Hermeneutic	285
11.4	Whither Theo-logy?	288

Bibliography	293
--------------------	-----

Select Index of References	339
----------------------------------	-----

Index of Modern Authors	351
-------------------------------	-----

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 The Quest

My fascination with the Fourth Gospel began when, as an undergraduate I ventured into evaluating the ecumenical discussion related to the theme of the World Council of Churches Vancouver Assembly, "Jesus Christ, the life of the world" in the light of the New Testament concept of life. Naturally I was lured by the Johannine concept of 'eternal life' which I contended to signify human participation in God's very life, in His very self. But two questions lingered: Does the Johannine concept of 'life' refer to the participation in God's Being or/and function? Does the Fourth Evangelist's God-language have something radically new to convey? Working on my Master's thesis on Johannine Sacramentalism, I came to the inference that Jesus Christ himself is the eternal sacrament of God, and in him symbol and reality merge. But the question regarding God-language still remained. I queried: Does the Fourth Evangelist write Christology or Theology?

1.2 The Problem of the Theology of the New Testament

After Nils Alstrup Dahl's provocative and seminal essay "The Neglected Factor in New Testament Theology"¹ Andreas Lindemann ponders over the probable reasons for the lack of interest among New Testament scholars in the New Testament idea of God:

- a) The widely held popular view is that the God of the New Testament is the replica of the Old Testament understanding of God! Therefore for

1 N. A. Dahl, "The Neglected Factor in New Testament Theology," *Reflection* 73/1 (1975): 5-8.

the Biblical understanding of God one looks more into the Old Testament as if the New Testament language of God is only secondary.²

- b) In evaluating the Theology of the early church, the Jesus movement, it is often taken for granted that the early converts' (e.g. Paul) fundamental commitment to one God did not alter when they embraced Jesus. Their basic Theology therefore remained intact whereas their Christology naturally underwent a sea change. From the viewpoint of interpreters of New Testament Theology the early Christians were perceived to have become more christocentric, though God did not disappear entirely. He was however pushed to a back seat. Early Christian communities did change their attitude towards God because of their Christology, but they did not evolve a new Theology, a new teaching about God.³
- c) Interpreters had always known that the New Testament writings were written to people who were in a theistic world, to whom the existence of God was never in doubt. And they perceived that the New Testament writers have been found to have considered it unnecessary to explore the concept of God elaborately. For them Christology and soteriology, and therefore, ethics and Eschatology were of importance, not Theology.⁴

In New Testament writings the question whether God exists was a non issue. New Testament documents seem to have taken God quite for granted. The New Testament community did believe in God, it recognised the One in whom we live, move and are (Acts 17:28). The New Testament Christians believed that God is their environment and perhaps this unshakeable, unquestioning assurance was primarily responsible for their apparent neglect of explicit explorations on the concept of God, as we find often in the Old Testament.

1.3 The Theological Re-Reading

In response to the plea to re-evaluate New Testament Theology in its all important/deciding narrower sense, there came studies exploring especially

2 A. Lindemann, "Die Rede von Gott in der paulinischen Theologie," in *Paulus: Apostel und Lehrer der Kirche. Studien zu Paulus und zum frühen Paulus-Verständnis* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck]), 11.

3 *Ibid.*, 11–12.

4 *Ibid.*, 12–13.

the Theology of Paul in triple-pack through Halvor Moxnes' *Theology in Conflict: Studies in Paul's Understanding of God in Romans*, Paul-Gerhard Klumbies' *Die Rede von Gott bei Paulus in ihrem zeitgeschichtlichen Kontext* and Neil G. Richardson's *Paul's Language about God*. Recently Nicholas T. Wright has started an ambitious five-volume series on "Christian origin and the question of God."⁵ Kurt Erlemann's *Das Bild Gottes in den synoptischen Gleichnissen* and Douglas W. Kennard's *The Doctrine of God in Petrine Theology* are, to mention just two, notable monographs apart from a number of articles that explore the understanding of God outside the Pauline corpus.

Since Rudolf Bultmann, Johannine interpretation has moved in the direction of Christology. Hans Conzelmann opens his discussion on Johannine Christology, remarking that it could be said that the whole of Johannine Theology is Christology, though it could equally well be argued that it is soteriology or anthropology.⁶ According to Ernst Käsemann epiphany Christology marks the pivotal point of Johannine Theology. The Christology of the Fourth Evangelist reaches the summit to point to a 'God who walks on the earth' whereby Käsemann contends that Johannine Christology itself becomes Theology.⁷

C. Kingsley Barrett, through two very lively essays, has tried to balance the christological discussion in the Fourth Gospel;⁸ David A. Fennema⁹ and Jerome H. Neyrey's socio-scientific criticism of the Fourth Gospel¹⁰ end up proclaiming Jesus as God! However, venturing through new criticism, namely in literary criticism Gail R. O'Day¹¹ makes an attempt to counter Bultmann's dictum on the Fourth Gospel: 'Jesus as revealer of God reveals

-
- 5 N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: S.P.C.K., 1992).
 - 6 H. Conzelmann, *Grundriß der Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (6th ed., rev. by A. Lindemann; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1997), 373.
 - 7 E. Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the Light of Chapter 17* (trans. G. Krodel; NTL; London: SCM, 1968).
 - 8 C. K. Barrett, "'The Father is Greater than I' (Jn 14:28): Subordinationist Christology in the New Testament," in *Neues Testament und Kirche: Für Rudolf Schnackenburg* (ed. J. Gnllka; Freiburg/Basel: Herder, 1974), 144–59, and his "Christocentric or Theocentric? Observations on the Theological Method of the Fourth Gospel," in *Essays on John* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), 1–18.
 - 9 D. A. Fennema, *Jesus and God according to John: An Analysis of the Fourth Gospel's Father/Son Christology* (Diss. Duke University, Durham, N. C., 1979).
 - 10 J. H. Neyrey, *An Ideology of Revolt: John's Christology in Social-Science Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988).
 - 11 G. R. O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Mode and Theological Claim* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986).

nothing, but that he is the revealer and that the Evangelist in his Gospel presents only the fact (*das Daß*) of revelation without describing its content (*ihr Was*).¹ In O'Day's opinion, not "Was" but "Wie" is the right question that has to be asked to the text. Affirming rightly that the narrative creates and communicates revelation, and that the locus of revelation lies in the biblical text and in the world created by the words of the text, she however comes to the thesis that the narrative itself is revelation! Finally we are not left with anything more than what Bultmann has already pointed to: a narrative and a Jesus—the revealer, as O'Day asks the reader to imbibe the revelation of Jesus through imaginative participation in the text.

Marianne M. Thompson's "God's Voice You Have Never Heard, God's Form You Have Never Seen: The Characterization of God in the Gospel of John"¹² is the only direct article published on the theme. Using Robert Alter's scale of characterisation, she analyses the Gospel narrative from the categories: actions of God, appearance, comment by other characters, direct speech, inward speech, and commentary of the narrator, to arrive at the conclusion that God is characterised as the One known through Jesus. But she queries in her conclusion: "if God makes no appearances how is any one to 'see' God at all?" Jesus reproves his audience: "you have never heard God's voice." And she complains: "However if God but seldom speaks, how are they to hear?" And the situation seems to be much the same for the reader. There is no dramatic description of the opening of the heavens, no vision of God, no theophany and only one instance of God speaking. What seems to characterise the plight of Jesus' audience applies to the reader as well. "God's voice you have never heard; God's form you have never seen, or, have you?" Bultmann's dictum seems to stand firm, the revealer reveals nothing, but that he is the revealer!

1.4 Theology in Christological Captivity?

Bultmann's opinion of 'God language' was very strikingly straightforward: "Es zeigt sich also: will man von Gott reden, so muß man offenbar von sich

12 M. M. Thompson, "God's Voice You Have Never Heard, God's Form You Have Never Seen: The Characterization of God in the Gospel of John," *Semeia* 63 (1993): 177–204.

selbst reden."¹³ Although Bultmann insisted on theological anthropology, that God and man ought to always be spoken of/held together, the outcome of his Theology was a rather unilateral concentration on 'man.' Moxnes' criticism is credible. New Testament writers do not speak about 'man' in general, but speak of people, 'God's elected people' in a certain span and specific time.¹⁴ Indeed in the New Testament the interaction of the people of God with the 'other people,' their cultural/socio-political interaction, and their experience with people, with or without God, create and develop the God-language.

Especially in the last few decades, since the Christian community has learnt to take its neighbours of faith seriously, inter-religious dialogue has opened our eyes to the bare fact that the 'Theology' stands close beside in our every interaction with our neighbours of other faiths. The language used, the very attitudes, exclusive/inclusive rhetoric not only create, but portray who our God is! "Love your neighbour" becomes the revelation command as it shows explicitly which God you belong to.

Moreover the christocentric approach to the New Testament and the exported christocentric theological system of the West have proclaimed 'God Jesus' in the religiously pluralistic societies. Thus the young missionary churches have (mis)understood the two nature doctrine or the teaching of Trinity, giving way to a Christo-theological system. In becoming increasingly christocentric the church has pushed itself to the verge of (indeed) christomonism! In the dialogue situations with the neighbours of our faith we strive for a christological approach instead of a theocentric one, with the fear of failing to uphold the uniqueness of Jesus, we in fact shy away from speaking of the unique God. Today *God* has become a captive of Christology. To liberate God from the church's christological captivity, in fact to liberate our language of God, the time has come to re-read, to re-hear the New Testament witnesses in their struggle to liberate the God-language from Judaism's racial/political Theology. In the Old Testament the question of God was distinctly socio-political. Their belief in God gave Israel its social, religious and political identity. Their God-language did dictate and mould Israel's relationship with its neighbours.

The Fourth Gospel in fact reflects a sociological/theological struggle of a community for an authentic theological identity. It shows how the

13 R. Bultmann, "Welchen Sinn hat es, von Gott zu reden?," in *Glauben und Verstehen: Gesammelte Aufsätze*, vol. I (9th ed.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1993), 28.

14 H. Moxnes, *Theology in Conflict: Studies in Paul's Understanding of God in Romans* (NovTSup 53; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 5.

community was involved in a tense, but rather creative theological debate not only with its neighbours of faith (inter-community), but also among its members (intra-community), among those who wished its demise, and those who wished to give it a gracious hearing. It reflects the attempts of a community's struggle towards formulating a Christology that is both credible, and faithful to its Theology

1.5 Travails of a Theological Quest—Compositional History of the Fourth Gospel

Wayne A. Meeks believes that in the Fourth Gospel we encounter a theological/ sociological struggle of a small group of believers isolated over against 'the world' that belongs intrinsically to the below, identifying with the man from heaven. The myth 'the man' functions both as a challenge and vindication of its theo-logical existence, as the group separated itself/was forced out from the social reality into an exclusive and totalistic community. Meeks opines that the development of a language and a set of symbols peculiar to itself reinforced its exclusive outlook.¹⁵ The question one should ask then is: does the theo-logical quest lead to isolation? Or did the fact that it was a sociological minority consciously force the community to lose its theological direction, to become christocentric thereby marginalising it to society's periphery and finally to its break-up?

D. Moody Smith too detects the sense of exclusiveness and a sharp delineation of the community from the world.¹⁶ R. Alan Culpepper seeks to understand the Johannine community in terms of a 'school' and the Gospel as a 'letter,' a product of study, teaching, interpretation, and writing. He argues that the synagogal opposition spurred the study of the Scriptures and the interpretation of the traditions about Jesus in the Johannine community were for use against the Jews. Thus the 'school' developed a sectarian conscience.¹⁷

15 W. A. Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," in *The Interpretation of John* (ed. J. Ashton; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 141–73.

16 D. M. Smith, *Johannine Christianity: Essays on its Setting, Sources, and Theology* (Columbia, S. C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1984), 1–36—an essay originally published in a shorter form in *NTS* 21 (1976): 222–48 under the title "Johannine Christianity. Some Reflections on its Character and Delineation."

17 R. A. Culpepper, *The Johannine School: An Evaluation of the Johannine-School Hypothesis Based on an Investigation of the Nature of Ancient Schools* (SBLDS 26; Missoula,

The studies of Smith and Culpepper portray the dangers of a theological enterprise if undertaken to be exclusive. Was the sectarian consciousness that the scholars point out, a product of exclusive Christology? Could it be possible to detect the community undertaking a theological correction in the Gospel to save what was to be saved, or to arrange a co-existence of christo-centric exclusivists and theocentric universalists?

Among numerous composition theories¹⁸ J. Louis Martyn,¹⁹ Georg Richter²⁰ and Marie-Émile Boismard²¹ make the Theology of the community a deciding factor, as the Gospel came into existence²² after much editorial and redactional work.

Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975). In his dissertation he discusses and compares Johannine activity with other schools.

- 18 See W. Wilkens, *Die Entstehungsgeschichte des vierten Evangeliums* (Zollikon: Evangelischer Verlag, 1958), esp. 92–122, 127–64, 171–74; W. Langbrandtner, *Weltferner Gott oder Gott der Liebe: Der Ketzerstreit in der johanneischen Kirche; eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung mit Berücksichtigung der koptisch-gnostischen Texte aus Nag-Hammadi* (BBET 6; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1977); R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John* (2 vols.; AB 29.29A; Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1966–1970), 1:xxiv–xxxix; B. Lindars, *Behind the Fourth Gospel* (London: S.P.C.K., 1971), chapters 2 and 3, esp. 13–18, 38–78, and his *The Gospel of John* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1972), 46–54; W. Schmithals, *Johannesevangelium und Johannesbriefe* (BZNW 64; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1992).
- 19 See J. L. Martyn, “Glimpses into the History of the Johannine Community. From its Origin through the Period of its Life in which the Fourth Gospel was Composed,” in *L’Évangile de Jean* (ed. M. de Jonge; BETL 44; Leuven: University Press, 1977), 149–75, and his *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (2nd ed.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1979).
- 20 Georg Richter, “Präsentische und futurische Eschatologie im 4. Evangelium,” in *Gegenwart und kommendes Reich: Schülergabe Anton Vögtle zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. P. Fiedler & D. Zeller; SBB 6; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1975), 117–52. For an English summary and evaluation see A. J. Mattill Jr., “Johannine Communities Behind the Fourth Gospel: Georg Richter’s Analysis,” *TS* 38 (1977): 294–315.
- 21 I could not read M.-É. Boismard’s *L’Évangile de Jean* (Paris: Cerf, 1977) for want of French knowledge, but could read a summary of his theory in R. E. Brown’s *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 178–79, and read the English translation of “*The Evaluation of Christology*” in his *Moses or Jesus: An Essay in Johannine Christology* (trans. B. T. Viviano; Minneapolis: Fortress, and Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 127–33. See also J. Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 82–86.
- 22 K. Wengst in *Bedrängte Gemeinde und verherrlichter Christus* (3rd ed.; Munich: Kaiser, 1990) also argues for a dialectic between the life and struggles of a community and its theological reflections.

For Martyn 'the christological-theological debate with the Jewish Synagogue' plays the decisive role, as the Gospel refers to the community's theological perspective! Richter detects the tension between the proponents of 'low Christology' and 'high Christology' within the community, and the Gospel for him in its finished form is the work of a monotheistic mediator, a theologian! Boismard sees the implication of the Son-Logos-Preexistent Christology in the Theology of the community. The final redaction for him reflects the community's attempt to react to the apparent dangers of theologising Jesus as God and its theo-logical consequence.

Though Martyn's hypothesis is of profound value to Johannine research, his limiting of the Johannine community to Jewish Christians, and interpreting the Gospel Theology in the light of the Synagogue excommunication limits the effects of the hypothesis. Richter, ascribing the christological developments to 'inner community theologising dynamic,' and Boismard, transporting the final publication of the Gospel to Ephesus, thereby indicating a geographical shift to a sociological environment from an original Jewish background and a more primitive Christology to a Gentile setting and a higher Christology, are the strong points of the respective hypotheses.

Four issues stand out relevant for our discussion:

- a) The Fourth Gospel is a product of a long theological quest of a complex Johannine community.
- b) The Theology of the community did not have a uniform coded structure! The community allowed 'theological freedom' (a sect will/could not have). The theological discussions basically motivated and catalysed the creative interaction between the basic community and new entrants (Samaritans? Hellenists?).
- c) The Theology of the community needed corrections, explanations and interpretations, as the christological evaluation catalysed theological tension within and without that are closely associated with identity issues and the community's environment.
- d) Negatively the Fourth Gospel is an example of how contextual theologies, if we do not consider their theo-logical implications, could make/break communities. The Fourth Gospel is an example for the instance of how exclusive christology if not held within the universal parenthood of God could send destructive ripples and distort peace in the wider society.

1.6 Theologising History – Historicity of the Fourth Gospel

The genius of the Fourth Evangelist is well attested by the way he creatively shapes his narrative Theology, his Gospel. In the Fourth Gospel we encounter a Johannine Jesus speaking Johannine language. The community's faith expression finds authenticity in Jesus' words. Martyn has interpreted the Fourth Gospel as a two-level drama—on the primary level it expresses the bits of Christian traditions concerning the historical life of Jesus of Nazareth. This provides a backdrop for the secondary level which expresses in slightly disguised fashion the contextual situation of the Evangelist. In such a situation the Fourth Gospel is a complex intermingling of two time periods and historical situations. Jesus is at once the traditional Jesus of the Christian community's heritage and the contemporary Johannine missionary. The opponents of Jesus are at once both Jewish leaders of Palestine in the early 1st century, contemporary to the historical Jesus, and Jewish protagonists of the Evangelist's own day. Martyn finds in the Fourth Gospel a dynamic, creative, contextual theological interpretation of the Jesus tradition by the Johannine community.²³

As a document of faith views history from the perspective of faith, the history that the Fourth Gospel presents is included in the history of supra-historical faith. The scholarly world today increasingly agrees that there is little actual history in the Fourth Gospel. The new quest for the historical Jesus completely neglects Johannine presentation from consideration. Even attempts to find the sources behind the Fourth Gospel are now limited to the 'Sign Source' theory.²⁴ There is, however, a renewed interest in searching for 'Synoptic' parallels, although Percival Gardner-Smith, R. Bultmann and Charles Harold Dodd have long back declared the Fourth Gospel's indepen-

23 J. L. Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*. Cf. C. L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel: Issues and Commentary* (Leicester: Apollos, 2001).

24 See R. T. Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and its Predecessor: From Narrative Source to Present Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988); W. Nicol, *The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel: Tradition and Redaction* (NovTSup 32; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972); U. C. von Wahlde, *The Earliest Version of John's Gospel: Recovering the Gospel of Signs* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1989); R. Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (21st ed.; KEK 2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986); J. Becker, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (2 vols.; 3rd ed.; ÖTK 4/1–2; Gütersloh: Mohn, 1991); R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John* (trans. C. Hastings, et al.; 3 vols.; London: Burns and Oates, 1968–1980).

dence of the Synoptics. The Leuven School led by Frans Neiryneck defends the position that the Fourth Evangelist knew, and was dependent on the three Synoptic Gospels.²⁵ Gardner-Smith is inclined to propose that the Fourth Evangelist must have been dependent on the Synoptic Gospels at least for its genre, particularly as it relates to the origin of the Gospels.²⁶ These on the other hand point out the Johannine drawing from early Christian heritage, but reworking it to contextualise the Jesus tradition for his community, thereby rendering the identity of 'source' affiliation beyond recognition.

The Fourth Evangelist uses his own creative hermeneutic. To be effective he needs to receive tradition and interpret it, in the process of which the time and horizon of the event, and interpretation merge. The Fourth Evangelist builds bridges between the time intervals and the distant horizons through the mode of symbols, teaching and remembering. When such an interpretive bridge is built, and time and horizon are merged, the past is not annulled but actualised for the present! The past is present and preserved in its entirety to make a past event a present reality, whereby the historical Jesus becomes visible in the kerygma of the community.

The Johannine Jesus, the proclaimer himself becomes the proclaimed. He steps out of mere historicity and addresses the community of the Evangelist in person. For the Fourth Gospel kerygma Jesus thus ceases to be a figure of the past, or even a past figure whose influence has extended into the present, but becomes a present reality. Here the Fourth Gospel uses history not as a means of confining Jesus within the set limits of his historical life, but makes it serve as an anchor for the factual reality of God's self-revelation within history. Thereby the Fourth Evangelist theologises history to interpret the breaking-in of God's eschaton!

25 See F. Neiryneck, "John and the Synoptics," in *L'Évangile de Jean* (ed. M. de Jonge; BETL 44; Leuven: University Press, 1977), 73–106, and for a survey of the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics see D. M. Smith, *John among the Gospels: The Relationship in Twentieth-Century Research* (2nd ed.; Columbia, S. C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2001).

26 P. Gardner-Smith, *St. John and the Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938).

1.7 Theological Re-Reading of the Fourth Gospel—Towards Understanding the Johannine Exegesis of God

To attempt the ‘characterisation of God’ in the Fourth Gospel, the study of the titles used for God such as ὁ πατήρ or ὁ θεός reduce God to abstract ideas and categories to say God is love, light, truth. It is not in the title or in the abstract categories, but in the text context that theological thinking enfolds and is expressed. The text context is not merely a linguistic one, it reflects the socio-cultural context. By way of exploring human experience, and understanding the concrete community context which created the ‘text contexts,’ we encounter not only in the explicit theological language, but also in silent implicit symbols, ‘the God’ of the community—the Johannine exegesis of God!

We approach the Johannine text context in order to explore the Johannine understanding of God with the following questions:

- a) How does the Fourth Evangelist characterise God? What language does he use to characterise God? What is the relationship of his christological language to his God-language? What kind of interaction is seen between Christology and Theology in the Fourth Gospel?
- b) Does the Johannine God-language benefit from, get enriched and enlarged through its dialogue/conflict with its pluralistic environment?
- c) Is the Evangelist theocentric or christocentric? How does he expect us to approach and interpret his Gospel narrative?
- d) What are the implications of Theology in the community’s identity, existence, authority and legitimacy in its struggle for identity and existence?

In attempting an exegesis of God in the Fourth Gospel, one should clarify at the outset the all important christological question who Jesus is. Is Jesus God as reflected in Thomas’ confession of the resurrected Jesus? We begin our exegetical exploration into the Theology of the Fourth Gospel with a close scrutiny of the Johannine passion narrative and indeed its Christology as to find the key to interpret Thomas’ ‘My Lord, my God.’ Here we begin to perceive Johannine christological language and God-language interacting to elucidate each other, and are naturally confronted with the question of the relationship of ‘the man’ Jesus to God. The Fourth Gospel revels in the discussion of the relationship of God to ‘the man’ Jesus, in whom the community has seen God’s mighty acts and the sign of the resurrection, and depicts the relationship by means of a distinctively Johannine Father-Son imagery.

Exactly at this point begins the community's theological conflict with the Synagogue. The Johannine Theology gets new interpretation in the conflict context. We concentrate our energies to attempt to understand the community's theological answer to the questions that the synagogue hurled at it—Is Jesus equal to God? Is Jesus pre-existent? Are the Father and Jesus one? The Evangelist tries his ultimate to inform the reader, as he portrays the departing Jesus praying to his Father that Jesus is theocentric. Here we have tried to emulate the narrative exegesis in order to allow the farewell prayer itself to open up before the reader the Johannine Jesus' characterisation of God.

The Prologue of the Fourth Gospel is the summit of theo-logical language! Our theological exegesis of it is an attempt to understand the Fourth Gospel's presentation of the incarnate Logos as the historical Theophany, where the original christological hymn has been tuned into an editorial masterpiece to dictate the Gospel's perspective, that Christology is the exegesis of Theology. Isolated and sidelined in spite of its efforts to clarify its Theology in its conflict with the Synagogue, the Johannine community now has no option but to assert itself.

Socially isolated, yet enriched in its theological insights, the community enters into a creative dialogue with considerate Jews and the Samaritans to clarify how its Theology envisages its role with those who stand outside the community. Our exegetical interpretation attempts to identify the dialogue dynamics of a theological conversation between those who do not share the same theological affirmations. The Johannine community's dialogue with its neighbours did create/bring into the fore-front questions regarding legitimacy and authority to decide, the community's understanding of how God authenticates its witness, and how the community can perceive the authenticity of God's continual revelation. Our re-reading of the Paraclete passages is an attempt to understand the community's theological construct, the Paraclete that lent authenticity and legitimacy to the community's theological endeavours and made its theological language clear and precise.

Chapter Two

Is Jesus God?

Thomas' Confession in the Light of the Passion Narrative

2.1 Introduction

Thomas' confession of Jesus "my Lord, my God" is considered to be the christological summit of New Testament Theology. In the whole of the New Testament writings it is unique, as nowhere but here Jesus is referred to explicitly as God! Generations of theologians who naturally read the Fourth Gospel from the perspective of the Trinitarian Doctrine, a later theological development in the history of the church, interpret Thomas' confession either as a confirmation of, or the seed of the Trinitarian understanding of God! Normally, since the narrative block explaining the appearance of the risen Jesus to the disciples with Thomas stands at the very end of the Fourth Gospel (chapter 21 being a later addition) interpreters intensively argue that Thomas' confession of Jesus holds the key required to interpret and understand Johannine Christology.

Without undermining the confessional character of Thomas' "My Lord, my God" one ought to risk an enquiry into the impact of such a faith affirmation on the Theology of the Johannine community. What did this narrative tradition actually intend to convey? Did it represent the 'theological perspective of a cross section of the community' in tension with the overall christological affirmations of the community? How did the community accommodate this narrative tradition in its evolving theological system? Did the community allow the whole of its Theology to be interpreted in terms of it? Or did it find the necessity to interpret Thomas' confession in terms of the community's Theology, especially in view of its distinctive Theology of the passion and resurrection of Jesus?

The Thomas pericope has no Synoptic parallel. It may be that the Thomas episode was either a Johannine construct, or an independent tradition floating in the Johannine community. It makes use of the 'doubt motif' reported in the Synoptic narratives (cf. Matt 28:17; Luke 24:11, 21ff., 37-38,

41) and the physical demonstration of the risen Jesus to overcome the doubt of the disciples (Luke 24:39–41). Nevertheless it builds upon the distinctly Johannine introduction of the Thomas persona in John 14:16 and 14:5, and refers to the characteristically Johannine pierced πλευρά of Jesus (19:34a). And most interestingly, the Thomas pericope in attempting a logical development from v. 23 excludes Thomas from the scene of the bestowal of the Spirit upon the disciples reported in vv. 19–23. But as such the passage with vv. 19–23 presupposes the presence of all disciples, and scarcely foresees the absence of a disciple, as the bestowal of the Spirit and granting of authority to forgive sins, applies to them as a whole. Used independently the pericope must have been making certain theological overtones in the community.

2.2 Thomas' Confession—“My Lord, My God”

Thomas' “unless I see” (v. 25) has always been interpreted as doubt and perhaps too easily characterised as moral failure on the disciple's part. Herbert Kohler suggests that Thomas had a very legitimate doubt, as he does not doubt the report of his brothers that they had seen the Lord, but in his mind their seeing is not unequivocal, and he would believe if the risen one were clearly identifiable with the crucified Jesus. In Kohler's view, by dramatising the theme of doubt in the character of Thomas, the Evangelist wants to point out the danger of that faith which can too quickly attach itself to the risen one, and thus exchange the powerlessness of the crucified for the omnipotence of the exalted victor over death, since that faith appears more drawn to the all powerful God than to the powerless crucified.¹

The Evangelist's particular mention of Jesus' invitation to touch him, especially the wounds on his hands and the spear-pierced side (probably healed marks, not open wounds!) is to make clear to the reader that the manifesting risen Jesus is the crucified one himself. The basis of Kohler's observation lies probably in his taking for granted that the risen one is revered as ‘God.’ The critical narrative reading of the text plainly says Thomas had not believed the very fact of the resurrection! Note his emphatic οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω. Therefore, when the risen Jesus comes and stands in the

1 H. Kohler, *Kreuz und Menschwerdung im Johannesevangelium: Ein exegetisch-hermeneutischer Versuch zur johanneischen Kreuzestheologie* (ATANT 72; Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1987), 175ff.

midst of his disciples greeting them Shalom and asking Thomas φέρε τὸν δάκτυλον σου ὧδε, καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖρας μου καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρα σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευράν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός he does not venture into tangible verification, but immediately believes in the resurrection of Jesus. He becomes ecstatic, and spontaneously confesses—ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου.

Some possible interpretive helps to understand the Thomas confession are the following:

- a) The collocation of κύριος and θεός appears in Gentile literature, among other sources in an Egyptian inscription of the year 24 B.C. which speaks of τῷ θεῷ καὶ κυρίῳ Σοκροπαίῳ. In the Caesar cult, "*Dominus et deus noster*" was well known to have been an imperial title much affected by Domitian (Suetonius, *Domitian* 13) in A.D. 81–96. It has been suggested that the Fourth Gospel used these for Jesus in order to repudiate the emperor cult.²
- b) Raymond Brown discerns in Thomas' words a combination of a covenantal confession ("you are my God" – Hos 2:25) and a baptismal profession/confession of faith—Jesus is the Lord.³ John Suggit drafts a liturgical scene in John 20:19–29 as follows: the gathering of the believers on the first day of the week, the Lord's day (vv. 19, 26), the presence of Christ (vv. 19, 26), the blessing (vv. 19, 21, 26), the coming of the Spirit (v. 22), the absolution (v. 23), the confession of faith (v. 28) and the benediction (v. 29).⁴ In his opinion "my Lord, my God" is the liturgical response of a worshipping community to Jesus who confronts and challenges them to recognise him in the Word. C. K. Barrett thinks the Thomas confession might have had a liturgical origin, or at least setting, whereas the common assumption is that the veneration of Jesus as κύριος in a worship context led to the expression of belief in the Deity of Christ in the early church.⁵ C. H. Dodd observes that in Thomas' confession we have the Johannine community's struggle to express the

2 See R. Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 538; C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (2nd ed.; London: S.P.C.K., 1978), 573, and G. R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC 36; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1987), 391.

3 See R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:1047–48.

4 See J. Suggit, *The Sign of Life: Studies in the Fourth Gospel and the Liturgy of the Church* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications, 1993), 150–57.

5 See C. K. Barrett, *op. cit.*, 573.

identification of the historical Jesus $\delta\ \kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$ with the incarnate Logos, the risen Christ $\delta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$.⁶

- c) The Septuagint frequently renders כִּי־יְהוָה הֵוָה as $\kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$. This combination usually occurs in worship, prayer, confession contexts— $\kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \epsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ (3 times),⁷ $\kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \epsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$ (20 times),⁸ $\kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \epsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \eta\ \mu\omega\ \nu$ (14 times),⁹ $\kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \omicron\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \sigma\omicron\upsilon$ (once),¹⁰ also frequent are expressions of $\kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \omicron\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$,¹¹ and $\kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \omicron\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \eta\ \mu\omega\ \nu$,¹² and those instances where $\sigma\upsilon$ ¹³ or $\sigma\upsilon\ \epsilon\iota$ or $\epsilon\iota\ \sigma\upsilon$ ¹⁴ accompanies a phrase such as $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$ or $\kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \omicron\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \eta\ \mu\omega\ \nu$. The closest Septuagint parallel is Ps 34:23— $\delta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \delta\ \kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$. The inverted order in the Fourth Gospel may be due to the frequency of $\kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \epsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$ in the Septuagint. Another close parallel is Ps 5:3, which has the vocational $\delta\ \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \delta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$. If we closely examine Ps 34:23 in the Septuagint rendering— $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\epsilon\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\rho\theta\eta\tau\iota, \kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \epsilon, \kappa\alpha\iota\ \pi\acute{\rho}\omicron\sigma\chi\epsilon\varsigma\ \tau\eta\ \kappa\ \rho\iota\sigma\epsilon\iota\ \mu\omicron\upsilon, \delta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \delta\ \kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon, \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\eta\ \nu\ \delta\iota\ \kappa\eta\ \nu\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$, we see that it has not translated the second verb very accurately. It means ‘awake’ rather than ‘attend’ (the word is נִשְׁרָבֵן). If the phrase that Thomas uses was originally used in the Aramaic speaking community, this might have led some Christians to see a prophecy here, the call to arise and awake fit very well in a post-resurrection situation. Moreover the Psalm ends on a joyful note (v. 27c, d: $\text{Μεγαλυνθήτω } \delta\ \kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\ \omicron\varsigma\ \omicron\iota\ \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\ \nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma\ \tau\eta\ \nu\ \epsilon\iota\ \rho\eta\ \nu\eta\ \nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \delta\omicron\upsilon\ \lambda\omicron\upsilon\ \alpha\upsilon\ \tau\omicron\upsilon$). The word ‘Shalom’ (שָׁלוֹם) is rendered in the Septuagint with $\epsilon\iota\ \rho\eta\ \nu\eta$, the word which Jesus uses to greet his disciples.¹⁵

6 See C. H. Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 430–31.

7 Ps 9:33; 85:15; 87:2.

8 2 Kgdms (2 Sam) 15:31; 3 Kgdms (1 Kgs) 17:21; Est 4:17; Tobit 3:11; Ps 7:2, 4, 7; 9:33; 12:4; 29:3, 13; 34:24; 37:16; 39:6; 85:12; 103:1; 108:26; Jonah 2:7; Hab 1:12; Isa 25:1.

9 4 Kgdms (2 Kgs) 19:19; 1 Chr 29:16; 2 Chr 14:10–11; 20:12; Ps 98:8; 105:47; Isa 26:12, 13; Bar 2:12, 19, 27; Dan 9:15, 17.

10 Ps 80:11.

11 Ps 143:1; Jer 38:18 among others.

12 2 Esd 9:9; Ps 98:9.

13 Jer 38:18; Bar 2:15; 3:6.

14 2 Macc 1:27; Ps 15:2; 96:9; 117:28; 139:7; 142:10; Hos 2:25; Isa 44:17; Jer 3:22.

15 See A. T. Hanson, *The Prophetic Gospel: A Study of John and the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 232ff.

Even then, interpreting ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου is not easy. Edwin Abbott suggested that it may be translated as "my Lord is *also my God*."¹⁶ According to him the omission of ἔστι might have been prompted by the Evangelist's desire to force his readers to think out the full import of the confession, while the emphatic καί (also) is frequent in the Fourth Gospel.¹⁷ It may also be translated as an exclamation—and Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord and my God." It could be that Thomas was exclaiming and expressing his astonishment and wonder, and praising God for the sign of the resurrection of Jesus, meaning—"Praise be to my Lord and my God!"¹⁸

The most common translation is as addressed to Jesus: Thomas answered and said to him, "My lord and my God."¹⁹ ἀπεκρίθη Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ implies a response to Jesus on the part of Thomas—"he spoke up."²⁰ Given the context and presence of ἀπεκρίθη, αὐτῷ indicates that Thomas is reacting to Jesus' invitation in v. 27. As far as ὁ κύριος is concerned, although the pre-Christian Papyri seem to lack the instance of this 'enallage' of case,²¹ the articular nominative of address is an established New Testament usage.²² It

-
- 16 See E. A. Abbott, *Johannine Grammar* (London: A. and C. Black, 1906), § 2049. He contends that κύριε should have been used if the vocative had been intended. For him the instance LXX-Ps 34:24 is explicable by its special context and with that one exceptional use ὁ κύριος is never vocational in the Septuagint. In classical Greek vocational nominative is: a) accompanied by οὗτος or σύ, b) found only in poetry, and c) while using κύριε freely the Papyri never have a vocative ὁ κύριος.
- 17 *Ibid.*, §§ 2050–2051.
- 18 As proposed according to Theodore of Mopsuestia which was proscribed at the 5th ecumenical council in A.D. 553—see G. R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 385, and M. J. Harris, *Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of theos in Reference to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 108–109.
- 19 W. Bauer, et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 357b; W. Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium* (3rd ed.; HNT 6; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1933), 222; E. C. Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel* (2 vols.; ed. Francis Noel Davey; London: Faber and Faber, 1940), 2:549; R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:1026, 1047; L. Morris, *The Gospel according to John* (NICNT 4; London: Morgan & Scott, 1971), 853; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 385; R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3:333; B. Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 615 among others.
- 20 This phrase probably represents the biblical Aramaic ܩܕܝܫܐ as in Dan 2:5, 8, 26; 3:14; 5:17 or the Hebrew קדשׁ . . . יי. See Bauer, et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 93c, and F. Büchsel, in *TDNT* 3:945.
- 21 J. H. Moulton and N. Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*. Vol. 3: *Syntax* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1963), 34.
- 22 *BDF*, § 147—the New Testament can even say ὁ θεός, ὁ πατήρ in which arthrous Semitic vocative is being reproduced by a nominative with article.

is not easy to decide and conclude that the Evangelist through Thomas' statement exhorts his readers to the Deity of Jesus. C. F. D. Moule while writing about the problem of John 20:28 in his idiom book writes, "it is to be noted that a substantive in nominative case used in a vocative sense, and followed by a possessive could not be anarthrous," but adds that the article before θεός may not, therefore, be significant.²³

Moreover, before we decide on the meaning of Thomas' statement we must ascertain the significance of μου. The presence of μου gives Thomas' statement a personal and confessional character. It is remarkable that μου and not ἡμῶν is found, since the other disciples were also present. Nor does Thomas say σύ εἶ ὁ θεός. Μου places Thomas' confession in perspective and works as an interpretive, exegetical help. The Evangelist's use of μου exhorts us not to absolutise the perception and not to use the confession as a universal acclamation of the deity of Jesus. Μου emphatically converts the perception into faith and personalises Thomas' confession, making supreme faith an act of personal experience in the language of adoring devotion.

There has always been a tendency to interpret Thomas' confession "My Lord and my God" with John 1:1; cf. 1:18 "and the Word was God," and to ascribe the risen Jesus as God. For such interpreters the risen Lord becomes the repudiation of the opposition's angry enquiring in 5:17—"he makes himself God"—and at 10:33—"you a mere man claim to be God?" In his "Überlegungen zu Joh. 20:24–29," J. Kremer rightly observes that "als Anrede hat das Bekenntnis »mein Herr und mein Gott« zwar nicht den Charakter einer Definition der Gottheit Christi (»wahrer Gott«) . . ." ²⁴ Does the Fourth Gospel ascribe absolute divinity to the risen Jesus? Does it propose ditheism? Why then, does the Evangelist two verses later not recommend his readers to believe Jesus as God, but just exhorts them to believe that Jesus is (only) the Christ, the Son of God?

Before attempting an answer to the above questions the interpreter should come to conclusions of certain issues raised below: Does the Fourth Evangelist's passion/resurrection narrative narrate the passion of a docetic Jesus whose God identity only becomes revealed at his resurrection? How

23 C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 116.

24 J. Kremer, "»Nimm deine Hand und lege sie in meine Seite!«. Exegetische, hermeneutische und bibeltheologische Überlegungen zu Joh. 20, 24–29," in *The Four Gospels, 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (ed. F. van Segbroeck, et al.; 3 vols.; BETL 100; Leuven: University Press, 1992), 3:2167.

does the Evangelist characterise 'Jesus' in his passion/resurrection narratives? What does the Evangelist convey through this Thomas episode? What is his purpose in placing the Thomas episode at the climax of his passion/resurrection narratives? Since by placing the pericope as a climax to both his passion and resurrection narratives, and as an immediate prelude to his confessed purpose of writing the Gospel, the Fourth Evangelist exhorts us for a contextual interpretive exegesis of the Thomas pericope. A grammatical analysis of the sentence and search for a better translation and thereby a better interpretation of the confession cannot do justice to the Evangelist's intentions, purpose and goal. Therefore, we propose a contextual exegetical exploration of the distinctive/special features of the passion/resurrection narrative and his stated purpose (20:30–31) of writing his Gospel in our attempt to understand the Thomas confession "my Lord, my God."

2.3 Self-Giving Jesus—Composure and Sovereignty in the Midst of Betrayal and Arrest

The arrest scene at the Olive Groove which begins the passion narrative in the Fourth Gospel has no Synoptic parallel as to vv. 4–9 in its narrative structure. The passage dramatises the garden scene, as Jesus himself receives the enemy gang asking them whom they seek, as a result of which the gang loses its nerve. Finally at the end, when Jesus was arrested, the Evangelist brings in Peter's sword-slashing.

The most striking feature of this narration is the threefold repetition of ἐγώ εἰμι here in vv. 5, 6 and 8. It has been contended that the Fourth Evangelist uses this phrase in double meaning. On the one hand in vv. 5 and 8, when the soldiers and officers who have come to arrest Jesus tell him that they are seeking Jesus of Nazareth, he replies saying ἐγώ εἰμι. It is clear that here ἐγώ εἰμι is used as a simple self-identification formula,²⁵ meaning 'I am he, Jesus of Nazareth whom you are seeking.' In v. 6 however, the Evangelist narrates the effect of Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι on the soldiers and officers in that "they drew back and fell to the ground."

25 See M. Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 83, and P. B. Harner, *The "I am" of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Johannine Usage and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970), 45.

Is then the phrase ἐγώ εἰμι to be understood absolutely? Is this the way the Fourth Evangelist wishes to express his belief that such an attitude of awe and reverence is the only fitting response to Jesus who is the ἐγώ εἰμι?

Probably the exegetical key lies in vv. 9–11. In v. 9 the Evangelist ponders over a prophetic saying of Jesus—ὅτι οὓς δέδωκάς μοι οὐκ ἀπώλεσα ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐδένα (cf. 6:39; 17:12)—and reflects over its fulfilment. The reflected prophetic saying portrays Jesus as God’s prophet/agent whose disciples/co-workers are God’s gift to him. In v. 11 the Evangelist again brings into the limelight ‘the agent’ role of Jesus as he affirms, “shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?”²⁶ Now one tends to ask: how could then a prophet/God’s agent be the ἐγώ εἰμι — ‘he who he is’?

If one interprets ἐγώ εἰμι in the absolute way only to explain the reaction of the audience, then we have probably a better explanation—Ps 56:10 (LXX 55:10); 27:2. In both instances the Psalmist appeals to God from deadly peril, expresses his confidence in God’s aid. On both occasions the Psalms end with the verse which could well be understood of the resurrection.

LXX
Ps 55:10 ἐπιστρέψουσιν οἱ ἐχθροί μου εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω, ἐν ᾗ ἂν ἡμέρα ἐπικαλέσωμαί σε, ἰδοὺ ἔγνω ὅτι θεός μου εἶ σύ.

(Then my enemies will fall back in the day when I call. This I know, that God is for me . . .)

LXX
Ps 55:14 ὅτι ἐρρύσω τὴν ψυχὴν μου ἐκ θανάτου καὶ τοὺς πόδας μου ἐξ ὀλισθήματος τοῦ εὐαρεστήσαι ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν φωτὶ ζώντων.

(For you have delivered my soul from death, and my feet from falling, so that I may walk before God in the light of life.)

LXX
Ps 26:2 ἐν τῷ ἐγγίξειν ἐπ’ ἐμέ κακούντας τοῦ φαγεῖν τὰς σάρκας μου οἱ θλίβοντές με καὶ οἱ ἐχθροί μου αὐτοὶ ἠσθένησαν καὶ ἔπεσαν

(When evildoers assail me, uttering slanders against me, my adversaries and foes, they shall stumble and fall.)

LXX
Ps 26:13 πιστεύω τοῦ ἰδεῖν τὰ ἀγαθὰ κυρίου ἐν γῆ ζώντων.

(I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!)

The arrest scene at the garden therefore pictures Jesus as the righteous servant/agent of God doing His will, and under His protection. It is He who is in control of the situation, not his enemies. Though he stands alone, he is

26 See the echo of Ps 116:13; the drinking of the cup is an analogy which is also used in the Synoptics.

not alone, God stands by him. The enemies cannot stand before him or touch him, the suffering which the 'servant' Jesus is led to is the 'cup' the Father has given him. Although the soldiers take Jesus captive, they do so only as he gives himself up to them in willing submission. In fact he virtually dictates their actions, thrice identifying himself as the object of their search (vv. 5, 6 and 8), directing that the disciples be released (v. 8), and commanding Peter to permit his arrest (v. 11). The issue is that if these features of victory and sovereignty are any indication of the direction in which the Fourth Evangelist wishes his narrative interpretation of the event to be understood, then it undoubtedly expresses the fact that the righteous Servant of God need not fear, as God protects him (see exegesis of 17:11bff.—in his prayer Jesus affirms his belief in the God who protects).

2.4 Jesus—The Pascal Lamb

In the Johannine passion narrative we hear 'the Lamb of God' motif being echoed at three places. The first indication is found in the scene that portrays Jesus' trial before Pilate. He declares Jesus thrice to be innocent (18:38; 19:4, 6; cf. Exod 12:5). Is this a veiled pointer to the blamelessness of the Pascal lamb? John 19:14 records the time of Pilate's judgement which begins the crucifixion of Jesus. The Johannine narrative's preference for fixing Jesus' crucifixion/death in time sequence clearly emphasises the Evangelist's theological conviction of Jesus himself being the true Pascal Lamb. It appears as though the Evangelist has intentionally altered the Synoptic chronology.²⁷ When the Passover eve happened to fall on Sabbath eve (according to the Fourth Gospel that was exactly the case—Nisan 14th, Friday), the Rabbis interpreted that 'the evening' (of Exod 12:6) begins at noon (6th hour) when the sun begins its decline in order to allow the slaughtering of the large number of lambs required before Sabbath breaks at the evening.²⁸ Thus the Johannine editorial notice at v. 14 brings to the fore the theological reflection

27 The Synoptic chronology records that Jesus was only condemned and executed on the day after the Passover meal—Nisan 15th, Friday.

28 See H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (7 vols.; Munich: C. H. Beck, 1922–1961), 2:836; R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:833; G. Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums* (SNTSMS 22; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 177.

that the true Pascal Lamb of God—Jesus—was on the cross, just at the time when the Pascal lambs were being slaughtered.

The second indication is found in v. 29 where Jesus who himself offers the 'water of life' that stills all thirst, reaches the deepest point of fleshy existence.²⁹ The incident where the sponge was lifted to Jesus' mouth on the hyssop stem appears to be another indication in support of the argument that the Johannine passion narrative presents Jesus as the Pascal Lamb. Purifying power was ascribed to the Hyssop as it was certainly used in cultic sprinkling (cf. Lev 14:6–7; Num 19:6; Ps 50:9), and it was the agent used to apply the blood of the Passover lamb to the door (Exod 12:22). Thus the mention of Hyssop may well be symbolically evocative of Jesus' dying as the Pascal Lamb of the new covenant.³⁰

If we agree on ὑσσώπω as the original reading,³¹ then the Fourth Gospel's deliberate departure from the Markan κάλαμος—the reed lifting the sponge attached to the Hyssop stem even when it lacked the necessary stiffness³² making it therefore ill-suited to lift a heavy wet sponge—is an indication that the Evangelist may have been prompted by the motif of the Passover.³³ Even if one is uncertain to an extent, seen along with v. 14 and v. 36 (see

29 See R. Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 522.

30 R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:930.

31 The reading ὑσσώπω is attested by every major Greek manuscript. One minuscule manuscript 476 reads ὑσσῶ (a javelin), compare the it^b. ff2. n. v use of *perticae* (a pole or long staff). A reading which may be more appropriate in the context, and makes the action more comprehensible has arisen accidentally through haplography with YCCΩΠΠΕΠΙΘΕΝΤΕC being written for YCCΩΠΩΠΠΕΠΙΘΕΝΤΕC. Whereas θ, 829, 1195, 2174 which reads μετὰ χολῆς καὶ ὑσσώπου and an old Latin version which reads merely *cum felle permixtum* both seem to have been influenced by Matt 27:34. See B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (London: United Bible Society, 1975), 253–54.

32 In the Old Testament, Hyssop is referred to as the humblest of shrubs (1 Kgs 4:33), it was very brittle and often grew from the cracks in stone walls which belonged most likely to 'Origanum maru' of the Labrial family, see R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:929–30.

33 See C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 553. Referring to M. Para 12:1 he suggests that perhaps Hyssop was attached to a reed, as such a procedure was used if the Hyssop used for cultic sprinkling was so stubby that the priests' fingertips were in jeopardy of contacting the sacrificial blood or water. But Bultmann is sceptical for, as he says, it is scarcely believable that Jesus should be designated as the Passover lamb through a statement that a sponge with vinegar was stuck on a Hyssop stem (Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 522).

below) a veiled pointer to portray Jesus as the ‘Pascal Lamb’ cannot escape being noticed.

The third indication of the Fourth Evangelist portraying Jesus as the Passover lamb might have been behind the very ironically depicted back-room manoeuvres of the opponents of Jesus even after he died. When the Jews did not wish to have Jesus’ body remain on the cross overnight (John 19:31–32) even as the Passover lamb was not to be left over until the morning (Exod 12:10; Num 9:12), they specifically ask Pilate to have Jesus’ legs broken and the body taken down. The Evangelist reports that the body was lowered, but creates yet another narrative scene to painstakingly inform his readers that ‘no bones were broken.’ The blamelessness of the lamb that already came to the fore during Pilate’s trial is now confirmed through an Old Testament quotation in v. 36. Whether or not this verse is intended to evoke a Pascal allusion depends on the origin of the Old Testament quotation. If it comes from the Pentateuch (LXX: Exod 12:46; Num 9:12), then the Pascal allusion is quite clear. However, if the quotation stems from the Psalter (LXX: Ps 33:21) where God’s protection of the righteous is spoken of, then the Pascal allusion need not be present.

LXX Exod 12:46—ὅστοῦν οὐ συντρίψετε ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ.

LXX Num 9:12—ὅστοῦν οὐ συντρίψουσιν ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ.

John 19:36b—ὅστοῦν οὐ συντριβήσεται αὐτοῦ.

Either of these citations could be sufficiently close to John 19:36b. If our observations, that in the Fourth Gospel’s chronology of the passion Jesus was on the cross just at the time when the Pascal lambs were being slaughtered, and that the Johannine mention of Hyssop at 19:29 might have Pascal connotations are correct, then John 19:36b has Pentateuchal origin and therefore portrays Jesus as Pascal Lamb.

However LXX Ps 33:21 which reads κύριος φυλάσσει πάντα τὰ ὅσῃ αὐτῶν, ἐν ἑξ αὐτῶν οὐ συντριβήσεται and John 19:36b both demonstrate the common passive form of the verb συντριβήσεται, though otherwise we find no word parallels. The Psalm has plural ‘bones’ rather than singular, and the term is not the subject of the passive verb as it is in the Fourth Gospel. Moreover this Psalm is the one in which the faithful Israelite is promised complete immunity from harm in this world. To apply the works of v. 21 to someone who has just been put to death with every circumstance of cruelty would seem outrageous. But with the Evangelist’s penchant for the Psalms in his passion narrative and the LXX Ps 33:21 indicating a reference to the

rescue from eternal death—resurrection—in its last verse, one cannot entirely dismiss the Psalter background of the quotation.³⁴

A meaningful decision in this case may not be a question of either/or, but of both/and. The linguistic considerations show that John 19:36 is/can be better identified with Num 9:12 and Exod 12:36.³⁵ If J. M. Ford's interpretation of 'spear thrust' in 19:34 is correct, then the Levitical rules that the blood of the victim must spurt forth intensifies the Pascal lamb reflection in 19:36.³⁶ It is indeed probable that the primary reference was to the Passover lamb, since Jesus died while it was being carried out and the early Christians must have also treasured LXX Psalm 33, as it is echoed at least eight times in the New Testament.³⁷ It is thanksgiving to God for preserving Jesus' body for the resurrection. The Fourth Gospel might have intended to refer to both the Psalter and the Pentateuch.³⁸

Those who read the Fourth Gospel cannot avoid paying attention to the passion framework which plays a significant role in the Gospel structure.³⁹

-
- 34 See C. H. Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 230–38; J. T. Forestell, *The Word of the Cross: Salvation as Revelation in the Fourth Gospel* (AnBib 57; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1974), 90, n. 32.
- 35 Num 9:12 (Codex Alexandrinus) reads ὅστων οὐ συντρίψεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. See E. D. Freed, *Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John* (NovTSup 11; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), 113, who sees v. 36b echoing Num 9:12. The οὐ corresponds to the singular ὅστων. The phrase יִרְבֵּץ לֹא could be translated as οὐ συντριβήσεται, and the αὐτοῦ of v. 36b is a very acceptable translation of the הוּ of the Masoretic Text. See B. H. Grigsby, "The Cross as an Expiatory Sacrifice in the Fourth Gospel," *JSNT* 15 (1982): 58–59; G. Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannes-evangeliums*, 52–54.
- 36 J. M. Ford, "Mingled Blood—From the Side of Christ: Jn. XIX:34," *NTS* 15 (1969): 337–39. She cites the frequent Rabbinic description of spurting forth רִבַּץ of the Pascal lambs blood—especially on the basis of the Tractate *Oholoth* in the Talmud.
- 37 See A. T. Hanson, *The Prophetic Gospel*, 219–20.
- 38 Bultmann, Barrett, Brown, Lindars and Schnackenburg (see their commentaries) all see both citations as relevant and coherent. Bultmann, Lindars and Schnackenburg think that the Fourth Evangelist's source understood the reference as a quotation from the Psalter and that the Evangelist must have been applying it to the 'Pascal lamb' citation from the Pentateuch.
- 39 W. Wilkens' thesis indicates that the Fourth Gospel evolved from, and still reflects an original Passover framework, see his *Die Entstehungsgeschichte des vierten Evangeliums*. W. A. Meeks proposes that 'Moses' served as a model for the Evangelist's prophet-king Christology and that the Johannine 'new Moses' accomplishes the new Exodus, see his *The Prophet-King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology* (NovTSup 14; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967). R. T. Fortna thinks that the frequent references to the Passover in the Fourth Gospel are meant to remind the reader of the