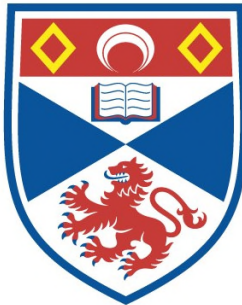


**THE APOCALYPTIC-ESCHATOLOGICAL DRAMA OF JESUS
IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL**

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE JOHANNINE CHRISTOLOGY AND
ESCHATOLOGY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JOHN 12.20-36**

Takanori Kobayashi

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



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PhD Thesis
submitted to
the School of Divinity
The University of St Andrews

1998

Takanori Kobayashi



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Preface

This thesis has come to its completion through the turbulent and yet most fruitful period in my life. During that period it has accompanied me all over the world, starting from St Andrews, Scotland, passing through parts of the European continent, with visits to the African Continent, the Holy Land and the USA. It is literally a product of my odyssey to my homeland in the Far East.

Recent years have seen a great number of studies dedicated to the Johannine literature and theology. One may feel hesitant to present yet another thesis in this well-cultivated field. A curious turn of events has led me to pursue this topic in the Johannine Christology and Eschatology, which was not necessarily my original interest for a doctoral research. Yet this proved to be a most challenging and most rewarding theme for some years, leading me into a marvel of the Fourth Gospel and its message.

I would like to thank Professor Ronald A. Piper, my mentor and friend, for his patient guidance and constant trust in his student's ability. He taught me what it means to write a thesis. I must also thank Mrs. Faith Piper for her help and friendship shown to my wife and me. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to my examiners, Professor Martinus de Boer and Professor Richard Bauckham, for their critical and yet constructive comments on various parts of the thesis, which both helped me to sharpen my argument and saved me from many errors. I am very grateful both to Professor R.McL. Wilson for his helpful comments on one of the difficult chapters of the thesis and to Dr David Calvert for his proofreading.

My stay at St Andrews was blessed with many good friends, all of whose names cannot be mentioned here due to the limited space. I am grateful especially to the Rev. Lawson Brown and Mrs. Sheila Brown and the congregation of St Leonard's Church, who were always ready to help in our need. The graduate community of St Mary's College, comprising students both from home and abroad, provided me with not only stimulating theological discussions but also a lot of fun and personal encouragement.

I would also like to thank Suginami Presbyterian Church, the Tobu First Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Japan and the Tokyo Christian Institute for their generous support during the years of my studying abroad.

Last of all and not least of all, I would like to express my heart-felt thanks to Miyako, my wife, who bore the most stressful task of being a PhD student's wife for so many years. Her presence encouraged me to pursue my work, and her smile cheered me up especially during the days of my illness towards the end of our stay in Scotland. I dedicate this thesis to her.

Advent, 1998

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis we will explore the question of Jesus' revelation as a central motif of the Johannine Christology from the perspectives of literary criticism, Jewish apocalypticism and Graeco-Roman dramatic literature. In particular, we will attempt to solve the riddle of the visions developed in John 12.20-36, by answering the fragmentary theory of the text, the claim for the divergent christologies, the question of realised eschatology with or without future eschatology, and the claim that the Johannine community its symbolic world creates is 'sectarian'. A special attention will be paid to the Son of man as presented in the pericope under discussion as well as in the Fourth Gospel as a whole. The thesis will be summarised as follows:

1. Over against the fragment theory, the concentric arrangement of Jesus' saying formed predominantly in parallelism shows a deliberate literary design of the author. Set at the end of the earthly ministry of Jesus, John 12.20-36 is a culminating point of the revelatory process of Jesus.

2. The overall conceptual framework to understand John 12.20-36, and thus the Fourth Gospel as a whole, is the apocalyptic idea of the divine mysteries concerning the end time. The revelation is centred on Jesus the Son of man, identified as the human-like figure of Dan 7, which culminates in his cross as his glorification/lifting-up. The vision of the revealed mysteries in Jesus on the cross embraces the eschatological Messiah, the restoration of Israel and of the Temple, salvation, the vindication of the righteous and the condemnation of the evil, and the Gentiles' pilgrimage, which is comparable to contemporary Jewish apocalyptic writings.

3. The cross of Jesus as the focus of the apocalyptic vision of the end time lies behind the apparently divergent christologies (the Son of man, the Davidic Messiah, divine Wisdom), which are integrated in the text in such a manner that it is impossible for each to be understood in isolation. The combination of these is already found in the Jewish apocalyptic-eschatological hope. The fact that the lifting-up and glorification of the Son of man is given precedence to the Davidic Kingly Messiah deprives a political and military aspect of the popular Jewish expectation.

4. At the same time, the revelatory pattern of the Johannine Jesus is not only explicable in Jewish apocalyptic terms, but it has to be understood in view of the *anagnorisis*, a popular Graeco-Roman dramatic convention. Within the main plot of the Fourth Gospel Jesus is depicted as the divine homecoming hero-king, as in Homer's *Odyssey*, whose messianic identity is closed to many and disclosed to those who receive him with faith (and hospitality). This pattern is relevant for most of the Johannine Son of man sayings as well. In this plot development John 12.20-36 is situated in a climactic place where the Jewish crowd fails to recognise Jesus who points to the decisive moment of his revelation on the cross.

5. The Johannine Eschatology is Jesus centred, and its realised aspect is strongly emphasised, because the eschatological terminology is overwhelmingly applied to him. Thus Jesus on the cross is the embodiment of the eschaton. At the same time, the post-Easter period, the time of the church, is open toward its future culmination because of the mission perspective.

6. The revelation of Jesus as the core of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time centres on the cross, which is presented as both the judgement and the salvation of the world. The Johannine understanding of the cross is expressed within the framework of the vindication/exaltation of the suffering righteous. It is implied that Jesus' death and resurrection inaugurates the new, eschatological covenant for the new people of God embracing both Jews and Gentiles.

7. John 12.20-36 envisages an apocalyptic vision of the end-time judgement and salvation, in which the new covenant people is created as a new people of God. The basis of the new 'children of the Light' is no longer the Law as in the old covenant but the faith in Jesus the Light (and to love each other as a new law). This faith is not individualistic but geared towards community building, which includes the believers from the Gentiles. The community itself is the result of the cross of Jesus. The purpose of Jesus' death for 'bearing much fruit' and gathering of 'all' (nations) to his own house is to be accomplished in the community through its mission to the world, despite the probable persecutions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	1
1 Problems	1
2 Scope of Research	3
3 Methodological Considerations	5
4 Line of Argument	7
<i>I. LITERARY ANALYSIS OF JOHN 12.20-36</i>	8
<i>I.1 Literary Unity and Design of John 12.20-36</i>	9
1.1 Introduction	9
1.2 Delimitation of the Pericope	10
1.3 Alleged Aporias and Literary Characteristics in John 12.20-36	13
1.3.1 The Literary Characteristics of the Pericope	14
1.3.2 Micro-Structures	17
(i) <i>Leitworten</i>	
(ii) Linear Development and Parallelisms and Misunderstanding/Irony Pattern	
1.4 Conclusion	20
<i>I.2 A Concentric Structure of John 12.20-36</i>	23
2.1 Introduction and Proposed Structures	23
2.2 Criteria for Identifying a Concentric Structure	25
2.3 John 12.20-36 in its Concentric Structure	28
2.4 Conclusion	41
<i>II. THE APOCALYPTIC VISION OF THE END-TIME JUDGEMENT AND SALVATION IN JOHN 12.20-36</i>	43
<i>II.1. The Apocalyptic Framework of John 12.20-36</i>	44
1.1 Introduction	44
1.2 Definition of Apocalypse, Apocalypticism and Apocalyptic Eschatology	47
1.3 Apocalyptic Epistemology	50
1.3.1 Seeing an Apocalyptic Vision?	50
1.3.2 Jesus' Teachings and Works as (Apocalyptic) Riddles that Conceal the Meaning	54
1.3.2.1 The Double <i>ἀμήν</i> Formula and Aphorisms	54
1.3.2.2 Sayings of Jesus as <i>Παροιμίας</i> (מִשְׁלֵי) and Misunderstandings	55
1.3.2.3 Misunderstanding and Interpretation	63
1.3.3. Summary	65
1.4 Does John 12.20-36 Contain or Refer to Any Sign?	65
1.4.1 Negative Appraisal	66
1.4.2. Positive Appraisal	70
1.4.3 Summary	76
1.5 Conclusion	77

II.2 <i>The Johannine Jesus as Apocalyptic Wisdom of the End Time and the Gnostic Redeemer Myth —The Johannine Use of the Apocalyptic-Sapiential Motifs of 'Seek and not Find', 'Reveal and Hide', and 'Rejection and Departure'—</i>	78
2.1 Introduction	78
2.2 Jewish Wisdom, Qumran, and Apocalyptic Literature	79
2.3 The Concealment of Jesus as Wisdom in John 12.36	82'
2.4 Gnosticism	88
2.4.1 Seek and Not Find	88
2.4.2 Other Sapiential Motifs	94
2.4.2.1 <i>The Apocryphon of John</i>	95
2.4.2.2 <i>The Trimorphic Protennoia</i>	97
2.4.2.3 The Jewish Wisdom Tradition in Apocalypse as a Common Background	99
2.4.2.4 The Fourth Gospel and the <i>Trimorphic Protennoia</i>	100
2.4.3 Conclusion and Further Assessment	112
2.5 The Johannine Jesus as Wisdom, Mystery, and the Danielic Son of Man	114
2.6 Summary	118
II.3 <i>Jesus as the Apocalyptic Son of Man</i>	120
3.1 Introduction	120
3.2 Revelation of the Divine Mystery	122
3.3 The Danielic Human-like Figure in 4 Ezra	124
3.3.1 Introduction	124
3.3.2 The Man from the Sea as the Danielic Son of Man and the Davidic Messiah	125
3.4 The Johannine Son of Man as the Danielic Human-like Figure and the Core of the Divine Mysteries	128
3.4.1 John 1.51	129
3.4.2 John 3.13-15	133
3.4.3 John 5.27-28	147
3.4.4 John 6.27, 53, 58	150
3.4.5 John 8.28	151
3.4.6 John 9.35ff	151
3.5 John 12.23, 34 (13.31f)	156
3.5.1 The Glorification of the Son of Man in John 12.23	156
3.5.2 The Exaltation/Crucifixion of the Son of Man and the Everlasting Messiah in John 12.34	169
3.6 Conclusions	169
II.4 <i>The Cross and Resurrection of Jesus as a Climax of his Mission and the Apocalyptic Eschatology</i>	175
4.1 Introduction	175
4.2 The Coming of the Hour as Eschatological Consummation	177
4.3 Major Themes of the Apocalyptic Scene of the End-Time Judgement and Salvation	185
4.3.1 The Coming of the Greeks as the Eschatological Pilgrimage of Gentiles	185
4.3.2 Jesus' Death as Fruit-Bearing	197
4.3.3 The Judgement of this World and the Casting out of its Ruler (12.31)	202
4.3.4 Eternal Life, to be Where Jesus is, and Divine Honour as Rewards for the (Suffering) Righteous in John 12.25-26	210
4.3.5 The Eschatological Urgency and the Johannine Two-Way Theology in John 12.35-36	218
4.3.6 Jesus' Anguish, the <i>Bath Qol</i> and the Glorification of the Name of the Father	229
4.3.6.1 The <i>ταραχή</i> of Jesus the Righteous Sufferer (12.27)	230
4.3.6.2 The Glorification of the Name of the Father and the <i>Bath Qol</i>	239
4.4 Summary	244
II.5 <i>CONCLUSIONS TO PART II</i>	246

**III. JESUS AS A HOMECOMING HERO-KING
—THE JOHANNINE JESUS' SELF-REVELATION IN THE LIGHT OF
RECOGNITION (ANAGNORISIS) IN GRAECO-ROMAN POETICS AND HOMER'S
ODYSSEY—** **253**

III.1 <i>Recognitions in the Fourth Gospel and the Dramatic Christology</i>	254
1.1 Introductio	254
1.2 Recognition (<i>Anagnorisis</i>) in Aristotle's <i>Poetics</i>	256
1.3 Recognitions in the Fourth Gospel	259
1.3.1 Recognitions in the Passion-Resurrection Narratives	259
1.3.2 Recognitions in John 1-12	266
1.3.3 Recognitions and the Revelation of the Johannine Son of Man	274
1.4 Summary	285
III.2 <i>Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> and the Main Plot-structure of the Fourth Gospel</i>	288
2.1 The Prologue and the Main Plot-Structure	288
2.2 Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> and the Johannine Homecoming Hero-King	290
2.3 Theoxeny, or Divine Epiphany and Guest-Friendship	294
2.4 Summary	303
2.5 Christological Implications of the Homecoming of the Johannine Jesus as the <i>LOGOS</i> Incarnate	306
(i) A Stranger from Heaven	306
(ii) Jesus the Revealer	307
(iii) A Naively Docetic Christology?	308
2.6 Conclusions	313
CONCLUSION	320
ADDENDUM	324
BIBLIOGRAPHY	328

INTRODUCTION

1 Problems

One of the intriguing issues in the Fourth Gospel is its Christology in diversity and unity.¹ What is particularly true with the Fourth Gospel is that it is one's understanding of the Gospel as a literary text that determines the Christology or Christologies it projects. On the one hand, a diachronical reading of the Gospel by means of historical criticism consequently results in a diachronical understanding of its Christology. As a result, there may be as many diverse Christologies as the number of the sources and/or the levels of redaction one can find in the Gospel. Yet J.H. Charlesworth argues on the basis of recent Pseudepigraphal studies that there were highly-developed messianic ideas even during the public ministry of Jesus, and that there was not so much of an evolution from primitive ideas in Christology of the early Church as a maturation of pregnant ideas. 'What was needed was not so much more development, as *transference* and *specification*. The transference to Jesus of many of the ideas already highly-developed about the Lord-God and his messengers; the specification of Jesus as the one-who-was-to-come; for example, as the Messiah, as the Son of God, and as the Son of Man'.² The implication of this claim needs to be tested with regard to the Fourth Gospel.

On the other hand, with the recent development of holistic reading of the Gospel such as narrative criticism, a holistic explanation of its Christology is emerging. M. Hengel can remark: 'in no New Testament writing are more christological titles collected than in the Fourth Gospel, but at the same time they are all developed and con-

1 Cf. Anderson, *The Christology*, 17-32. We prefer to use the term 'diversity and unity' here instead of Anderson's 'unity and disunity', for the reason which will be explicated in this thesis.

2 Charlesworth, *The OT Pseudepigrapha*, 80-83, the citation, 81. In a similar vein, M. Hengel, *The 'Hellenization'*, 55, remarks that 'the whole development of christological doctrine *could* have taken place completely within Palestinian Judaism'.

nected idiosyncratically, to result in an impressive multiform unity derived from "different christologies".³ There is a need to elucidate the way in which the different Christological elements are synthesized in the Gospel.

As to the central theme of the Johannine Christology, R. Bultmann's insight that the central idea of the Gospel is *revelation* is certainly valid.⁴ His Christology turns around this orbit: 'Jesus as the Revealer of God *reveals nothing but that he is the Revealer*.'⁵ For the evangelist, what matters is not the content of the revelation but the fact of it: 'Der Verfasser interessiert sich nur für das Daß der Offenbarung, nicht das Was'.⁶ Bultmann's understanding of revelation is coloured with his existentialism, and may not be true of the Johannine concept. To reduce the revelation in Christ to a bare fact (Daß) proves to detract from the other Christological (and soteriological) ideas attached to this central Christological thrust of the Fourth Gospel. In reaction to Bultmann, the theory of the *naively* docetic nature of the Johannine Christology was propagated (E. Käsemann), whereas its anti-docetic tendency is recently argued for (U. Schnelle).⁷ Taking up Bultmann's fundamental insight, on the other hand, J. Ashton has demonstrated the apocalyptic thrust of the idea of revelation in the Fourth Gospel and its Christology.⁸

Here a question arises as to in what (religious) milieu the Fourth Gospel and its Christology are to be understood. Bultmann, for example, locates the making of the Johannine Christology within the history of early Christianity as he understands it. He viewed that, when (Palestinian) Christianity went into the Greek and Roman world, its ideas of Christology embedded in the OT-Jewish tradition had to be translated categorically to come to terms with the Hellenistic world by means of the demythologised terminology of Gnosticism.⁹ For Bultmann, the history of early Christianity is regarded as a syncretistic process of Jewish Palestinian Christianity with the help of Gnosticism

3 Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, 104.

4 See Ashton *Understanding*, 62-66, for a penetrating elaboration of the theological presuppositions of Bultmann.

5 Bultmann, *Theology*, 2.66.

6 Bultmann, 'Die Bedeutung', 145.

7 Käsemann, *Jesu Iester Wille* (1980); Schnelle, *Antidocetic Christology* (1992).

8 Ashton, *Understanding*, esp. part III.

9 Bultmann, *Theology*, 1.164-183.

into Hellenistic Christianity. A telling example of this is Bultmann's conclusion that the (Jewish) Davidic-kingly figure was more or less replaced by the Son of man who was to come from heaven to bring judgement and salvation, an influence of Mandaean Gnosticism. In place of this Mandaean theory, a Gnostic connection of the Johannine Christology, especially with its ascent/descent motif, has been repeatedly made since the discovery of Nag Hammadi texts.¹⁰ On the other hand, there is a strong tendency in recent Johannine scholarship to emphasise the Gospel's Jewishness, sometimes at the cost of its Hellenistic-Roman elements. Yet recent narrative critical studies (e.g. P.D. Duke, M.W.G. Stibbe) seem to be pointing to the Hellenistic-Roman aspect of the Gospel as well.¹¹

In such a state of the issues surrounding the Fourth Gospel, not only an analytical but synthetical elucidation of the Johannine Christology and its related ideas seems to be required. In so doing, a vexing question of the relation between the Johannine Christology and its eschatology may be resolved.

2 *Scope of the Research*

In this thesis we will attempt to read the Fourth Gospel, with a special focus on John 12.20-36, over against the contemporary Jewish apocalypses, asking whether the Fourth Gospel is apocalyptic in form and content. The reason for our choice of this pericope is twofold. It is generally agreed that the public ministry of the Johannine Jesus reaches at its climax in John 12.20ff since after this his Farewell discourses with the disciples begin. This is further indicated by the reference to the coming of the hour (12.23) which has been expected in the future in the earlier part of the Gospel (2.4;

10 Yet it is also argued that not only were the ideas of Hellenistic mystery religions accessible, though not so influential, in Palestine, but also ideas once ascribed to Hellenistic thought are found in early Judaism. See Charlesworth, *The OT Pseudepigrapha*, 81-83; I.H. Marshall, 'Palestinian and Hellenistic Christianity'; M. Hengel, 'Christology and NT Chronology'. The distinction of the Palestinian and Hellenistic Christianity has been under attack particularly since M. Hengel's *Judaism and Hellenism*, which has shown that Judaism was Hellenised from about the middle of the third century BCE. As to the degree of the Hellenisation of Judaism, some scholars have posed a more reserved view than Hengel's; e.g. L.H. Feldman, 'Hengel's Judaism and Hellenism', 371-382; F. Miller, 'The Background', 1-21. Cf. S. Sandmel, 'Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism and Christianity', 137-148.

11 Duke, *Irony* (1985); Stibbe, *John as Storyteller* (1992).

7.6, 8, 30; 8.20) and is depicted as having already come after this pericope (13.1, 31, 32; 17.1). At the same time, in John 12.20-36 Jesus refers to the 'now' of the judgment of this world (v 31). In this respect it is suggested that this pericope constitutes a climax of the judicial process, a prominent theme that runs through the entire Gospel, especially in the passages depicting the conflicts between Jesus and the Jews (representing the hostile human world) are presented (3.16-21, and chs 5, 7-8, 9 in particular).¹² This judicial process reflects the Jewish apocalyptic idea of a cosmic conflict between God and Evil as we shall see in II.4. Being placed at a climactic part of the Gospel, especially of its first half, John 12.20-36 would envisage the fundamental themes of the Fourth Gospel. But we will bear in mind the exegetical maxim that a part illuminates the whole as much as it is illuminated by the whole.

In this thesis, we would argue that knowledge of apocalypses is not merely necessary but indispensable for a better understanding of the language of the Fourth Gospel, because it depicts Jesus' revelatory mission culminating in his crucifixion and resurrection as an apocalyptic drama of the end time. At the same time, however, the Jewishness of the Fourth Gospel, which has been emphasised recently perhaps in reaction to Bultmann's Hellenistic-Gnostic origin and Dodd's Hellenistic-Hermetic origin of the Gospel, cannot be reiterated at the expense of the Hellenistic-Roman elements in it. Rather we will argue that the Fourth Gospel, when written, had little to do with Gnosticism as developed primarily in the second century onwards, but that the Hellenistic-Roman nature of the Gospel is not simply due to the Greek translation of Jewish ideas but it reflects the evangelist's keen awareness of the dominant culture and society of the Graeco-Roman world and his deliberate presentation of the kerygmatic biographical account of Jesus in a dramatic narrative form widely known in the ancient Mediterranean world.

By scrutinising these two elements, we will argue that the idea of revelation as the main theme of the Johannine Christology is due to a skillful integration of these two categories, and that its Christology is dynamically presented in terms of an apocalyptic drama of the end time as well as a drama of the homecoming hero.

¹² See N.A. Dahl, 'Johannine Church', 139; S. Pancaro, *The Law*, 7; A.A. Trites, *The New Testament Concept*, 79; Lincoln, 'Trials', 4-13..

3 Methodological Considerations

It is needless to say that there is a need to engage in an intercultural discourse between the horizon of the given text, i.e. of the author and the first-hand audience, and the horizon of the modern readers. That task is not an easy one. Furthermore, the problem becomes more complicated since we need to pay due attention to the fact that a certain inter-cultural discourse must have been under way when the author of the Fourth Gospel expressed its predominantly Hebrew or Jewish concepts in the Greek *lingua franca* of the Hellenistic-Roman World of that day.¹³ Although our main concern is with the contemporary Jewish literature, apocalypses in particular, we have to be open to the possibility that some non-Jewish concepts are also reflected either positively or negatively in the Gospel, since there was no literature purely 'Jewish' without any influence of Hellenism and the dominant Roman culture even if it was written in reaction to those foreign cultural systems. This is particularly so if we suppose the implied audience to have included both Jews and non-Jews as the notes on Jewish customs and feasts as well as Hebrew (Aramaic) terms in the Gospel (John 1.41; 2.6; 4.9; 5.2; 6.4; 7.2; 19.13; 20.16) suggest.

In our reading of John 12.20-36 and the Fourth Gospel as a whole in the context of the Hellenistic-Roman world, we will basically follow the suggestions made by Berger and Colpe on the *redefined religionsgeschichtliche* method.¹⁴ That is, our interest is not so much in the genesis or influence¹⁵ of a religious idea as on a study of patterns of thought with a view to understanding the thought-world of the passage under discussion: the religio-historical context of NT thought as religious phenomena. Due to the nature of our investigation, we cannot claim it to be a full-blown *religionsgeschichtliche* study embracing all Hellenistic religions (Greco-Roman religions, Mystery religions, Gnosticism) and various trends of Judaism; our target religion is

13 Cf. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.58.

14 Berger & Colpe, *Religionsgeschichtliches Textbuch zum NT*, 1987.

15 Cf. R. Garrison, *The Graeco-Roman Context*, 23, who despite his call for attention to the Graeco-Roman context in describing early Christianity, speaks of 'origins' and influence.

mainly Judaism, especially Judaism earlier than and virtually contemporary to the Fourth Gospel (towards the end of the first century CE). When handling important themes, we intend to follow basically their suggestion that each pattern of thought is to be studied (1) in its original context, (2) in its reinterpretations, (3) and to see the way in which it is used in the Gospel, with a question as to what is in fact communicated by it.

Our method involves in the comparison and contrast between the given text of the Fourth Gospel and its near contemporary literary data in the Hellenistic-Roman world of the late first century CE. Among them, Jewish apocalypses and Graeco-Roman dramatic writings occupy a prominent place in our study, though we cannot claim it to be an exhaustive treatment of them. Due to the nature of our research, we are mainly concerned with a literary analysis of the Fourth Gospel and those of its contemporary literature, Jewish or non-Jewish, whether they are literary or conceptual or sociological. In the process, our methodology does not share the premiss that literary resemblances are to be explained by the dependence of one on the other. Instead, we would regard them as pointing to the authors' conscious or unconscious, self-location of their works in known genres or modes of thought.¹⁶ The very existence of such resemblances not only establishes the points of contact with the audience but also serves to highlight the rhetorical purposes of a particular author. By giving a certain thrust to a literary motif, or a theme, the author exhibits the uniqueness of his/her claim.

By so doing, we will conclude that the thought world of the Fourth Gospel is that of Jewish apocalyptic literature and that the former should be in comparison and contrast to the latter. Furthermore our findings point to the author's mastery of the conventions of Graeco-Roman poetics in composing dramatic narratives and his awareness and apologetic consideration of the popular myth of theoxeny, i.e. guest-friendship offered to a divine figure appearing in a guise of a stranger, against which the incarnation Christology and the self-revelations of Jesus are presented. We will argue that, in presenting the revelatory narrative of Jesus, the author artfully adapts the myth of theoxeny to the Son of man/the Davidic Messiah as known in Jewish apocalypses.

¹⁶ Cf. J.R. Morgan, 'Introduction', 2-3.

4 Line of Argument

Part I is concerned with the elucidation of the internal literary design and unity of John 12.20-36. Part II handles the conceptual elements (symbolic world) which organise our pericope within the Gospel with special reference to contemporary Jewish apocalypses. Part III is devoted to a narrative critical reading of the Gospel within the context of the dramatic literature in the Graeco-Roman world, which has an indispensable bearing on the Christology of the Fourth Gospel. Although a full sociological analysis of the symbolic universe which the pericope and the Fourth Gospel as a whole create cannot be attempted within the confines of this study, some social and/or sociological considerations will be made when appropriate.

I. *LITERARY ANALYSIS OF JOHN 12.20-36*

LITERARY UNITY AND DESIGN IN JOHN 12.20-36

1.1 Introduction

John 12.20-36 is a very difficult passage. J. Wellhausen regarded it as a collection of sheer disordered fragments.¹ R. Bultmann acknowledged that because of its puzzling features this (apart from 12.34-36) is such a difficult passage that it is impossible to draw reliable conclusions.² Due to such nature of the text, not many exegetes have attempted a hypothesis of literary structure of the pericope as a whole. The nature of the difficulty would be both literary and thematic or theological. In this chapter, we will pay particular attention to its literary surface structure, with a belief that 'Patterns of surface structure not only divide the text into segments, but also establish the internal unity of those segments'.³ For elucidating the surface structure of the pericope, we will employ a holistic reading of the text. For this purpose we will use a text-immanent approach, focusing on the text itself. We also apply some reader oriented theories as necessary to answer certain interpretative questions. The employment of a text-immanent approach is due to our belief that modern literary theories, though helpful at times, are unable to fully expound 'ancient texts that in fact have their own dynamics, their own distinctive conventions and characteristic techniques'.⁴ A text-immanent approach resembles that of form criticism in the way in which a form of the text is elucidated, although it does not necessarily share all of the assumptions of form criticism. Not only do we attempt to handle the pericope as an integral part of its present context, but also are we not so much concerned with the *Sitz im Leben* in which a certain form originated and through which it was transmitted.⁵ Such an approach (though characteristically formalistic) would yield some insights concerning the internal constitution of the Gospel, which in turn serves to provide certain nuances to the sym-

1 Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Johannis*, 57.

2 Bultmann, *John*, 420.

3 H. Van Dyke Parunak, 'Oral Typesetting', 162.

4 Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 15.

5 Uncertainty surrounding form-critical assumptions has been aptly pointed out by M. Hooker, 'Wrong Tool', 570-581.

bolic world which the text unfolds. This can be achieved by observing the ways in which the constituent elements of the pericope and the entire Gospel are related to one another not only in semantic terms but also through the literary features. This is of course not to deny the extra-textual level of meaning that can be achieved by reference to elements external to the text such as intertextuality and socio-cultural associations. An inquiry into the ways in which the elements of a text are related to the social-historical situations within which and for which it was written is indispensable for a fuller understanding of the text and its function.⁶ Yet we pay particular attention to the intra-organisation of the given text in the light of the literary conventions contemporary to it as well as its intertextuality with the preceding and contemporary literature.

1.2 *Delimitation of the Pericope*

In order to delimit a literary unit regarding our section, the question as to what kinds of criteria to be employed is of importance. Although divergent criteria can be used,⁷ we confine ourselves to the literary characteristics of an oral type-setting which dominated ancient literature. In line with the Hellenistic literary system and the narrative tradition of the Hebrew Scripture and its Greek translation, the Fourth Gospel shows 'a type-setting' characteristic to the *scriptio continua* and its aural/oral literary practice. Various literary devices can be used to distinguish one cycle from the others in a text, and one unit from the others in a certain cycle.⁸ Inclusions and 'bridge sections' are the main devices employed in the Fourth Gospel for such a purpose. Bridge sections are literary devices used in 'an oral type-setting', such as Hebrew narrative, to divide a narrative into large units or cycles by providing a conclusion to the preceding and a transition to the following. The bridge sections in the Fourth Gospel, generally starting with *μετὰ ταῦτα* or *μετὰ τοῦτο*, are used to bridge cycles or larger units.⁹ The *μετὰ ταῦτα* formula is followed by a verb describing Jesus' movement from one place

6 See the critique of Ricoeur's structuralist thrust by Thompson, *Studies*, 194-197.

7 Cf. G. Mlakuzhyil, *The Christocentric Literary Structure*, 87-135.

8 Cf. Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 5, who suggests that the Bible 'was read in pericopes rather than continuously through a book.'

9 John 2.12; 2.23; 3.22; 4.1; 4.43; 5.1; 6.1; 7.1; 10.40; 11.54; 19.38; 21.1. Cf. Mlakuzhyil, *The Christocentric Literary Structure*, 28.

to another, nearly always with specific geographical references.¹⁰ The bridge-sections are usually followed by ἦν δὲ... or ἦσαν δὲ... introducing the occasions (e.g. the nearness of Passover: 2.13; 6.1; 11.55), the main characters (e.g. Nicodemus: 3.1; John the Baptist: 3.23; Lazarus: 11.1; Simon Peter: 21.2), or the local designations (e.g. Jacob's well: 4.6; a Pool of Bethzatha: 5.2; a new tomb: 19.41), around which the following narratives unfold.¹¹

Though devoid of a μετὰ ταῦτα formula,¹² 11.54 signals the end of the preceding cycle, since it consists of Jesus' movement from one place to another (in this case he is going from there [ἀπῆλθεν ἐκεῖθεν] to Ephraim and staying [ἔμεινεν] there with the disciples). At the same time, this bridge section as a transitional section provides a setting, if distant, for the forthcoming scene(s).¹³ ἦν δὲ in 11.55, followed by the reference to the nearness of Passover, resembles the introductions of the new cycles in 2.13; 6.3; and 7.2, all of which follow a bridge section. Consequently, 11.54-55f, like 2.12-13, 6.1-3, and 7.1-2, exhibits the characteristics of the transitional section and the beginning of a new cycle.

The extent of this cycle is difficult to define, since the next typically Johannine bridge section occurs only at 19.38f.¹⁴ It may be arguable therefore that 11.54-19.37 constitutes an extended cycle. Yet there are some distinguishable boundary markers such as an *inclusio* between 16.1 and 33.¹⁵ Our cycle can be taken to end at 12.50, not

10 John 2.12 (Capernaum); 2.23 (Jerusalem); 3.22 (Judea); 4.1 (Judea, Galilee, Samaria); 4.43 (Galilee, Cana); 5.1 (Jerusalem); 6.1 (the Sea of Tiberias, the mountain); 7.1 (Galilee); 10.40 (beyond the Jordan); 11.54 (Ephraim); 19.38 (the cross?); 21.1 (by the sea of Tiberias). M. Rissi, 'Der Aufbau', based on the criterion of Jesus' journey from a Gentile or semi-Gentile land to Judea/Jerusalem, finds five such journeys (1.19-3.16; 4.1-5.47; 6.1-10.39; 10.40-12.41).

11 The ἦν δὲ construction is used also in the middle of a narrative to comment on time, place, person, and material referred to (1.44; 2.6; 5.9; 9.14; 11.2, 18; 13.30; 18.10, 14, 28, 40; 19.23).

12 Some bridge sections (2.13, 4.1, 10.40) lack a μετὰ ταῦτα formula.

13 Cf. Mlakuzhyil, *The Christcentric Literary Structure*, 104.

14 The request of Joseph of Arimathea to Pilate to hand him the body of Jesus and his preparation for burial with Nicodemus are introduced by μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα (19.38). It is clear that this section (19.38-40) functions as a bridge section both providing an ending to the crucifixion scene and preparing a setting for (the burial [19.41-42] and) the resurrection scene (20.1ff).

15 Both passages start with ταῦτα ἐλάληκα ὑμῖν ἵνα..., and ἵνα μὴ σκανδαλισθῆτε (16.1) is closely related to ἵνα ἐν ἐμοὶ εἰρήνην ἔχητε (16.33).

only because 13.1 shows a characteristic of a beginning of a section, but also because the popular view that 12.37-50 is a summary of Jesus' public ministry cannot be easily discredited.¹⁶

In the Fourth Gospel a marker of a pericope ἦν δὲ or ἦσαν δὲ, appearing at the beginning, introduces a main character or characters, a place, or an occasion in the story. Beginning with ἦσαν δὲ Ἑλληνες τινες, John 12.20 falls into this category. Our unit is marked off at the end by the reference to Jesus' hiding himself from the crowd (12.36), which is similar to the ending of the account of the feast of Tabernacle (8.59). There are remarkable similarities between chs 7-8 and 11.55-12.36. (i) The theme of seeking and hiding appears in both. (ii) In a manner related closely to the first point, the pattern of Jesus' coming out of the state of hiddenness to reveal himself in public to the world and then to retire into hiddenness occurs in both. C.H. Dodd rightly summarises chs 7-8: 'The whole episode [of chs 7-8] began with Jesus ἐν κρυπτῷ (vii.4). His attendance at the Feast is at first οὐ φανερώς ἀλλὰ ὡς ἐν κρυπτῷ (vii.10). Then at mid-feast He suddenly appears in public, to be met with opposition and threats. It is fitting that the episode of conflict, having ended in the rejection of Jesus' challenge, should be rounded off by His retirement into concealment once more'.¹⁷ Likewise, in our cycle Jesus enters Jerusalem in public from the state of being unable to walk in public (11.54: οὐκέτι παρρησίᾳ περιπάτει ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις), and then, having been misunderstood by the crowd, he hides himself again (12.36c: ἐκρύβη ἀπ' ἀντῶν).¹⁸ Like the hiding in 8.59, Jesus' hiding in 12.36, while corresponding to the concealment motif of the bridge section (11.54), does not end the cycle. As Jesus' hiding at 8.59 paves the way for the next episode of healing the blind (ch 9), so does it lead to his proclamation and to the author's summary of the public ministry of Jesus (12.37ff).

If the cycle of John 11.55-12.36 is rounded off by the παρρησίᾳ-κρύπτω pattern, John 12.20-36 is the fourth of the successive units within the cycle (11.55-57; 12.1-

16 (i) John 12.37-50 seems to sum up the overall message of the revelatory mission of Jesus. (ii) A number of main themes found both in the Prologue (1.1-18) and the Epilogue (20.30-31) are found there, especially in 12.44-50.

17 Dodd, *Interpretation*, 348.

18 See also Stibbe, 'The Elusive Christ', esp. 21-24.

11¹⁹; 12.12-19). The beginnings of the units are indicated not only by the temporal indicators, i.e. the nearness of the Passover (11.55), 'six days before the Passover' (12.1), and 'the next day' (12.12; cf. 1.29, 35, 43), but also by the references to the characters, i.e. the Jews (11.55), Jesus (12.1), and 'the great crowd' (12.12). In this cycle the sign of raising of Lazarus (12.9) creates an unsurpassable tension in that it prompts the crowds' expectation about Jesus as the Davidic King (12.17, 18), while at the same time it has led to the Sanhedrin's decision to kill him (11.46-53). This tension is evident throughout the three units preceding our pericope, with references to the order to arrest Jesus given by the chief priests and the Pharisees (11.57) and to the crowd's acceptance of Jesus as the Davidic King (12.13-15; cf. Ps 118.26; Zech 9.9) .

1.3 *Alleged Aporias and Literary Nature of John 12.20-36*

John 12.20-36 is a text within which many exegetes have found several discrepancies. Although such alleged discrepancies could be, and actually have been, used as clues to distinguish sources or different literary strata²⁰, they seem to contribute to our understanding of the literary structure of the pericope in a positive manner, as we shall see. We here list selectively the inconsistencies, discontinuities of thought or changes of vocabulary and/or style (with some varying degrees) which are alleged to be found in John 12.20-36: (1) between v 22 and v 23,²¹ (2) between v 23 and v 24,²² (3) between v 24 and v 25,²³ (4) between v 26 and v 27,²⁴ (5) between v 30 and

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- 19 John 12.1-11 has three sub-units, with vv 1-2 re-introducing the two characters, Mary and Lazarus, on whom focus falls respectively in the successive sub-units (vv 3-8, 9-11). The particle *οὖν* functions as an indicator of each sub-unit (12.3, 9; cf. 7).
- 20 J.L. Martyn regards the Fourth Gospel as having various literary strata reflecting the experiences and theologies of the community which produced it at some (historical) stages. See Martyn, 'Glimpses', 90-121. Following the lead of Martyn, Tuchido, "Ἐλληνη", 348-356; *Tradition and Redaction*, 133-171, contends that aporias reflect simultaneously both the life-setting of the original sources (i.e. of the time of Jesus) and that of the evangelist's redaction. Cf. M. de Boer, 'Narrative Criticism', 41-48.
- 21 Spitta, *Johannes*, 272-273 (vv 20-22 is a later insertion); Bultmann, *John*, 420-421 ("between v.22 and v.23 a whole piece [of discourse] has fallen out'). V 23 gives no direct answer to the request of the Greeks, nor is any such answer given further on (Bultmann, *John*, 423).
- 22 Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium*, 57; Langbrandtner, *Weltferner Gott*, 55f, 105; J. Becker, *Johannes*, 2.383, 399 (vv 24-26 as an ecclesiastical redaction based on a short sayings-group from the Johannine community's tradition). J. Ashton, *Understanding*, 367 n86, 494, thinks that vv.24-26 is a pre-Johannine literary unit independent of the Synoptic tradition.
- 23 Schwart in Spitta, *Johannes*, 274-275.
- 24 Bauer, *Johannes*, 157; Becker, *Johannes*, 1.399; Ashton, *Understanding*, 494.

v 31,²⁵ (6) between v 31 and v 32,²⁶ (7) between v 33 and v 34,²⁷ and (8) between v 34 and v 35.²⁸ This would reflect the axiom of historical criticism that the present text consists of smaller literary units derived from various sources and/or traditions, and that thematic inconsistencies, changes of style and vocabulary are signs of editorial efforts by the author or redactor. A synchronic approach, in an attempt to read the pericope as a coherent entity, faces a challenge to explain these apparent inconsistencies and discrepancies and to seek the thematic connections between small units by providing legitimate reasons for the alleged changes in vocabulary and style. To this end we will apply the implications of biblical poetics as analysed especially in respect to the poetry of the Hebrew Scripture, for it is legitimate to expect that Semitic poetics played a significant role in the pericope which consists predominantly of the sayings of Jesus the Jew.

That the pericope consists of a number of loosely connected parts is also demonstrated by the exegetes who take 12.20-36 as a coherent text. There is a tendency among them to sub-divide the pericope into several sub-sections. E. Leidig finds as many as ten sub-sections in this seventeen verse pericope.²⁹ J. Blank, regarding it as constituting a thematically coherent whole which develops the basic theme of the glorification of the Son of man, sees John 12.23-34 as a series of paradoxical statements consisting of seven parts.³⁰

1.3.1 *The Literary Characteristics of the Pericope*

What then has caused this apparently loosely-knit nature of the text? It has already become quite clear that the cause is in part the nature of Jesus' sayings which occupy most of our pericope. He expresses himself mostly in a series of *poetic* sentences, some of whose interconnections, except apparent parallelisms, are not evi-

25 Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.390.

26 Spitta, *Johannes*, 278-279; Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 365.

27 Bultmann, *John*, 420ff; Bjerkelund, *Tauta Egeneto*, 122. Cf. Smith, *The Composition and Order*, 160-161.

28 Spitta, *Johannes*, 279; Bultmann, *John*, 347ff.

29 Leidig, *Jesu Gespräch*, 228-229.

30 Blank, *Krisis*, 307.

dent due to the lack of descriptive markers indicating inter-sentence relations. Given the extensive use of parallelisms and paratactic sentences, characteristics of the poetic language in the OT narrative can be applicable to Jesus' sayings here. As J.L. Kugel points out, parallelisms are not confined to poetry but are characteristic of classical Hebrew literature as a whole, including poetry, narrative, legal literature, prophetic literature and wisdom.³¹ Poetry as a heightened form of speech thus constitutes a narrative technique characteristic of OT narrative. R. Alter observes that the inset of formal verse is 'a common convention in the biblical narrative for direct speech that has some significantly summarising or ceremonial function'.³² Alter takes short segments of direct speech expressed in poetic form to be 'heightened speech'. In such a 'heightened speech' the rich connotations of imaginative, symbolic language are used abundantly with some variety. This may be another factor of the difficulty regarding the pericope under discussion.

Most of Jesus' sayings in the pericope are not in descriptive language but in imaginative, or metaphorical, language. The use of imaginative, metaphoric language suggests that the author is either presupposing the knowledge of the same imaginative world on the part of the readers/listeners, or at least inviting the readers into such a world. The interpretation of such a highly poetic text requires an imaginative mind on the reader's part, and the reader's expectation of descriptive reasoning in a given text will not be met. As E.H. Gombrich remarks, 'The greater the probability of a symbol's occurrence in any given situation, the smaller will be its information content. Where we can anticipate we need not listen'.³³

Moreover, the rapid change of images and/or metaphors characteristic of the Fourth Gospel³⁴ in general and in John 12.20ff in particular is a puzzle for a modern reader. In our pericope there are metaphors such as a grain of wheat falling down to bear much fruit and walking either in the light or in the darkness. The expression to be where Jesus is also belongs to this category, for a similar expression is used in 8.21ff

31 J.L. Kugel, *Biblical Poetry*, 70, 59-95.

32 Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 28.

33 Gombrich, *Art and Illusion* (New York: 1961), 205, cited in Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 62.

34 Cf. R. Kyser, 'Johannine Metaphor-Meaning and Function', 81-111.

as an enigmatic saying which has led the Jews to misunderstandings due to their attention to its 'literal', earthly meaning. All these may be called in the Fourth Gospel *παροιμίας*, whose significance we shall see later (II.1). Though not metaphors themselves in their strict sense, the culturally and religiously loaded terms such as 'to glorify', 'to honour', 'to lift up', the Son of man, the Messiah, the judgement of this world, the ruler of this world, and so on are also to be accounted for in their given context. Furthermore, since some of these sayings such as vv 24, 25, 26 can be characterised as aphoristic, D. Aune's observation of aphorisms is relevant to understanding the metaphoric language of the Johannine Jesus here: 'When aphorisms occur in narrative contexts, they frequently exhibit a degree of tension, even discontinuity, with their literary matrices. They leap, as it were, from the page to the eye of the reader and *ipso facto* suggest a connection with oral or written precursors, much like such discrete folkloristic genres as riddles, proverbs and epigrams'.³⁵ Such an aphoristic nature of Jesus' *logia* here may well have given an impression of this pericope being a compilation of fragments or an unskilfully redacted text. 'Yet', remarks Aune, 'the primary setting of many aphorisms (particularly those in the canonical Gospels) is a larger discourse unit (e.g. an apophthegm or pronouncement story) within an encompassing narrative framework'.³⁶ While it is legitimate to treat each of the aphoristic sayings as discrete rhetorical units, our focus is rather on elucidating the way in which they achieve a meaning by being semantically related to one another within the given context of John 12.20-36. The former task can be well served by analytical form-critical method, while the latter task is achieved by a more synthetic, contextual method with intertextual considerations.

Such being the nature of the language we are faced with, one should not deny altogether the logic underlying the apparently loose connections, nor should one easily explain away the apparently loosely connected sentences as resulting from the author's or the redactor's unskilful arrangement of disparate sources. But to understand such paratactic and metaphoric language, one ought to seek for the underlying logic with a

35 D. Aune, 'Oral Tradition', 223.

36 Aune, 'Oral Tradition', 223.

poetic (or paratactical) reasoning. R. Funk, commenting on the function of metaphoric language, remarks that a metaphor, 'because of the juxtaposition of two discrete and not entirely comparable entities, produces an impact upon the imagination and induces a vision of that which cannot be conveyed by prosaic or discursive speech'.³⁷ To this perspective has to be added the fact that the imaginative transaction of metaphors is culturally bound. Pointing out the complex, socio-cultural dimension of the understanding of metaphors, U. Eco remarks: 'The success of a metaphor is a function of the sociocultural format of the interpreting subjects' encyclopaedia. In this perspective, metaphors are produced solely on the basis of a rich cultural framework, on the basis, that is, of a universe of content that is already organised into networks of interpretants [i.e. either signs or expressions or a sequence of expressions which translate a previous expression], which decide (semiotically) the identities and differences of properties'.³⁸ In other words, one ought to understand the complex metaphoric, symbolic world of the Fourth Gospel against the rich sociocultural framework of the first-century Roman East, both Jewish and otherwise. To explicate the complex symbolic world created by the various, swiftly-shifting metaphors and images of the aphoristic sayings of Jesus (as well as the other settings) will be our main task in interpreting the message of the Fourth Gospel through John 12.20-36.

1.3.2 *Micro-Structures*

(i) *Leitworten*

A *prima facie* reading of the pericope reveals at least three *Leitworten* scattered in it in a significant manner. First of all, Jesus' opening announcement of the coming of 'the hour' (ὥρα) in v 23 is taken up in v 27 in a twofold manner, with Jesus casting doubt about a deliverance from this hour in a rhetorical question (τί εἶπω, πατερ, σῶσόν με ἐκ τῆς ὥρας ταύτης;) on the one hand and confirming the purpose of his coming into this hour (ἦλθον εἰς τὴν ὥραν ταύτην) on the other. The arrival of 'the hour' is also reflected in the triple use of νῦν in v 27 and v 31, which well corresponds

37 Funk, *Language*, 136.

38 Eco, *Semiotics*, 127.

to 'this hour' in v 27. Another frequent term is *δοξάζειν*, used first in what is seemingly a title passage of the pericope (v 23), and is repeated three times in v 28. The third and last of the *Leitworten* is *ἀποθνήσκειν* in conjunction with Jesus, used twice in v 24 and once in v 33 in a combination with its cognate *θάνατος*. Closely related to this key term is *ὑψωθῆναι*, since this verb, appearing in the words of Jesus at v 32, is explained as referring to the manner of his death in the implicit commentary (v 34). Moreover, the idea of the death of Jesus is presupposed almost throughout the pericope even when an explicit reference is lacking, as we will see later. As far as the designations for Jesus are concerned, 'the Light' (*ὁ φῶς*) featuring five times (vv 35-36) is by far the major designation of him in the pericope, which is followed by 'the Son of man' occurring three times and closely associated with the other *Leitworten* 'the hour' and 'to glorify' (v 23). The three *Leitworten* and the two major christological terms suggest that the pericope is concerned with the coming of *the hour of glorification*, the glorification of *the Son of man* as well as of the name of the Father simultaneously, which is said to be 'now' in the narrative time, and that this hour of glorification is closely associated with *the death of Jesus*, which means at the same time *the imminent departure of him as the Light*.

(ii) *Linear Development and Parallelisms and Misunderstanding/Irony Patterns*

John 12.20-22 shows a typical Johannine introduction of a pericope or a cycle. An introduction of a character, *Ἕλληνές τινες* with *ἦσαν δὲ*, is followed by a further description of what they did (*οὗτοι οὖν...*), in this case approaching Philip. The mediation of Philip and then of Philip with Andrew is presented in an unmistakable parallelism in v 22. Philip does not bring the request of the Greeks directly to Jesus but to Andrew instead. Their request is at last brought to Jesus through the mediation of these two disciples only in the second line of the parallelism, the pattern of which corresponds to that of the coming of the Greeks comprising the two main verbs (*προσῆρχεσθαι* and *λέγειν*). Such a construction could be called a step parallelism con-

sisting of three layers. If that is the case, the double process of mediation of their request through the two disciples in this step parallelism seems to have an effect to compel a feeling of the listener/reader wanting to know the outcome.³⁹

Jesus' answer to the request of the Greeks starts with a thematic statement declaring the coming of the hour (12.23) followed by an extended monologue of Jesus (12.24-28a). As in the majority of the sayings of Jesus in the Synoptics⁴⁰ and the Johannine Jesus,⁴¹ *parallelismus membrorum* is one of the prevalent stylistic features of his sayings in this pericope. Apart from v 23, most of the sayings of Jesus in the pericope show a pattern of parallelism of one kind or another (v 24 [antithetical], v 25 [antithetical], v 26 [synthetical]; v 31 [synthetical], vv 35c-36c [abcdb'ac': synthetic]).

Following the double ἀμήν formula, Jesus' sayings in vv 24-26 exhibit three highly articulate binary parallelisms. Like the majority of the double ἀμήν sayings in the Fourth Gospel, 12.24-27 consists in perspicuous syntactical parallelisms stating with a simple conditional sentences (v 24: ἐὰν + protasis + apodosis), a substantival participial phrase (v 25: ὁ φιλιῶν...), and a conditional clause with τις (v 26: ἐὰν...τις...).⁴²

The sequence of parallelisms is abruptly broken in vv 27ff, which in turn exhibits a structure of the Johannine misunderstanding and irony: an event or a saying (v 28) causes a split among the audience concerning its meaning (v 29), which compels Jesus' response (v 30).

Jesus' saying in v 31 returns to a binary parallelism (synthetic), which is followed by a conditional sentence (v 32) leading to another pattern of the Johannine misunderstanding and irony (vv 33-34) (II.4). Jesus' response to the misunderstanding crowd

39 Cf. Watson, *Hebrew Poetry*, 154.

40 Riesner, *Jesus*, 398, observes that approximately 80% of Jesus sayings in the Synoptics are either synonymous, antithetic, synthetic or climactic parallelisms.

41 See P.S.-C. Chang, 'Repetitions and Variations', 105-115.

42 It is followed by a conditional relative clause (John 3.3, 5; 5.24; 8.51; cf. Mark 3.28, 29; 9.41; 10.29; 11.23), a sentence starting with an articular substantival participial phrase (John 6.47; 8.34; 10.1; 13.20; 14.12), and a simple conditional clause (John 5.53; 12.24; 16.23). So Berger, *Die Amen-Worte*, 102.

(vv 35-36) consists of a theme sentence, followed by a synthetic parallelism with a sentence inserted between them serving a double-duty to both the first and the second parts of the couplet.

1.4 Conclusion

The frequent use of parallelisms gives the pericope a sense of *syntactic* coherence (coherence in *form*), while at the same time contributing to its apparently fragmentary nature by producing distinctive syntactic and semantic units within the pericope. But this does not necessarily mean that each sub-unit stands isolated from the others in the pericope. D. Hellholm's comment is appropriate here: 'By delimiting text sequences of different ranks, however, the various text-units do not stand apart from, and are not unrelated to, each other, but they are in fact linked to each other; only so is it possible to discover their interrelationship and to recognise their syntagmatic function in the overall structure of the text being analysed'.⁴³ A *syntagm* is concerned with the linear arrangement of words, phrases and clauses in the syntax, and a syntagmatic function is to do with holding syntactically between units that may contribute to form contexts.⁴⁴ How these distinctive units of parallelisms are interrelated syntagmatically and semantically is to be asked in the following chapter. It would suffice here to say that the two patterns of misunderstanding and irony (12.28-30, 31-34f) would point to an elaborate literary design of the pericope. Furthermore, our investigation of the overall structure of the pericope will reveal a literary structure which embraces in a unified form both the syntactic and semantic levels of the text under discussion. This literary structure is what is generally known as chiasmic, or as we prefer to call it, concentric, to a consideration of which we will now turn.

How John 12.20-36 is to be understood in *content* and *function*, or *semantically* and *pragmatically* to use text-linguistic terminology, is a crucial question to be asked in

43 Hellholm, 'The Problem', 54.

44 See M. Silva, *Biblical Words*, 119-120, 141-143, 195; M.C. de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 37.

the following. While semantics is concerned with a study of the text itself with respect to its meaning in its vocabulary, sentences, units paragraphs, pragmatics is concerned with a study of the function of the text in its socio-historical circumstances.⁴⁵

John 12.20-36:

⁴⁵ Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 13, 16. But see de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 37.

- 20 Ἦσαν δὲ Ἕλληνές τινες ἐκ τῶν ἀναβαινόντων
 ἵνα προσκυνήσωσιν ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ·
- 21 A οὗτοι οὖν προσῆλθον Φιλίππῳ τῷ ἀπὸ Βηθσαϊδᾶ τῆς Γαλιλαίας,
 B καὶ ἡρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες,
 Κύριε, θέλομεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἰδεῖν.
- 22 a ἔρχεται ὁ Φίλιππος
 b καὶ λέγει τῷ Ἀνδρέᾳ,
 a' ἔρχεται Ἀνδρέας καὶ Φίλιππος
 b' καὶ λέγουσιν τῷ Ἰησοῦ.
- 23 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀποκρίνεται αὐτοῖς λέγων,
- [theme] Ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα ἵνα δοξασθῇ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.
 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν,
- 24 a εἰάν μὴ ὁ κόκκος τοῦ σίτου πεσὼν εἰς τὴν γῆν ἀποθάνη,
 b αὐτὸς μόνος μένει·
 a' εἰάν δὲ ἀποθάνη,
 b' πολὺν καρπὸν φέρει.
- 25 a ὁ φιλῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ
 b ἀπολλύει αὐτήν,
 a' καὶ ὁ μισῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ
 b' εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον φυλάξει αὐτήν.
- 26 c εἰάν ἐμοί τις διακονῇ, ἐμοὶ ἀκολουθεῖτω,
 d καὶ ὅπου εἰμὶ ἐγὼ ἐκεῖ καὶ ὁ διάκονος ὁ ἐμὸς ἔσται·
 c' εἰάν τις ἐμοὶ διακονῇ
 d' τιμήσει αὐτὸν ὁ πατήρ.
- 27 Νῦν ἡ ψυχὴ μου τετάρακται,
 καὶ τί εἶπω;
 Πάτερ, σῶσόν με ἐκ τῆς ὥρας ταύτης;
 ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον εἰς τὴν ὥραν ταύτην.
- 28 πάτερ, δόξασόν σου τὸ ὄνομα.
 ἦλθεν οὖν φωνὴ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ,
 Καὶ ἐδόξασα καὶ ἄλιν δοξάσω.
- 29 ὁ οὖν ὄχλος ὁ ἐστὼς καὶ ἀκούσας ἔλεγεν
 βροντὴν γεγενέσθαι,
 ἄλλοι ἔλεγον,
 Ἄγγελος αὐτῷ λελάληκεν.
- 30 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν,
 Οὐ δι' ἐμὲ ἡ φωνὴ αὕτη γέγονεν ἀλλὰ δι' ὑμᾶς.
- 31 a νῦν κρίσις ἐστὶν τοῦ κόσμου τούτου,
 a' νῦν ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἐκβληθήσεται ἔξω·
 32 καγὼ εἰάν ὑψωθῶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς,
 πάντας ἐλκύσω πρὸς ἐμαυτόν.
- 33 τοῦτο δὲ ἔλεγεν σημαίνων ποῖω θανάτῳ ἡμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν.
- 34 ἀπεκρίθη οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ ὄχλος,
 Ἥμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα,
 καὶ πῶς λέγεις σὺ ὅτι δεῖ ὑψωθῆναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;
 τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;
- 35 εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς,
 Ἔτι μικρὸν χρόνον τὸ φῶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστίν.
 ab περιπατεῖτε ὡς τὸ φῶς ἔχετε,
 c ἵνα μὴ σκοτία ὑμᾶς καταλάβῃ·
 d καὶ ὁ περιπατῶν ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ οὐκ οἶδεν ποῦ ὑπάγει.
 ba' ὡς τὸ φῶς ἔχετε, πιστεύετε εἰς τὸ φῶς,
 c' ἵνα υἱοὶ φωτὸς γένησθε.
- 36 Ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς, καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἐκρύβη ἀπ' αὐτῶν.

CONCENTRIC STRUCTURE*2.1 Introduction and Proposed Structures*

As an initial observation, we have made notice of some interesting signs of a concentric structure in John 12.20-36. Commentators have encountered several aporias or disconnections in it, which led some like Bultmann to conclude that the pericope is a badly redacted unit originating from several sources. At the same time, several exegetes have recognised some parallels overarching some verses, notably between v 24 and v 32. R. Bultmann, despite his fragmentary view of this text, observes that 'in a certain way vv. 27-33 run parallel to vv. 23-26. The ὥρα of the δοξασθήναι, of which v. 23 had already spoken, is more exactly defined in vv. 27f.; and its significance, of which v. 24 had spoken allusively, is described in the language of the myth in vv. 31f'.¹ Going further than this, a few exegetes have found a concentric or chiasmic structure of one kind or another. X. Léon-Dufour² has maintained that a chiasmic structure is found in vv 23-32, which is schematised as follows:

		v 23		
		The hour of the glorification		
a grain of wheat				
falling on the earth	v 24		I will be lifted up	v 32
			from the earth	
To hate his life	v 25		v 31	the judgement of
in this world			this world	
My Father will	v 26		v 28	Father, glorify
honour him			your name	
		v 27		
		The 'now' of the hour		

Léon-Dufour's treatment focuses only on verbal correspondences, and therefore lacks a methodological meticulousness that is required in such a study. V 26 and v 28 do not

1 Bultmann, *John*, 427.

2 Léon-Dufour, 'Trias Chiasmiques', 249-251, who is followed by de la Potterie, 'L'exaltation', 462-463.

correspond to each other as clearly as he suggests (viz. *δοξάζειν* vs. *τιμᾶν*). Léon-Dufour excludes vv 29-30 from his chiasmic construction because he thinks that it is more to do with vv 33-35 (the crowd's misunderstanding). Vv 20-21 and 35-36 are given no place, being regarded as loosely connected to the rest of passage.³ Despite these deficits, however, the correspondence between v 24 and v 32 and that between v 25 and v 31 are very likely.

Kühschelm⁴ contends that John 12.20-36 is part of a larger literary unit of 12.20-50 consisting of two halves (vv 20-34 and vv 35-50) that thematically correspond to one another. The correspondences he finds are 21d//37a (?); 23cd,28//41b (glorify-glory); 25d//50ab (eternal life); 26a-d//35cd,abc (serve and follow Jesus, and walk as having the light); 26ef//44c-45b; 27,28//49-50b; 29,34//37b; 31//35b-e; 31//36ef,48; 32//46-47; 34bc//35b. According to Kühschelm, these two halves are connected together especially by a structural device of misunderstanding and reply (29/30-32 and 34/35-36c) and by the semantic contrast between v 34b ('the Christ remains forever') and v 35b ('The light is with you for a little longer'). Kühschelm's proposal is tenuous in that it is inconsistent to assign the first structural element of misunderstanding and reply in the first half (v 29/vv 30-32) and its second element split into the two halves (v 34/vv 35-36c). Furthermore, most of his correspondences are merely partial affinities and are not strong enough to constitute a parallel structure. His proposed symmetric structure (12.27-34) with vv 27-28 (a theme) and v 29+v 34 (misunderstandings) corresponding to v 30 (correction by Jesus)+v 33 (commentary) respectively has little substance.

The above survey reveals that there is no persuasive literary structure of John 12.20-36 proposed, and that no successful explanation is given as to what aspect(s) of language or literature has led many to a fragment theory of one kind or another. Yet the chiasmic structure proposed by Léon-Dufour, though not entirely agreeable, points out that there are at least two probable corresponding passages, which suggests at least a chiasmic or concentric structure in our pericope. In fact, we shall propose a concentric structure of John 12.20-36, based on the following criteria.

3 Also Moloney, *Son of Man*, 175.

4 Kühschelm, *Verstockung*, 17-22.

2.2 *Criteria for Identifying a Concentric Structure*

Studies on concentric structures have been received with some suspicion in New Testament scholarship, perhaps partly due to the lack of a definitive terminology in classical rhetoric and modern literary criticism and partly due to the use of less sophisticated methodologies and sometimes idiosyncratic applications of them.⁵ Classic rhetoricians and modern literary critics have not reached agreement on any single term.⁶ But recent surge of interest in this topic has pointed to the possibility of carefully extracting such a structure.

A concentric structure may be defined as a literary structure which exhibits a bilateral symmetry of four or more layers corresponding in terms of either verbal, syntactical elements, themes, or concepts, or any combination of them, and which has an apex at its centre.⁷ It is a device for literary artistry achieving aesthetic effects, a mnemonic device, and/or a structuring device distinguishing a section from another and unifying material within it.⁸ A concentric structure 'is a dynamic, fluid concept that provides a framework of the passage into which other patterns may well be interwoven'.⁹ Its total meaning is incomplete unless it is understood in conjunction with its corresponding member.¹⁰

The chiasmic and concentric artistry was a common feature in ancient literature, both Greek and Latin.¹¹ It is also widely utilised in the OT, early Jewish literature, and the NT.¹² In the Fourth Gospel in particular exegetes have found concentric structures widely in use, starting from the Prologue.¹³

5 For a survey of studies on concentric structures in the NT, see Thomson, 'Chiasmus', 24-59.

6 Thomson, 'Chiasmus' 12-16.

7 Cf. Thomson, 'Chiasmus', 62-63.

8 Parunak, 'Typesetting', 162f, 168; Thomson, 'Chiasmus', 69-70.

9 Thomson, 'Chiasmus', 73.

10 Talbert, 'Artistry and Theology', 366.

11 Cf. Talbert, 'Artistry and Theology', 361-363.

12 See Talbert, 'Artistry and Theology', 360-362. Culpepper, 'The Pivot', 7 n29.

13 See e.g. R.A. Culpepper, 'The Pivot', 1-31. Other concentric sections are also pointed out, e.g. John 13.1-35; 13.36-14.31b; 15.1-17.26. See Talbert, 'Artistry and Theology', 358; G. Ostenstad, 'The Structure', 33-55.

To identify the corresponding relations within a concentric structure, we employ the following four criteria:

- (1) a verbal correspondence,¹⁴
- (2) a conceptual correspondence,¹⁵
- (3) a thematic correspondence,¹⁶
- (4) a syntactic correspondence (which is subordinate to the previous criteria).¹⁷

In addition, the dispersing of associated concepts or themes could be a sign of correspondence as in parallelism of Hebrew poetry.¹⁸ It is also possible to find corresponding two layers standing in vivid contrast as far as their meaning is concerned. As supportive criteria we would add two considerations: (a) 'Identical or corresponding ideas may occasionally be distributed in such a fashion that they occur in the extremes and at the centre of a given system'.¹⁹ (b) Normally corresponding layers have approximately the same length; some explanation is needed when this is not the case.²⁰

These criteria work in a cumulative way to establish a correspondence between passages, and no single criterion taken in isolation is adequate.²¹ In applying these criteria we must bear in mind the nature and the limitations of such a research. Like any other literary study, the procedure of finding a concentric structure is unavoidably circular,²² but we can avoid pitfalls of reading the structure of our cultural codes onto a given passage by carefully applying the above criteria with intra-textual and inter-textual considerations.

A difficulty raised by modern exegetes is how the readers or the hearers could have recognised such a rather complex pattern when they read or heard such a text. Taking into account the educational tradition of the Hellenistic world in Roman times in

14 Clark, 'Criteria', 65.

15 'Conceptual parallels may be identified which are more specific than parallels of content or theme and yet do not qualify as verbal (or language) parallels' (Culpepper, 'The Pivot', 8).

16 Content is never completely identical in two sections. So it requires a certain abstraction of content to see parallelism between the two. 'A series of two or more consecutive catchwords may be taken as a phrase and therefore as part of the content' (Clark, 'Criteria', 66).

17 Cf. Kugel, *Biblical Poetry*, 49-50.

18 Cf. Kugel, *Biblical Poetry*, 55.

19 Thomson, 'Chiasmus', 67.

20 Thomson, 'Chiasmus', 67.

21 Clark, 'Criteria', 66. Cautions which Culpepper, 'The Pivot', 8, lists in searching a concentric pattern is helpful: (a) 'one should not generally expect perfect symmetry or complete adherence to the identifiable pattern'; (b) 'a given passage may give evidence of two or even three structures'.

22 Tuckett, *Interpretation*, 70.

which memorisation of the alphabet in a bilateral symmetric fashion was practiced²³, and the plausibility that a symmetry is inherent in human nature, it is not surprising to find such a structure cross-culturally. A more important observation is concerned with the oral culture of the Hellenistic world in which the Gospel was read and heard. H.I. Marrou states that 'Hellenistic culture was above all things a rhetorical culture'.²⁴ In such a culture, although 'the rhetorical qualities inherent in the text were originally intended to have an impact on first hearing', a text was read aloud again and again 'and thus took on qualities of a frozen oral text in which a hearer might remember passages yet to come'.²⁵ Thus 'there was no borderline between the written and the spoken word'.²⁶ Emphasising the importance of 'recitation composition' as progymnastic composition in Hellenistic education that is an introductory to rhetoric culture, V.K. Robbins concludes that 'writing and speaking are closely intertwined in much Mediterranean literature'.²⁷ Furthermore, the secondary educational tradition in the first century Hellenistic world, which emphasised a detailed scrutiny of the text written or memorised, might have made it possible for such a structure to become recognisable.²⁸ It is true that the number of those who could receive such education was limited; but the influence of the dominant rhetorical culture may have been felt among those who were not properly educated. It is a well-known fact that an ancient Roman provision of education was not necessarily restricted to the 'free'; there were many primary teachers, grammarians, orators and philosophers who came from a slave status.²⁹ Malherbe's comment on Pauline communities that awareness of rhetoric would not necessarily have created a conspicuous social division within a community may be applicable

23 Primary school pupils learned the alphabet forwards, backwards (from Ω to Α), and both ways at once (ΑΩ, ΒΨ, ΓΧ...ΜΝ). See Marrou, *Education*, 151.

24 Marrou, *Education*, 195.

25 Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 5-6.

26 Marrou, *Education*, 195.

27 Robbins, 'Writing', 147.

28 So Thomson, 'Chiasmus', 65. Ancient education in Greek (at a secondary school level) involved four stages: 1) textual criticism; 2) expressive reading by which grammarians distinguish words in a *scriptio continua*, determine punctuations, identify phrases and sentences, identify interrogative sentences, and make lines scan according to the laws of prosody and metre; 3) literal and literary explanation of form and content; 4) a moral judgement of the text. See Marrou, *Education*, 165-170. This is almost in parallel to the secondary education in Rome. See Bonner, *Education*, 227-249.

29 See Bonner, *Education*, 34-46. Cicero, *De Oratore*, I.4.14; and Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* X.1.43; XII.10.40, refer to 'natural eloquence' of untrained orators.

to the Johannine community as well.³⁰ Therefore, we could assume that a concentric structure may have been intuitively sensed or felt by the hearers of the Graeco-Roman world in the first century CE, but not consciously perceived until after reflection.³¹

2.3 John 12.20-36 in its Concentric Structure

We propose that it is highly probable that John 12.20-36 exhibits an extended concentric structure with four corresponding layers (circles) with a pivot in its centre:

- A The coming of the Greeks is depicted with the language, *προσελθεῖν* and *ἰδεῖν*, that symbolically implies 'faith' elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel. Cf. the verb 'to worship'. (vv 20-22)
- B The hour has come for 'the Son of man' to be glorified. (v 23) The glorification of the Son of man would be a reference to his enthronement (cf. 1 Enoch 51.3).
- C A grain of wheat is to fall onto 'the earth' and to 'die' to bear much fruit (v 24).
- D One's hatred of life in 'this world' for the reward of eternal life; Jesus' servant is to follow to where he is, to receive honour from God (vv 25-26).
- E 'Now' of Jesus' agony. 'This hour' for which Jesus has come to achieve the glorification of the Father's name. A *Bath Qol* for the sake of the crowd (vv 27-30).
- D' 'Now' the judgement of 'this world'; the expulsion of the ruler of 'this world' (v 31).
- C' Jesus is to 'be lifted up' from 'the earth' = to 'die' a death so as to draw all to himself (vv 32-33).
- B' 'The Son of man' (2x) who is to be lifted up = the Messiah who remains forever. The irony here implies that by being lifted up the Son of man returns to the eternal reign with the Father (v 34; cf. 17.5)
- A' Call to 'walk'/'believe' in the Light (vv 35-36).

Since there are at least two corresponding layers (A//A' and D//D') that are not apparent *prima facie*, we would start with a treatment of the seemingly more obvious ones and then move on to the less obvious ones.

C (v 24) and C' (vv 32-33)

Although Léon-Dufour and others have found a correspondence between vv 24 and 32,³² we consider v 24 and vv 32-33 as corresponding layers. Why is v 33 to be understood together with v 32? In the light of the literary structure of Johannine

30 See Malherbe, *Social Aspects*, 54-57. Rhetoric was taught at secondary schools in Roman education (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* II.1.1ff). See Bonner, *Education*, 252-253.

31 Talbert, 'Artistry', 365.

32 Cf. Onuki, *Gemeinde und Welt*, 60-61, sees a correspondence between v 24 and v 32, whilst Coppens, 'Le Fils de l'Homme', 68, between vv 24-25 and v 32.

misunderstanding, v 33 an implicit commentary is most likely a commentary on Jesus' saying which the crowd in v 34 misunderstands, namely, v 32. Evidently the crowd misunderstands Jesus on the basis of *ὑψωθῆναι*, since its meaning has to be explained by the narrator for the sake of the reader.³³

When the link between 12.32 and 33 is established, the correspondence between C and C' can be clearly seen.

(1) The verbal correspondences are very strong between C and C', because of the references to Jesus' death: 'to die'/'to die' in v 24 and 'death'/'to die' in v 33. Also there are references to 'the earth' in both in relation to Jesus' death, though different prepositions are attached (*εἰς* and *ἐκ*).³⁴

(2) As is suggested already by its verbal correspondence, the verb 'to die' and its nominal form constitute a very strong thematic correspondence between these verses, occurring twice in each layer. Thus, it is evident that these verses are mainly concerned with Jesus' death and its consequences.

(a) In v 24 Jesus' death is depicted in a metaphorical language: a grain of wheat falling onto the earth, which refers to its death (*ἀποθνήσκειν*). On the other hand, although v 32 does not give any direct clue to the meaning of the metaphorical term *ὑψοῦν*, the narrator soon makes it clear in v 33 that it refers to Jesus' death.³⁵

(b) The consequences of Jesus' death seem to be orientated soteriologically and missiologically. In v 24 Jesus speaks of his fruit-bearing death using a metaphor of grain of wheat, while v 32 relates his being lifted up with his gathering all to himself.

(3) There is also a syntactical correspondence between v 24 and v 32.³⁶ The fact that in both verses a metaphorical reference to Jesus' death is expressed in the *ἐὲν* protasis and its soteriological (and missiological) consequences in the apodosis confirms in a supportive manner the above thematic correspondences.

33 A similar implicit commentary in 18.32 makes it clear that a Roman way of capital punishment, namely, crucifixion, not the Jewish stoning, is implied by *ὑψωθῆναι*.

34 Léon-Dufour, 'Trias Chiasmés', 47

35 Being an implicit commentary, v 33 does not show any stylistic resemblance to the other segments in the pericope.

36 Cf. Onuki, *Gemeinde und Welt*, 61. A conditional sentence with *ἐὰν* occurs in John 12.26 as well.

Thus the correspondence between C and C' is demonstrated with a strong support of multiple criteria.

B (v 23) and B' (v 34)

Despite the fact that John 12.34 consists in the argument of the crowd who misunderstand Jesus' statement in v 32, its content can, because of an irony involved here, be received positively with some care in understanding the narrator's intention.

(1) Verbally, these verses are the only places in the pericope where the references to 'the Son of man' occur.

(2) Apart from this, B and B' appear to lack further correspondences. Even if a popular view that *δοξάζονται* and *ὕψωθῆναι* placed as a pair as in Isa 52.13 constitutes a correspondence is correct, it remains at least ambivalent without further reasoning. However, a thematic correspondence can be at least suggested. In their misunderstanding, it is suggested, the crowd found the idea of the lifting up of the Son of man conflicting with their expectation of the everlasting Messiah. Since it is virtually agreed that by using misunderstandings the evangelist conveys ironically the deeper dimension of the truth missed by them (cf. 6.42; 8.33), there must be a deeper meaning to the misunderstanding here as well. We would argue that the lifting up of Jesus the Son of man ironically proves his being the everlasting Messiah. Two observations are in order:

- (i) The combination of the Davidic Messiah and the Danielic son of man figure is not uncommon in the Jewish apocalyptic literature prior to and contemporary with the Fourth Gospel, e.g. the *Similitudes of Enoch* (circa 70 CE) and 4 Ezra (circa 100 CE).
- (ii) There would be no doubt that Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem points to the coming of the everlasting kingdom of the Davidic Messiah (12.12-15). Consequently, the crowd's identification of Jesus who in v 23 refers to himself as 'Son of man' with the Davidic Messiah whose reign is expected to last everlastingly is not ungrounded. When we turn to the relation of the glorification of the Son of man in B to the everlasting Messiah//the Son of man in B', there is a point of agreement. Although we have to be cautious here, a parallel can be found in 1

Enoch 51.3, where the idea of the enthronement of the messianic figure, the Elect One identified with the Son of man and the Anointed One, is coterminous with his glorification.³⁷

To sum up, the verbal correspondence of 'the Son of man', though not sufficient by itself, can be a basis to view v 23 and v 34 as corresponding layers. Also, the idea of the enthronement of the messianic figure, i.e. the Son of man/the Messiah, for the everlasting reign marked by his glorification is not unknown in early Judaism and would lend support to this correspondence.

A (vv 20-22) and A' (vv 35-36)

John 12.20-22 and 35-36 are often conceived of as redactional additions, because they are thought to be loosely connected with the rest of the pericope. As is suggested by the fact that this relation is scarcely noted, A and A' is one of the most difficult correspondences to establish. In fact, there is no clear verbal or syntactical match between them. But a closer look would reveal a striking conceptual and thematic correspondences between them.

(1) At a superficial level, there are at least two conceptual correspondences observable. One is the use of the verbs describing movements: while *προσέρχασθαι* and *ἔρχασθαι* (2x) are used in A, *περιπατεῖν*, though in a metaphorical sense for faith, is used twice in A'. The other is the use of optical terminology: *ὁρᾶν* for seeing Jesus in A and the poetical imagery of to have the light as the antonym of not knowing where to go in A'. Of course, all these can happen in any possible circumstances and are not sufficient enough to establish a correspondence only by themselves.

(2) As for a thematic relationship between these two layers, there are some difficulties with regard to A; so we start with the seemingly more straightforward A'. Jesus's call to faith, directed towards the confused Jewish crowd in 12.35-36 reflects the covenantal concept of two ways because of the use of *περιπατεῖν* in conjunction with the symbolical contrast of light and darkness. What is demanded is 'to walk in the

³⁷ At the eschatological judgement and the resurrection of the dead, the Elect One is said to 'sit on my [the Lord of the Spirits'] throne', whereas the Lord has given him the secrets of wisdom and glorified him (51.3).

light' and 'to believe in the light', which are set in parallel. As the blessings and the curses of the new covenant, which is based not on the Law but on Jesus, the Johannine theology of two ways expresses the urgent adherence to Jesus the Light appropriate to the new, eschatological age.

On the other hand, in A the theme of faith in Jesus is suggested in a very interesting manner. Both *προσέρχασθαι* and *ιδεῖν* used to speak of the Greeks in the introductory narration are closely associated with faith in the symbolic literary world of John.³⁸

(i) Although it is virtually neglected with regard to John 12.20-22, the symbolic nature of the expression 'to come to Jesus' in the Fourth Gospel ought to be accounted for.³⁹ In John 3.2 Nicodemus came to Jesus: *ἦλθεν πρὸς αὐτόν* (cf. 7.50), whilst at the end of Jesus' discourse a similar phrase recurs: 'he who does what is right comes to the light' (*ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν φῶς*) (v 21). Lindars aptly comments on this correspondence: 'The present discourse leads to the idea of coming to the light to be exposed, verse 21. Thus Nicodemus' visit at night is a search for truth in which he himself will be exposed. It is a detail which only becomes meaningful when the whole piece has been read'.⁴⁰ This *inclusio* sets the theme of the section as the symbolic coming of Nicodemus from the darkness of night to Jesus the light; an interpretation adopted by both Origen and Augustine.⁴¹ The coming of the Greeks at the beginning and the light and darkness imagery at the end corresponds very well to the inclusion of 3.1 and 3.21. Furthermore, in John 6 the 'coming to Jesus' has explicitly a symbolic meaning; it is often equated with faith in him.⁴² A first such example occurs in 6.35 (cf. 7.37f), where Jesus remarks in a synthetic parallelism:

38 Cf. John's use of certain verbs with symbolic meanings in John 13, see Culpepper, 'The Johannine Hypodeigma', 137; Dunn, 'The Washing', 248.

39 Despite the fact that *προσέρχασθαι* + a dative noun occurs only here in the entire Gospel, it would be equal to the *ἔρχασθαι πρὸς* + an accusative noun. Out of the thirty-four occasions in which this construction appears, twenty times it is used with Jesus (or sometimes 'the light') as its object. Only once it is used negatively in the context of the soldiers mocking Jesus (19.3); otherwise it is always used in a positive context (1.47; 3.2, 20, 21, 26; 4.30, 40; 5.40; 6.5, 17, 35, 37, 44, 45, 65; 7.37, 50; 10.41; 11.29; 19.39). It is used to describe a responsive action of Nathanael and of the Samaritans to the witnesses of Philip and the Samaritan woman respectively (1.47; 4.30).

40 Lindars, *John*, 149. See also Barrett, *John*, 205; Brown, *John*, 1.130; Morris, *John*, 211.

41 Origen, *Johannescommentar*, GCS 4.509: *μᾶλλον δ', ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐναντίρρητον, διὰ τοῦτο νυκτὸς προσελήλυθεν, ἐπεὶ περ ἄγνωστον ἔχων τὴν περὶ θεοῦ ᾧ προσήρχετο οὕτω πεφώτιστο*; Augustine, XI.5, p.76.

42 See Carson, *Divine Sovereignty*, 184-186; Schnackenburg, *John*, 1.564.

ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ἐμὲ οὐ μὴ πεινάσῃ,

καὶ ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ μὴ διψήσῃ πώποτε.⁴³

It is noteworthy that Jesus says thus in the context interpreting the feeding of the multitude who had 'come to' (*ἔρχεται πρὸς*) him (6.5). That 'to come to' Jesus contains something more than its ordinary, physical sense is attested in 6.37: 'All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out'. Furthermore, in 6.44-45 Jesus says: 'No one can come to (*ἐλθεῖν πρὸς*) me unless the Father who sent me draws (*ἐλκύσῃ*) him; and I will raise him at the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught by God" (Isa 54.13). Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to (*ἔρχεται πρὸς*) me' (cf. 6.60ff).⁴⁴

Thus, the verbal phrase 'to come to' Jesus in the earlier part of the Fourth Gospel is used predominantly in a symbolic sense implying the faith in Jesus. Although this strong symbolic use of *ἔρχεσθαι* + *πρὸς* + a pronoun is scarce after John 8, it is without doubt that the use of this construction here triggers the symbolic meaning it has acquired earlier.⁴⁵

(ii) In its specifically Johannine use, the verb 'to see', for which the evangelist seems to use *ὁρᾶν*, *θεωρεῖν*, *θεᾶσθαι*, and *βλέπειν* indiscriminately, is concerned with the vision of the revelation of God in Jesus as well as faith. As F. Mussner rightly observes, 'seeing is a term for an encounter with Jesus and related both to seeing the epiphany of the glory of the divine Logos and Son and to faith; it is used with regard to eye-witnessing the Jesus of history'.⁴⁶ Such seeing of the revelation of the glory of God or of Christ is explicit in the prologue: 'And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we beheld (*ἑθεασάμεθα*) his glory, glory of the only Son from the Father' (1.14; cf. 1.51; [3.13]; 6.62; 11.40; 12.44-45; 16.16f, 19). The

43 Cf. Prov 9.5; Sir 24.19: 'Come to me (*προσέλθετε πρὸς με*), you who desire me, and fill yourselves with my fruits [produce]'. Cf. Sir 24.21: 'Those who eat me [the personified wisdom] will still be hungry, and those who drink me will still be thirsty'. By claiming the supremacy and finality of Jesus/Wisdom, John 6.35 (7.35f) would have a polemical or apologetic thrust with respect to the wisdom tradition.

44 Carson, *Divine Sovereignty*, 185, argues here for the idea of soteriological predestination, while Lindars, *John*, 263, denies this interpretation.

45 A distant echo of John 6.44-45 can be heard by the reader in the coming of the Greeks to see Jesus at 12.20f. It may be inferred that the Greeks come to see Jesus because they (having heard and learned from the Father) are drawn by God.

46 Mussner, *The Historical Jesus*, 18-23.

most direct combination of seeing with believing appears in Jesus words at 6.40: 'For this is the will of my Father, that every one who sees (*ὁ θεωρῶν*) the Son and believes in him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day'. It is true that seeing and believing Jesus cannot be easily equated because not every seeing of Jesus results in faith in him (6.36). Hence, there is a division among those who see Jesus. As Mussner notes, 'the unbelievers see and yet do not "see"; believers on the contrary "see" behind the earthly appearance the mystery which is manifested'.⁴⁷ Therefore, seeing is more than a sense or intellectual perception (6.40, 62; 12.45; 14.19; 16.10, 16f.,19); it is 'a further seeing' which 'involves a submission in faith to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ'.⁴⁸

Yet Zahn, Westcott and Bultmann have argued that *ὁρᾶν* in 12.21 is used for ordinary physical sight as in John 1.39; 5.6; 6.22, 24; 12.9.⁴⁹ The very frequent use of it and its cognate verbs (63x) with its ordinary (non-symbolic) meaning in the gospel appears to discourage such an interpretation in John 12.21. However, if we examine each passage carefully, this claim is not so strong as it appears. First, that *ιδεῖν* has a symbolic meaning does not contradict with its having a physical sense (1.39). Second, the verb 'to see' has a symbolic meaning particularly when the object of seeing is Jesus.⁵⁰ Third, a symbolic meaning is evoked when it occurs particularly in conjunction with the verb 'to come to' (cf. 6.44-45).

(iii) The verb *προσκυβεῖν* is used predominantly in the discussion of true worship in the Fourth Gospel. In the story of the Samaritan woman, which focuses on the issue of the true worship, *προσκυβεῖν* is used nine times out of its eleven occurrences in the Gospel (4.20-24). A radically new perspective on worship is offered by Jesus: 'the hour is coming when neither on this mountain (Gerezim) nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.... But the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him;

47 Mussner, *The Historical Jesus*, 22-23.

48 Michaelis, *TDNT* 5.363. Schnackenburg, *John*, 1.565, lists only 6.40 and 12.45.

49 Zahn, *Das Evangelium*, 513. Both Westcott, *St. John*, 180, and Bultmann, *John*, 423, find a pejorative sense in the use of *ιδεῖν* in 12.21, because the Greeks' concern is not with the Messiah but with the historical Jesus. But to distinguish the Messiah and the earthly Jesus is unwarranted in the Fourth Gospel.

50 No symbolic meaning can be found in 5.6; 6.22, 24; 12.9.

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit' (4.21, 23-24). Another occasion is provided by 9.38 where the issue of true worship seems to be picked up.⁵¹ In John 12, the Greeks who came to see Jesus are said to be Passover pilgrims who came to worship in Jerusalem. Although they are not portrayed as being aware of the coming of the new era of true worship, their appearance is depicted in a term loaded with a theological significance in the Gospel.

If the reader is immersed into the symbolic narrative world of the Fourth Gospel, the symbolic meanings of these terms cannot be easily dismissed. Rather, it looks like a deliberate literary technique of the evangelist who invites the reader into the symbolic world he creates. This would provide a reason for the seemingly abrupt transition to Jesus' words voiced at the news of their coming in v 23. In addition, we must emphasise the significance of the combination of the verbs to come to and to see, which leads the reader to expect the revelation of God in Jesus, a theme in line with the overall structure of this cycle starting from John 11.54. Therefore the correspondence between A and A' becomes apparent, since in both layers the theme of faith is in operation in the use of the verbs *προσκυνεῖν*, *ἔρχεται πρὸς* and *ὄρᾶν*, on the one hand, and *περιπατεῖν/πιστεύειν*, on the other.

D (vv 25-26) and D' (v 31)

Perhaps the apparently most difficult pair of sections to find a correspondence is vv 25-26 and v 31, for few commentators have taken cognizance of it. Yet a closer reading reveals an impressive correspondence between them. First of all, vv 25-26 is to be understood as constituting a single layer. This is evident in the light of its synoptic parallels (Matt 10.38-39; 16.24-25; Mark 8.34-35; cf. Luke 17.33), in which to hate one's life on earth for the sake of the gospel is indicative of following Jesus.⁵²

51 When read in contrast to the end of ch 8, *προσκυνεῖν* of the blind man is telling. In ch 8, when the Jews rejected the one who revealed himself as *ἐγὼ εἰμι*, Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. If we understand this symbolically in rabbinic terminology, the divine *shekinah* left the temple at the rejection by his people. In ch 9, on the other hand, the healed man believes and worships the Son of man, who reveals himself in a manner comparable to that of the epiphany of God to Moses (9.29, 37). Here a true worship is achieved by the former blind man who believes in Jesus the Son of man.

52 Since it is Jesus' death and its consequences which v 24 speaks of, vv 25-26 should be treated as a unit distinct from, though related to, v 24. V 31 consists of a synthetic parallelism and thus clearly constitutes a unit.

When we consider its relationship to v 31, the correspondences appear to be very minimal in comparison to others. But at least two relations are evident.

(1) Verbal correspondence between these sections is scarce except the references to 'this world', which occurs only in v 25 and v 31 within the pericope.

(2) Stylistically, though not a strong correspondence, both D and D' consist of parallelisms: D with a pair of parallelisms and D' with one.

(3) It is a thematic consideration that reveals an unquestionable correspondence between these layers. The content of these layers corresponds to a contrast of reward and punishment commonly observable in the apocalyptic, end-time judgement scenes in early Jewish apocalyptic literature and the NT.⁵³

(a) *Early Judaism*: In early Jewish apocalypses, M. Hengel notes, 'The counterpart to resurrection or eternal life was judgement'.⁵⁴ Not only resurrection and eternal life but also exaltation to the heavenly realm is associated with judgement of the evil as its counterpart. Nickelsburg has demonstrated that the contrast between vindication of the righteous and condemnation of the wicked or Satan is an essential element of what he calls 'a traditional judgment scene', although employed with variations in each book (Dan 12.3; AsMos 10; Jub 23.27-31; TJud 25.3-5; 1 Enoch 104.2-4; 4 Ezra 7.32-37⁵⁵). In these texts, Nickelsburg remarks, 'the judgment scene is the climax of an apocalypse which has culminated with a description of persecution. The judgment is the specific, ad hoc adjudication of this unjust persecution.'⁵⁶ In such judgement scenes, vindication for the righteous suffering of the saints is presented by the contrast of (i) rewards for the saints and (ii) condemnation of the evil.

(i) Typical of the rewards for the (suffering) saints or the martyrs in the Jewish literature of the Second Temple period are resurrection, immortality, exalta-

53 C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 365, for example, while discussing the apocalypticism in the NT, fails to see this apocalyptic antithesis and denies the apocalyptic nature of John 12.31 despite its affinity to Luke 10.18.

54 Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 200. E.g. Dan 7.9-14; 1 Enoch 90.15, 18-26; 91.14f.

55 The light motif in Dan 12.3, 1 Enoch 104.2 and 4 Ezra 7.97 was used to refer to the promise to the righteous of the ascent to the divine world at the end-time. See J. Theisohn, *Der auserwählte Richter*, 195-196.

56 Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 171; cf. 172-173.

tion/ascension to heaven, or eternal life.⁵⁷ Sometimes the imagery of heavenly luminaries is utilised to depict their heavenly bliss (Dan 12.3; AsMos 10.9; 1 Enoch 104.2; 4 Ezra 7.39-42, 97, 125; cf. Rev 21.22-25; 22.5). Furthermore, the War Scroll of Qumran, which has a characteristically apocalyptic outlook,⁵⁸ attests to the fact that the contrast between vindication of the saints and condemnation of the evil or Belial/Satan constitutes a common feature of eschatological judgement scenes.⁵⁹

(ii) Condemnation and punishment to the evil force, on the other hand, is presented in terms of Satan's dethronement, binding, eternal punishment and destruction (in the burning abyss). Wrath of God, shame, and/or gloom are other elements of such condemnation.⁶⁰ Although details differ from one document to another, this basic contrast of reward and punishment is a common feature in Jewish apocalyptic eschatologies. Particularly important for our study is that such contrast in the context of a divine judgement scene is a feature widely attested in the Second Temple Judaism.

(b) *The Fourth Gospel*: In the Fourth Gospel in general the same contrast is evident in three respects.

57 In Jewish apocalyptic and non-apocalyptic literature rewards for the martyr are described with a diverse alliance of ideas such as:

- 1) resurrection (Dan 12.1-2; 2 Macc 6.26; 7.9, 11, 14, 23, 29, 36; 12.43-45);
- 2) eternal life: resurrection 'unto eternal life' (2 Macc 7.9); resurrection as the new creation (2 Macc 7.22-23);
- 3) eternal kingdom (Dan 7.18, 22; cf. 27);
- 4) immortality (*ἀθανασία, ἀφθαρσία*) (4 Macc 16.13; 14.5; 15.3; 17.12; 18.3; WisSol 3.1-6; PsSol 3.11; 13.11; 14.2-3; Josephus, *Bell* 2.152-153, 515; 7.344, 346), or continual personal existence (WisSol 3.3, 4, 8, 17; 15.13; Sir 19.17) in fellowship with the Lord in heaven (WisSol 3.23; 6.18-19; 4 Macc 15.3; 17.12; 18.3);
- 5) 'glory and honour' (1 Enoch 50.1);
- 6) the dwelling with the Lord and his angels (1 Enoch 45.57; 47.2);
- 7) rest from the oppositions of sinners (1 Enoch 53.7).

58 *Contra* Ashton, *Understanding*, 387-388. *Pace* Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 126-130.

59 In 1QM 1.5-9 'salvation for the people of God' is contrasted with 'everlasting destruction for all the company of Satan'. See also 1QM 14.

60 The *Similitudes of Enoch* abounds in expressions of the end-time condemnation:

- 1) Dethronement of the arrogant, oppressive kings by the Danielic son of man figure (1 Enoch 46.4-5)
- 2) Shame and gloom (46.6), misery and weariness (48.8)
- 3) Perishing eternally (53.2)
- 4) Binding of Satan (51.3) and his earthly representatives, 'the kings and the potentates of this earth' (53.5).
- 5) Burning fire, the abyss (54.6, 10)
- 6) Punishment and wrath (55.3).

(1) A contrast used most frequently in the Fourth Gospel is one between eternal life and κρίσις (judgement/condemnation).⁶¹ The best example is John 5.24, 29 where '(eternal) life' is contrasted with judgement/condemnation.⁶² Following a double ἀμήν formula, Jesus says, 'he who hears my word and believes in him who sent me, has eternal life (ζωὴν αἰώνιον), he does not come into judgement (εἰς κρίσιν), but has passed from death to life' (5.24). In John 5.29 the resurrection to judgement (κρίσις) is contrasted with the resurrection to life (ζωή). As Ashton remarks, 'If life is what is promised to those who accept the revelation of Jesus, judgement is what is promised to those who do not. So in this respect the theme of judgement (κρίσις) is simply the obverse of that of life'.⁶³ John 3.16-18 provides a similar contrast, though a clear stylistic parallel is lacking. The contrast of having eternal life and being destroyed in 3.16 parallels σώξεν and κρίνειν in 3.17. In 3.36, having 'eternal life' is contrasted with the abiding of 'the wrath of God', which is also a language of judgement. Jesus' words at the end of the shepherd discourse set 'eternal life' in parallel with the denial of eternal destruction (10.28: καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀπόλωνται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). It is true, however, that both 'eternal life' and 'judgement' also occur independently in the Gospel,⁶⁴ and that thus the contrast may not always be intended. But, in view of the provenance of the stark contrast between eternal life/resurrection and judgement/condemnation in early Jewish apocalypses and in the Gospel, the contrast between the phrases εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον φυλάξει αὐτήν (i.e. τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ) in 12.25 and κρίσις ἐστὶν τοῦ κόσμου τούτου in 12.31 is evident, albeit a distance lying between them.

(2) The obverse of judgement/condemnation is not only the reward of eternal life but also a typically Johannine idea of reward expressed in terms of being where Jesus is (ὅπου εἰμὶ ἐγώ, 12.26; cf. 14.3; 17.24). The phrase occurs three more times (7.34; 14.3; 17.24) and is related to Jesus' returning to the Father who sent him (14.3-4; 17.25; cf. 7.33; 8.14, 21-22; 13.3, 33, 36; 14.4, 28; 16.5, 10,

61 Blank, *Krisis*, 88-90.

62 Barrett, *John*, 261, finds here 'The related eschatological themes of resurrection and judgement'.

63 Ashton, *Understanding*, 220, cf. 214-226. So also Blank, *Krisis*, 131.

64 Cf. John 1.4; 4.14, 36; 5.39, 40; 6.27, 40, 51, 54, 68; 17.2-3.

17).⁶⁵ In 7.33-34, Jesus said to the Jews, 'I shall be with you a little longer, and then I go to him who sent me; you will seek me and you will not find me; where I am you cannot come'. T. Korteweg points to its affinity to the wisdom tradition (cf. Prov 1, 8), in which the followers of Wisdom are protected by her, while the unrepentant will seek her when it is too late.⁶⁶ In the context which refers to Peter's martyrdom (13.36: he is to follow Jesus later), the consolidation is expressed in Jesus' coming to take the disciples to be where he is (14.3), which is an expression equivalent to *μοναί* in the Father's house (= the Temple = the Body of Jesus, cf. 2.11).⁶⁷ Finally, in 17.24, Jesus prays that all those whom the Father has given him may be with Jesus where he is, in order to observe his glory given by the Father before creation.⁶⁸ Although exactly the same phrase may not be found in early Jewish writings, *the expression 'to be where I am' of Jesus very likely represents the Johannine version of the Jewish apocalyptic theme of the exaltation to heaven of the saints or the martyrs as a vindication of the righteous sufferings they have endured while on earth.*⁶⁹ Another conceptual correspondence is between the idea of 'to honour' (12.26) and that of shame which accompanies judgement/condemnation.⁷⁰ Since the honour and shame scheme prevalent in the ancient Mediterranean world is used for the contrast of reward and punishment of the end-time judgement in certain Jewish apocalypses, *τιμᾶν* must have been seen in contrast to the *κρίσις* (condemnation) which meant necessarily shame.

65 Whereas the unbelieving Jews are said to be unable to *ερχέσθαι* to where Jesus goes (7.34: *ἔπου εἰμί ἐγώ*; 8.21: *ἔπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω*), the believers are said to *εἶναι* where Jesus is (12.26, 14.3, 17.24: *ἔπου εἰμί ἐγώ*).

66 Korteweg, 'Jn 7,34', 352-353.

67 Some exegetes understand it as a reference to the parousia (e.g. Morris, *John*, 639-640; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 250-251; Carson, *John*, 489-490), while others find references to the post-resurrection event of Jesus (Lindars, *John*, 471), death of believers (Schnackenburg, *John*, 3.195), martyrdom of believers, and other general comings of Jesus (Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 454). Others claim that it should be fitted in the predominantly present-eschatological out-look of the Gospel (e.g. Brown, *John*, 2.626-627), with which we concur.

68 The scope of those who participate in this privilege seems to be enlarged to include all believers as well as the disciples.

69 So also P. Minear, 'To Ask and To Receive', 232; Becker, *Johannes*, 2.401. In martyr theologies, both Jewish and Christian, the martyrs are thought to be removed to God's side in death. See 4 Macc 6.29; 9.8; 16.25; 17.18-20; 18.10-24; Phil 1.21-26; Rev 6.9ff; 7.9ff; 1 Clem 5.4, 7.

70 In Dan 12.2 the term 'shame' along with 'everlasting contempt' is a counterpart of 'everlasting life' depicting the results of the judgement. 'Shame' and 'darkness' are associated with the judgement in the *Similitudes of Enoch* (46.6; 62.10; 63.11).

(3) Finally, that 12.25 and 26 are to be treated together in contrast to 12.31 would be evident for the following reason. That the casting out of 'the ruler of this world' (John 12.31b) is also a counterpart of vindication of the martyrs in apocalyptic eschatological judgement scene is evident from 1 Enoch 62. In the eschatological judgement scene the rewards the persecuted righteous will receive are everlasting dwelling with the Son of Man (62.14: 'they shall eat and rest and rise with the Son of Man forever and ever'), resurrection, and eternal life (1 Enoch 62.14-16), while its counterpart is 'punishment' (*ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ*, or *τῆς ὀργῆς*), executing vengeance (*ἡδικῆσαν*), and 'the wrath of the Lord of Spirits' on the mighty kings and the earthly rulers (62.11-12).⁷¹ Judgement on them is executed as God's vengeance on behalf of the children and elect ones of God whom they oppressed and persecuted in assault of God and his sovereignty (62.11; cf. 46.8).

Consequently, in addition to the obvious verbal correspondences, the unmistakable thematic contrast of eternal life and exaltation into heaven on the one hand and judgement/condemnation on the other makes the layers D and D' correspond even more strongly.

E (vv 27-30)

As far as its form is concerned the layer *E* stands out within the pericope. The lack of any evident parallelism here provides an abrupt break from the preceding series of parallelisms (vv 24-26) and the immediately following one (v 31). There also seems to be a thematic leap from what proceeds. Suddenly in v 27 Jesus' words take up a monologue-like tone, referring his own *ταραχή*. This monologue-like tone in turn is heightened into a form of prayer to the Father, which is met with the heavenly voice in v 28.

On the other hand, the themes concentrated in this pivot section such as 'this hour' (v 27 - v 23) linked with *νῦν* (v 27 - v 31), the glorification (v 27 - v 23), the theme of death suggested by Jesus' agony (v 27 - v 24; vv 31-32; v 34), are the main

⁷¹ The arrogant gentile kings and rulers who are agents of the demon who assaults the divine throne are to be punished by 'that Son of Man' by being 'cast down' 'from their thrones and kingdoms' (1 Enoch 46.5). See Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 74-75.

themes running throughout the pericope.⁷² ⁴¹δοξάζειν used three times in this layer functions as a *Leitwort* not only for the pivot but also for the whole pericope. Hence the coming of the hour of glorification of the Son of man is the main thrust of Jesus' ministry and is expressed in a more urgent manner. The prayer of Jesus and the heavenly voice as an epiphanic event lie in the centre of this pericope on the revelation concerning the cross of Jesus.

It is argued that the function of an apex in a concentric structure constitutes a climax introducing the purpose and acting as an apophthegmatic summary of the whole contents of the argument.⁷³ E (12.27ff) functions as unifying diverse ideas thematically in the pericope: the Johannine Jesus' mission from the Father is summarised in his self-understanding of the cross as the glorification of the name of the Father. *The coming of Jesus is διὰ τοῦτο (12.27), i.e. for this hour of the glorification of the Son of man through the agony of death. What lies behind this statement is the Father's sending of the only Son for this specific purpose, that is, to save this world through his death on the cross.*

2.4 Conclusion

On literary grounds, the surface structure of John 12.20-36 exhibits an extended concentric structure with four layers and a pivot in the centre. It is particularly noteworthy that most of the divisions of the layers and the pivot section correspond to the alleged aporias which critics have pointed out. It may be concluded that despite the apparently fragmentary nature of the text John 12.20-36 exhibits a sign of a skillful literary design on the part of the author (and/or of his disciples). Whatever sources may have been used, the final product shows signs of coherence pointing to internal unity, homogeneity and design. This fact runs counter to the traditional historical-critical theories that various strata of composition with additions, expansions, omissions, and/or interpolations that reflect the interests, the concerns and the experiences of the author(s) or of the Johannine community can be extracted by using the (alleged)

⁷² Cf. Ruiz, *Der Missionsgedanke*, 138.

⁷³ Thomson, 'Chiasmus', 78-79; Chang, 'Repetitions and Variations', 129.

aporias as clues.⁷⁴ In addition to the linear development, this concentric structure gives cohesion to the pericope and allows it to achieve its unified meaning, especially providing the corresponding layers which produce meaning in an interrelated manner, and the pivot which summaries the whole pericope thematically. Therefore, the finding of a concentric structure provides a framework to relate elements of this pericope, whose meaning in its totality has not been considered seriously by exegetes.

Our intertextual consideration has suggested that John 12.20-36 contains the themes of reward (and vindication as in Jewish martyr theologies) and punishment, and the Son of man identified with the Messiah, the combination of which is characteristic of the revealed mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and restoration in Jewish apocalypses. We will turn to the elucidation of this aspect in Part II.

74 Such an approach, i.e. literary archaeology (cf. Martyn, 'Glimpse', 90-121), is at least arbitrary and subjective, and its approach tends to be tautological. So-called *aporias* could be an imaginary creation by modern critics whose conceptual and literary baggage is considerably different from that of the author of the ancient text; this could be a type of 'Orientalism'.

II. THE APOCALYPTIC VISION OF THE END-TIME JUDGEMENT AND SALVATION IN JOHN 12.20-36

In Part II we will argue that John 12.20-36 resembles in form and content the divine judgement scene as a climax of the revealed mysteries concerning the end time in Jewish apocalyptic literature. Such a scene constitutes a prominent part of the apocalyptic vision concerning the end-time judgement and salvation in the first-century interpretations of Dan 7 in 1 Enoch 62 ('the Son of man'), and 4 Ezra 13 (the Man from the sea). Our argument can be summarised:

- (i) John 12.20-36 as a whole falls into the category of the end-time judgement scene as the core of the divine mystery/ies in Jewish apocalypses (e.g. Dan 7; 4 Ezra 13; 1 Enoch 62).
- (ii) The revelation of the divine mysteries focuses on Jesus, the Son of man and the Messiah, lifted up on the cross and thus glorified. This focus of revelation exhibits the Johannine understanding of the eschatological significance of the cross and resurrection of Jesus. He becomes the centre of the eschatological pilgrimage around whom a new people of God are created, not on the basis of the Law but on the basis of the faith in the Light.

Our investigation begins with the apocalyptic framework of the pericope as well as of the entire Gospel (II.1), and focuses on the application of apocalyptic Wisdom to Jesus (II.2) and the Son of man sayings as related to John 12.23ff (II.3). At the end, we will attempt a synthesis of the messianic ideas extant in John 12.20-36 within the entire symbolic world the pericope creates (II.4).

II.1. THE APOCALYPTIC FRAMEWORK OF JOHN 12.20-36

1.1. Introduction

Is the Fourth Gospel apocalyptic? The prevailing answer to this question in the history of interpretation of the Fourth Gospel in this century has been predominantly in the negative.¹ R. Bultmann has contended that apocalyptic eschatology was foreign to the theology of the evangelist, because he eliminated apocalyptic, futuristic eschatological elements from the tradition of Jesus available to him so as to lay stress on the existential 'now' of salvation. Bultmann believed that the ecclesiastical redactor reintroduced some futuristic eschatological elements in order to bring the Gospel in line with the traditional eschatology of early Christianity.² Bultmann's distaste for apocalyptic, futuristic eschatology is such that he could even say that 'No future of this world's history can bring anything new, and all apocalyptic pictures of the future are empty dreams'.³ C.H. Dodd is of the opinion that the Johannine eschatology represents a tradition that has never undergone the increasingly apocalypticising process which he believes to have been prevalent in the Synoptics.⁴ According to Dodd, in spite of the presence of Jewish apocalyptic ideas the Fourth Gospel's dependence on the Hellenistic philosophical-mystical trends restricted the refinement of its apocalyptic future hope.⁵ C.K. Barrett, in the first edition of his commentary, paid attention to 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, but could claim rather sweepingly that 'apocalyptic is not characteristic of the (fourth) gospel', a position that appears to be altered in the second edition.⁶

1 Yarbrow Collins, *ABD* 3.288-292, has no section on the Fourth Gospel. Yet see A. Strobel, 'Apokalyptik/Apocalypsen', *TRE* 2.248.

2 Bultmann, *John*, 260-261, on John 5.27-29. For Bultmann, apocalyptic eschatology means futuristic eschatology concerning the abrupt end of this world.

3 Bultmann, *John*, 431, on John 12.31. He regards the cosmic judgement as part of 'the Gnostic myth'.

4 Dodd, *Interpretation*, 446-447.

5 Strobel, *TRE* 1.248.

6 Barrett, *The Gospel of John*, 44; *John*, 31-33. Barrett is more approving of Jewish apocalypticism as a background of the Gospel in the latter.

On the other hand, however, there is an undeniable number of studies pointing to numerous apocalyptic elements in the Gospel. In response to Bultmann, L. van Hartingsveld argued that the Gospel's apocalyptic motifs and themes are more pronounced than anywhere else in the NT; they include 'life' (12.25), 'light' (12.36), 'freedom' (8.36), 'peace' (16.33), 'judgement' (12.31; 9.36), 'day-night' (9.4), 'wrath' (3.36; 16.33), 'darkness' (3.19), 'resurrection' (11.25), and 'exaltation' (12.32).⁷ Although these motifs are not inherently apocalyptic by themselves, the high concentration of them in the Gospel makes van Hartingsveld's view plausible. Böcher and others have pointed out that the Johannine terms of dualism such as darkness and light (1.5; 3.19; 12.35), truth and lie (8.44), eternal life and the wrath of God (3.36), and the hostile world and the believers, as well as the two-age construction are very much at home in the early Jewish apocalyptic literature.⁸ J. Schmitt has found apocalyptic characteristics in the cosmological dualism (15.18-25), the Son of man sayings, and the Parable of the Shepherd (John 10) which he conceives of as 'une parabole de contenu apocalyptique' based on Ezek 34.⁹ In the Farewell discourses H. Koester has drawn attention to the apocalyptic pattern of the seer's questioning and the *angelus interpres*' explanation/revelation, and construed that they are 'interpretations of traditional apocalyptic topics in the form of a discourse of Jesus with the disciples'.¹⁰ K. Blank, in his work on the Johannine *Krisis*, has proposed the Jewish apocalyptic background for understanding the Johannine concept of 'eternal life', which is expected to be given at the final judgement.¹¹

The view that the Fourth Gospel is fundamentally apocalyptic has been strongly put forward recently. J.L. Martyn, for example, has remarked that what he calls the two-level (heavenly and earthly) drama of the Gospel 'was at home in the thought-

7 van Hartingsveld, *Die Eschatologie*, 137-185.

8 Böcher, *Dualismus*, 120-127; G. Stählin, 'Zum Problem', 228. Böcher points out that the Qumran literature, like the Fourth Gospel, understood that its members were participating in the end-time blessing (120-122).

9 Schmitt, 'Apocalyptique', 337-350.

10 Koester, 'One Jesus', 197. Koester places the Farewell discourses at 'a crucial place in the development of the genre revelation' which would include Gnostic writings such as the *Apocryphon of John*.

11 Blank, *Krisis*, 88-90.

world of Jewish apocalypticism'.¹² Unlike the Jewish apocalyptic literature, the Johannine two-level drama, Martyn contends, develops only on the earthly stage as the story of Jesus' life and its projection into the experience of the community, for he thinks that the divine plan in John is not revealed to a certain seer but it is itself fully embedded in the person of Jesus as its revealer. Matyn's insight is further developed by J. Ashton in his *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, a third of which he devotes to an extended study of the idea of revelation.¹³ Taking as a starting point Bultmann's insight into the central message of the Fourth Gospel that Jesus reveals that he is the Revealer, Ashton argues that the Gospel is in form and content 'profoundly indebted in apocalyptic', and conceives it to be 'intimations of apocalyptic', understood as a generic term. Though limited in scale, J. Painter argues that the Fourth Gospel utilises the 'apocalyptic ideology' represented in the use of a dualistic *Weltanschauung* characteristic of apocalyptic literature, the human world in darkness to be rescued by the incarnate *λόγος*, the light, the conflict between Jesus and Satan, the allusion to Dan 7.13-14 in John 5.27, the Johannine Son of man as the eschatological judge in a Danielic mould, and Jesus as the unique (apocalyptic) revealer.¹⁴

Despite these studies, there still seems to be a tendency to deny the apocalyptic interpretation of the Gospel. The reasons may be partially due to the prevalence in some schools of the Gnostic interpretation of Johannine dualistic thinking,¹⁵ and partially due to the denial of the apocalyptic nature of most of the Johannine Son of man sayings. Therefore, we need to assess the claim that the Fourth Gospel contains apocalyptic elements, and to investigate to what extent its thought-world, that of John 12.20-36 in particular, can be characterised as apocalyptic. In this chapter we will set out to investigate the apocalyptic characteristics of John 12.20-36, by analysing its apocalyptic framework such as (1) the apocalyptic manners of communication (apocalyptic epistemology), (2) the apocalyptic connotation of the Johannine idea of revelation, and (3) the apocalyptic signs of the end-time judgement and salvation. The

12 Martyn, *History and Theology*, 127.

13 Ashton, *Understanding*, 381-553, esp. 383-406.

14 Painter, *The Quest*, 208-211.

15 See K. Rudolph, *Gnosis*, 159-160, 305, 387 n134.

vexing question as to whether the Johannine Son of man sayings are apocalyptic or, in other words, have anything to do with the human-like figure of Dan 7.13-14 requires a separate treatment (II.3), since the non-apocalyptic reading of the term has been influential recently. Before going into a detailed discussion, it is necessary to provide a definition of the sometimes misleading term 'apocalypse' and its cognates.

1.2 *Definition of Apocalypse, Apocalypticism, and Apocalyptic Eschatology*

There may be no other term whose definition has been more disputed and confused than 'apocalypse' in Biblical criticism. In the history of scholarship on apocalyptic there are two conflicting, yet not always mutually exclusive, tendencies; some see it as a literary genre, while others emphasise its being a theological concept.¹⁶ Given this situation, it is understandable that one would argue that this term is confusing and thus is unfitting for a scholarly discussion.¹⁷ But, rather than abandoning the term all together, we believe that the term can be of scholarly use as long as it is carefully defined.

At a fundamental level most exegetes would agree that 'apocalypse' is concerned with the revelation of heavenly mysteries.¹⁸ The etymological consideration of ἀποκάλυψις, though not always legitimate and sometimes misleading, would help clarify the apocalyptic thought-world in early Judaism as well as in early Christianity. M. Smith argues for the importance of the etymological consideration of ἀποκάλυψις and ἀποκαλύπτειν as used especially by Paul.¹⁹ M. Hengel provides a very useful description in this line: 'The epistemological basis of apocalyptic is the notion of the "revelation" of special divine "wisdom" about the mysteries of history, the cosmos, the heavenly world and the fate of the individual at the eschaton, hidden from human

16 R.E. Sturm, 'Defining', 18-37.

17 T.F. Glasson, 'What is Apocalyptic?', 98-105.

18 Cf. Davies, 'The Social World', 255.

19 Smith, 'On the History'..

reason'.²⁰ Similarly, C. Rowland's understanding that 'Apocalyptic seems essentially to be the revelation of the divine mysteries through visions or some other form of immediate disclosure of heavenly truths'²¹ is well focused.

J.J. Collins attempts a synthesis that accommodates the conflicting tendencies.²² By pointing to K. Koch's observation that since 'apocalyptic' refers first of all to a body of literature any study of apocalypticism must start with analysing the literature, Collins reminds us of the importance of the methodological procedure. In order not to reduce apocalypse merely to the literary genre or a literary convention, Collins proposes to begin with a consideration of the kind of materials found in apocalypses, because it is them which the term 'apocalyptic' refers to first and foremost. Following Collins' definition, we define 'apocalypse', 'apocalypticism' and 'apocalyptic eschatology' as follows:

- (i) The definition of 'apocalypse' as a literary genre which is beginning to gain considerable, if not universal, consensus is that of the SBL Apocalypse Group: "Apocalypse" is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world'. A. Yarbro Collins amends this definition: as a literary genre an apocalypse is 'intended to interpret present earthly circumstances in the light of the supernatural world and of the future, and to influence both the understanding and the behaviour of the audience by means of divine authority'.²³ J. Ashton modifies the definition by the SBL Apocalypse Group and uses it almost discriminately as referring only to the literary genre.²⁴ Yet, while the generic definition is helpful in

20 Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.250. He seeks the origin of apocalypse in the *Hasidim*—'a "penitential movement" under the impact of the Hellenistic reform' in Palestine during the second century BCE. Hengel construes that the problem of theodicy handled in late wisdom is answered in apocalypses by the idea of 'resurrection or immortality and retribution after death or at the eschaton'.

21 Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 70. See also Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 14; *Origins*, 58-64. Yet he rejects its generic use.

22 Collins, 'Genre', 12-13.

23 Yarbro Collins, 'Introduction', 7.

24 For Ashton's definition of 'apocalypse' see *Understanding*, 386. Ashton's use of 'heavenly mysteries' instead of 'a transcendent reality' of J.J. Collins is more true of Jewish apocalypses.

categorising certain types of literature, an overemphasis on it might run a risk of excluding a text including apocalyptic themes simply for the reason that it does not fully comply with that generic definition.²⁵

- (ii) It is generally agreed that 'apocalypticism' refers to the worldview common to apocalypses.²⁶ Collins suggests that since apocalypticism as a worldview of apocalypses is a broad one, it is advisable to distinguish between the historical type (cf. Daniel and Revelation) and the more cosmic orientation of the heavenly ascents.²⁷ It must be added that by 'apocalypticism' we do not mean a movement, a term containing certain sociological implications²⁸, because it is persuasively argued, against the prevailing view, that apocalypticism and apocalyptic literature are not confined to one distinguishable social movement.²⁹
- (iii) 'Apocalyptic eschatology' refers to a theological concept or a set of ideas and motifs which is not only found in the full-blown apocalypses but also can be utilised in literature of other genres.³⁰ It is characterised in particular by the imminent expectation of the end time which will involve judgement and restoration/salvation as well as cosmic cataclysm and renewal. Although it is disputed, we would not agree with the view that apocalyptic eschatology necessarily implies a certain social tendency of the author or that of the group to which he or she belongs.³¹

Its adjectival form 'apocalyptic', when not accompanied by such generic terms as 'literature' or 'writings', is used in this study as referring to apocalyptic eschatology or in modifying ideas characteristic to apocalyptic genre.

Following these definitions, we will argue that the Fourth Gospel in general and John 12.20-36 in particular are profoundly embedded in the apocalyptic thought-world

25 Sturm, 'Defining', 25; M. de Boer, 'Paul', 187 n19.

26 See F.J. Murphy, 'Apocalypse', 157-158.

27 Collins, 'Genre', 16. We agree with Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 29-30, 205-206, that a general, anthropological term 'millennialism' is too wide and universal a definition to embrace the specific features and details of the first-century Jewish/Christian apocalypticism.

28 Cf. P.D. Hanson, *The Dawn*, 432-434.

29 E.g. L.L. Grabbe, 'The Social Setting', 27-47.

30 So Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 2.

31 See, for example, D.C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, esp. 25, 62-69, who sets the social function of apocalyptic eschatology close to that of apocalypticism, which he regards as being occasioned by an acute crisis which leads to alienation from the wider society.

of first-century Judaism. Our contention is that the Fourth Gospel not only (a) makes use of the apocalyptic *concept* (and in a limited sense apocalyptic manners) of *revelation* as the discourse of the heavenly mysteries by a heavenly revealer (I.1) but also (b) contains 'apocalyptic eschatology' in its prominent parts (II.2,3,4). It exhibits predominantly a historical type of apocalyptic eschatology, while the idea of a heavenly journey by a human seer is carefully avoided to lay emphasis on the exclusivity of the revelation by Jesus, the incarnate divine *logos*, the Son of man (3.13),--the revelation that focuses on his cross and resurrection.

1.3 *Apocalyptic Epistemology*

To begin with, the manners of communication or epistemology of the Fourth Gospel (including John 12.20-36) exhibits the characteristics of apocalypses. We will consider (1) the cognitive terminology, and (2) the manners of Jesus' communication through his sayings and deeds as riddles, which will include (i) the double ἀμῆν sayings, (ii) παροιμίαι, and (iii) misunderstanding and interpretation.

1.3.1 *Seeing an Apocalyptic Vision?*

In its specifically Johannine use, the verb 'to see', for which the evangelist uses ὁρᾶν, θεωρεῖν, θεᾶσθαι, and βλέπειν almost indiscriminately,³² is concerned with the vision of the revelation of God in Jesus as well as faith. F. Mussner astutely observes that 'seeing is a term for an encounter with Jesus and related both to seeing the epiphany of the glory of the divine Logos and Son and to faith; it is used with regard to eye-witnessing the Jesus of history'.³³ Hence the verbs to see in the Fourth Gospel are used frequently in a symbolic sense. Used three times, once within the pericope under discussion itself (12.21) and twice in the immediately following summary section (12.40, 41), ἰδεῖν is important.

³² See, e.g. John 1.29-34.

³³ Mussner, *The Historical Jesus*, 18-23.

(a) *Some Greeks Coming to See Jesus*

At the beginning of John 12.20ff some Greeks approach Philip with a wish to see Jesus. Regarding *ιδεῖν* in 12.21, Zahn, Westcott and Bultmann have strongly opposed a symbolic reading, by arguing that it is used for ordinary physical sight here as in John 1.39; 5.6; 6.22, 24; 12.9.³⁴ It is true that the very frequent use of it and its cognate verbs (63x) in the ordinary (non-symbolic) sense appears to dissuade us from interpreting the verb in John 12.21 symbolically. Yet the following observations would suggest that the verb conveys a symbolic sense with an apocalyptic overtone.

First, that the verb *ιδεῖν* here has a symbolic meaning does not contradict its having a physical sense; there is no symbolic use of it without any physical sense (e.g. 1.39). A symbolic meaning may be suggested when the verb occurs particularly in conjunction with the compound verb equivalent to *ἔρχεσθαι* + *πρός* with Jesus as its object (cf. 3.2, 20-21; 6.44-45), about which we have already seen (I.2).

Second, *ιδεῖν*, with *ἔρχεσθαι*, at the end of Jesus' public ministry in the Gospel provides an interesting narrative pattern. The Gospel's account of Jesus' public ministry starts with the witness of John the Baptist, who has seen the Spirit descending and remaining on Jesus. He then witnesses that he is the Son of God, the Davidic Messiah promised in Isa 11.2 (John 1.32). The first disciples are invited to come and see (*ἔρχεσθε καὶ ὄψεσθε* [1.39], or *ἔρχου καὶ ἴδε* [1.46]) where Jesus is staying. This process culminates with the confession of Nathanael that he is the Son of God, the King of Israel, the well known titles for the Davidic Messiah (1.49). To this a further promise of a greater revelation is added in 1.50-51, where *ὄψη* attains an unmistakable technical sense for seeing in the use of an apocalyptic vision. It is obvious that this promise to see the apocalyptic vision concerning the Son of man is expected to be realised during the course of the following narratives. Towards the end of the account of Jesus' public ministry, some Greeks come with the wish to 'see' Jesus, which is mediated by Philip and Andrew, the first disciples who were directly called by Jesus (1.39, 43) and wit-

34 Zahn, *Das Evangelium*, 513. Both Westcott, *St. John*, 180, and Bultmann, *John*, 423, find a pejorative sense in the use of *ιδεῖν* in 12.20, because the Greeks' concern is not with the Messiah but with the historical Jesus.

nessed to Nathanael and Simon Peter respectively. This narrative echo suggests that the coming of the Greeks is to be read in some relation to John 1. The Greeks' request to 'see' Jesus is followed by Jesus' announcement of the coming of the hour for the glorification of the Son of man (12.23). The reader would not fail to notice the similar connection between the verb to 'see' and the reference to the Son of man.

Third, as we will see, the narrative following *ἰδεῖν* exhibits the content of the vision concerning the end-time judgement and restoration commonly known to the apocalyptic writings such as Dan 7, 1 Enoch 62 and 4 Ezra 13: the scene contains the Son of man receiving glory and dominion, the vindication and judgement, and restoration of the people of God.³⁵ This scene, as we will argue, is the fulfilment of the apocalyptic vision promised to Nathanael and other disciples (1.51) in its fullest sense—a vision that will be actualised in the cross of Jesus. If so, it is not impossible that *ἰδεῖν* used at the introductory section of the pericope conjures up an expectation of seeing an apocalyptic vision *a priori* in the mind of the reader, and that it affirms its apocalyptic meaning after the visionary-like revelation of the end-time judgement and salvation by the Son of man, universal Judge and Davidic King.

(b) *The Jewish Crowds' Reaction to Jesus' Activities: Not See and not Perceive*

ἰδεῖν also occurs in the quotation from a very important text for early Christianity, i.e. Isa 6.10, quoted at John 12.40 to explicate the obduracy of the Jews.³⁶ The Johannine rendering transforms the chiasmic or concentric structure of Isa 6.10 into a staircase parallelism by omitting the lines concerning the aural concep-

35 In the contemporary apocalypses, seeing is used in the contexts with strongly eschatological colourings. Seeing God's 'salvation' and 'the end' of his world in 4 Ezra 6.26 means as in other apocalypses the future enlightenment by the eschatological act (2 Baruch 51.7f; 1 Enoch 55.4; 62.3; 4 Ezra 4.26, 43; 6.25; 7.37f; 9.7f). See Müller, *Messias*, 150.

36 Cf. Matt 13.13 par; Acts 28.26-27; Rom 11.7, 25; 2 Cor 3.14; Eph 4.18. For the treatment of John 12.40 in terms of divine sovereignty and human freedom, see R. Bergmeier, *Glaube als Gabe*, 228-231. The view of Blank, *Krisis*, 302; Holst, 'The Relation', 204-209, that the subject of the first two lines of the quotation is not God but Devil cannot be maintained. See Menken, 'Die Form', 198 n34.

tion.³⁷ The effect is that emphasis is placed on the visual side of the obduracy of the unbelieving Jewish crowds at the expense of its aural side. This is so, perhaps because of its appearing in the context speaking of the obduracy of the Jewish crowds despite seeing Jesus' signs.³⁸ When the evangelist identifies Isaiah's seeing the glorious vision of the divine throne as seeing the glory of the Son (12.41: *εἶδεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ*),³⁹ it would be that the seeing of his glory in his signs is contrasted. In conjunction with John 12.37-38 where Jesus' signs are identified as the *revelation* of the arm of the Lord, the clear emphasis on the *seeing* of the revelation in Jesus indicates that for the author the whole ministry of Jesus can be summarised in the seeing of the apocalyptic visions revealed in the person of Jesus, especially through his signs.

Another observation gives a further significance to the elaborate citation of Isa 6.10 here. As we have seen, the Johannine misunderstandings correspond to the Synoptic parables through which the apocalyptic mystery concerning the kingdom of God is revealed (Matt 13.11//Mark 4.11//Luke 8.9).⁴⁰ It is exactly within the context of the parables of the heavenly kingdom that the Synoptic Jesus quotes from Isa 6.9 or 6.9-10 in order to explain the reason why Jesus teaches in parables, which is accompanied by the theme of obduracy of Israel. Since the Johannine Jesus speaks *ἐν παραρρησίᾳ* only to his disciples as in the Synoptics, the parallel is evident. If Anderson is correct when he

37 John 12.40: Both the MT and the LXX of Isa 6.10 show a clear chiasmic pattern:

- a Make (*επαχύνθη*) the heart of this people fat,
- b and their ears heavy,
- c and their eyes shut (*εκάμμυσαν*);
- c' lest (*μήποτε*) they see with their eyes,
- b' and hear with their ears,
- a' and understand (*ἴσῳ*; *συνώσω*) with their hearts and turn,

and he (MT: *אָשִׁיב*); 'I' in the LXX: *καὶ ἰάσομαι*) heal them.

The evangelist's elaborate rendering changes the structure radically, by omitting b and b', and turns the chiasm into a staircase parallelism:

- c He has blinded (*τετύφλωκεν*) their eyes
- a and hardened *their heart*
- c' lest (*ὥστε*) they should see (*ἴδωσιν*) with their eyes
- a' and perceive (*γνώσωσιν*) with *their heart* and turn,
- and I heal them.

See M.J.J. Menken, 'Die Form', 195. Cf. Matt 13.14-15//Mark 4.12; Acts 28.26; Luke 8.10 (cf. Isa 6.9).

38 This emphasis would reflect the remark in the Prologue: *καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός* (1.14b).

39 So Hengel, 'The Old Testament', 27.

40 Cf. W.D. Davies & D.C. Allison, *Matthew*, 1.389.

argues that Mark reinterpreted the Book of Isaiah apocalyptically,⁴¹ the same could be applied to John 12.40 and its context. Located just before this summary section, John 12.20-36 cannot avoid its strongly apocalyptic overtones.

(c) *Summary*

It is not certain *a priori* whether *ιδεῖν* in 12.21 is used in its metaphorical sense of seeing an apocalyptic vision. Yet its occurrence close to the Son of man saying in 12.23 may recall the reader/audience of the promise of seeing the (apocalyptic) Son of man in 1.50-51. Within the context containing the apocalyptic motifs of the end-time judgement scene a symbolic meaning is likely. Even if it is not, the emphasis on the visual side of the Jewish crowds' encounter with Jesus (12.40) would accord with our interpretation that to see Jesus is to see the apocalyptic visions of the end-time judgement and salvation embodied in his person, deeds and words. *As the verb 'to see' is the key word in viewing Jesus' deeds and words, the reader is expected to 'see' and 'perceive' in Jesus' ταραχή a messianic woe and in Jesus' concealment from the disbelieving Jewish crowd in John 12.36 the concealment of Wisdom as a prelude to the climactic vision of the end-time judgement and salvation, which is going to be achieved in the lifting up-glorification of Jesus as the Son of man.*

1.3.2 *Jesus' Teachings and Works as (Apocalyptic) Riddles that Conceal the Meaning*

1.3.2.1 *The Double ἀμῆν Formula and Aphorisms*

In line with other revelatory sayings of the Johannine Jesus, his aphoristic sayings are 12.24ff is introduced by the double ἀμῆν formula.⁴²R. Riesner observes that the double ἀμῆν formula is 'non-responsorial', functioning as 'a pointer to statements of special, that is, revelatory, character'.⁴³ Although Riesner is not ready to call them apocalyptic, K. Berger was willing to do so. Berger argues in *Die Amen-Worte Jesu*.

41 Anderson, 'The Apocalyptic Rendering', 35.

42 The double \aleph/\aleph formula is found in the OT/Jewish tradition. E.g. $\aleph \aleph$: Num 5.22; Ps 89.53; Neh 8.6; 1QS 2.10, 18; $\aleph \aleph$: Ps 41.14; 72.19; cf. 1 Esr 9.47 B.

43 Riesner, *Jesus*, 378-382.

Ein Untersuchung zum Problem der Legitimation in apokalyptische Rede (1970) that the Johannine double ἀμήν formula contains not only prophetic but also *apocalyptic* traits. The formula in John 12.24, Berger points out, leads to a traditional sapiential saying with particularly apocalyptic traits, concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus (cf. 12.23, 27) and the destiny of the humanity at the *Endzeit*.⁴⁴ Indeed, that the formula itself is used to introduce a saying of Jesus with sapiential and/or apocalyptic nature is demonstrated earlier in the Gospel. It introduces the first promise of the apocalyptic vision about the Son of man (1.51), while it is used by Jesus the only authentic revealer to reveal the heavenly things to Nicodemus (3.3, 5). The double ἀμήν formula may not be inherently apocalyptic, but it leads to Jesus' authoritative sayings on various themes including apocalyptic themes in the Gospel.⁴⁵

1.3.2.2 *Sayings of Jesus as Παροιμίαι (משלים) and Misunderstandings*

Intrinsically related to the double ἀμήν formula as a legitimation in apocalyptic sayings is the form and content of Jesus' sayings introduced by it. Our contention is that the sayings of Jesus in 12.23ff show characteristics of παροιμίαι, which characterise prophecies (parables, aphorisms) as riddles before their fulfilment at the end time as in Jewish apocalyptic literature.

It is recognised that the Fourth Gospel exhibits a strongly symbolic world that requires a reading of it as such.⁴⁶ Indeed, the sayings of Jesus in John 12.23ff show a strongly symbolic nature involving metaphors such as a grain of wheat (v 24), a servant's serving Jesus (v 26) and walking in light or darkness (vv 35-36), along with the enigmatic saying of the 'lifting up' of Jesus (v 32), highly symbolic expressions such as to be where Jesus is (v 26), the judgement of the world (v 31), and so on. That such

44 Berger, *Die Amen-Worte*, 112-113. He takes John 12.24 to be a passage taken from a wider Jewish-Christian christological tradition (cf. 1 Cor 15.36; 1 Clem 24.4f; Theoph ad Auto 1.13; 3 Cor 3.28), which stands within the wisdom tradition with apocalyptic traits.

45 For a christological function of the formula, see Berger, *Die Amen-Worte*, 116-117.

46 E.g. Léon-Dufour, 'Symbolic Reading', 445-446.

metaphoric sayings in John 12.23ff (esp. 12.32-34) may lead to misunderstandings is suggested by W. Wrede's observation: 'Jesus makes use of an allusive, ambiguous mode of expression which actually provokes misunderstanding, as if deliberately.'⁴⁷

There is an all-embracing Hebrew term that can characterise such an allusive, ambiguous mode of expression, viz. מִשְׁל, which is in the main rendered παραβολή and παροιμία in the LXX.⁴⁸ This term is used for a spectrum of figurative speech widely attested in Hebrew literature from the OT, through Pseudepigrapha and Qumran, to rabbinic literature, and the NT is not an exception.⁴⁹ Παροιμίαι (משלים) is the title of the Book of Proverbs, and some of the proverbs, including the numerical ones (e.g. Prov 30.15-16), contain characteristics of a riddle (16.24; 20.17; 22.1).⁵⁰ Employed in wisdom utterances and prophetic proclamations, מִשְׁל has a wide range of meaning, corresponding to proverb, aphorism, riddle, parable, similitude, allegory, etc.⁵¹ παραβολή and παροιμία are interchangeable in the Greek version of Ben Sira, both being used for מִשְׁל as well as חידה ('riddle').⁵² In Ezek 17.2 and 24.3 מִשְׁל is a parabolic speech, which in itself conveys the divine revelation and carries an element of mystery and enigma.⁵³

Of particular importance is that מִשְׁל ('similitude', or 'parable': the Aramaic מִתְל), which is a kind of aphorism used in wisdom literature, is also a prominent means to give expression to natural, cosmological and eschatological mysteries in apocalyptic literature. In 4 Ezra 'similitudes' (*mtlyn*: 4.3, 47; 8.2) are the means by which the angel Uriel reveals, in terms of the natural and human phenomena, 'the ways of the Most High', i.e. God's hidden plans pertaining to the eschatological judgement and salvation.⁵⁴ Thus the 'similitudes' of natural phenomena there serve to programmatically explicate God's plans in salvation history leading up to the eschatological judgement

47 Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, 201.

48 παροιμία is used in Prov 1.1; 25.1.

49 Cf. Vermes, *The Religion*, 90ff.

50 G. von Rad, *The OT Theology*, 1.423. W. McKane, *Proverbs*, 23, suggests the generally cryptic nature of the 'proverb'.

51 Cf. J. Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 20.

52 See Hauck, *TDNT* 5.855.

53 So Hauck, *TDNT* 5.749.

54 Cf. Hauck, *TDNT* 5.749-750.

and salvation, which shows his justice and grace in his handling of this (suffering) people and the world. Hence the question of theodicy caused by the dominion of the gentile empire over the people of God is answered by means of the revelation through similitudes as well as visions and their interpretations.⁵⁵ In the *Similitudes of Enoch* 'similitudes', or 'parables' (*masale* = מַשְׁלִים), are the means by which the visionary account of the cosmological mysteries and the eschatological mysteries concerning the punishment of the wicked and the reward for the righteous is expressed.⁵⁶ W.D. Suter points out that the 'similitudes' are the manners in which to express the heavenly realities in terms of the earthly phenomena, reflecting the principle: 'As it is above, is it also on earth'.⁵⁷ It is not surprising therefore that in these apocalypses מַשְׁלִים are used in depicting not only natural, cosmological mysteries but also eschatological mysteries concerning the reward for the righteous and the punishment on the wicked. In the OT מַשְׁלִים are the means by which to express both the natural (e.g. Prov 25.23; 30.29-31) and the eschatological types of mysteries (Ps 49.13-15; 78 .67-72; Prov 11.19; Isa 14.3-4; Micah 2.4; Hab 2.6; cf. Job 27-31). In some apocalypses these types became integrated.⁵⁸

In the Fourth Gospel מַשְׁלִים is rendered with *παροιμίαι*.⁵⁹ Although it is first used in John 16.25ff, many of Jesus' sayings in the Gospel can be categorised as *παροιμίαι*. Insisting that *παροιμίαι* should be characterised less by form than by content, viz. they are mysterious, N.A. Dahl lists the various forms of the Johannine *παροιμίαι* including aphoristic parables (3.29; 4.37; 11.9f; 12.24; 13.16; 16.21f) and narrative parables (10.1-5, 11-13; ch 15).⁶⁰ These examples correspond to the type of figurative language concerning natural, or cosmological mysteries. They of course are not exhaustive, nor do they include the eschatological type concerning mainly the future reward of the righteous and the judgement.

55 See Stone, 'The Parabolic Use', 304-308.

56 1 Enoch 68.1; 37.5; 38.1; 45.1; 57.3; 58.1; 69.29. See in particular Suter, 'משל', 193-212.

57 Suter, 'Mashal', 204.

58 Cf. Suter, 'Mashal', 201. For the apocalypses' indebtedness to both wisdom and prophetic tradition, see Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.206-207.

59 See J.M. Robinson, 'Gnosticism', 141; Ashton, *Understanding*, 398.

60 Dahl, 'Geheimnis und Parabel', 1619. See also L. Cerfaux, 'Le thème', 19ff, who lists as examples John 4.35-38; 12.24; 3.8; 14.25; 16.25; 3.3; 4.32; 5.17; 6.27; 7.27, 33; 8.33; 14.4, 19; 16.16; 8.32, 51; 9.23; 11.11; 6.31; 3.14 (cf. 8.28; 12.32-34); 9.7.

Yet Jesus' sayings in the Gospel in general and in John 12.23ff in particular contain the elements of both natural and eschatological mysteries as found in contemporary apocalypses. The metaphor of a grain of wheat and harvest (12.24) shows distinctive characteristics of an *aphorism*⁶¹ (χρηῖα in Greek and *usus* or *chreia* in Latin), which is rare in the Fourth Gospel in comparison to the Synoptics.⁶² Although an *aphorism* can be self-contained and thus does not always require any narrative context, it is evident that the *aphorism* concerning the death of a grain of wheat is well integrated in the narrative context concerning the coming of the hour. John 12.23ff contains the reference to the rewards of the followers of Jesus in terms of eternal life (12.25), being where he is, and receiving honour from God (12.26) as well as the reference to the judgement of the wicked (12.31). All these passages, each exhibiting a type of parallelism or another, shows a trait of aphoristic sayings. Jesus' saying on his lifting up at 12.32 has to be categorised as a *παροιμία*, because it is a riddling saying which causes a misunderstanding by the crowd. This is supported by the fact that this saying picks up the language of 3.14, another example of Jesus' *παροιμιαί* (II.3), although the typical pattern of simile ('as...', 'so') is absent. John 12.35-36, utilising the natural phenomenon of light and darkness in connection with the human activity of walking, shows a characteristic of a similitude expressing the heavenly reality in terms of earthly phenomena. Like proverbs and parables, some aphorisms belong to מְשָׁלִים/παροιμιαί.

A theological explanation of Jesus' metaphoric language in the Gospel in general and in John 12.23ff in particular is given in John 16.25ff. There he tells the disciples that ταῦτα ἐν παροιμιαῖς λελάληκα ὑμῖν. The primary reference of the *παροιμιαί* is without doubt to Jesus' disappearance from the disciples, which is expressed in a figure

61 *Aphorisms* are 'short, pithy sayings, arresting in their succinctness of expression'; 'they are expressed as though they are true to aspects of general experience. They are communicated in language which is vividly concrete and grounded in the world' (Piper, *Wisdom*, 4-5.). See also Aune, 'Oral Tradition', 216; cf. Crossan, *In Fragments*, 18-25. Due to their general nature expressed often in impersonal terms, *aphorisms* are not necessarily limited to a particular situation. So Piper, *Wisdom*, 5, following von Rad, *Wisdom*, 32.

62 D.E. Aune, 'Oral Tradition', 242-258, has found eight such examples in the Fourth Gospel (3.8, 29; 4.37; 5.19-20a; 8.35; 11.9-10; 12.24; 16.21), and 147 in the Synoptics without counting parallels. Cf. Dahl, 'Gleichnis und Parabel', 1619. The term *chreia* is defined by Aelius Theo as 'A brief statement or action with pointedness attributed to a definite person or something analogous to a person' (Theon, *Progim.* 202.4-5)

of a woman in birth pang (16.21). The exactly same metaphor or ܠܫܡܐ (Syr: *mtl*; Lat: *similitudo*) is used in 4 Ezra 4.42, 47 to suggest the imminent coming of the end-time judgement. Thus Jesus' disappearance from the disciples is depicted as a messianic woe before the end-time judgement (and salvation). At the same time, however, the plural παροιμίαι suggests that the reference is not just to the simile of a woman in travail but to the foregoing discourses of Jesus in their entirety, which is obviously retrospectively summarised here.⁶³ The function of John 16.25 resembles that of Mark 4.33-34 ($\text{καὶ τοιαύταις παραβολαῖς πολλαῖς ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον... χωρὶς δὲ παραβολῆς οὐκ ἐλάλει...}$), in which παραβολαί seems to be used 'to designate not just parables but the whole teaching of Jesus as enigmatic'.⁶⁴ Since Jesus' sayings in the so-called Book of Signs (John 1-12) are to be categorised as discourse ἐν παροιμίαις , a number of commentators conclude that Jesus' speaking in figures refers also to his whole teaching during the earthly mission.⁶⁵

We will argue that the speaking in figures constitutes a part of (a) the twofold division of παροιμία and παρρησία as the modes of Jesus' revelation, (b) whose conceptual background can be found in Jewish prophetic/apocalyptic belief in the modes of revelation before and after the coming of the eschatological age.

(a) παροιμία and παρρησία . It is clear from John 16.25b that παροιμία (= παραβολή) with παρρησία constitutes an antithetical contrast concerning the distinctive modes of Jesus' teaching. John 16.25b also clearly distinguished the two periods concerning the mode of Jesus' teaching: $\text{ἔρχεται ὥρα ὅτε οὐκέτι ἐν παροιμίαις λαλήσω ὑμῖν, ἀλλὰ παρρησίᾳ περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀπαγγελῶ ὑμῖν}$ (cf. John 14.20; 16.12). Since 'the hour' refers to Jesus' departure from the world to the Father (16.28), the coming of the 'hour' (the end time) in which Jesus speaks not in figures (παροιμίαις) but openly (παρρησίᾳ) distinguishes the modes of revelation before the death and after the resurrection of Jesus.⁶⁶ W. Wrede, being aware of passages suggesting otherwise,

63 Hauck, *TDNT* 5.856.

64 Robinson, 'Gnosticism', 141.

65 Brown, *John*, 2.734; Barrett, *John*, 495; Lindars, *John*, 511; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 286.

66 Ashton, *Understanding*, 397-400. Cf. 14.20; 16.12. See also Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, 186-207.

observes that 'the *general* idea seems to be fundamental, that during his earthly life Jesus proclaimed, in a mysterious, allusive manner, the superhuman truth which he brought from heaven, and that he therefore remained uncomprehended'.⁶⁷ Wrede rightly finds the same characteristics in the events of Jesus' life (e.g. John 12.16; 13.7).⁶⁸ The implication is that, since it was not until the coming of the hour that Jesus had spoken not *ἐν παροιμίαις* but *παρρησίᾳ*, all Jesus' foregoing teachings including aphorisms and metaphorical sayings can be regarded as *παροιμίαι*. This corresponds to the general distinction between Jesus' coded teachings (*παροιμίαι*) before his death and his uncoded (*παρρησίᾳ*) teachings afterwards. This distinction of the manners of revelation is envisaged in the hermeneutical temporal turning point for the disciples recorded in John 2.22 and 12.16, where their perception of what Jesus said and did is said to have happened after his resurrection, i.e. his glorification.⁶⁹ To 'speak openly' would mean that in the time after the resurrection, which is most likely identified with his glorification, the direct knowledge of what Jesus has said is conferred on the believers through the Paraclete (14.26; 16.12-15),⁷⁰ who like *angelus interpretis* interprets (*ἀναγγελλεῖν*) the teachings of Jesus.⁷¹

(b) The conceptual background of this antithesis is of some import. Recognising this pattern both in John and Mark, Wrede looked into the later development of the theme in Justin, Clement of Alexandria (Eusebius, *HE* 2.1), and Gnostic writings, especially *Pistis Sophia* (the second half of the third century CE).⁷² *Pistis Sophia* 6 shows a striking resemblance to John 16.25ff: 'Then Jesus, the compassionate, said to

67 Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, 201. Ashton, *Understanding*, 398.

68 Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, 207.

69 For the identification of the glorification of Jesus in 12.16 with his resurrection, see e.g. A. Obermann, *Die christologische Erfüllung*, 212-213. As to the hermeneutical shift, cf. Luke 24.25-26, 32, 44-47 [cf. John 20.9]; 1 Peter 1.10-12; and Justin, *Dialogue*, 52.1; 68.6; 106; *Apology* 1.50; cf. Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* IV.26.1. See Robinson, 'Gnosticism', 138-139. Robinson, 'Jesus', 26-27. Robinson argues that John 16.29, like Mark 8.32, is an attempt to push back the hermeneutical turning point into the public ministry of Jesus from after Easter, a move representing 'an emergent orthodoxy' that 'sought to validate Jesus prior to his death as a source of ultimate interpretation' ('Gnosticism', 141-142; Robinson, 'Jesus', 22, 36). Yet the disciples' exclamation at John 16.29 (*Ἰδὲ νῦν ἐν παρρησίᾳ λαλεῖς*) cannot be given much weight, since it reflects their misunderstanding (Cf. Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung*, 97).

70 Brown, *John*, 2.735; Lindars, *John*, 511.

71 So Ashton, *Understanding*, 393-394, 423-424.

72 Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, 244-252. Cf. Robinson, 'Jesus', 24-36.

them [the disciples]: 'Rejoice and be glad *from this hour* because *I have been to the places from whence I came forth*. From today onwards now I will speak with you *openly* (παρρησία) from the beginning of the truth until its completion. And I will speak with you face to face, without *parable* (παραβολή). I will not conceal from you, from this hour onwards, anything of the things of the height and of the place of the truth'.⁷³ Wrede suggested that the antithesis of παραβολή (= παροιμία) and παρρησία, representing the teaching of Jesus before his death and after his resurrection respectively, is not only the result of reading the Fourth Gospel but a reflection of a living tradition existing in Gnosticism.⁷⁴ Picking up Wrede's point here, J.M. Robinson argues for the existence of a trajectory from Mark and John to *Pistis Sophia*, and regards *ApJas* (CG I,2) 7.1-7 as standing closer to the Fourth Gospel than to the *Pistis Sophia* in time.⁷⁵ But it is difficult to view that *ApJas* 7.1-7 provides a contemporary category to explain the conceptual framework of the Johannine notion (or that of Mark's Gospel), since *ApJas* does not predate 150 CE.⁷⁶ Rather, these Gnostic passages seem to show considerable influence of Christianity (the Fourth Gospel in particular). Robinson, on his part, has found its background in 'the broader hermeneutical undertaking of Late Antiquity, especially that taking place within Judaism and primitive Christianity' (the Habakkuk Commentary of Qumran, esp. 1QpHab 7.1-5).⁷⁷ In fact, it is the Jewish apocalyptic belief of the once-hidden divine mystery/ies to be openly revealed at the end time, that provides a proper context for the παραβολαὶ (παροιμίαι)-παρρησία pattern. A classic example is Dan 12.9, in which the seer Daniel is told that 'the words are to remain secret and sealed until the time of the end (לְמַעַן יִתְּנָהן לְעַמּוּד הַיּוֹם)'.⁷⁸ In the Habakkuk Commentary of Qumran (1QpHab 7.1ff) the time of the Teacher of Righteousness and that of his community is regarded as the time of revela-

73 Also see *Pistis Sophia* 25.

74 Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, 251. The juxtaposition of 'parable' and 'openly' occurs in *Pistis Sophia* 107, 110, 128.

75 Robinson, 'Gnosticism', 140-141. *ApJas* 7.1-7 reads: 'At first I spoke to you in parables and you did not understand; now I speak to you openly and you (still) do not perceive'.

76 Cf. Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library*, 30 (F.E. Williams).

77 Robinson, 'Gnosticism', 138-139.

78 The Marcan theme of the Messianic secret falls into the same apocalyptic mould as is evident from Mark 9.9.

tion of the hidden mysteries, since the author interprets Hab 2.2 ('That he who reads it may read it speedily') that 'this concerns the Teacher of Righteousness, to whom God made known to him (הודיעו) all the mysteries (כול רזי) of the words of His servants the Prophets'. What is implied in this passage with apocalyptic contours⁷⁹ is that the mysteries as the veiled content of the prophecy hidden even to the prophet himself is now revealed to the founder of the Qumran community.⁸⁰ Since there is a theme of the prolongation of the end time (הקיץ האחרון) in the immediately following *peshar* (7.7), it is evident that the time of the Teacher of Righteousness and of the community represents the end time in which the divine mysteries concerning the meaning of the Scripture have become known. This concept of a hermeneutical change in the eschatological age with respect to the meaning of the Jewish Scripture is known to Rabbis as well.⁸¹

In the Fourth Gospel, Ashton observes, there are two distinctive periods, divided by Jesus' resurrection/glorification, concerning the perception of Jesus' words and deeds by the disciples (John 2.19-20, 21-22; 7.39; 12.14-15, 16).⁸² The symbolic saying or deed of Jesus is perceived only after the resurrection, or the glorification of Jesus, either in conjunction with passages of the Hebrew Scripture or not. As Ashton succinctly points out the time after Jesus' resurrection is the time in which the hidden meaning of the enigmatic sayings or visions of Jesus are interpreted to the believers by the Paraclete. This may well correspond to the *παροιμία-παρρησία* contrast. In the Fourth Gospel the revelation of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation was given to the Jews as well as to the disciples in the imminence of their fulfilment in the person of Jesus. Yet even the disciples did not understand their significance until after his resurrection/glorification (John 20.8 may be the first of such an understanding).

79 So Milik, *Ten Years*, 114.

80 See G.J. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 283; Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 234; M. Horgan, *Pesharim*, 237.

81 See Martyn, 'Epistemology', 280, who lists NumR 19.6; KohR 2.1; Pes 50a; Ber 34b; Nidd 70b; GenR 98.9.

82 Ashton, *Understanding*, 413-420. See also Loader, *The Christology*, 105.

To conclude, the metaphoric language of the sayings of Jesus in John 12.20-36 (esp. 12.24, 25, 32, 35-36) suggests *a posteriori* the pericope's apocalyptic nature with other apocalyptic elements in content. The *ἐν παροιμίαις* - *παρηρησία* contrast that seems to provide an overall pattern of Jesus' revelatory teachings in the Fourth Gospel points towards this conclusion.

1.3.2.3 *Misunderstanding and Interpretation*

W. Wrede, followed by Ashton, pointed out that the Johannine Jesus' teaching *ἐν παροιμίαις* is intrinsically related to the Johannine misunderstandings.⁸³ John 12.20-36 contains two accounts of misunderstanding by the crowd gathered around Jesus (vv 29, 34). Both cases exhibit a typical pattern of the Johannine misunderstandings: an enigmatic saying or event (vv 28b, 32) causes a misunderstanding (vv 29 [schism], 34), which requires an interpretation either for the characters in the narrative (v 30) or for the reader/audience (v 33).

The milieu of the Johannine misunderstandings has not been given much attention. R. Bultmann in his seminal article maintained that the numerous misunderstandings in the Johannine dialogues are not simply a technical literary means used by the evangelist, but that they are deeply grounded in his idea of the revelation.⁸⁴ For Bultmann the concept of revelation meant first and foremost that of the demythologised Mandaean redeemer myth, a theory which has been convincingly refuted. H.-M. Schenke has drawn attention to the affinity of this Johannine literary device to the Gnostic revelatory sayings concerning the heavenly wisdom in the *Corpus Hermeticum* (XIII 1,2) and the *Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth* (CG VI.6), as well as to the question-answer-result pattern in the *Apocryphon of James* (CG I,2) and the *Book of Thomas the Contender* (CG II,7.138.21-36; cf. John 3.12, 21; *ThomCont* 140.5-18; cf. John 3.11).⁸⁵ Yet this motif of misunderstanding is used widely in apocalypses and the Gospel of Mark.⁸⁶ W.A. Meeks pointed out the widespread nature of this motif in the

83 Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, 197ff.

84 Bultmann, 'Die Bedeutung', 146.

85 Schenke and Fischer, *Einleitung*, 2.187; Schenke, 'The Function and Background', 112.

86 Mark 4.13, 41; 6.51f; 7.17f; 8.17-21. See Tuckett, *Nag Hammadi*, 83.

Graeco-Roman world, and remarked that 'perhaps the closest parallels to the present dialogue [with Nicodemus in John 3.1ff] are to be found in the dialogue between the seer and the interpreting angel in apocalypses and in the gnostic revelations such as the Apocryphon of John or the Pistis Sophia'.⁸⁷ Yet the mere existence of such parallels is meaningless unless they are adequately explained. It is very likely that both the Fourth Gospel and some Gnostic texts are embedded in the Jewish wisdom and apocalyptic tradition,⁸⁸ and that the Gospel exerted some influence among Gnostics. As we shall see later (II.3.3) that at least the misunderstandings by Nicodemus in John 3 correspond in form to the apocalyptic pattern of (a) an enigmatic vision or a riddle — (b) puzzle/lack of understanding and request for interpretation — (c) interpretation given to a seer by an interpreting angel. If the drawing back of the veil hiding the divine mysteries is one of the fundamental aspects of apocalyptic epistemology, at least some of the Johannine misunderstanding passages would fall well into that mould. In the coming of the divine *Logos*, human ignorance clashes with divine omniscience and surface meaning clashes with hidden meaning; such a clash of opposition creates the Johannine irony.⁸⁹

Lack of understanding or misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel is, as we will see in part III, characteristic of a drama of concealed identity in which the protagonist is misunderstood by other characters. We will argue that this apocalyptic presentation of the Johannine misunderstandings in John 3 is fused with the failed recognitions of a disguised divine hero as developed in Graeco-Roman literature. It has to be noted, however, that there is a difference between these themes as well. On the one hand, in apocalypses the seers express their ignorance concerning the vision or the riddle they have seen or have been told and ask for explanation; the seer is finally satisfied with the knowledge he is given by an explanation. On the other hand, without Jesus' intervention or revelation, most misunderstandings in the Fourth Gospel do not function to lead the characters concerned to real understanding; and some of them function as irony

87 Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 148.

88 So Wilson, *Gnosis*, 48-57; MacRae, 'The Jewish Background', 86-101.

89 Duke, *Irony*, 111.

suggesting deeper meanings to the readers, while the victimised characters are left in oblivion. Such is the characteristic of the drama of concealed identity. This may concur with P. Duke's observation that many of the Johannine ironies are Jewish in content while they are embedded to the Homeric and Greek tragicomic conventions in form.⁹⁰

Returning to John 12.20ff, the figurative saying concerning the *ὑψωθῆναι* of the Son of man at John 12.32 is presented as enigmatic, causing a misunderstanding among the crowd (12.34), whereas its meaning is only relevant from the post-Easter perspective and is given by the narrator to the readers of that period (12.33). This post-Easter explanation of the enigmatic saying at 12.33 is coloured with an intriguing characteristic of apocalyptic revelation, as the technical use of *σημαίνειν* in interpreting a riddling saying suggests (see II.1.4).

1.3.4 Summary

Thus, the cognitive terminology, the manners of Jesus' revelation in the double *ἀμήν* sayings and in the form of the *παροιμίας*, and the pattern of misunderstanding and interpretation all point to the existence of an apocalyptic epistemology in the Fourth Gospel as a whole, of which John 12.20-36 is a part. Having established these points, we are ready to investigate the well-discussed issue of the Johannine *σημεῖα* with respect to the pericope under discussion and the verb *σημαίνειν* which exegetes frequently associate with *σημεῖα*.

1.4 Does John 12.20-36 Contain or Refer to Any Sign?—Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection as Signs of the End-Time Judgement and Restoration—

At the beginning of a summary section of Jesus' earthly ministry (12.37ff) the author refers back to the signs and their effect: *Τοσαῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ σημεῖα πεποιηκότος ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν οὐκ ἐπίστευον εἰς αὐτόν*. The author finds little problem in summarising by *σημεῖα* Jesus' deeds (and teachings) in the first half of the Gospel.⁹¹ For this reason, Bultmann and others conclude that the works and words of Jesus form an

⁹⁰ Duke, *Irony*, 140-142.

⁹¹ Bittner, *Jesu Zeichen*, 192.

inner unity in the Fourth Gospel.⁹² Lightfoot succinctly pointed out the twofold characteristics of 'signs' in all the narrated deeds of Jesus: 'it may be said that all the Lord's actions narrated in this Gospel have a twofold character; on the one hand, they are objects of sight and perception, and, to some of those who witness them, no more than this; but on the other hand, to some they convey an inner, deeper significance, leading to faith in the author of them, and thereby to "life in His name"'.⁹³ Apart from this general theme, whether or not the *σημεῖα* in John 12.37 also includes or refers back to the preceding pericope may be a matter of dispute.

1.4.1 *Negative Appraisal*

Some interpreters would take the lifting up of Jesus as a sign, generally on the basis that *σημαίνειν* in John 12.33 is a cognate of *σημεῖον* (cf. 18.32).⁹⁴ Indeed, *σημαίνειν* corresponds to *σημα*, a cognate of *σημεῖον*.⁹⁵ As Schnackenburg maintains, however, it is not feasible to argue that Jesus' lifting up is a sign only because of the use of *σημαίνειν* in 12.33 (cf. 18.32), since the same verb is utilised to refer to the martyr's death of Peter in 21.19.⁹⁶ Although there is a further similarity between the death of Jesus and that of Peter in that they are both to glorify God, it is only Jesus' signs, not Peter's, that lead to people's belief or disbelief—a characteristic of the Johannine concept of sign.⁹⁷

Lütgehetmann is of the opinion that although the idea of *νι* ('an ensign') has no role to play in the Johannine concept of *σημεῖα*; the narrator explains the *ὑψωθῆναι* of Jesus as a sign (*σημαίνων*) designating the manner of Jesus' death.⁹⁸ Relating John 12.33 to 3.14, he reasons that since the LXX renders *νι* ('an ensign') with *σημεῖον*,

92 Bultmann, *John*, 452, followed by Blank, *Krisis*, 298, maintains that the *σημεῖα* here represent the entire revelatory activity of Jesus including not only signs but also words, because Jesus' words are words of revelation. Cf. Wellhausen, *Johannis*, 57. On the other hand, however, there is a strong opposition to this view. See Schneider, *Johannes*, 235, 325; Schulz, *Johannes*, 247.

93 Lightfoot, *John*, 336.

94 Dodd, *Interpretation*, 379. Cf. J.A. Draper, 'The Development', 17, 19, who, without referring to Bittner's thesis, connects the *σημαίνειν* with the Messianic totem (Isa 11.10f) and the totem of Moses (Num 21.4ff), both of which are designated as *νι*/*σημεῖον*.

95 Liddell & Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1593-1594.

96 Schanckenburg, *John*, 1.520 n7.

97 See John 2.11, 23; 4.50, 53; 6.30; 7.31; 9.35, 36, 38; 10.42; 11.15, 45; 12.37; 20.30-31.

98 Lütgehetmann, *Die Hochzeit*, 228-229.

which is used to refer to a pole upon which Moses lifted up a bronze serpent in Num 21.8-9, the cross as Jesus' lifting-up is set in parallel with that כנ/σημεῖον. This view is also based on the cognate relation of σημαίνειν and σημεῖον. However, this cognate relation is not so strong in the Fourth Gospel, when considered by means of historical semantics. In fact, σημαίνειν seems to be used technically, containing peculiarly apocalyptic connotations in the Gospel as in Jewish literature.

W. Bauer has seen σημαίνειν only in conjunction with its technical use for an allusive speech of the Delphic oracle speaking of a future event.⁹⁹ But lexicographers have failed to consider its use in the Greek translations of Daniel 2, in which an apocalyptic connotation is attached to this verb. The LXX of Dan 2.23, 30, 45 translates the Haphel of כדע/כדע with σημαίνειν, whereas the Theodotion has γνωρίζειν.¹⁰⁰ Most of the occurrences of Haphel of כדע/כדע in Dan 2 (except 2.15, 17) are concerned with the knowledge of the revealed mysteries of Nebchadnezzar's dream vision and/or its interpretation.¹⁰¹ Thus, הודע פשר (σημαίνειν/δηλοῦν/ἀπαγγεῖλαι τὸ σύγκριμα/τὴν [συγ]κρίσιμ) is a semi-technical term referring to the interpretative activity of the divine mysteries revealed either in visions or in the Scripture.¹⁰² The Aramaic הודע, corresponding to σημαίνειν, has some cognates in the Qumran literature used for designating (apocalyptic) revelations. In the *Habakkuk Commentary* the Hiphil of דר is used for interpreting a vision concerning the end time: while God did not make known (הודע) to Habakkuk 'when the time would come to an end (גמר הקץ), to the Teacher of Righteousness were made known (הודיע, inf.const.) 'all the mysteries of the words' of the prophets (1QpHab 7.2-5). Moreover, the *Hodayot* (1QH 11.16-17) provides evi-

99 Bauer, *Johannes*, 159. So also Bultmann, *John*, 433 n5. M&M, 572. BAGD 747, categorises it along with its use in Delphic oracles, but assigns it a rather ordinary meaning of 'to mean' or 'to signify'.

100 The Haphel of כדע/כדע is a very common verbal stem in the Aramaic part of the Book of Daniel, which is translated with ἀπαγγεῖλαι, δηλοῦν, or σημαίνειν in the LXX and with γνωρίζειν or ἀπαγγεῖλαι in the Theodotion (Dan 2.5, 9, 15, 17, 25, 28, 29, 30, 45; 4.4, 15; 5.8, 15, 16, 17; 7.16). In Dan 2.45 in particular הודע/σημαίνειν means 'to show or to make known in a symbol' what will happen in the future.

101 The Peal of כדע is also commonly used in Daniel (2.8, 30; 4.6, 12, 14, 21, 22, 23, 29; 5.21, 23; 6.11, 16).

102 The reason for the Septuaginta's choice of σημαίνειν for הודע must be due to the overlapping of the semantic fields of these verbs; the former has a sense of prediction, while the latter is concerned with communication (of what will happen in the future).

dence that the Hiphil of עָרַב has a close semantic relation with הִלָּל which is frequently rendered $\alpha\pi\kappa\alpha\lambda\upsilon\pi\tau\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ in the LXX.¹⁰³ If $\sigma\eta\mu\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ is a rendering of עָרַב , therefore, there is no direct link between that Greek verb in Daniel and $\sigma\eta\mu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ (אָרַב or בָּרַב).¹⁰⁴

1 Enoch 107.2 $\sigma\eta\mu\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ is employed (in a manner similar to the Aramaic עָרַב) for Enoch's interpretation of the divine mystery revealed at the birth of Noah to Methuselah, his grandfather. Josephus provides strong evidence of $\sigma\eta\mu\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ being used as a technical term for an apocalyptic communication in the first-century Judaism.¹⁰⁵

In the NT $\sigma\eta\mu\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ is very rare, occurring only six times. At two occasions (Acts 11.28; 25.27) a rather ordinary sense 'to signify' is assigned to it. But the use of the verb in Rev 1.1 is specifically apocalyptic: 'Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἣν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεός, δεῖξαι αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει, καὶ ἐσήμανεν ἀποστείλας διὰ τοῦ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννῃ. Here $\sigma\eta\mu\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ is used for a transmission of the revelation of the divine mysteries in an undisputably apocalyptic context, and thus is virtually equivalent to the Aramaic עָרַב in Dan 2 and 1QpHab 7.2, 4-5.¹⁰⁶ The object of the ἐσήμανεν is without doubt 'the revelation of Jesus Christ' which the relative pronoun ἣν modifies. Since it provides the basis for the witness of John concerning the apocalyptic visions of Jesus Christ (Rev 1.2), $\sigma\eta\mu\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ here concerns the interpretation of the revealed mysteries in visions.

Turning to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus' self-revelation is expressed by means of the riddles, or enigmatic sayings, which cause misunderstandings among the immediate audience, i.e. the disciples, the Jews, and the crowd alike. The riddles in the Fourth Gospel seem to function like revealed mysteries in apocalyptic literature, being an

103 The semantic overlapping between these verbs is clearly indicated in 1QH 11.16-17: $\text{כִּי הוֹרֵעַתְנִי סוּדֵר וְנִפְלְאוֹתֵיכֶם גְּלִיתָה לִּי/אֲמַת}$.

104 Cf. Rengstorf, *TDNT* 7.263, who holds that 'the LXX follows ordinary Greek usage' and that 'there is no connection with אָרַב/σημεῖον '.

105 Josephus utilises the verb technically to denote what apocalyptic dreams or visions signify. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.11, 14, 15, 17 (Gen 37); *Ant.* 10.239, 241 (Dan 5); *Ant.* 10.200 (Dan 2.17). Elsewhere it is used non-technically (*Bell.* 5.218; 7.2, 338; *Ant.* 2.90; 3.310; 5.293; *Cont. Ap.* 2.263).

106 Rengstorf, *TDNT* 7.265, is of the opinion that the verb in Rev 1.1 is 'not specifically religious'. In a Qumran *peshet* to Hab 2.2 (1QpHab 7.4-5), the Hiphil of עָרַב is used for the transmission of knowledge concerning the mysteries of the Prophets. Indeed, an apocalyptic tone of its Hophal is very strong in what proceeds: 'He [God] did not make known to (הוֹרֵעַ) him [Habakkuk] the completion of the time (עֵת) (1QpHab 7.2).

enigma provoking within the seers or hearers a desire to know its interpretation. Indeed, some of the enigmatic sayings of Jesus which have caused misunderstandings are given interpretations by the narrator.¹⁰⁷ In John 12.32ff Jesus' enigmatic saying of his *ὑψωθῆναι*, which is followed by a comment of the narrator (v 33), causes a misunderstanding among the crowd (v 34). It is already indicated in 3.14 that the *ὑψωθῆναι* of the Son of man constitutes part of the revealed heavenly things (*τὰ ἐπουράνια*: 3.12). The use of *σημαίνειν* in interpreting the enigmatic saying of Jesus points to its technical use. Cyril of Alexandria (the early fifth century CE) would concur with our interpretation, conceiving of the content of what *ὑψωθῆναι* refers to as 'the mystery', whose meaning can be understood only by the wise.¹⁰⁸ The fact that the verb in John 18.32 and 21.19 appears with few apocalyptic associations may be taken to discourage such an interpretation. But John 12.33 has a prominent role to play in deciding the meaning of the verb, because 18.32 and 21.19, both speaking of the manner of Peter's death similar to that of Jesus, echo 12.33. In any case, *σημαίνειν* in 12.33 pertains to its use in the LXX of Dan 2 and Josephus, as well as in Rev 1.1 where it is a technical term of apocalyptic epistemology. This would suggest that *the lifting up of Jesus the Son of man as a reference to his crucifixion is the locus where the divine mystery about the end-time judgement and restoration is revealed, and that, due to its enigmatic nature, the lifting up of Jesus the Son of man as an apocalyptic vision of the end time is to be given an interpretation by the narrator who functions as a mediator of Jesus' revelation.*

Consequently, the cognate relation between *σημεῖον* and *σημαίνειν* does not provide a sufficient ground for identifying *ὑψωθῆναι*, i.e. the crucifixion, of Jesus as a 'sign' in John 12.32-33. If this is the case, should such an identification be abandoned altogether? The answer would be in the negative, for there is evidence that strongly suggests that the cross and resurrection of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel and in John 12.20ff in particular is presented as a sign of the end-time judgement and salvation as in Jewish apocalyptic eschatologies.

¹⁰⁷ See Mark 9.2-13. Cf. Dan 12.9; 4 Ezra 13.48.

¹⁰⁸ Cyril, *St. John*, 156-157, 158.

1.4.2. *Positive Appraisal*

In John 12.37 the 'signs' function as a summary word for the first half of the Gospel. Both by the use of *ποσαῦτα* ('so many'), which generally refers back to what precedes immediately,¹⁰⁹ and by the use of the perfect participle *πεποιηκότος* (cf. 12.18), it is inferred that what the author has just narrated before 12.37 is a series of signs performed by Jesus. It is reasonable to doubt whether the 'so many signs' of Jesus here include not only the events mentioned expressly as such but also the unspecified deeds (and words) of Jesus.¹¹⁰ Thus it is legitimate to ask whether or not it is implied by John 12.37 that the preceding pericope contains, or constitutes, a sign or signs.

i. *The Signs of the Johannine Jesus within the Jewish Context*

In order to clarify this issue, we need to discuss the Johannine term *σημεῖα* in contrast to its use (a) in the OT and (b) in early Judaism.

(a) *Signs in the OT* The function and purpose of the signs in the Fourth Gospel may be comparable to those of the signs of Exodus¹¹¹, because in the event of Exodus the signs had a purpose to let the people hearken to the voice of God.¹¹² In Num 14.22 seeing the signs which God wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness is equated with seeing his glory. It was expected for the people to hearken to God's voice as a result of their seeing his signs and glory,¹¹³ while those who did not pay heed to God's voice were not allowed to *see* (ראה) the promised land. Likewise, in Deut 29.2-4 signs as revelation of God could lead to the hardening of the heart of the people,

109 See John 6.9; Matt 15.33; Luke 14.5 (cf. Heb 12.1: *ποσούτων νέφος μαρτύρων*, referring back to the faithful of the OT, who are mentioned in the preceding chapter, i.e. Heb 11).

110 See John 2.23; 7.31; 10.41; cf. 6.29; 9.16; 11.47.

111 Lütgehetmann, *Die Hochzeit*, 230, distinguishes the OT use of the signs into legitimation signs and revelation signs: (1) A legitimation sign (*אור/σημείον*) is the one which is used as a technical means to procure the message of a God-sent prophet (e.g. 1 Sam 2.34; 10.7, 9; 2 Kings 19.29; Exod 4.8, 9, 17, 28, 30). (2) Its other OT use is for the revelation of God through miracles and for the entire statement-event (cf. Dan 5.5-9; 2 Chron 32.24).

112 D.K. Clark, 'Signs and Wisdom', 210-219, contends that WisSol 11-19 reinterprets the Exodus tradition by reducing the ten signs and wonders to six 'ordinary' signs and one 'extraordinary' sign wrought by wisdom. M. Scott, *Sophia*, 167-168, following Clark, suggests that the 'signs' in the Fourth Gospel may be dependent on this scheme. However, whether the Fourth Gospel has six or five narrated 'signs' is a matter of dispute. Cf. Lütgehetmann, *Die Hochzeit*, 219, who finds five such signs (2.11; 4.54; 6.14, 26; 9.16; 11.47/12.18).

113 The rejection of God's message by Israel in Egypt and the desert is expressed as *ולא שמעו בקולי* (Num 14.22).

whereas God's sustenance of his people throughout the wilderness was to lead them to the belief that he is the Lord their God (29.5: יהוה אגני יהוה למען תדעו כי אלהיכם/ὅτι οὗτος κύριος ὁ θεός ὑμῶν). Similar contrasted consequences of a sign are found in PsSol 15.6, 10, where a sign leads either εἰς σωτηρίαν (15.6) or to ἀπώλεια (15.10).

In the same vein, the prime purpose of Jesus' signs in the Fourth Gospel is to show people the divine glory of Jesus (2.11, 11.4, 40) so that they may *believe* that Jesus is 'sent by God', ἐγὼ εἰμί, and the Christ, the Son of God. Nevertheless, however, the Jewish crowd is said to have responded to Jesus' signs with disbelief (12.37). Such negativeness may be reflected in John 12.27-30, where the crowd misunderstands the heavenly voice concerning the glorification of the name of the Father. Jesus' enigmatic saying that it was 'for your sake' (οὐ δι' ἐμὲ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτῆ γέγονεν ἀλλὰ δι' ὑμῶν: 12.30) would presuppose that the heavenly voice should have been perceived by the Jewish crowd as a sign legitimating Jesus' being sent by the Father.

The relationship between the Johannine idea of glory or glorification and signs are of interest. As the revelation of 'glory' of Jesus is closely associated with his signs (2.11, 11.4, 40), so is his resurrection from death and departure to the Father called the event of his glorification (7.39; 12.16, 23, 28; 13.31f; 17.1-5; cf. 21.19).¹¹⁴ The sign of the raising of Lazarus is portrayed as the event of the bilateral glorification between the Father and Jesus as the Son of God (11.4). In John 17.1-5 the glorification of Jesus is described as happening in 'the hour' of his passion and resurrection. Jesus prays to the Father, 'I have glorified thee on earth, having accomplished (τέλειωσας) the work thou gavest me to do' (17.4). There is no doubt that this refers not to the previous works of Jesus but to what he is going to achieve on the cross. The last word of Jesus on the cross ('It is finished' [τετέλειωται]: 19.30) would support this interpretation. Also emphasised in John 17.1-5 is that the cross as the event of the bilateral glorification of the Father and the Son is associated with eternal life. The cross is thus understood as the focus of the revelation of the eternal life to humanity: Jesus reveals

114 See Lütgehetmann, *Die Hochzeit*, 254; cf. de Jonge, *Stranger*, 127.

is finished' [τετέλασται]: 19.30) would support this interpretation. Also emphasised in John 17.1-5 is that the cross as the event of the bilateral glorification of the Father and the Son is associated with eternal life. The cross is thus understood as the focus of the revelation of the eternal life to humanity: Jesus reveals the life (ζωή) in that he goes along the way of the cross as the obedient Son (of the Father) and gave up his life (ψυχή) for his own people.¹¹⁶ Despite the close link between the idea of 'glory' and Jesus' signs, the use of δοξάζειν in 12.23 and 28 does not necessarily indicate that the death and resurrection of Jesus is a sign.¹¹⁷ But it could be said that the idea of glorification in the heavenly voice operates in a near proximity of the signs of Jesus.

(b) *Signs in Early Judaism* At the same time, of considerable significance for a proper understanding of the Johannine σημεῖα is the use of 'sign(s)' in Jewish apocalypses. In them 'signs' designate predominantly messianic woes before the eschatological judgement,¹¹⁸ while its salvific use as in most of the Johannine σημεῖα is also attested elsewhere.¹¹⁹ The signs as messianic woes at the end time reflect the breakdown of the natural and social order of the present world caused by human iniquity, to pave the way for the eschatological judgement and the new order of the age to come.¹²⁰ Such a use of σημεῖον is found in the NT also (e.g. Mark 13.4/Matt 24.3/Luke 21.7).¹²¹ That the 'signs' mentioned in John 12.37 fall into the similar mould can be demonstrated by considering its intriguing affinity to 4 Ezra 5.1ff. There the 'signs' of the final days revealed to the seer by Uriel consist of several interrelated themes such as (a) the concealment of wisdom, (b) the lack of faith and increase of unrighteousness on earth, (c) the theme of 'seek and not find' concerning wisdom, and

116 Pamment, 'The Meaning', 12-15; Lütgehetmann, *Die Hochzeit*, 255.

117 Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 226.

118 E.g. 4 Ezra 4.51-5.31; 8.63-9.6; 1 Enoch 99.4-7; Jub 23.22-31; SibOr 3.796-808; 2 Baruch 25.1-4. As Hofbeck, *SEMEION*, 39-40, observes, in early Jewish apocalypses σημεῖον has acquired a totally new *topos* of theological meaning unknown in the OT: it carries strongly eschatological connotations. Cf. Ashton, *Understanding*, 84.

119 Josephus, *Bell.* 6.285, would imply that the Jewry of Jerusalem in 70 CE expected τὰ σημεῖα τῆς σωτηρίας at the end time. Cf. Hengel, *Zealots*, 242.

120 Cf. Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 105, 293. The 'signs' as the messianic woes can be found also in 2 Baruch 25.1-2; 72.2; SibOr 3.796; bSanh 98a.

121 Matt 24.3 (τὸ σημεῖον τῆς σῆς παρουσίας καὶ συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος) is more elaborate than Mark 13.4 (τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα), while Luke 21.7 is closer to Mark and most simplified (τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα γίνεσθαι).

(d) the breakdown of social and natural order, or, as is generally so called, 'messianic woes' or tribulations (5.4-9). The reason for the eschatological concealment of Wisdom identified with the Torah,¹²² is people's unrighteousness expressed in their rejection of her. Likewise, in the preceding context of John 12.37, (a) Jesus conceals himself (b) from the misunderstanding (Jewish) crowd, who along with the hostile Jewish authorities represents the unrighteous, faithless world (whose ruler is to be judged); (c) the narrative cycle in which John 12.20-36 is located is presented in a framework of the motif 'seek and hide'. Although Jesus' concealment is not accompanied by the theme of eschatological reversal of the social and natural orders as in 4 Ezra 5 (cf. 2 Baruch 48.33-36), Jesus' concealment can be understood as a prelude to the eschatological catastrophe (d). In 2 Baruch 25.1-4 the sign which the Most High will bring about 'at the end of days' is identified as the tribulations and great torments inflicted upon the inhabitants of the earth. Likewise, by depicting the suffering of Jesus as concurrent with the coming of the eschatological ὥρα/ῥῆ of judgement and salvation (John 12.23) and by assimilating the lament and sorrow of the disciples at his death to a θλίψις of child-bearing (John 16.20-21), the evangelist ascribes to Jesus' crucifixion significant characteristics of the sign of the end time as a messianic woe.

ii. *The Cross and Resurrection as the Greatest Sign*

Lightfoot perceived that, though the word 'sign' is not actually applied, the cross is the greatest sign of Jesus.¹²³ Yet his insight is not always followed in the history of the interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.¹²⁴ The reason may be, at least in part, due to the popular distinction between the Book of Signs and the Book of Glory and the prevalence of the hypothesis of the *Semeia-Quelle*, both of which have contributed to rendering a consideration of the Passion and Resurrection Narrative irrelevant for understanding the Johannine signs.¹²⁵ But there are good reasons to concur with Lightfoot's view.

122 See 1 Enoch 99.1-6; 2 Baruch 38.1-4; 48.2; cf. 4 Ezra 5.1ff, in which 'the way of righteousness' is related to the Torah.

123 Lightfoot, *John*, 336.

124 E.g., Dodd, *Interpretation*, 78.

125 For a good critique of the *Semeia Quelle* hypothesis, see Schnelle, *Antidocetic Christology*, 150-164.

Already in John 2.18-22 a sign is associated with the resurrection of Jesus' body from death. Some deny the connection between the request of the Jews for a sign in 2.18 and Jesus' cryptic prediction of his death and resurrection in 2.19.¹²⁶ It is conceived that Jesus in 2.19 rejects the request for a legitimating sign by the Jews.¹²⁷ But it is not unknown in the OT that a sign can be described in an enigmatic מִשַׁל (cf. Isa 7.10-17).¹²⁸ While acknowledging this fact, Bittner denies the possibility that the evangelist understood the death and resurrection here as a prophetic sign predicting a future event.¹²⁹ Yet, that Jesus' saying in John 2.19 refers to a sign of the destruction and restoration of the Temple in apocalyptic eschatology becomes clear in the light of 2 Baruch 32.2-4 and 68.5. There the destruction of the Temple and its restoration after a short period of desolation constitute messianic woes, or 'signs', in the apocalyptic picture of the end-time destruction and new creation. Thus S. Schulz remarks that 'Das von Jesus angekündigt Wunderzeichen ist die eschatologische Katastrophe der Tempelzerstörung und der Aufbau eines neuen Tempels'.¹³⁰ The narrator's comment in 2.21 clarifies the riddle that the Temple destroyed and rebuilt is the body of Jesus,¹³¹ referring to the cross and resurrection. If we take into account the Jewish eschatological expectations concerning the Temple on Zion,¹³² the body of Jesus resurrected takes the place of the glorified Temple as the locus of the universal recognition and worship of God.

That the revelatory works of the Johannine Jesus are not limited to his earthly ministry is evident from the post-Easter accounts. But the decisive revelation of Jesus

126 E.g. Barrett, *John*, 199; Lindars, *John*, 141-144; Carson, *John*, 180-181. *Contra* Dodd, *Interpretation*, 300-301.

127 Wikenhauser, *Johannes*, 80; Léon-Dufour, *Lecture*, 259.

128 So Schnackenburg, *John*, 1.349; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 40.

129 Bittner, *Jesu Zeichen*, 169. Also Lütgehetmann, *Die Hochzeit*, 219, who denies that the passion and resurrection prediction in 2.19-22 is related to 20.30f.

130 Schulz, *Johannes*, 50. John 2.19 shows certain affinity to the prediction of Jonah's sign in the Synoptics (Matt 12.39-41; 16.4//Luke 11.29-32; cf. Matt 26.61). Cf. Barrett, *John*, 199-200.

131 It is obvious that the genitive τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ is in apposition to ὁ ναός in περὶ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ.

132 For the Jewish expectation of the future glory of Jerusalem and its Temple, see Volz, *Eschatologie*, 335. Ezek 40-44; Isa 60.7, 13; Tob 13.16f; 14.5f; Sir 36.18f; 1 Enoch 90.33; Jub 4.26; Zech 2.5-9. The nations will come to Jerusalem in order to see her glory (PsSol 17.30; cf. Tob 13.11). In SibOr 3.787 the city in which God dwells will have unextinguishable light, i.e. salvation.

as the Son of man is focused on his lifting-up (3.14; 8.28; cf. 1.51), obviously referring to his death on the cross (12.32-33). So there is no need to distinguish the earthly ministry radically from the passion and resurrection. Rather the intensifying and climaxing development of the narrative in John 1-12 suggests that his earthly mission points toward or is focused on the coming death and resurrection. Within such a wider context of the Gospel, John 2.18ff implies that the death and resurrection of Jesus is 'the sign'.

Apart from John 2.18ff, there is no explicit reference in the Gospel to the cross and/or the resurrection as a *σημεῖον*. This has led many exegetes to connect John 20.30-31 only with chs 1-12, without giving any consideration to chs 13-20.¹³³ For them 20.30f belongs to the *Semeia Quelle* or is a conclusion to it, though being used as a conclusion to the whole Gospel.¹³⁴ However, there are good reasons to believe otherwise, viz. that John 20.30-31 provides a conclusion to the Passion and Resurrection Narratives but not to chs 2-12.¹³⁵ (i) If John 20.30-31 originally belonged to the *Semeia Quelle* which was nothing to do with 13.1-20.29, the redactor's placement of it after the Passion and Resurrection narrative in the present form of the Gospel would be meaningless. (ii) There is a distinctive difference between the two summary sections. The section summarising Jesus' public ministry in 12.37f is concerned with the signs done in front of the Jewish crowds (*ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν*), whereas the second summary section is concerned with the signs done in front of his disciples (*ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ*). This difference corresponds to the change of the observers of Jesus' ministry in the second half of the Gospel from the first half. Whereas the ministry of Jesus (including his crucifixion) can be summarised as the revelation to Israel (cf. 1.31) and to the *κόσμος* (cf. 7.4f), the resurrection appearance is limited to the disciples including Mary Magdalene (John 20; cf. 21.1: *ἐφανερώσεν ἑαυτὸν πάλιν Ἰησοῦς τοῖς μαθηταῖς*). This narrowing down of the recipients of Jesus' revelation to the disciples after the resurrec-

133 E.g. Rengstorf, *TDNT* 7.255.

134 Bultmann, *John*, 698; Bittner, *Jesu Zeichen*, 91-92, 197-225; Fortna, *The Gospel*, 198; Nicol, *Semeia*, 39; Schulz, *Johannes*, 169, 247; Becker, *Johannes*, 2.632-633; cf. Bittner, *Jesu Zeichen*, 216-225. Brown, *John*, 2.1059, Schnackenburg, *John*, 3.337, and others are reluctant to see the death and resurrection as a sign or signs.

135 For a persuasive argument for this view, see H.-Chr. Kammler, 'Die "Zeichen"', 191-211.

tion accords with the prediction of the Johannine Jesus concerning his eschatological concealment from the world and revelation to the disciples in 14.19: 'Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me' (cf. 14.22). (iii) πολλὰ...καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα implies that, although σημεῖον is not used to describe Jesus' activities in the latter half of the Gospel, the Passion and Resurrection Narrative actually speaks of the σημεῖα of Jesus. It may be that since Jesus' death and resurrection was indicated as a sign early in the Gospel (2.18ff), there was no need to reiterate it.¹³⁶ The resurrection of Jesus is not only the work of God, but the deed of Jesus as the initial phase of his return to the Father, which, as God's vindication, legitimates the crucified one as a righteous sufferer.¹³⁷ Therefore, we agree with the view that 'Der Tod und die Auferstehung Jesu ist das größte und entscheidende "Zeichen" der messianischen Zeit'.¹³⁸

1.4.3 Summary

Our evaluation of the argument that the lifting up of Jesus in 12.32-33 is a σημεῖον due to the use of σημαίνειν is in the negative. But we have offered three considerations that point to a positive answer. First, not only σημαίνειν but also the literary structure of misunderstanding-interpretation within which it appears, points to its technical use indicating apocalyptic revelation as in Dan 2 (LXX). This suggests that the enigmatic saying of Jesus concerning his lifting up requires interpretation like an apocalyptic revelatory vision or saying. Second, although the signs in the Gospel are like the signs of Exodus legitimating the actor who is sent by God and leading the people either to belief or disbelief, the strong eschatological topos which the term acquired in early Judaism, especially in apocalyptic literature, is undeniable. Indeed, the cross of Jesus is depicted as a messianic woe: messianic woes are usually designated as signs leading up to the end-time judgement and restoration in Jewish 'historical-type' apocalypses. Furthermore, as we shall see later, there are two un-named signs of the

136 Lütgehetmann, *Die Hochzeit*, 219: 'Wie Joh 2,19-22 zeigt, fallen Passion und Auferstehung durchaus unter den Begriff σημεῖον, so daß der Zeichen-Begriff auch in Joh 20,30 so verstanden werden kann'.

137 O. Betz, 'Das Problem', 413.

138 P. Ricca, *Die Eschatologie*, 85; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 387. Cf. Carson, *John*, 661.

end time in John 12.20-36 as known in apocalypses. (a) Jesus' concealment from the misunderstanding crowd (12.36) is an eschatological sign of the concealment and departure of Wisdom which signifies the approaching end-time judgement (II.2). (b) His anguish (*ταραχῆ*) in 12.27 is also portrayed as a messianic woe (II.3). The reference to the signs of Jesus in 12.37 thus seems to be intended to signal to the first-century (Jewish and Christian) reader/audience the imminent coming of the end-time judgement and salvation. Third, although not expressly stated, it is inferred that the glorification and lifting up of Jesus, i.e. the cross and resurrection, in John 12.23ff is the sign of the end time *par excellence*, since in 2.18ff Jesus' resurrection from death which signifies the end-time restoration of the Temple is identified as a sign, and 20.31f refers back to the crucifixion and the resurrection by calling them 'signs'.

1.5 Conclusion

We have argued that John 12.20-36 and its context envisage strong apocalyptic traits not only in the manner of communication but also in its reference to the eschatological signs. As we have seen, the revelatory ministry of the Johannine Jesus consists in not only his works and his words but also what is happening around him. It has become evident that the cross (and resurrection) of Jesus is depicted as a climactic sign of the end time, which coincides with the messianic woes preceding the end-time judgement is the centre of the entire picture. The claim that the Fourth Gospel is apocalyptic or contains apocalyptic elements should come as no surprise, because recent scholarship on apocalypse has added an enormous amount to our knowledge and in such an atmosphere Bultmann's insight into the idea of revelation as the core of the Gospel ought to be seen not in terms of Mandaean Gnosticism but within the context of the Jewish (and Christian) apocalyptic thought-world.

THE JOHANNINE JESUS AS (APOCALYPTIC) WISDOM OF THE END TIME
AND THE Gnostic REDEEMER MYTH

—The Johannine Use of the *Apocalyptic-Sapiential Motifs of 'Seek and Not Find',
'Reveal and Hide', and Rejection and Departure*—

2.1 *Introduction*

The cycle in which John 12.20-36 is a part shows an intriguing narrative pattern similar to John 7.1-8.59. John 7-8 starts with the reference to 'the Jews'¹ seeking to kill Jesus (7.1) and ends with his hiding from the hostile Jews (8.59). This motif of 'seek and hide' is set in the narrative pattern of Jesus' coming out of hiddenness (*κρύπτω*) to reveal himself in public to Israel (cf. 1.31; 7.4) and then to retire into hiddenness again. C.H. Dodd remarks cogently: 'The whole episode [of John 7-8] began with Jesus *ἐν κρυπτῷ* (7.4). His attendance at the Feast is at first *οὐ φανερώς ἀλλὰ ὡς ἐν κρυπτῷ* (7.10). Then at mid-feast He suddenly appears in public, to be met with opposition and threats. It is fitting that the episode of conflict, having ended in the rejection of Jesus' challenge, should be rounded off by His retirement into concealment once more'.² Similarly, in our cycle Jesus enters Jerusalem from the state of being unable to walk in public (11.54: *οὐκέτι παρρησίᾳ περιεπάτει*), while he is both sought by the crowd (*ζητεῖν*: 11.56; cf. 12.9, 12, 18) and pursued by the authorities for arrest (11.57; cf. 12.10); then, after being misunderstood by the crowd (12.34), he hides himself again (12.36b: *καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἐκρύβη ἀπ' αὐτῶν*).³ Noteworthy is the way in

1 We treat 'the Jews' as a corporate character in the narrative and not as an analogy to the Jewish synagogue of a certain stage of the Johannine community's history.

2 Dodd, *Interpretation*, 348. So also Ibuki, *Wahrheit*, 66; Mlakuzhyil, *Literary Structure*, 202; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 104.

3 This contrast between *ἐν κρύπτω* and *παρρησίᾳ* was expounded by M. Stibbe, 'The Elusive Christ', esp. 21-24.

which the coming of the hour is linked with the manifestation of Jesus from concealment in these cycles. In John 7.3-10, it is evident that the appeal of Jesus' brothers *φανερώσων σεαυτὸν τῷ κόσμῳ* is an 'unconscious prophecy' for a request for the manifestation of the Messiah to the whole of humanity.⁴ His response *ὁ καιρὸς ὁ ἐμὸς οὐπω πάρεστιν* (7.6; 7.8: *πεπλήρωται*) implies that the arrival of the time of his manifestation to the world has to wait for an occasion other than the approaching feast of Tabernacles (note the emphatic *ἐγὼ οὐκ ἀναβαίνω εἰς τὴν ἑορτὴν ταύτην* in 7.8). In view of 7.3-10, it is evident that the cycle of 11.54ff is artfully composed to show that in the approaching of Passover the time for Jesus (*ὁ καιρὸς ὁ ἐμὸς*) to go up to Jerusalem openly from concealment (11.54) has come, i.e. the hour (*ἡ ὥρα*) when Jesus as the Son of man is glorified and in turn glorifies the Father (12.23, 27f).

Regarding the background and/or foreground of the motif of 'seek and not find' and that of revelation and concealment, various theories have been presented since they are found in Jewish wisdom and apocalyptic literature, in Qumran documents, and in Gnostic texts from Nag Hammadi.

2.2 Jewish Wisdom, Qumran, and Apocalyptic Literature

K. Berger and others have drawn attention to the fact that the motif of 'search (seek) and not find' (John 7.34, 36: *ζητήσατέ με καὶ οὐχ εὐρήσατε*) is widely attested in Jewish wisdom and apocalyptic literature.⁵ The classic passage is Prov 1.28f, in which the motif is used to depict the unrighteousness of the people with respect to God's wisdom and its consequence: 'they will seek me diligently, but will not find me (MT: *ימצאני ולא ישרחני*; LXX: *ζητήσουσίν με κακοὶ καὶ οὐχ εὐρήσουσιν*). Because they hated knowledge (*ἄγνοια*) and did not choose the fear of the Lord'.⁶ This passage appears in the context where the people's refusal to heed to Wisdom is said to have catastrophic consequences.

4 So Dodd, *Interpretation*, 351; Duke, *Irony*, 84-85. Cf. Bultmann, *John*, 290. Schulz, *Johannes*, 113; Schneider, *Johannes*, 162-163 think that the words of Jesus' brothers reflect a popular Jewish expectation of the Messiah who is to be enthroned in Jerusalem.

5 Berger, *Daniel-Diegese*, 76-79; T. Korteweg, 'Jn 7,34', 351. Ashton, *Studying John*, 173-182, and Bühner, *Der Gesandte*, 102, hold that due to this motif the Johannine Jesus is identified with Wisdom. Cf. Stibbe, 'The Elusive Christ', 29-34.

6 Bultmann, 'Bedeutung', 127, pointed to Prov 1.31 along with Matt 23.38f.

R. Bultmann argued that a gnostic myth of a searching and disappointed wisdom existed as is attested in Jewish wisdom tradition (e.g. Prov 1.20-32).⁷ But the alleged existence of such a wisdom myth especially in the earlier Jewish wisdom texts like Prov 1.20ff, Job 28 and Sir 24 has been rightly rejected.⁸ Indeed, the idea of a disappointed wisdom returning to where she has come from is foreign to these early wisdom texts.⁹ The motif of the departure (or concealment) of wisdom due to the unrighteousness of the people becomes apparent only later in apocalyptic literature¹⁰ and perhaps in Qumran literature. As such the motif is specific to the apocalyptic literature, reflecting a negative view of the covenantal people of God.¹¹ Yet it must be noted that the motif of the withdrawal of Wisdom causing messianic woes as a prologue to the end-time judgement in Jewish apocalyptic eschatology is based on Prov 1.28 and Micah 3.4 (cf. Hos 5.6).¹²

That the 'seek and not find' motif is intrinsically related to the motif of 'reveal and hide' is evident in wisdom tradition as appropriated in Qumran literature. In the *Hodayot* of Qumran, the psalmist utilises the motif in expressing his suffering in terms of the end-time tribulation (1QH 5.25ff): 'The members of my [Covenant] have rebelled... they have gone talebearers before the children of mischief concerning the mystery (רַ) which Thou hast hidden in me... and because of their guilt, Thou hast hidden the fountain of understanding (בִּינָה) and the counsel (or, mystery: סוּד) of truth'. Although the verb 'to reveal' is not used here, the concealment of 'the fountain of understanding and the counsel of truth', namely Wisdom,¹³ presupposes the fact that

7 Bultmann, 'Die religionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund', 17-18; John 8ff; Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 160ff.

8 C. Colpe, *Die religionsgeschichte Schule*, esp. 171-208. Cf. Mack, *Logos und Sophia*, 17-18.

9 See von Rad, *Wisdom*, 160 n17. In Job 28.12ff the hiddenness of wisdom from all the creation and from 'the eyes of all living' (v 21) is to emphasise her being found only in God. Sir 24, though containing the idea that Wisdom is leaving her heavenly abode in search of her dwelling place among humans, is mainly concerned with her (perpetual) settlement in the tabernacle/the Temple in Jerusalem among the people of Israel and her revelation through the Torah, and does not suggest a departure.

10 Mack, *Logos und Sophia*, 32-33, refers rightly to 1 Enoch 42.1-3, 4 Ezra 5.9-10 and 2 Baruch 48.36.

11 Cf. Schimanowski, *Weisheit und Messias*, 97-101.

12 Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom*, 139; Mack, *Logos und Sophia*, 45-46 n81.

13 בִּינָה is closely associated with חוכמה/חוכמה. See H.-W. Kuhn, *Enderwartung*, 139-140; H. Ringgren, *TDOT* 2.105-106. 1QH 1.21; 2.17; 14.8, 13; cf. Job 12.12, 20; Prov 9.10. Cf. Holm-Nielsen, *Hodayot*, 24 n41.

Wisdom has been given to the community members. Such is the repeated theme of the *Hodayot* as H.-W. Kuhn has aptly explicated.¹⁴ The concealment of wisdom constitutes a prelude to the end-time tribulations, since the suffering of the psalmist's 'I' is depicted as a messianic woe expressed by the imagery of a woman in travail in the same context (1QH 5.30-31).

This motif of 'reveal and hide' is more explicitly linked with Wisdom in later apocalyptic writings.¹⁵ In 4 Ezra 5.1ff the motif of 'seek and not find' is utilised coterminously with the theme of the concealment of Wisdom, which coincides with messianic woes before the end-time judgement.¹⁶ Concerning 'the signs' of the coming of the end time, Uriel says to Ezra, 'Behold, the days are coming when those who dwell on earth shall be seized with great terror, and the way of truth shall be hidden (*abscondetur*: the verb used for *κρύπτειν* at John 12.36 in the Vulgate), and the land shall be barren of faith' (5.1-2). Here the signs of the end time are related to an eschatological terror in the messianic woes (cf. 5.4-9),¹⁷ the hiding of the way of truth, and the increase of unrighteousness: 'and reason shall hide itself, and wisdom shall withdraw into its chamber, and it shall be sought by many but shall not be found, and unrighteousness and unrestraint shall increase on earth' (5.9-10).¹⁸ The personified Wisdom is closely associated with the Torah, since it is revealed to the righteous and concealed from the wicked who have rejected her by refusing to walk in the way of righteousness in adherence to the Torah (5.9-12). The hiding of 'wisdom' here is part and parcel of the apocalyptic vision of the breakdown of the cosmic order expressed in terms of messianic woes.¹⁹ In 2 Baruch 48.36 (cf. 14.8; 75.1-6), the concealment of 'the multitude' of intelligence/wisdom, which corresponds to the fact that the wise and intelligent are few (48.33), is said to happen in the final times before the imminent judgement, and is associated with the eschatological reversal of the socio-cosmic order

14 Kuhn, *Enderwartung*, 154-175.

15 See 2 Baruch 14.8; 75.1-6.

16 The motif of 'seek and not find' is not always applied to Wisdom. See 4Q185.1.13, which itself belongs to wisdom literature.

17 In 4 Ezra 5.3f a future destruction of the Roman empire is a sign of the coming of the eschatological judgement. See Keuler, *Die eschatologische Lehre*, 65.

18 See also 2 Baruch 48.36.

19 Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 109. For the parallel between 4 Ezra 5.1 and 9-10 see Keuler, *Die eschatologische Lehre*, 48; Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 113.

(48.32, 34-35). Behind the idea that the withdrawal of Wisdom is a result of unrighteousness and causes further calamity in the world lies the OT and Jewish notion of wisdom as operating for the ordering of both the human and the natural worlds.²⁰

The third motif which is closely linked with these sapiential motifs is the coming and departure of Wisdom in Jewish apocalyptic literature.²¹ As in early wisdom passages like Prov 8.31 and Sir 24.6f, the *Similitudes of Enoch* 42.1-2 utilises the theme of Wisdom coming down to earth to find her dwelling there: 'Wisdom found no place where she might dwell, and her dwelling-place came to be in heaven. Wisdom went forth to make her dwelling among the children of men, and found no dwelling place: Wisdom returned to her place, and became established among the angels'. What differentiates this passage from the earlier wisdom texts is that Wisdom returns to heaven after a failure to find a dwelling on earth—a distinctive twist of that sapiential theme characteristic of the Jewish apocalyptic tradition.²² The purpose of this new element would be, like the motif of Wisdom not finding a dwelling among the wicked, to pave the way for the end-time judgement on the unrighteous (cf. 1 Enoch 94.5f).

To summarise, the motif of the withdrawal of Wisdom and its cognate motifs have a *topos* in the sinfulness of the human world and of the people of God, which is believed to culminate in the end time before the universal judgement. The disappearance of Wisdom as the principle of order in the universe and the reason of human affairs leads necessarily to the chaotic tribulations of the cosmos leading up to the divine judgement.

2.3 *The Concealment of Jesus as Wisdom in John 12.36*

As for the pericope under discussion, the thematic affinity of John 12.34-36 to 4 Ezra 5.1ff is striking, and a comparison exhibits an intriguing bearing on the former's meaning. Just as the hiding of wisdom is contrasted with the increased unrighteousness of the people in 4 Ezra 5, so does the disbelief of the Jewish crowd

20 See Prov 8.15-16; Sir 6.9ff; 21; 24.6; WisSol 8.1. See B.L. Mack, *Logos und Sophia*, 29-31. The theme of reversal of human and natural world was widespread in the ancient Near East (R.C. Van Leeuwen, 'Proverbs 30.21-23', 602).

21 See Mack, *Logos und Sophia*, 32-33.

22 See Schimanowski, *Weisheit und Messias*, 100.

lead to the hiding of Jesus in John 12.36.²³ The implication of this is of considerable significance. In 4 Ezra 5 the withdrawal of divine Wisdom from the unrighteous who have rejected her constitutes the 'signs' of the *eschaton* along with the messianic woes, and thus is a prelude to the end-time judgement.²⁴ In John 12 the final hiding of Jesus (implicitly identified as the divine Wisdom, or Mystery) from the unbelieving crowd points towards the coming of the eschatological tribulations or messianic woes before the divine judgement. M. Scott rightly finds the Sophia motif (as is utilised especially in 1 Enoch 42.1ff and 4 Ezra 5.9f) in the Johannine depiction of the rejection of Jesus and his withdrawal, although he falls short of elucidating its apocalyptic nature and its other associated motifs in the Gospel.²⁵ Furthermore, it is very likely that, along with the withdrawal motif, another sapiential motif of descent and ascent is presupposed in the departure of the Son of man (John 12.32, 34).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Johannine Jesus in the Passion narrative expressly regards his crucifixion as the eschatological tribulation (*θλίψις*) for the disciples, which is compared to a birth pang (16.20ff). The metaphor of a woman in travail is commonly used in Jewish apocalyptic writings in depicting the end time. In 4 Ezra 4.42 it is used as a similitude depicting the imminence of the general resurrection at the end time.²⁶ In the final judgement scene of 1 Enoch 62 the enthronement of the Chosen One/'the Son of man' (vv 4-5) evokes 'the kings, the governors, the high officials, and landlords' to see and recognise him and at the same time causes a birth-pang among them.²⁷ In view of these parallels, the concealment of the Johannine Jesus from the misunderstanding crowd (John 12.36), analogous to the withdrawal of Wisdom from the unrighteous, constitutes a visionary picture of a prelude to the coming end-time judgement. The use of this sapiential, apocalyptic motif in the context of Jesus' announcing the coming of the eschatological hour of the judgement (John 12.23, 31) encourages such an interpretation. Later the motif of seeking, together with another

23 Cf. Luke 18.8.

24 Cf. Küchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstraditionen*, 547-552; R. Piper, *Wisdom*, 163, 171.

25 Scott, *Sophia*, 138, 159.

26 So M. Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 99. Cf. 4 Ezra 5.41-53; 10.9-13.

27 Whereas the ruling class of the world in the *Similitudes* is the object of judgement by the Son of man, the disciples in John 16 are not.

technical term *ἔτι μικρόν* of apocalyptic eschatology (II.4), is applied to the concealment of Jesus through his death (13.33) and depicts the final concealment of Jesus/Wisdom at the end-time judgement.

This interpretation would be further supported by the Johannine portrayal of Jesus in the terms characteristic of divine Wisdom. As Scott has recently reiterated, the wisdom tradition is applied to the Johannine Jesus both in the Prologue and the body of the Gospel, i.e. in terms of the existence before creation, the participation in creation, the descent-revelation pattern, light, and life as well as the *ἐγώ εἰμι* + predicate constructions (esp. 6.35; 15.1, 5).²⁸ What is important to our thesis is that some of these sapiential motifs reflect distinctive apocalyptic contours. In John 4.14 Jesus is characterised as Wisdom at the end time: *ὅς δ' ἄν πῖνῃ ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος οὐδ' ἐγὼ δώσω αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ διψήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὕδωρ ὃ δώσω αὐτῷ γενήσεται ἐν αὐτῷ πηγὴ ὕδατος ἀλλομένου εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον* (cf. 6.35; 7.37f). A sapiential overtone is evident here, since a metaphor of thirst and satisfaction is pertinent in describing a human desire for wisdom and/or the Torah in Sir 24.21 and 1 Enoch 48.1 (cf. OdSol 6.11-18; 30.1-7).²⁹ John 4.14 resembles the latter rather than the former. Whereas Sir 24.21 depicts those who eat and drink from wisdom as becoming more hungry and thirsty—which signifies the continuous desire for the Torah—in 1 Enoch 48.1 the wells of wisdom provide the eschatological satisfaction of thirst. Seen in this context, Jesus' revelation and concealment in the mould similar to the divine Wisdom can be understood as a preparation for and a foretaste of the communication of perfect wisdom to be given in the time of salvation,³⁰ which is expressed by the verbs of cognizance (*γνωρίζειν*, *μυμνήσκομαι*) and is to come after the lifting-up (John 8.28) and the glorification (2.22; 12.16) of Jesus. Thus it is implied that the sapiential motifs applied to the Johannine Jesus are already given an eschatological thrust as in apocalyptic literature.

28 Scott, *Sophia*, 115ff. Cf. von Lips, *Weisheitliche Traditionen*, 315.

29 Cf. von Lips, *Weisheitliche Traditionen*, 314f; W.D. Davies, *Torah*, 40-43. Though without the metaphor of drinking, CD 8.6ff identifies the Torah as a well and indicates that people cannot drink from it until the Teacher of Righteousness arises at the end of the days.

30 So Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.208. It is so in the earlier Jewish apocalypse (1 Enoch 5.8 [cf. 4QEn^D 1.1]; 91.10 [= 4QEn^G 1.II, 13f]; 93.10 [= 4QEn^G 1.IV, 12f]) as well as in the first century apocalypses (1 Enoch 48.1; 51.3; 4 Ezra 8.52; 2 Baruch 54.13). Cf. M. Küchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstraditionen*, 70, 78-79.

Another example of the apocalyptic colouring of the wisdom tradition is the theme of Jesus' return to the One who sent him in John 7.33. When the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him, Jesus says: 'Ἐτι χρόνον μικρὸν μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι καὶ ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με. Since this saying is immediately followed by the sapiential motif of 'seek and not find', the idea of being sent by God here also points to its use for Wisdom (WisSol 9.10).³¹ Since the departure of Wisdom from the world is characteristic of the end time in apocalyptic eschatologies, the departure of Jesus to the One who sent him exhibits an unmistakable apocalyptic colouring, occurring in association with the technical term of apocalyptic eschatology, ἔτι χρόνον μικρὸν.³² Furthermore, Jesus' departure is closely associated with the motif of seeking in John 8.21, where Jesus remarks concerning the disbelieving Jews: 'I will go away, and you will search for me, but you will die in your sin'. Dying in sin reflects the wickedness of the people who cannot find Wisdom despite their seeking.³³

All in all, the sapiential motifs utilised in the Fourth Gospel show a strong apocalyptic tendency. Even the motif of wisdom's existence before creation and participation in creation found its way into apocalyptic literature with other sapiential themes.³⁴ Therefore we would conclude that the wisdom tradition reflected in the Gospel corresponds to its development in apocalyptic literature. Since such a development is already attested in the pre-Christian work of 1 Enoch 93.8; 94.5, it is not impossible that the above sapiential sayings of the Johannine Jesus with apocalyptic contours could date back to the time of Jesus.

To summarise: In the narrative depicting the final phase of Jesus' ministry (John 11.54ff) the author of the Fourth Gospel skillfully depicts Jesus' appearance and con-

31 There the author asks God to send ἡ σοφία, which is earlier equated with ὁ λόγος in her mediation in creation (WisSol 9.1-2): ἐξ ἀπόστειλον αὐτήν ἐξ ἀγίων οὐρανῶν καὶ ἀπὸ θρόνου δόξης σου πέμψον αὐτήν. In light of this passage the Johannine verbs πέμπειν and ἀποστέλλειν (e.g. John 20.22) could be interchangeable. So Scott, *Sophia*, 134, 136.

32 In John 7.33f, 14.19, and 16.16 this term is applied to Jesus' death and resurrection expressed in terms of seeing and not seeing him. H. von Lips, *Weisheitliche Traditionen*, 316, observes that the theme of seeing and not seeing is based on the motif of the Sophia withdrawing and returning at the beginning of the *Heilszeit*. But a direct allusion to Sophia seems minimal in these passages. Von Lips' view might be supported by Luke 13.34-35//Matt 23.37-39. Yet the direct allusion to Sophia is doubtful there (Piper, *Wisdom*, 164-165).

33 Cf. Becker, *Johannes*, 1.269; von Lips, *Weisheitliche Traditionen*, 315.

34 E.g. 1 Enoch 84.3; 42; 2 Baruch 14.9; 2 Enoch 30.8; 33.36. See Schimanowski, *Weisheit und Messias*, 95-97; von Lips, *Weisheitliche Traditionen*, 86-87.

concealment in terms of the divine Wisdom as appropriated in Jewish apocalypses. The sapiential motif of 'seek and not find' already used in Jesus' words in John 7 and that of concealment applied dramatically to him in the narrative of John 7-8 prepare the reader to expect a similar development in his public appearance from hiddenness in John 11.54ff. His concealment at 12.36 concludes this pattern. The use of these sapiential motifs points to an apocalyptic colouring of the presentation of the ministry of the Johannine Jesus. Narratologically, Jesus' concealment from the misunderstanding Jewish crowds in a manner similar to the eschatological concealment of Wisdom has two functions: (i) its primary narrative function is to *highlight the obduracy of the Jewish crowd in spite of the divine revelation*, a theme programmatically presented in the *Logos* hymn (1.11)³⁵ and summarised in 12.37ff in terms of the fulfilment of the Isaianic prophecies; (ii) in the context of the drama of the end-time judgement and salvation applied to Jesus, it is used as a *sign signalling the imminent coming of the end-time judgement*, which is already suggested to happen at the death of Jesus on the cross (12.31 and its context). In other words, *the concealment of Jesus from the unbelieving (Jewish) crowd at John 12.36 is a skillful presentation of Jesus' action which is to be understood in terms of the withdrawal of Wisdom from the unrighteous people in the apocalyptic drama leading to the end-time judgement and restoration*. In this manner this sapiential motif is artfully integrated within the dynamic development of the Johannine story of Jesus. The primary literary function of the motif of 'seek and hide' applied to Jesus in our pericope is not to reflect his elusiveness as such, or that of the Johannine community, or the hiddenness of Yahweh,³⁶ but to constitute in part an apocalyptic vision of the end time which is unfolding around and in the person of Jesus. The application to Jesus of the motif characteristic of the divine Wisdom would be construed as implying that Jesus as Wisdom embodies in his person the hidden mystery of God revealed in the Torah and manifested at the end time. In so doing, the author indicates that the *raison d'être* of eschatological Israel as the covenantal people of God

35 The failure of *oi ἰδιοί*, 'his own [people]', to recognise the *Logos* in John 1.11 may provide a summary of the obduracy of the majority of the Jews in rejecting Jesus as divine Wisdom. Cf. Scott, *Sophia*, 103. For the meaning of 'his own' to be the covenant people of God or the Jews, see Brown, *John*, 1.10; Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 154. Cf. 1 Enoch 42.

36 *Contra* Stibbe, 'The Elusive Christ', 34-37; *John as Storyteller*, 89-92.

hinges in a unique manner on him.

Regarding the probable social function(s) of the concealment of Wisdom applied to the Johannine Jesus, two points are in order. (a) There is a strong tendency, since Meeks' influential article, to see the Johannine community as being rejected by and alienated from Judaism or the larger society in general.³⁷ The theme of Jesus' concealment due to the crowd's rejection may fit with this theory. But there is no explicit analogy made between Jesus' concealment and the fate of the disciples.³⁸ Rather, the followers of Jesus were explicitly related to their Master in an analogous manner in terms of 'sending' (John 17.18; 20.21), 'doing (greater) works' (14.12), and facing the hatred of the world (17.14f). Thus, to read this single element of the symbolic world concerning the Johannine Jesus as an exact allegory for the Johannine community,³⁹ even if they might be proved to be related to a certain extent, would run a risk of blurring the entire picture of the apocalyptic end-time drama which the author creates so skillfully in depicting Jesus' way to the cross. (b) It must be stressed, against the aforementioned tendency, that the social function of a motif or a theme is not independent of its literary function. In other words, before considering the social function of a motif abstracted from a literary text, its literary function is to be sought first. Our understanding is that the motif of concealment of Jesus in John 12.36 is a dramatic presentation of the theme of the obduracy by the majority of the Jews in the end time expressed in their failure to perceive and believe in the divine figure. If we see this Johannine drama of the end time in comparison to Jewish apocalyptic eschatologies, the rejection of the unrighteous due to their obduracy is expected to be followed by the restoration of the new covenant people in the age to come. In view of this, the social

37 Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 163-165, regards the descent and ascent of the Johannine Son of man (which he thinks is based on the Jewish Sophia myth) as 'an etiology' [*sic.*] of the Johannine community which vindicates its existence of being alien and under attack in the hostile world but living in unity with Christ and with God. So also W. Carter, 'The Prologue', 49-50. Yet, Rensberger, *Overcoming the World*, 26, 99, points out the insufficiency of applying only one of the categories (e.g. the 'introversionist' type among others) by B. Wilson to the Johannine community. Cf. Wilson, *Magic and Millenium*, 19.

38 Even John 20.19 is irrelevant, for there is no comparison made between Jesus' concealment and the disciples'.

39 So Stibbe, 'The Elusive Christ', 35.

function of the Johannine use of this motif needs to be sought within the context of the newly created community of the people of God consisting of not only Jews but also non-Jews (see Part III).

2.4 Gnosticism

The sapiential motifs analogous to the ones found in the Fourth Gospel are not only found in Jewish apocalypse but also in Gnostic texts of the Nag Hammadi Library. This not only complicates the issue but also has led some exegetes to views seeing the Johannine Christology in close connection with these Gnostic texts.

2.4.1 *Seek and Not Find*

The sapiential motif of 'seek and not find' occurs also in Gnostic writings with some significance attached to it.⁴⁰ A prime example is found at *GThom* 38 (CG II,2.40.2-7),⁴¹ in which Jesus says to his disciples, 'Many times you desired to hear these words which I am saying to you, and you have no one else to hear them from. There will be days when you will look for me and will not find me (POxy 655, 30.I: κα[ὶ ἐλεύσονται] ἡμ[έρα] ὅτε ζητή[σ]ε [τέ με καὶ οὐχ εὐρήσετέ με]'.⁴² It is disputed whether this motif found its way into Gnostic literature *via* Jewish apocalypticism and/or early Christianity.

R.E. Brown has argued that in *GThom* there is very little evidence of the direct use of any of the sayings of the Fourth Gospel, and that the Johannine elements were added by a secondary editor to give a gnostic, or semi-gnostic orientation to the earlier *GThom* comprising mainly the 'synoptic' sayings.⁴³ On the other hand, others find

40 *GThom* 38; also in the unknown book of Baruch in Cyprian, *Quir.* 3.29. Cf. H. Koester, 'Gnostic Writings', 239-240.

41 The Gnostic nature of *GThom* may be disputable. Cf. e.g. S.L. Davies, *Thomas and Wisdom*, 3, 18-35; Robinson, 'LOGOI SOPHON', *Trajectories*, 71-113; 'On Bridging', 165ff. But its general Gnostic tendency is acknowledged by Wilson, *Studies*, 14-44; M. Fieger, *Das Thomasevangelium*, esp. 281-289. Despite their disagreement on the origins of the parables (*GThom* 9, 64, 65), A. Lindemann, 'Zur Gleichnisinterpretation', 243, and H. Koester, 'Three Thomas Parables', 201, would agree with the Gnostic nature of *GThom*.

42 This reconstruction is by Ménard, *L'Évangile Selon Thomas*, 138.

43 Brown, 'The Gospel of Thomas', 177. So also Schnackenburg, *John*, 1.148.

several substantial affinities between the two texts.⁴⁴ For C.A. Evans these parallels can be explained as *GThom*'s allusions to the Fourth Gospel. But the issue may not be as simple as he would want us to think. As Brown and Koester emphasise, not only is there no direct citation from the Fourth Gospel in *GThom*, but the Johannine sayings akin to those in *GThom* in fact diverge significantly from the latter in thought.⁴⁵

As far as *GThom* 38 is concerned, its latter half parallels John 7.34, 36 (cf. 8.21, 13.33; Luke 10.23-24//Matt 13.16-17; Luke 17.22).⁴⁶ Commenting on Jewish, Christian and Gnostic passages containing the motif of 'seek and not find' (including *GThom* 38), J.M. Robinson acknowledges the non-gnostic nature of its origin and observes: 'The personified Wisdom of Old Testament wisdom literature developed into the gnostic redeemer myth, especially as it identified Jesus with that redeemer, and thus understood Jesus as bringer of the secret redemptive *gnosis* or *logoi*'.⁴⁷ Robinson conceives that these wisdom sayings of Q (7.35; 11.49) were organized into 'the *Gattung* of *logoi sophon*', and that this *Gattung* in turn became coordinated to 'the trajectory from the hypostatized Sophia to the gnostic redeemer'.⁴⁸ Unfortunately, details about his placement of them in this putative trajectory are not clear, since he does not discuss the relevant Johannine passages. H. Koester clarifies this point in his more elaborate thesis. He maintains that the latter half of this logion was originally 'a statement of

44 Fieger, *Das Thomasevangelium*, 7-8, and Evans, *Word and Glory*, 62 n2, list parallels without discussing them in detail. E.g. *GThom* 1/John 8.52; *GThom* 27/John 14.9; *GThom* 67/John 10.15; *GThom* 38/John 7.34, 36; *GThom* 77/John 8.12; *GThom* 78/John 8.32; *GThom* 28/John 1.4; *GThom* 40/John 15.6.

45 Brown, 'The Gospel of Thomas', 157, 176; Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 113-124. Koester regards some of the parallels as reflecting the fourth evangelist's rejection of the Gnostic sayings included in *GThom* (*GThom* 49/John 16.28; *GThom* 50a/John 8.14b; 1.9; 13.3; *GThom* 24a/John 14.3; *GThom* 69a/John 14.7; 8.19; *GThom* 37a/John 14.22) and others as introducing significant changes to the sayings of Jesus preserved in more original forms in *GThom*.

46 See also 1 Clem 57.3ff (which cites Prov 1.28); Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I.20.2). Cf. R.M. Grant, 'Notes', 171, 176; Schneemelcher, *NTAp*⁴, 1.132 n50; C. Evans, *Nag Hammadi Texts*, 112-113. S.J. Patterson fails to see the apocalyptic nature of this saying when he finds no relationship between *GThom* 38 and 'the apocalyptic saying in Luke 17.22' (*The Gospel of Thomas*, 87 n340).

47 Robinson, 'LOGOI SOPHON', 106-107.

48 Robinson, 'LOGOI SOPHON', 113.

heavenly Wisdom about herself', and postulates that it is one of the 'originally isolated sayings' of Jesus which represents 'the oldest traditions of the Johannine churches'.⁴⁹ Koester develops Robinson's thesis further by holding that this type of sapiential sayings belongs to 'a development of the sayings tradition that took place in the first century A.D.', and suggests that the Fourth Gospel belongs to the later, well-developed stage.⁵⁰ Thus, for Koester this sapiential saying belongs, as in *GThom*, to an early stage of gnostic christology.⁵¹ This is conceivable, since Koester, like Robinson, assumes the 'gnostic proclivity' of the collection of '*logoi sophon*', or 'wisdom gospel' (e.g. Q and *GThom*). Regarding the function of the motif 'seek and not find' in the Fourth Gospel, Koester, like Bultmann, thinks that it was a polemic against a gnostic teaching associated with the motif: 'The saying about "seeking and not finding me" (John 13.33) is then used to reject both the notion of Jesus as the paradigm for the Gnostic believer and the concept of the discovery of one's own divine origin'.⁵²

However, the views of Robinson and Koester are untenable. Koester's dating of *GThom* in its present form in the late first century CE cannot be proven with any degree of probability. Some would treat *GThom* closely with Q by regarding it (or at least some of its logia that have no parallels to the canonical Gospels) as representing independent, authentic sayings of Jesus.⁵³ Yet, at the same time, the theory of its total

49 Koester, *Introduction*, 2.180f.

50 Koester, 'Gnostic Writings', 242, 256. See also Koester, 'Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels', 119-126; 'The History-of-Religion School', 128-130. Koester is of the opinion that Gnosticisation of Jesus' tradition happened in the development of the Johannine community concurrently with the development of their Gospel. So also J.M. Robinson, 'The Johannine Trajectory', 266.

51 Koester, 'Q and its Relatives', 63, would regard *GThom* 38b as the basis for Q/Luke 17.22. Cf. S. Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 106-116, who, denying the Gnostic nature of the *GThom*, conjectures that 'the Gospel of Thomas is a saying collection from an early stage of the Johannine communities' before its separation from the synoptic trajectory (116).

52 Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 120.

53 So G. MacRae, 'Nag Hammadi', 152. For the more recent advocates who stand in line with Koester and Robinson, see e.g. R. Cameron, *The Other Gospels*, 24-25; S. Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 4-5; Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, 34-35. A good, though not fully persuasive, case for the independence of the Thomas tradition from the synoptic (and Johannine) tradition has been presented by S.J. Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas*, esp. 17-93.

independence from the canonical Gospels has been seriously questioned.⁵⁴ Of course, the main contention of Robinson and Koester that apocryphal gospels are not worthless in understanding early Christianity should not be easily dismissed. Yet it has been argued, persuasively we think, that allusions to the NT in general are so evident in the gnostic writings that it is difficult to regard the gnostic parallels to the NT as reflecting not the NT passages themselves but the oral tradition lying behind them.⁵⁵ The relationship between *GThom* and the Fourth Gospel is complex, for, despite many similarities, there is no evidence of direct citation as such. R. McL. Wilson, regarding *GThom* as an earlier work, resolved this in terms of the similarities in the realm of ideas, whereas R.E. Brown, placing the Fourth Gospel earlier than the *GThom*, thought of the Johannine elements in *GThom* as coming from an intermediary source that makes use of the Fourth Gospel.⁵⁶

One cannot agree with C.A. Evans who would take a number of the logia in *GThom* to be 'allusions' to the Johannine passages,⁵⁷ because some of his examples parallel the Synoptic passages as well as ones in the Fourth Gospel. Nevertheless, the Thomas logia that are in parallel only to the Johannine passages may be regarded as allusions to the latter.⁵⁸ Even if we may well leave the case open due to the lack of clear evidence, *GThom*'s use of the motif of 'seek and not find' provides no warrant to

54 See e.g. Wilson, *Studies*, 88; *Gnosis*, 92-96; Rudolf, *Gnosis*, 263; C. Tuckett, 'Thomas', 132-157; 'Q and Thomas', 346-360 (who argues in the former that the *GThom* has parallels to the redactional materials in the Synoptics, and convincingly demonstrates in the latter that the passages of *GThom* regarded by Koester as more original than their counterparts in Q [*GThom* 68/Q 6.22; 95/6.34; 47/16.13; 89/11.39f; 39/11.52; 44/12.10; 10, 16/12.49, 51-53] have in fact closer resemblance to their parallels in the Synoptics); Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 123-139; R.E. Brown, 'The Gospel of Peter', 323-325.

55 C.M. Tuckett, *Nag Hammadi*, esp. 149, demonstrates that the Gnostic parallels to the synoptic tradition seem to presuppose the finished Gospels. See also Ph. Perkins' critique ('Johannine Traditions', 403-414) of Koester ('Dialog', 553-554). Cf. W.G. Röhl, *Die Rezeption*, 46-47, who draws attention to the common use of the motif of return to 'the place from which he came' in Nag Hammadi texts (e.g. *TractTri* 123.6.8; *ApJohn* 1.11; *OrigWorld* 127.14f; *TestTruth* 44.258).

56 Wilson, *Studies*, 87; Brown, 'The Gospel of Thomas', 177.

57 Evans, *Word and Glory*, 62 and n2. Yet his comparison of *GThom* 28 with John 1.14; 4.13-15; 6.35; 7.37 is of interest.

58 G.J. Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered* (1994), presents a plausible argument, chiefly on the basis of his comparison of the doubting Thomas accounts, that *GThom* contains a number of ideas also found in the Fourth Gospel, but with their orientations peculiar to *GThom*, and that the Gospel is at places a reaction against the ideas presented in *GThom*.

argue for its Gnostic nature in the Fourth Gospel. When seen within the entire context of the Fourth Gospel, it would be doubtful that these sayings of Jesus show a gnostic perspective. Rather, it is more likely that sapiential motifs as developed in Jewish wisdom and apocalyptic writings, which Koester fails fully to account for, can easily find their way into Gnostic systems despite the change of the *Weltanschauungen*.⁵⁹ As F.T. Fallon and R. Cameron observe, *GThom* depicts Jesus not only as Wisdom's envoy but as Wisdom herself and this advances 'a christology in which the proclamation of the cross and resurrection was not deemed necessary'.⁶⁰ But the Johannine Wisdom Christology, unlike that of *GThom*, is not an isolated element, but along with other Christological concepts constitutes the entirety of a complex symbolic world whose core is the cross and resurrection of Jesus.

There would be general agreement that *GThom* in its present form was used by gnostics and as a whole can be interpreted in Gnostic terms. At the same time, it is not impossible to find in *GThom* elements that are not necessarily gnostic in origin, if we take into account the likelihood that the document has gone through a lengthy process of compilation and translation, probably from Greek to Coptic, and that there were traditions related to Jesus available both in oral and written forms apart from the canonical Gospels (cf. Eusebius, *HE* iii.39.4). But it has to be borne in mind that it would be difficult to prove with any degree of probability that a certain logion stems from that early stage, for the principle of difference or multiple attestation cannot be applicable here.⁶¹

Similarly to *GThom* 38, *TestimTruth* (CG IX,3) 29.9-11 states that 'For many have sought after the truth and have not been able to find it'. Since wisdom is brought into very close proximity with 'truth' in Jewish wisdom literature (e.g. *WisSol* 6.22),

59 Cf. Davies, *Thomas and Wisdom*, 4, who finds in *GThom* elements 'drawn from the Jewish Wisdom and apocalyptic traditions'. Davies discounts a number of the sapiential and apocalyptic elements have close affinities to the sayings of the canonical Gospels

60 Fallon and Cameron, 'The Gospel of Thomas', *ANRW* II.25.6.4235-4236.

61 *Contra* Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 217, who contends that 'many [of the sayings in *GThom*] must have a history that extends back into the earliest phase of the Jesus movement'.

this passage can be categorised as a Wisdom saying. Yet the importance of the *Testimony of Truth* for understanding the Fourth Gospel would be secondary, due to its later date as well as its strong indebtedness to the Christian scriptures in general.⁶²

To conclude, both the Fourth Gospel and some Gnostic texts we have treated above share Jewish Wisdom tradition as it is appropriated in apocalyptic literature. In this respect it may be possible to think of such wisdom tradition in terms of a trajectory (Robinson, Koester) or a tree (H.-M. Schenke).⁶³ In view of the less hypostatized nature of Wisdom in those Jewish texts in comparison to Gnosticism⁶⁴ and the very pronounced identification of Wisdom and the redeemer figure in the latter, the Fourth Gospel may represent the turning point of such a 'trajectory' of an hypostatic Wisdom figure, because the identification of the divine Wisdom and Jesus is made, though implicitly, in the Fourth Gospel. It has to be emphasised, however, that, as far as its *Weltanschauung* is concerned, the Fourth Gospel pertains to its Jewish counterpart and not to Gnosticism, as we shall see later. Moreover, to think of these sapiential sayings in terms of the gnostic proclivity is speculative as well as misleading, since it has been demonstrated that no gnosticising tendency can be found in any of the collections of wisdom sayings, or '*logoi sophon*', except *GThom*.⁶⁵ Rather, it seems more likely that, to speak in terms of the history of religion, only after the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics as well as the *Similitudes of Enoch* the identification of the messianic figure with the hypostatized Wisdom would have become readily available. In any case, our main critique of Robinson-Koester's approach is that, while it is not impossible that these sapiential sayings were collected into a collection of '*logoi sophon*' and eventually found their way into the Fourth Gospel, they are to be understood first and foremost

62 See B.A. Pearson, 'Philo', 79-81. Pearson places *TestimTruth* at the end of the second century or the beginning of the third century CE (see J.M. Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Library*, 449), and points out that the Johannine Son of man sayings, among others, exerted a strong influence on it.

63 J.T. Sanders, 'Nag Hammadi', 64-66, holds that the term 'trajectory' has an evolutionist trait. Sanders' view that what is happening is 'adaptation' of certain themes or motifs into certain systems in response to highly complex situations is commendable. So also Böhlig, *Mysterion und Wahrheit*, 101.

64 See G. MacRae, 'The Jewish Background', 88.

65 See Küchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstradition*, 562-563; Kloppenborg, *The Formation*, 31.

within their given literary contexts. In other words, it is not appropriate to understand them simply diachronically in a trajectory of the hypostatic Wisdom with an allegedly gnosticising proclivity, nor is it helpful to compare other parallel passages without a proper consideration of the literary contexts within which they are found.⁶⁶ When read within the literary context of the Fourth Gospel, they are fully incorporated into the apocalyptic drama of the end-time judgement and salvation centring around the messianic figure of Jesus, the presentation of which is comparable to the contemporary Jewish apocalypses.

2.4.2 Other Sapiential Motifs

While the motif of 'seek and not find' occurs rather independently in the Gnostic texts above, the other sapiential motifs analogous to those of the Fourth Gospel such as 'reveal and hide' appear in the *Apocryphon of John* and the *Trimorphic Protennoia*. The latter has attracted a special interest with regard to the Fourth Gospel, particularly the Prologue. Because the sapiential motifs appear in conjunction with the so-called Gnostic Sophia myth in these texts, it is imperative to compare and contrast them with the corresponding sapiential motifs in the Fourth Gospel. R. Bultmann has maintained that a gnostic redeemer myth existed in the pre-Christian, late Antiquity and influenced the later development of Jewish apocalyptic speculation on Wisdom and eventually the Prologue, a tendency which the evangelist eradicated by demythologising and historicising it.⁶⁷ Although Bultmann's Mandaean theory is challenged partly because of the late date of Mandaeanism, the finding of the Nag Hammadi library brought the issue anew since these Gnostic writings stand chronologically closer to the NT than the Mandaean literature did for Bultmann.

W.A. Meeks' influential article on the Johannine Son of man, though confined to the task of elucidating the social function of the descent/ascent motif of a redeemer fig-

⁶⁶ Cf. Kloppenborg, *The Formation*, 38-39, who points out the inappropriateness of Koester's comparative approach in elucidating the *Gattung* of Q.

⁶⁷ Bultmann, 'Bedeutung', 103, 127. He lists the passages from Jewish wisdom and apocalyptic literature, i.e. Prov 1.24, 28; Sir 24.7; Bar 3.11-13, 29f; Deut 30.11-14; 1 Enoch 42.1-3; 4 Ezra 5.9f; 2 Baruch 48.36.

ure is relevant here. Acknowledging MacRae's thesis that 'the Jewish Wisdom myth in some form lies behind both the Johannine Christology and the gnostic soul and saviour myths', Meeks asks 'whether both the Johannine and the gnostic myths are independent variants of the Jewish, or whether one has influenced the other'.⁶⁸ Meeks' answer is to develop a theory of reciprocal interaction between them: 'it is at least as plausible that the Johannine Christology helped to create some gnostic myths as that gnostic myths helped create the Johannine Christology'.⁶⁹ In fact, scholarly discussion has been centred around this basic question with respect to the relation between the Fourth Gospel (especially the Prologue) and the Gnostic texts, especially the *Apocryphon of John* and the *Trimorphic Protennoia*.

2.4.2.1 *The Apocryphon of John*

In this tractate of Christian Sethian Gnosticism⁷⁰ the theme of Sophia's concealment from the wicked in connection with the motif of descent and ascent is applied to the feminine revealer/redeemer, 'Pronoia', in the account of her threefold descent. This is found only in the longer recension of *ApJohn* (CG II,1) 30.11-31.25. In the first of her three descents to the world of chaos, the 'Pronoia', who is identified with Barbelo (30.12; cf. 4.32; 5.16; 6.5), hides herself because of the failure of the people to recognise her because of their wickedness: 'And I went into the realm of darkness and I endured till I entered the middle of the prison (i.e. the human body). And the foundations of chaos shook. And I hid myself from them because of their wickedness (κακία), and they did not recognise me' (30.16-21). Linked with the descent and ascent motif, the hiding of Pronoia here shows a very interesting resemblance not only to the Jewish apocalyptic theme of Wisdom but also to the Johannine Jesus whose concealment after revelation is linked with his departure. It is not surprising to find this sapiential motif here, because the *Apocryphon of John* as a whole in its every recension is set within an

68 Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 142-143.

69 Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 165.

70 H.-M. Schenke, 'The Phenomenon', 611-612; Rudolph, *Gnosis*, 139-140. Cf. Arai, 'Zur Christologie', 314.

undisputably apocalyptic framework.⁷¹ It is highly likely, therefore, that the wisdom tradition as had been developed in the Jewish apocalypses exerted a prominent influence on the use of this motif in this gnostic text.

Noting its resemblance to the Johannine Prologue, J.M. Robinson suggests that the Pronoia hymn provides 'something like the "natural" context in which this material existed prior to its Christianization'.⁷² However, when we focus on the use of the motif of concealment, its use in *ApJohn* runs counter to Robinson's contention on three accounts. (a) The hypothesis of an earlier, non-Christian version of the Pronoia hymn is put forward in conjunction with the hypothetical theory of composition history of *ApJohn*. The frame story, which is common both in the longer (II.1.31-2.1) and the shorter (BG 19.6ff) recensions, characterises the entire document as a further revelation of Christ to John, the brother of James and son of Zebedee. It is generally considered that this Christian-apocalyptic framework is secondary, and a putative Urtext of *ApJohn* without such a framework is thought of because the report on the Barbelo Gnosticism by Irenaeus (*Adv.haer.* I.29.1-4), which corresponds to *ApJohn*, apparently lacks the revelatory scheme in the revelation of the exalted Christ to John. Yet the fact that its triadic scheme of Father-Mother(Ennoia=Barbelo)-Christ(the Light)⁷³ is already attested by Irenaeus (*Adv.haer.* I.29) may suggest that Christian elements existed in the Pronoia hymn of *ApJohn* even before the alleged addition of the apocalyptic framework was made (if such a theory of composition history has any degree of legitimacy). Therefore, it is more likely that the Pronoia hymn of *ApJohn* was written under a Christian influence as was the frame story. Thus to speak of an Urtext of the Pronoia hymn prior to its Christianisation would be highly speculative. (b) The appropriation of the Sophia tradition in the Pronoia hymn differs from that developed in Jewish apocalypses at one crucial point. Despite its use of the Sophia myth similar to its Jewish apocalyptic counterpart, the concealment of the Pronoia in her first visit to the

71 The *Apocryphon of John* has unmistakable apocalyptic traits (CG II.1,1.31f//BG 20.19f; CG IV.1, 31.29-31; BG 75.16-76.1). So B.A. Pearson, *Gnosticism*, 30 n3, 38. On *ApJohn* 1.31f see W.C. van Unnik, 'Die "geöffneten Himmel"', 273-284; F.T. Fallon, 'The Gnostic Apocalypses', 130-131; Perkins, *The Gnostic Dialogue*, 49.

72 Robinson, 'Sethians', 661-662.

73 R. van den Broek, 'Autogenes', 16-25, thinks that a heavenly Anthropos myth is adapted to this triadic scheme.

world is given an eschatological contour.⁷⁴ This is unusual for Wisdom in Jewish apocalypses, in which her concealment is confined to the end time that introduces the judgement and the age to come. In this respect, *ApJohn* differs remarkably from the Fourth Gospel, since the latter's appropriation of the sapiential motif of concealment is associated with the apocalyptic-eschatological themes such as increase of evil, judgement and salvation, as we will see in the next chapter. (c) Moreover, when we compare the *Weltanschauungen* of the Fourth Gospel and *ApJohn*, the difference between them is evident, and the former and Jewish apocalypses do not show any anti-cosmic dualism or any devaluation of the creator by identifying him with the Demiurge as in Gnosticism. *ApJohn* has a strongly Gnostic understanding of the material world as evil (darkness)—dualistic anti-cosmic cosmogony—salvation from which is achieved by the imparting by Sophia of knowledge (*γνῶσις*) of the reality that the human spirit (*πνεῦμα*) derives from the ultimate being (Father) and is to be reunited with him by departing from the psyche (*ψυχή*) and the body (*σῶμα*) created by the Demiurgic creator (Jaldabaoth).⁷⁵ Thus, due to such a cosmogony and anthropogony characteristic of Gnosticism, *ApJohn* differs fundamentally from its Jewish apocalyptic and Johannine counterparts.

It is therefore the Fourth Gospel, not *ApJohn*, which provides a more 'natural' context for the Wisdom myth as appropriated in Jewish apocalypses, if the distinction between 'natural' and 'artificial' is of any value as an objective criterion.

2.4.2.2 *The Trimorphic Protennoia*

The Pronoia hymn is not confined to *ApJohn* 30.11ff, but it is found in a Sethian tractate called *Trimorphic Protennoia* (CG XIII,1) 45.21-34, which shows a closer affinity to the Fourth Gospel, the Prologue in particular. *TriProt* exhibits a triadic

74 Onuki, *Gnosis und Stoa*, 141-143, following H.-M. Schenke, points out that the periodisation of the world history into the four ages (of Adam, Seth, early-Sethians and Sethians) is characteristic of Sethianism, and that the threefold descent of the Pronoia corresponds to the last three periods (*ApJohn* [CG II,1] 30.16-21; 30.21-23; 30.32-31.28). Cf. *ApJohn* (II,1) 9.18-23.

75 The influence of Aristotelian diadic view of human being and Platonic cosmology is evident here.

Father-Mother-Son(Logos) scheme within the threefold revelatory descent and ascent of a redeemer figure, Protennoia (the First Thought). The tractate as a whole consists of three self-revelatory discourses by Protennoia (Barbelo), who descends to the world of chaos to awaken and raise her fallen members. Her first descent is as the masculine Voice of the First Thought to illuminate her members, and her second descent as the feminine Speech of the Protennoia to announce the end of the old Aeon and the beginning of the Aeon to come (42.17ff). Her third descent as the Word of the Protennoia is to enlighten her members by administering the Five Seals, i.e. a baptismal rite for a visionary ascent into the world of Light.⁷⁶ This threefold revelation of Protennoia in the forms of the Father (*TriProt* 35.1-42.3), the Voice (Mother) (42.4-46.4), and the Logos (46.5-50.22) shows close affinity to the Pronoia hymn of *ApJohn*. Sapiential motifs are concentrated in the second and the third of the threefold descent-revelation-ascent of Protennoia. In *TriProt* 45.21-24, the motif of concealment and revelation is combined with motifs of seeking and of participation in creation: 'And I hid myself in everyone and revealed [myself] within them, and every mind seeking me longed for me, for it is I who gave shape to the All when it had no form'. The similar contrast of hiddenness and revelation appears with regard to Protennoia in *TriProt* (CG XIII,1) 47.18 and 22, where Protennoia's third descent as the Word (*logos*) to the world (*kosmos*) is portrayed in a manner similar to the Johannine motif of the revelation and concealment of Jesus. The Word of the Protennoia says in the first person: 'The third time I revealed myself to them in their tents (*σκηνην*) as the Word (cf. John 1.14)... *And I hid myself in them until I revealed myself to my brethren*. And none of them knew me, although it is I who work in them... I am the light which illuminates the All' (47.13ff; cf. 49.20f; John 1.10).

The question how one should account for these obvious parallels to the Johannine Prologue has been hotly debated. As we have seen, however, parallels are not confined to the Prologue but can be found in the body of the Gospel as well. Yet, due to the fact that the debate has developed with regard to the Prologue and *TriProt*, we would have

⁷⁶ See G. Robinson 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 41-42.

to draw that issue of a considerable degree of complexity into our discussion. Before discussing the various views, it would be helpful to begin with the point where a consensus can be achieved.

2.4.2.3 *The Jewish Wisdom Tradition Developed in Apocalypses as a Common Background*

It is generally agreed that the Jewish Wisdom (Sophia) tradition provides a background of the Gnostic Sophia myth expressed in these Gnostic texts, while at the same time some other classical traditions are incorporated in it by skillful exegetical manoeuvres of the Gnostic writers.⁷⁷ Yet this 'Jewish Wisdom tradition' has to be further clarified, for it was not monolithic.

In *TriProt* (XII,1) 45.21-23 the motif of hiding and revealing and the theme of seeking in conjunction with the Redeemer are placed in a context most expressly apocalyptic—a section called 'the Discourse of Protennoia: One' (42.3-46.3).⁷⁸ This section is concerned with the second of the three descents of Protennoia and her self-revelation in a likeness of a female figure, as the Voice and the Mother, in order to inform 'the coming end of the Aeon' and to reveal the mystery of 'the beginning of the Aeon to come' (42.17-21).⁷⁹ And she speaks of the coming of 'the time of fulfillment' which is accompanied by eschatological tribulations (i.e. the birth pangs of a woman, cosmic upheavals with the imagery of fire, earthquake, thunder, and social upheaval) and the approaching 'destruction' (43.4-18). What is distinctively Gnostic here is that the Powers ascend to accuse the Archigenetor, another name for the Demiurge who is depicted like the Creator of the OT and is responsible for the creation of the corruptible physical world (43.32ff)—a devolution of the creation is typical of Gnosticism. Soon afterwards, the theme of eschatological urgency is expressed in a term similar to Jewish apocalyptic eschatology but with a Gnostic trait: 'For already the slackening of bondage (i.e. of the material world or 'ignorant Chaos') has approached, and the times ($\chi\rho\nu\nu\omicron\varsigma$)

⁷⁷ See J.E. Goehring, 'A Classical Influence', 16-23.

⁷⁸ Fallon, 'The Gnostic Apocalypses', 143-144, sees that *TriProt* is a gnostic apocalypse of the revelatory discourse type.

⁷⁹ In the first descent and revelation Protennoia is identified as a father figure and in the third descent as the word (*logos*). See Rudolph, *Gnosis*, 140-144.

are cut short and the days have shortened and our time has been fulfilled' before 'the weeping of our destruction' (44.16-17).⁸⁰ As in Jewish apocalypses the mystery 'hidden [from the beginning of] the Aeons' is entrusted only to the elect, i.e. 'Sons of the Truth' (cf. 'the Sons of Light': 41.16, 27-28), at the turn of the Aeons (44.30-45.2; cf. 40.36-41.4; 41.26-28). Thus, G. Schenke is right when she remarks regarding *TriProt* 42.27-43.4: 'Die ganze Darstellung ist gespeist aus Bildern und Motivkomplexen der jüdischen Apokalyptik, die ja nachweislich Eingang in die gnostische Gedankenwelt gefunden hat'.⁸¹ Given such an impressive apocalyptic colouring,⁸² it is impossible to understand the sapiential motif of hiding and revealing and that of descent and ascent in *TriProt* separately from their apocalyptic context. Also the attachment of the idea of Wisdom's participation in creation ('for it is I who gave shape to the All when it had no form [$\mu\omicron\rho\phi\acute{\eta}$]: *TriProt* 45.23-25) echoes without doubt the Jewish wisdom tradition expressed in such texts as Prov 3.19; 8.27-30; Sir 9.2; 2 Enoch 30.8.⁸³ In view of our earlier observation that the Fourth Gospel is deeply embedded in Jewish wisdom tradition as appropriated in apocalyptic literature, it is without doubt that both texts share 'a common background', and such is the scholarly consensus.⁸⁴ This common ancestor is not simply the Jewish Wisdom (Sophia) tradition, but it ought to be characterised as the Jewish Wisdom tradition as appropriated in Jewish apocalypses. But when it comes to the question as to whether or not the wisdom tradition that the Fourth Gospel and *TriProt* share was already Gnosticised before it was utilised in both, the opinions diverge and the scholarly discussion is focused on this very issue.⁸⁵

2.4.2.4 *The Fourth Gospel (the Prologue) and the Trimorphic Protennoia*

Regarding the question of relationship between the Prologue of the canonical Gospel and *TriProt*, the opinions can be grouped into three main camps: (1) both the

80 Cf. Matt 24.22//Mark 13.20. See Tuckett, *Nag Hammadi*, 24-25, who denies the echo of the Synoptic apocalyptic sayings in *TriProt* 44.16.

81 Schenke, *Die dreigestaltige Protennoia*, 137. See also G. MacRae, 'Apocalyptic Eschatology', *Studies*, 244-245.

82 Rudolph, *Gnosis*, 200, sees the 'wholly' apocalyptic description of the *Endzeit* here.

83 See MacRae, 'The Jewish Background', 90.

84 Wilson, 'Nag Hammadi', 298; G.W. MacRae, *Studies*, 186-193. Cf. Rudolph, *Gnosis*, 141-144.

85 Cf. G. Robinson, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 38.

Sethian texts of *TriProt* and *ApJohn* and the Johannine Prologue, represent parallel developments without any interrelations; (2) both texts are based on the already Gnosticised Jewish Sophia myth of which *TriProt* is a more natural representation; (3) the latter adapted the former into a Gnostic system. We shall argue that there is evidence pointing to the third option.

1. In the discussion after J.M. Robinson's paper at the Yale Conference (1978), several scholars including G. MacRae expressed their reservation about any direct relationship between *TriProt* and the Fourth Gospel.⁸⁶ More recently J.T. Sanders has argued that the Prologue, the Odes of Solomon, and *TriProt* stem from the same intellectual milieu of Jewish wisdom tradition, and that the Johannine Prologue was not a direct source of the Gnostic writing even though *TriProt* was written later than the Gospel.⁸⁷ In view of the Jewish sapiential elements found both in the Fourth Gospel and in *TriProt*, this position is not groundless. But we would argue that the parallels between them go further than the theory of a common background can explain, so that it seems impossible to avoid seeing one kind of more direct relationship or another. In order to prove this, we have to put the alleged parallels between the Fourth Gospel and *TriProt* under closer scrutiny.⁸⁸

The sapiential motifs occur predominantly in *TriProt* 47.13ff, a summary of the Protennoia's third descent; this is the very section where the themes and phrases similar to the ones found in the Fourth Gospel are concentrated. The Protennoia says in an aetiological form: 'The third time I *revealed* myself to them⁸⁹ *in their tents* (σκηνή) as *the Word* (λόγος) and I revealed myself in the likeness of their shape. And I wore everyone's garment and I hid myself within them and they [did] not know the one who empowers me... And I hid myself within them until I revealed myself to my [brethren]... [I] am the Light that illumines the All. I am the Light that rejoiced [in

⁸⁶ Robinson, 'Sethians', 662-670.

⁸⁷ Sanders, 'Nag Hammadi', 51-66.

⁸⁸ The Synoptics do not come into perspective, for there seems to be 'nothing in *TriProt* to suggest that the author was acquainted with synoptic tradition, even indirectly' (C.M. Tuckett, *Nag Hammadi*, 25).

⁸⁹ I.e. 'all the sovereignties and powers' and 'the angels' and 'every movement which is in the whole of the matter'.

my] brethren, for I came down to the world [of] mortals on account of the Spirit that remains [in] that which [descended] (and) came forth [from] the innocent Sophia (σοφία)...’ (*TriProt* 47.13-34).

It goes without saying that the descent and revelation of the Pronoia as the *Logos* shows a striking semblance not only to the Jewish sapiential motifs but also to the Johannine Prologue. A parallel to John 1.14 is noted by some in *TriProt* 47.13-19, where the third *incognito* revelation of the Protennoia as the *Logos* presents a striking concentration of the ideas similar to those found in the Fourth Gospel, in particular John 1.14. J. Helderman, pointing out the paucity of *σκηνή*, a loanword from Greek, in the Nag Hammadi Library, argues that this passage is an intentional reinterpretation of John 1.14 (καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν), aimed at polemicising against its Christian message.⁹⁰ Against Helderman, J.M. Robinson holds that, since the Sahidic and Bohairic translations of John 1.14 do not use the same loanword, ‘the Coptic translator of *TriProt* may well not have had John 1.14 in mind’.⁹¹ This judgement, however, precludes the possibility of the knowledge of Greek and the Greek NT by the Coptic translator of *TriProt*, and thus is to be considered as one-sided. A more serious challenge to Helderman’s view is that because *σκηνή* and its cognate verb are used in Sir 24.8 to describe Wisdom’s dwelling among Israel it is impossible to link *TriProt* 47.13-19 with John 1.14 by pointing to the use of these words in both alone. It is not impossible to suppose, as the first school of thought does, that the same Jewish Wisdom myth lies behind these two texts that developed independently of one another. However, evidence seems to point to a certain Johannine connection of *TriProt* 47.13ff in a cumulative way.

Firstly, the use of the term in conjunction with the *Logos*, though not sufficient by itself to prove a link, could suggest a certain relation with the Johannine Prologue.

Secondly, it is likely that this passage parallels a clearly docetic understanding of the incarnation of the Johannine Jesus as *Logos* in *TriProt* 50.12-15, where, in the last

90 Helderman, ‘In ihren Zelten’, 182-211. Cf. Wilson, ‘The Trimorphic Protennoia’, 53-54, who remarks that this passage ‘looks like interpolation of John 1.14’.

91 Robinson, ‘Sethians’, 660. Schenke, *Die dreigestaltige Protennoia*, 150, denies any possible parallel between *TriProt* 47.15 and John 1.14 which is put forward on the basis of the correspondence between CKHNH and ἐσκήνωσεν.

of aetiological sayings summarising her third descent as the *Logos*, the Protennoia remarks: 'As for me, I *put on* Jesus. I bore him from the cursed wood, and established him in the dwelling places of his Father' (50.12-15).⁹² In view of Irenaeus' report (*Adv. haer.* III.11.3⁹³) that Gnostic heretics (such as Marcionites and Valentinians) could not assent to the phrase $\delta \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma \sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{x} \acute{\epsilon}\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$ of John 1.14, *TriProt* 47.13-16, speaking of the revelation of the *Logos* in the *σκηνή* of the archons, may very well be a Gnostic reinterpretation of the Johannine passage.

Thirdly, striking parallels to the Fourth Gospel are undeniable in passages following the *σκηνή* passage: 'I am the Light' (47.28ff; cf. John 8.12; 9.5); 'I came down to the world [of] mortals (cf. John 1.14) on account of the Spirit' (47.31-33; cf. John 1.32b-33). Although the 'I am' + predicate construction used abundantly in both the Pronoia hymn of *ApJohn* and the entire *TriProt* is not by itself sufficient to argue for the dependence on the Johannine formula,⁹⁴ the similarity of these aetiological sayings to the Johannine sayings is impressive. In addition, it is difficult to deny that the phrase 'the dwelling places of his Father' (50.12-15) is a probable allusion to John 14.2,⁹⁵ since it occurs closely linked with a clear docetic understanding of Jesus' incarnation, cross and ascension.⁹⁶

Fourthly, Johannine parallels can be found in other passages of *TriProt* as well. At the end of her second descent and revelation Protennoia casts out 'the eternal holy Spirit' on her 'own' and re-ascends to enter her Light and to be in the 'dwelling place' of the 'Son of the [holy] Light' (45.31ff). The motif of a well of living water (cf. John

92 *Contra* G. Schenke, *Die dreigestaltige Protennoia*, 161 and n3, who conjectures that the *Vorlage* of the saving work of the *Logos* must have been put into expression well before John 1.14.

93 $\text{Καί} \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\epsilon\lambda\iota\omicron\nu\omicron\varsigma \delta\acute{\epsilon} \omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon \delta \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma \sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{x} \acute{\epsilon}\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron \omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon \delta \text{Χριστ}\acute{o}\varsigma \omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon \delta \acute{\epsilon}\kappa \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omega\omicron\upsilon \gamma\epsilon\gamma\omicron\nu\acute{o}\varsigma \Sigma\omega\tau\acute{\eta}\rho.$

94 The style of 'I am' + predicate (ANOK + copulae ΠΕ[m.]/ΤΕ[f.]) resembles not only the Isis aetiologies but also the Johannine $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\acute{\omega} \acute{\epsilon}\mu\iota$ proclamations with predicates. See MacRae, 'The Ego-Proclamation', 131-134. However, despite the similarity in form between the formulae of the Fourth Gospel and these Nag Hammadi texts, there is no evidence to prove the influence of one upon the other (Janssens, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 236). Jewish wisdom literature (e.g. Prov 8; Sir 24) would provide closer parallels to the Johannine $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\acute{\omega} \acute{\epsilon}\mu\iota$ + predicates (Brown, *John*, 1.535-538; Scott, *Sophia*, 116-131).

95 So J.M. Robinson, 'Sethians', 657-658. *Contra* G. Robinson, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 44, 45.

96 Such a docetic Christology is reported by Hippolytus as characteristic of Heracleon and Ptolemaeus who say that 'the body of Jesus was psychic and that because of this at his baptism the Spirit came upon him like dove—that is, the *Logos* of *Sophia*, the mother from above—and entered into his psychic body, and (also) raised him from dead' (*Ref.* 35.5). Cf. Foerster, *Gnosis*, 1.192-193.

4.10f) is utilised along with the themes similar to those in the Johannine Christology. The Protennoia claims that she alone is 'the Word (λόγος)', which is 'a hidden Light, bearing a Fruit of Life, pouring forth a Living Water from the invisible, unpolluted, immeasurable Spring' (46.14-18; cf. 36.5-7; 31.3; 41.23; 48.20).⁹⁷ The third descent of the Protennoia is characterised with other Johannine-like themes elsewhere: 'the Water of [Life]' (48.7), 'Sons of Light' (49.25; 41.16 ['those who have known me, Sons of Light']; cf. 1QS 1.9; 3.13, 24; John 12.36⁹⁸), and the theme of mutual abiding (50.10-12; cf. John 6.56; 15.4-5; 1 John 3.24; 4.13, 15-16).⁹⁹

In view of such a concentration of the affinities to the themes of the Johannine Prologue and of the entire Gospel within this rather short Gnostic tractate, it is impossible to disregard J.M. Robinson's question outright: 'Given the mass of Jewish literature available, why do we find the only concentrated cluster of parallels to the prologue in one text, *Trimorphic Protennoia*?'¹⁰⁰ Hence, the theory of a common background without any interactions between the two texts is not sufficient to explain these affinities, and our options are narrowed down to the second and the third views which see an influence of one text on the other.

2. The second view is represented by G. Schenke (Robinson), J.M. Robinson, and others, who maintain that a pre-Christian Gnostic Sophia myth gave rise to the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel, and whose more original form is preserved in *TriProt*, especially in the section depicting the third manifestation of Protennoia of the primal Father.¹⁰¹ G. Schenke (Robinson), representing *Berliner Arbeitskreis für die koptisch-gnostische Schriften*, remarked that 'one has the impression that the relevant statements of *Protennoia* stand in their natural context, whereas their parallels in the Johannine prologue, as we find in the Fourth Gospel, seem to have been artificially made serviceable to a purpose really alien to them'.¹⁰² More recently, following J.M. Robinson, she has taken a more definitive position that 'since the *Trimorphic Protennoia* is the

97 See Janssens, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 238. Cf. Sir 15.3 where water imagery is applied to Wisdom. Turner, 'Protennoia', 436.

98 Janssens, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 239, 241.

99 See Evans, *Nag Hammadi Texts*, 412-413.

100 Robinson, 'Sethians', 666.

101 Rudolph, *Gnosis*, 143.

102 Schenke, 'Die dreigestaltige Protennoia', 733, as translated by J.M. Robinson, 'Sethians', 651.

best-attested matrix of the Logos hymn, the most obvious conclusion would seem to be that the Prologue derives from a Wisdom tradition that has already passed through this gnostic filter'.¹⁰³ She further contends that *TriProt* 'in its basic substance was not yet influenced by Christianity', and that 'The few distinctively Christian traits are the result of secondary Christianisation that took place in a rather superficial way'.¹⁰⁴

To this view of the *Berliner Arbeitskreis* and its followers some serious questions have to be raised.

i. First of all, it has to be remembered that the thesis of the *Berliner Arbeitskreis* was presented when the view was prevalent that the Prologue was not only ill-matched with the body of the Fourth Gospel but was derived from a non-Christian Gnostic myth such as R. Bultmann proposed.¹⁰⁵ However, recently not a few exegetes have emphasised the closer relation between the Prologue and the body of the Gospel,¹⁰⁶ and the Gnostic-myth theory to explain the Prologue is strongly contested.¹⁰⁷ Drawing attention to the correspondence of this 'camouflaged-descent schematism' of Protennoia in *TriProt* 47.15-28 to John 1.10, G. (Schenke) Robinson refers to her earlier conclusion reached by the *Berliner Arbeitskreis* that 'the two texts interpret each other mutually, whereby however...the light falls more from Protennoia upon the Prologue of John than the reverse'.¹⁰⁸ But the very fact that the theme of Israel's rejection of Jesus identified with divine Wisdom is reflected not only in the Prologue but in the body of the Gospel (1.11; 8.59; 12.34-36), a point unnoticed by Robinson, casts a serious doubt on one of her assumptions that the Prologue is a later addition composed independently of the main body of the Gospel.

ii. It is argued, representatively by the *Berliner Arbeitskreis*, that both *ApJohn* and *TriProt* are the result of a secondary Christianisation of originally non-Christian

103 G. Robinson, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 50.

104 G. Robinson, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 41 and 43, respectively. Also Schenke, 'Die dreigestaltige Protennoia', 732.

105 Cf. Arai, *Studies*, 253.

106 E.g. M. Hooker, 'The Johannine Prologue', 40-58; Dunn, 'Let John be John', 309-339; R. Edwards, 'Χάρις ἀπὸ χάριτος', 3-15; Scott, *Sophia*, 115ff.

107 E.g. H. Gese, 'Wisdom', 23-57; Ashton, 'The Tradition', 161-186; more comprehensively by Evans, *Word and Glory*, (1993).

108 G. Robinson, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 48-49; Schenke, 'Die dreigestaltige Protennoia', 733.

Jewish texts with Gnostic proclivities.¹⁰⁹ Within this scholarly context, J.M. Robinson could argue that 'It is conceded that there are Christian ingredients in the T[rim]P[rot], but they are classified by these German scholars [of the *Berliner Arbeitskreis*] as the result of the secondary Christianising of an originally Jewish Gnostic tractate. Thus the Trimorphic Protennoia would not itself be the long-sought "source" of the Johannine prologue, but would through its own pre-Christian Jewish background provide the best available access to the background of the Johannine prologue'.¹¹⁰ What Robinson assumes here is the existence of the non-Christian, Gnostic text of *Ur-Trimorphic Protennoia* only with Jewish traits. Even if we could assume the existence of an *Ur-TriProt* tractate, it cannot be proven whether it is pre- or post-Christian chronologically since Wisdom tradition continued to be utilised in Jewish apocalyptic writings well after a number of early Christian documents were written. If Robinson is using the term 'pre-Christian' in terms of composition history, there is no need to locate the Johannine sapiential motifs in connection with such a hypothetical Gnostic document whose date is unknown, since there is a well-spread tradition of hypostatic Wisdom readily available in contemporary Jewish apocalypses. Furthermore, the theory of the existence of a non-Christian Urtext of *TriProt* itself is very difficult to maintain. This fact can be illustrated by examining the claim made regarding *ApJohn* whose shorter rescensions are generally thought to be earlier than the longer ones and to show a process of Christianisation leading to the latter. This theory on *ApJohn* does not go unchallenged. A.H.B. Logan, for example, observes that there is little evidence to show consistent Christianisation or de-Christianisation in *ApJohn*.¹¹¹ Moreover, it has been recently argued that the theory of a non-Christian early text of *ApJohn* is impossible to uphold

109 H.M. Schenke, 'Die neutestamentliche Christologie', 213f. For *ApJohn* see Arai, 'Zur Christologie', 302-318; Onuki, 'Wiederkehr', 90; *Gnosis und Stoa*, 111; B.A. Pearson, 'The Problem', 19-25; Turner, 'The Gnostic Threefold Path', 328; 'Sethian Gnosticism', 65-66, and for *TriProt* see Robinson, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 43. Koschorke, *Die Polemik*, 207, categorises *ApJohn* as a superficially Christianised Gnostic text along with *TriProt*, *Eugnostos* (CG III,3), *GEgypt* (IV,2), *OrgWorld* (II,5), and *Zost* (VIII,1), and as genuinely Christian Gnostic texts *GTruth* (I,3), *GPhil* (II,3), *TreatRes* (I,4), *InterKnow* (XI,1), *TestimTruth* (IX,3).

110 Robinson, 'The Prologue of the Gospel of John and the Trimorphic Protennoia' 1978 SBL Abstracts, 29.

111 Logan, 'The Development', 607.

beyond any reasonable doubt.¹¹² For example, in view of Irenaeus' account of the Barbelognostics (*Adv. haer.* 1.29.1-4), the *Gospel of Egyptians*, and the *Trimorphic Protennoia*, it is impossible to argue that the 'Autogenes', set in apposition to 'Christus' in all the four recensions, is to be regarded as secondary.¹¹³ The fact that Christ appears only in the third of the threefold descent scheme of the Pronoia hymn does not necessarily indicate its secondary interpolation; rather it would represent the Gnostic schematisation of the salvation history. Indeed, the third descent of the revealer/redeemer figure in *ApJohn*, *TriProt*, and *GEgypt*, which are all regarded as Sethian Gnostic documents, is characterised not only with the depiction of 'putting on or appearing in a body which is implicitly or explicitly that of Jesus', but also with the sealing of the Gnostics with the spiritual enlightenment for initiation.¹¹⁴ Thus the introduction of Christ in the third descent in the Pronoia hymn and *TriProt* does not represent a secondary interpolation but constitutes an integral part of the Gnostic schematisation of salvation history. Therefore we cannot but agree with Wilson who remarks that 'to discover a completely non-Christian text behind it [*TriProt*] would be at best speculative'.¹¹⁵

iii. Another basis on which J.M. Robinson and G. Robinson build their argument is that they find a threefold periodisation concerning the being and the works of the *Logos* in the Johannine Prologue. This periodisation, they think, is explicable only in the light of the threefold descent of Protennoia in *TriProt*.¹¹⁶ G. Robinson regards these three periods as the primordial, the pre-Christian 'spermatic', and the incarnate ones. But such a periodisation of the Johannine *Logos* is untenable. There is no warrant that the second period of the *Logos* is 'the pre-Christian "spermatic" period, which

112 So Logan, 'The Development', 482ff, who challenges Arai's thesis head-on. See also Logan, 'John and the Gnostics', 54, 58-59; H.-J. Klauck (*BZ* 34 [1990] 146-149) and B. Dehandschutter (*ETL* 65 [1989] 444) in their reviews of Onuki's *Gnosis und Stoa*.

113 So Logan, 'The Development', 483-484. For the identification of the 'Autogenes' and the 'Christus' see CG III 10,22/BG 31,17f//II 7,1/IV 10.28f; III 11,7/BG 32,9//II 7.20/IV 11,12; III 12,21/BG 34,12//II 8,23/IV lacuna; III 13.6f/BG 35,8//II 9,2/IV lacuna. Cf. Onuki, *Gnosis und Stoa*, 110-111 n130, n133.

114 The putting on the body of Jesus: *ApJohn* II,1.31.4; *TriProt* XIII,1.47.13-16; 50.12-15; *GEgypt* IV.74.24-29; 75.15-17; the sealing for enlightenment: *ApJohn* II,1.31.23ff; *TriProt* XIII,1.48.3ff; 49.28ff; 50.9f; *GEgypt* IV,2.74.16. See Logan, 'The Development', 485-486.

115 Wilson, 'Review on G. Schenke', 570.

116 Robinson, 'Sethians', 662; G. Robinson, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 46-47.

J.M. Robinson claims to find between the primal period and the incarnate period of the *Logos*. Nor is it possible to find such a distinction as G. Robinson makes in the Prologue between the second period concerning the *Logos' incognito* entrance into the human realm to make some children of God and the third period concerning his incarnation with glory. Rather, if there is a periodisation, the Prologue seems to distinguish the existence of the *Logos* before and his participation in creation (John 1.1-3) from his incarnation which resulted in making the children of God those who hearken to him and in his being rejected by his own people (1.9-14). Therefore, to read the threefold descent of the Gnostic Redeemer in *TriProt* back into the Johannine Prologue is tenuous.

Although it is not directly linked with the Johannine sapiential motifs under discussion, Meeks' above-mentioned article is worth mentioning here, for it proposes an alternative view regarding the relationship between the Gnostic redeemer myth and the Johannine Christology. He opts for a reciprocal influencing of these two different systems, suggesting that the Johannine Christology, the motif of the descent and ascent of the redeemer in particular, helped to create some gnostic myths, especially that of the Valentinian type, while gnostic myths helped to create the Johannine Christology in turn.¹¹⁷ This is based on his study of the social function of the descent/ascent motif of the Johannine Jesus, which he regards as deriving from the Sophia myth; the Johannine descent/ascent motif functions dialectically in creating, legitimating and reinforcing a sect isolated from Judaism/the synagogue. Meeks is right in seeing that the Jewish Wisdom tradition influenced both the Gospel and the Gnostic myths, although he fails to recognise its apocalyptic colouring in both. It must also be pointed out that Meeks' interpretation of the Johannine Son of man in conjunction with the descent/ascent motif is forced so that the Johannine scheme has become conformed to the gnostic Sophia myth as he understands it; the ascent/descent terminology in the Fourth Gospel is not monolithic.¹¹⁸ More problematic is the dialectical reasoning that Meeks uses to explain

¹¹⁷ Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 165.

¹¹⁸ John 1.51 is based on Gen 28.12 which speaks of angels' ascent and descent, while 3.13 is concerned with a contrast with a heavenly journey of a seer, a motif related to gaining wisdom. See Evans, *Word and Glory*, 94-95.

the relation between the Johannine Christology and the Gnostic theme in terms of reciprocal interaction. By so doing, Meeks is in effect implying the Gnostic nature of the former in its end-product. This theory seems to reflect G. Robinson's assumption: 'On the fast-moving field of late antiquity, Wisdom speculation and gnostic myth influenced and accelerated each other mutually'.¹¹⁹ But thinking in terms of a trajectory tends to focus mainly on the diachronical development of a certain motif or theme at the expense of a synchronical investigation, that is, a full account is not always given to a consideration of the contexts within which a certain motif is utilised. Moreover, to speak of the existence of a gnostic Sophia myth without any support of relevant documents dating before the emergence of the Gnostic texts is no more than speculative. As C.A. Evans remarks, 'When it is remembered...that no redeemer myth from the first century (or earlier) can actually be documented, the hypothesis that Johannine (and Pauline) Christology reflects such a myth is hardly more than a guess'.¹²⁰

3. The third school of thought seeks to explain the affinities in terms of the influence of the Fourth Gospel on *TriProt*. Y. Janssens has drawn attention to a number of *TriProt*'s parallels with the NT and opted for its dependence on the Fourth Gospel in particular, although she has later resorted to a more compromising view suggesting a common background while at the same time reiterating her earlier view.¹²¹ A more or less similar view is presented by E. Yamauchi, P. Hofrichter, A.H.B. Logan, and C.A. Evans.¹²² Wilson suggested a possible Christian background and a secondary de-Christianisation of *TriProt*, and remarks that 'The way in which some of the these [Christian] echoes occur suggests not their use for purposes of Christianisation but the use of language long familiar'.¹²³

This view of the relation between *TriProt* and the Fourth Gospel is often presented in conjunction with *ApJohn*. It is argued that the threefold descent of the Proten-

119 Robinson, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 50.

120 Evans, *Word and Glory*, 67.

121 Janssens, 'Une source gnostique', 355; 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 229-244.

122 Yamauchi, 'Jewish Gnosticism?', 480-484. Hofrichter, *Im Anfang*, 172, 215-221, thinks that the threefold descent of Protennoia in *TriProt*, like the Pronoia hymn of *ApJohn*, refers to John 1.4-9, and regards *TriProt* as a summarising interpretation of the early Christian Logos concept. Logan, 'The Development'. Evans, *Word and Glory*, 49-67, esp. 64-65, who would take a number of the parallels as the *TriProt*'s allusions to the Johannine counterparts.

123 Wilson, 'Review on G. Schenke, *Die dreigestaltige Protennoia*', 569; 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 54

noia in *TriProt* is an expansion of the Pronoia hymn of the longer recension of *ApJohn* (CG II,1) 4.19-13.13, and that both are in parallel with Irenaeus, *Adv.haer.* 1.29.1-4.¹²⁴ J.D. Turner thinks that both texts are secondarily Christianised Gnostic texts. He stresses the difference between them in that, whereas in *ApJohn* Pronoia is simply identified with the Christ of the church, in *TriProt* Protennoia is said to be mistaken for the Christ since she disguised herself as such before the archons.¹²⁵ He concludes that *TriProt* represents a 'dechristification' of a secondarily Christianised text by the Sethians written with a polemic purpose against the great church over the interpretation of the Christology of the Fourth Gospel. Yet this view is not convincing, because the difference between these texts is not as distinctive as Turner suggests. On the other hand, A. Logan, following M. Tardieu, argues that *TriProt* is a development of a version of the Christian Gnostic myth underlying the Pronoia hymn of *ApJohn*, whose earlier form is represented in the report of Irenaeus, *Adv.haer.* I.29.1-5.¹²⁶ For Logan the descent and ascent of the Logos cannot be explained without reference to the Fourth Gospel. Yet, as A. Böhlig has pointed out, the triadic theogony of Gnosticism comprising Father-Mother-Son might not necessarily be a Gnostic expression of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, since such a triadic concept was widely observed in Antiquity.¹²⁷ Furthermore, the doctrine of the Trinity is not yet fully established in the Fourth Gospel. Even so, the probability that Christian elements are integral to the Gnostic triadic theogony and the fact that the triadic understanding of the Johannine Prologue was held by some Gnostics¹²⁸ would infer that the triadic scheme was inherently associated with the Johannine Prologue appropriated in the Gnostic systems.

124 It is generally thought that among the four extant recensions of *ApJohn* the two longer recensions (CG II, IV) in general are more Christianised than the shorter ones (III, BG). See Arai, 'Zur Christologie', 302-318. Yet there is evidence that runs counter to this theory. See e.g. BG 32.9-14 (CG III 11.6-11)//CG II 7.21-24 (IV 11.13-18). It is not in the longer recensions but in the shorter ones that the *αὐτογενής* of God is set in apposition to Christ. *ApJohn's* extensive dependence on or allusions to the NT is questionable. See Wilson, *Gnosis*, 105; Tuckett, *Nag Hammadi*, 25-27, who finds no other allusion to the Synoptics but to Matthew.

125 Turner, 'The Gnostic Threefold Path', 327-328.

126 Logan, 'John and the Gnostics', 56-57, 59.

127 Böhlig, 'Triade und Trinität', 617-642. Cf. Janssens, 'The Trimorphic Protennoia', 236.

128 Irenaeus accuses his Valentinian opponent Ptolemaeus as applying a triadic theogonic scheme to the Prologue, since the latter interprets it as referring to the three aeons of the Father, the Beginning (*ἀρχή*), and the Logos (*Adv.haer.* I.8.5). Cf. Philo, *Leg.Alleg.* 1.43; cf. 3.175 (where the *οὐράνιος σοφία* is given many names including *ἀρχή*, *εἰκόν*, and *ἕρμης θεοῦ*); Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 36. See Mack, *Logos und Sophia*, 111 n3, 143.

Since other theories lack such an external evidence as Irenaeus, whose report, despite its polemical nature, is regarded as reasonably reliable in general,¹²⁹ the view that the Johannine *Logos* hymn was already Gnosticised in the Pronoia hymn of *ApJohn*, which in turn influenced the writing of *TriProt*, should be given a considerable degree of plausibility.

The way in which the apocalyptic and the Johannine elements were integrated in *TriProt* is difficult to discern. Do the Johannine elements represent a secondary superficial Christianisation of an originally non-Christian Gnostic text with strong apocalyptic contours? Or were the apocalyptic contours of the Johannine motifs amplified by the Gnostic author who was familiar with the Jewish apocalyptic thought-world? We are inclined to regard the third descent of the Protennoia in *TriProt* as providing a Gnostic reinterpretation of the Fourth Gospel, particularly the Prologue. We would therefore suggest that, although it is difficult to resolve the question as to whether it was an originally Christian-Gnostic section secondarily de-Christianised or the Christian elements are secondary, at least this particular section of *TriProt* in its present form is indebted fundamentally not only to the Jewish apocalyptic thought-world¹³⁰ but also to Christianity as expressed in the Fourth Gospel in particular. This conclusion cannot be altered, whether one takes the author of this Sethian document (*TriProt*) as incorporating the Johannine motifs into an originally non-Christian text in order to confute mainline Christianity (or the great Church)¹³¹ or as representing de-Christianisation of a text based on the Pronoia hymn of the longer recensions of *ApJohn*. Even the Pronoia hymn of *ApJohn* (a source of *TriProt*'s account of the descents and ascents of the redeemer), albeit with a less elaborate eschatological terminology of Jewish apocalypticism, is part of the entirety which has both an unmistakably apocalyptic beginning and ending. Therefore we would conclude that the descent/ascent motifs in both texts are so well integrated into their own contexts that it is hardly possible to decide which is more natural (*natürlich*) or more artificial (*künstlich*).¹³² In discussing the parallel of

129 Foerster, *Von Valentin*, esp. 81; Tuckett, *Nag Hammadi*, 157; Pagels, *The Johannine Gospel*, 40-46. Cf. Rudolph, *Gnosis*, 11-12.

130 Cf. G. Schenke, *Die dreigestaltige Protennoia*, 137-138.

131 J.D. Turner, 'Trimorphic Protennoia', 392;

132 Cf. G. Schenke, 'Die dreigestaltige Protennoia', 734.

'dwelling-places' (*μονή*) in John 14.2 and *TriProt* 50.12-16, J.M. Robinson argues for the naturalness of *TriProt*'s composition and the artificiality of the Fourth Gospel, by saying that 'The author of *TriProt* writes fluently from his own world of thought and does not need John to provide him an occasion to think in terms of his own thought patterns'.¹³³ But what Robinson fails to examine is how well the author of the Fourth Gospel integrates the theme into his own thought world. In this sense his support for the *Berliner Arbeitskreis*' theory is one-sided. Therefore it is more plausible that the use of the sapiential motif in the Fourth Gospel under discussion is in line with its Jewish apocalyptic counterparts rather than those in the Gnostic texts. The strongly apocalyptic contours of John 12.20-36, which we will observe in II.4, would further support this conclusion.

2.4.3 Conclusion and Father Assessment

If it is correct that the *Trimorphic Protennoia* as it stands contains Christian, particularly Johannine, elements, this tractate represents a Christian Gnostic work. The hypothesis of a superficial secondary Christianisation of a non-Christian Urtext would not stand in view of the quantity of parallels and the qualitative affinities. Until such a non-Christian Urtext of *TriProt* or a document of the putative Gnosticised Sophia myth is found, any attempt to explain the Prologue, and the body as well, of the Fourth Gospel in the light of a Gnostic Sophia myth is to be considered precarious. Instead, since we have Jewish Wisdom themes documented and developed in Jewish apocalypses contemporaneous with the Fourth Gospel, to read the latter in contrast to the former provides a more certain basis.

Furthermore, it must be added that, despite the use of the similar sapiential motif, the Johannine presentation of Jesus in a mould of the descent and ascent of Wisdom differs fundamentally from the Gnostic Sophia myths in some important respects:

(i) First, the dualism of light and darkness and the like in the Fourth Gospel is not an ontological one of the evil material and the supra-heavenly world as in Gnosticism but ethical as in Jewish apocalypticism.¹³⁴

¹³³ Robinson, 'Sethians', 657.

¹³⁴ Cf. Schottroff, *Der Glaubende*, 54f, who maintains that the dualism behind the theme of withdrawing Wisdom depicted in 1 Enoch 42 is ethical.

(ii) We would agree with J.M. Robinson and others who argue that to understand the theology of the Prologue light can be shed from *TriProt*; but not in terms of the Gnostic nature of the Prologue as they suggest. If *TriProt* was secondarily Christianised as Robinson thinks, then it would mean that the Johannine sapiential motifs found their appropriate context in the putative *Ur-TriProt* with Jewish apocalyptic, albeit undoubtedly Gnosticised, traits. If, on the other hand, *TriProt* was composed originally as a Christian-Gnostic work, the apocalyptic colourings of the Johannine sapiential motifs are pronounced in their adaptation to the Sethian-Gnostic *Weltanschauung*. In the final analysis, the evidence we have examined above seems to point to the latter alternative. It would follow that if this Gnostic tractate, whose composition would be comparatively late,¹³⁵ reflects the Fourth Gospel to a certain degree, it can be a witness to the apocalyptic nature of the Gospel or at least to a kind of interpretation of the Gospel known to the Gnostic author and/or his circle.

(iii) Regarding soteriology, these Gnostic texts differ fundamentally from the Fourth Gospel. Both *ApJohn* and *TriProt* provide a soteriology that contains no *theologica crucis* but focuses on a revealer who by giving *gnosis* awakens those who are asleep, entrapped in the carnal material world, and liberates them into the heavenly world of Light (cf. *ApJohn* [CG II,1] 31-5-2).¹³⁶ This soteriology is intrinsically linked with its cosmogony and anthropogony which show strong influence of Middle Platonism.¹³⁷ On the other hand, in Jewish apocalyptic eschatology represented in 4 Ezra salvation is dependent on a redeemer figure who as the universal Judge in terms of the Danielic Son of man and as the militant King in terms of the Davidic Messiah delivers judgement on the enemies and brings salvation/restoration to the righteous Israel. Salvation in this scheme is to be achieved on the earthly level, since 4 Ezra does not adhere to the ethico-metaphysical dualism of Gnosticism. In this respect, the total lack of the concept of new creation is characteristic of the gnostic apocalyptic-eschatology of *ApJohn* and *TriProt*; as MacRae remarks, 'Given its radically dualist perspective, expressed in the

¹³⁵ Hengel, *Die johanneische Frage*, 49, dates it in the late third century.

¹³⁶ See G. MacRae, 'Sleep and Awakening', 496-507.

¹³⁷ For the far reaching influence of Middle Platonism on Sethian Gnosticism, see Pearson, *Gnosticism*, 155-164.

concept of creation as error, Gnosticism can see the end time only as the dissolution of the created world'.¹³⁸ The Fourth Gospel, like 4 Ezra, does not degrade the creation, nor does it confuse the ethical and ontological dimensions, as we shall see regarding its use of *κόσμος*. Salvation is achieved not merely by the imparting of knowledge,¹³⁹ but also that knowledge has an objective basis, i.e. Jesus lifted up on the cross as the core of the hidden mystery now revealed; thus salvation is based on the objective 'work' of Jesus as it is traditionally called.

2.5 *The Johannine Jesus as Wisdom, Mystery, and the Danielic Son of Man*

Having seen that to the Johannine Jesus are attributed the characteristics of the personified Wisdom, i.e. her hiddenness from the exceptionally wicked human world at the end time, as appropriated in Jewish apocalyptic literature, we are ready to answer the next question concerning the relationship between the divine Wisdom (Sophia) and other Christological terms modifying the Johannine Jesus. It has been argued that the Hellenistic *anthropos* myth lies behind both the Johannine Sophia Christology and the Gnostic redeemer myth. Before investigating this claim (III.2.5), we need to explicate the Johannine portrayal of Jesus as Wisdom in relation to other apocalyptic themes, because we have argued against Gnostic influence. Besides the theme of the eschatological hiding of Wisdom, the fact that the pre-existent Wisdom seems to be identified with the messianic figure in some of the Jewish apocalypses would provide a more plausible solution than the theory of Gnostic influence. Indeed, in view of this identification, the combination of the Johannine *Logos* with other messianic references such as the Davidic Messiah and the Danielic Son of man can be readily explained.

M. Hengel pointed out that there is a tendency in the OT and the pseudepigrapha that Wisdom becomes closely associated with the Spirit, the Son of man, and the Messiah (Isa 11.1-4; PsSol 17-18; WisSol 7.22-27; 1 Enoch 48.1-10; 49.1-3; 52.4-5).¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ MacRae, *Studies*, 247. See also Fallon, 'The Gnostic Apocalypses', 125.

¹³⁹ The Johannine concept of knowledge is twofold, as we shall see later: knowledge is expressed in the sense of gaining wisdom through revelation and interpretation of the divine mysteries concerning the end time, while it is frequently presented as a change from *agnoia* to *gnosis* in believers' recognition (*anagnorisis*) of Jesus' divine and messianic identity.

¹⁴⁰ Hengel, 'Jesus als messianischer Lehrer', 166-180.

Yet, since no explicit identification of Wisdom with the messianic figure Son of man/Messiah appears to be made in those texts, J.D.G. Dunn concludes that 'we must simply note that in the *Similitudes* [sic.] Wisdom is *not* identified with the Son of Man'.¹⁴¹ We would rather argue that, while the Son of Man in the *Similitudes* is in some cases clearly distinguished from Wisdom despite their close association, he is no doubt identified with Wisdom in other, though only a few, cases. In 1 Enoch 49.1-2 wisdom is clearly distinguished from the redeemer figure: 'For wisdom is poured out like water, and the glory fails not before him evermore. For he is mighty in all secrets of righteousness... And in him dwells the spirit of wisdom, and the spirit of understanding and of might, and the spirit of those who have fallen asleep in righteousness'. In this interpretation of Isa 11.2, wisdom is not hypostatic as in 1 Enoch 42. In other places, however, the Son of Man comes very close to Wisdom to the extent that some attributes peculiar to Wisdom are attached to the Son of man. Especially in the *Similitudes of Enoch* and 4 Ezra the motif of being hidden in God from before the creation of the world and revealed at the end time, which is characteristic of the pre-existent Wisdom or the divine mystery concerning the end time, is applied to the Son of man as well. This has to be distinguished from the theme of the eschatological concealment of Wisdom from the wicked human world, which we have found applied to Jesus in John 12.36.

In 1 Enoch 48.3 and 6, as J. Theisohn, M. Hengel and Schimanowski have convincingly observed, the pre-existence of the Son of Man/the Chosen One is described with a clear allusion to Prov 8.22ff, where the personified Wisdom's pre-existence and participation in creation is spoken of.¹⁴² The Chosen One/the Son of man is distinguished from wisdom itself in that 'the wisdom of the Lord of Spirits will reveal him [the Son of Man/the Chosen One] to the holy and righteous'¹⁴³ (48.7; cf. 51.3, where

¹⁴¹ Dunn, *Christology*, 73.

¹⁴² Theisohn, *Der auserwählte Richter*, 131-135; Hengel, 'Jesus als messianischer Lehrer', 178-179; Schimanowski, *Weisheit und Messias*, 171-172. Contra Dunn, *Christology*, 295 n54.

¹⁴³ Black, *The Book of Enoch*, 50). Also S. Uhlig, *Das Äthiopische Henochbuch*, 591. But see another textual tradition in R.H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, 134, and the ms (Rylands Ethiopic MS. 23) used by M. Knibb, *Enoch*, 2.134, representing the text type incorporated into the Ethiopic Old Testament: 'he has revealed the wisdom of the Lord of the Spirits to the righteous and the holy ones'.

the Chosen One speaks 'all the secrets of wisdom'). Yet, at the same time, the traits of wisdom (and mystery) are attributed to him in that not only before the creation he 'was given a name', or, was chosen,¹⁴⁴ by the Lord of the Spirits (48.5f), but also was he 'concealed' in the presence of the Lord from before the creation (48.6). Here, although the Son of Man/the Chosen One is merged with the pre-existent Wisdom hidden in God, the distinction between them is preserved as far as his revelatory function is concerned. But, in 1 Enoch 62.8, a parallel to 48.7 (also 69.26), it is the hidden Son of Man who is to be revealed 'to the holy and the elect ones' when he sits on the throne of his glory. Therefore we are inclined to think that already in this apocalyptic document the Danielic Son of man/the Chosen One is depicted not only as the teacher of wisdom, but also he is interpreted in terms of the pre-existent Wisdom. As we shall see in the next chapter, the Johannine Jesus as identified with the Son of man (esp. 1.51; 3.14) is given traits characteristic of divine Wisdom or the divine mystery as hidden within God from before creation. Although it may be difficult to date it back to the time of Jesus, the *Similitudes* with its identification of Wisdom and the redeemer figures in the manner of a 'Traditionsmischung'¹⁴⁵ makes conceivable the Johannine presentation of Jesus as the personified Wisdom concealing from the wicked world before the end-time judgement and as the Danielic Son of man concealed in God and revealed at the end time.¹⁴⁶

We must also emphasise that it is hasty to conclude that, due to its use of the motif of 'seek and hide' in conjunction with that of coming and departure of Jesus, the Fourth Gospel presents a Wisdom Christology that can be abstracted and understood in isolation from other themes in the text. Rather, a contextual reading would show that the Wisdom Christology here is inseparably integrated with other elements of the text and constitutes one segment, albeit important, of the complex and elaborate presentation of the apocalyptic drama of the end time which evolves around the figure of Jesus

144 Schimanowski, *Weisheit und Messias*, 165-171, 177f, 192. See 1 Enoch 46.3; 49.4; cf. Isa 49.1; 45.3f. E. Sjöberg, *Menschensohn*, 89-90, 95, who, understanding this terminology in conjunction with the Ancient Near Eastern king-ideology.

145 Hengel, 'Jesus', 180f.

146 As to the depiction of the Danielic Son of man of 4 Ezra 13 in the manner of the mystery of the divine will concerning the end time, see II.3.3.

who was lifted up and glorified. For example, as the motif of concealment and revelation in the *Similitudes* is not necessarily confined to the divine Wisdom but applied to the Son of man (1 Enoch 62.8), so can the same motif not be understood without any reference to the Johannine Son of man depicted as the hidden mystery now revealed. Due to the application of the sapiential motifs we have seen in this chapter, the Johannine Jesus is linked with the well-known motif of Wisdom participating in the creation as it is adapted to the divine *Logos* in the Prologue (John 1.1ff). The motif of revelation from concealment as dramatically applied to Jesus in John 11.54ff points to the link between Jesus as Wisdom and as the Danielic Son of man. What is unique about the Johannine description of Jesus is that he, in his concealment from the unbelieving crowd, is given the traits of Wisdom at the end time as developed in Jewish apocalypses. Such a characteristic, apart from the theme of hiddenness and revelation, is not attributed to the Danielic human-like figure in other Jewish apocalyptic writings.

In some Christian Gnostic writings the identification of the Son of man with Sophia is overtly made. The *Sophia of Jesus Christ* (III,3.81.21-82.6) and its parallel *Eugnostos the Blessed* (III,4.106.14-24) both identify the 'Son of man' with 'Sophia'.¹⁴⁷ In the dialogue with his disciples in *SophJesChr* 106.14-24, 'The perfect Savior (=Jesus) said: "Then Son of man consented with Sophia, his consort, and revealed a great androgynous light. [His] masculine name is [designated] 'Savior, Begetter of All things'. His feminine name is designated 'Sophia, All-Begetress'. Some call her 'Pistis'". The term 'Son of Man' here is used without any apparent reference to the Danielic figure, and as such can be an idiomatic use referring to a certain human being or humanity in general. Yet, due to the Christian nature of both texts, the term seems to be used as a title attached to Jesus. In view of the strongly Christian traits of *SophJesChr*, it is more likely that its identification of 'Son of Man' with 'Sophia' was derived from Christian teachings, rather than that it is a result of an independent development from a Jewish text similar to the *Similitudes*. In the *Gospel of Mary* (BG 8502.1, 8.18-21) the identification between the Son of man (Jesus) and the

¹⁴⁷ D.M. Parrott argues that *SophJesChr* represents a Christianisation of the non-Christian *Eugnostos* by being cast into the framework of revelatory discourse (Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Library*, 220). But see Wilson, *Gnosis*, 111-117.

Wisdom seems to be already clearly established, because the sapiential theme of 'seek and find' is directly applied to the former in an apparently apocalyptic context.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, this passage, like those in *Eugnostos* and *SophJesChr*, has only secondary bearings to our purpose in that they reflect the Christian identification of the Son of man with Wisdom.

2.6 Summary

The concealment of Jesus depicted at John 12.36 is a significant motif in the development of the narrative concerning the mission of Jesus. It entails the characteristics of Wisdom as appropriated in apocalyptic literature and as such constitutes part of the apocalyptic drama evolving around the Johannine Jesus by signalling the approaching end-time judgement and restoration of the world. In this apocalyptic drama Jesus is no doubt identified as the divine Wisdom. Yet to abstract a Wisdom Christology from that drama and to elaborate its functions, theological and/or sociological, without any reference to its close relationship with the other Christological elements within the text is illegitimate. Indeed, sapiential elements are inextricably intertwined with other Christological elements. The primary function of the motif of Jesus' concealment would be to explicate many Jews' rejection of Jesus in terms of the obduracy of Israel (cf. 12.37ff). This would reflect the social setting of the community consisting of both Jews and non-Jews for whom the creation (or restoration) of the new people of God regardless of Jews or non-Jews must have been the main concern, as we shall see in II.4. The use of the comparable motifs of Sophia in Gnostic writings such as *TriProt* and *ApJohn* may well be due to the Gnostic elaboration of the Johannine themes with strong awareness of their apocalyptic traits.

Our contention in this chapter is that, *although the sapiential motifs are used they do not comprise the entire picture of the complex metaphoric world of the Fourth Gospel represented in John 12.20-36. The descent/ascent motif does not exist without*

148 Fallon, 'The Gnostic Apocalypses', 131-132, regards the *GMary* as 'a document of two apocalypses with dialogue'. In *GMary* 8.18-21 Jesus says: 'Beware that no one lead you astray, saying "Lo here! or Lo there!" For the Son of Man is within you. Follow after him! Those who seek him will find him'. An allusion to the so-called 'future' Son of man of the Synoptics is evident here.

other sapiential motifs such as 'seek and not find' and 'reveal and hide', which themselves do not appear isolated but constitute integral parts of the apocalyptic eschatological drama which culminates in Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. To extract the descending and ascending redeemer myth from the complex symbolic world of the Fourth Gospel and to treat it out of its given context (not of the alleged myth but of the text of the Gospel) not only damages the entirety of the text and the symbolic world it creates but also falls into a danger of creating something foreign to the given text. Nor does it advocate a salvation achieved by imparting of knowledge to enable one to be isolated from the evil material world. Rather it is clearly stated that the salvation is based on the lifting up of the Son of man (3.14f; 8.28; 12.32) which refers to the cross of Jesus (12.33)¹⁴⁹ as the climax of the eschatological drama, a consideration of which we shall now turn.

149 E. Ruckstuhl, 'Das Johannesevangelium', 153.

THE JOHANNINE JESUS AS THE APOCALYPTIC SON OF MAN

3.1 *Introduction*

In John 12.20-36 there are three clear references to the 'Son of man'. Hearing the news of the arrival of some Greeks to see him, Jesus remarks: 'The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified' (v 23). The other occurrences are assigned to the Passover crowd who, having heard Jesus' words about his lifting-up and drawing all (v 32), question: 'why do you say that the Son of man must be lifted up?' and 'Who is this Son of man?' (v 34). There is a tendency in scholarship to treat these sayings separately, either because of the distance lying between them and/or because of the apparently fragmentary nature of the text. The problem is compounded by the fact that, among its thirteen occurrences in the Gospel,¹ it is only in 12.34 that the term occurs twice on the lips of the crowd. How much weight should we put on the testimony of the crowd which is often blamed for their lack of knowledge or misunderstanding? If their testimony reflects any element of truth, what is the christological significance of their apparent identification of Jesus with the Son of man? To answer these questions we need to read these Son of man sayings not only within the context of John 12.20-36 but also in the light of the other Johannine Son of man sayings, especially those preceding this pericope.

It is generally acknowledged that *ὁ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου* is a literal Greek translation of a Semitic idiom בן אדם (Hebrew) or בר אנש/בר נש (Aramaic), which is used in a sense of

¹ John 1.51; 3.13, 14; 5.27; 6.27, 53, 62; 8.28, 9.35; 12.23, 34 (2x), 13.31.

a person or the humanity in general.² G. Vermes argued that the term used in the Gospels is circumlocutional referring to the 'I' of the speaker.³ But it has been convincingly demonstrated that the examples considered by Vermes as pointing to the circumlocutional use of **בֵּר אִנְשׁ** are found mainly in the talmudic and later targumic literature and are in fact mostly of a properly generic use.⁴ In the wake of such a linguistic argument, the traditional view that the 'Son of man' ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels is 'apocalyptic', conforming to its use in Jewish apocalypses, has recently been resurrected.⁵ **כְּבָר אִנְשׁ** in Dan 7.13, meaning 'one like a human being' who as a heavenly being⁶ is set in contrast to the beasts from the sea in the apocalyptic visions,⁷ exerted a significant influence on later apocalyptic writings such as the *Similitudes of Enoch* and *Fourth Ezra*. There the term, combined with allusions to other elements of Dan 7, is used to refer to that kingly judge figure representing (in heaven) the people of the Most High who are under persecution by the earthly powers (represented by the beasts).

Regarding the Johannine Son of man sayings in particular, scholarship is unavoidably divided. Some would uphold the Patristic understanding of the term 'the Son of man' as a reference to Jesus' humiliation and/or humanity.⁸ Yet Hare's view that the Hellenistic church as represented by the Fourth Gospel forgot the apocalyptic origin of the term is anachronistic for the writing written towards the end the first century. The recent denial of the apocalyptic Son of man in the Gospel(s) by Vermes, Casey and others in preference of a circumlocutional⁹ or a purely generic reading ('man')¹⁰ of the term has no doubt contributed to the tendency to deny the apocalyptic nature of the Fourth Gospel as a whole. But the findings of the preceding chapters sug-

2 See Collins, *Daniel*, 93. For **בֵּר אִנְשׁ** in the generic sense of 'human being' see Dan 7.13; 11QtgJob 9.9; 26.3. Cf. M. Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 182ff.

3 Vermes, 'The Use', 310-328; 'The Present State', 123-134; *Jesus the Jew*, 160-162, 177-180.

4 J.A. Fitzmyer, 'The New Testament Title', 143-160; Bauckham, 'The Son of Man', 23-33; Casey, *Son of Man*, 224-227.

5 Esp. see J.J. Collins, 'The Son of Man', 448-466; Slatur, 'One Like a Son of Man', 183-198.

6 For this view see Slater, 'One Like a Son of Man', 183-198.

7 See Collins, *Daniel*, 304-305.

8 Westcott, *St. John*, 33-35; Lightfoot, *St. John*, 103-105, 144; D.R.A. Hare, *The Son of Man*, 111. See Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 3.16.7; 3.20.2; Ignatius, *ad Eph.* 20.2; *Epistle of Barnabas*, 12.10.

9 Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 161-162.

10 Casey, *Son of Man*, 198-199. Casey, 'Idiom', 178-182, contends that the originally Aramaic **בֵּר אִנְשׁ** was used by Jesus as a generic idiom ('man') in referring to himself.

gest otherwise. Indeed, amidst some strong objections,¹¹ a number of exegetes have insisted that at least the Son of man saying in John 5.27f alludes to Dan 7.13-14.¹² C. Rowland also finds some apocalyptic elements associated with the Son of man sayings in John 1.51 and 12.31.¹³

We will argue that, read within the entire context of the Gospel, the Johanine Son of man is presented as the human-like figure of Dan 7.14 as interpreted in the contemporary Jewish apocalypses such as 4 Ezra and the *Similitudes of Enoch*. In these apocalypses that figure is identified with the Davidic Messiah. As such he is interpreted as the mystery hidden in heaven to be manifested at the end time, executing judgement on the evil and delivering the righteous into the age to come. John 12.20-36 with its three references to 'the Son of man' exhibits an eschatological judgement scene and thus is a climax of the revelation of the divine mysteries concerning the end time. The scene focuses on the enthronement of Jesus as the eschatological King/Judge which is achieved in his cross and resurrection. In the Gospel's narrative, we shall argue, the Son of man sayings develop in a progressive manner and retrospectively of the earlier one(s), leading up to its climactic point in our pericope which is concerned with Jesus' imminent death and its consequences—a thesis we will develop in this chapter.

3.2 *Revelation of the Divine Mystery*

Although opinions differ as to what essential elements constitute the world view of apocalypses, most would agree that 'the *conventions of the genre itself* imply at least the belief in the existence and accessibility of heavenly secrets which enable one to understand, even predict, earthly phenomena'.¹⁴ In his historical-linguistic study on *The Semitic Background of 'Mystery' in the New Testament*, R.E. Brown has demonstrated that the idea of the heavenly assembly (710) in which Yahweh and his

11 E.g. J. Schmitt, 'Apocalyptic', 342. See Burkett, *The Son of Man*, 41-45.

12 Schulz, *Untersuchungen*, 122-124; Moloney, *Son of Man*, 82; Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man*, 155; Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.113; 1.535; J.D.G. Dunn, *Christology*, 89-90; Ashton, *Understanding*, 337-373; J.-A. Bühner, *Der Gesandte*, 347-399, 422-429.

13 Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 359, 365; 'John 1.51'. More recently Rowland, 'The Parting of the Ways', 226-230, has emphasised that the Fourth Gospel is profoundly embedded in the Jewish apocalyptic tradition.

14 P.R. Davies, 'The Social World', 255.

angels discuss the conduct of the world and into which the prophets are introduced to hear its decrees underlines the revelation of the divine mysteries to the wise in wisdom literature and to seers in apocalyptic literature. Brown argues that what distinguishes the apocalyptic revelation of the divine mysteries from that in prophecy and wisdom is the manner of revelation, that is, visions or symbols are the main means of communication in apocalypses.¹⁵ The term 'mystery' acquires eschatological connotations in apocalyptic literature starting from the Book of Daniel.¹⁶ 'The nature of the Danielic *μυστήριον* [in Dan 2.29, 47]', observes C.C. Caragounis, 'is no doubt that of the mysterious purposes of God regarding the last days. God alone knows them and reveals them in His own time, way and measure to His chosen ones'.¹⁷ Ben Sira summarises the work of the prophet Isaiah in the way in which an apocalypticist would have done: 'Through the mighty Spirit he saw the last things (חזוה אחרית, εἶδεν τὰ ἔσχατα) and comforted those who mourned in Zion, and revealed (הגיד [hi. נגד], ὑπέδειξεν) what would happen, forever, and the hidden things (נסתרות, τὰ ἀπόκρυφα) before they came to be' (48.24-25). In 1 Enoch, beside evil mysteries (the Book of Watchers) and cosmic mysteries (the *Similitudes*), the divine mysteries of human history come to focus on the eschatological judgement which determines rewards for the righteous and punishment for the evil (103.2; cf. 68.5). As Brown puts it, 'the divine mystery *par excellence* is the final judgement and its aftermath'.¹⁸ In Qumran the mysteries (צִי and סוד) refer not only to the community's interpretation of the Law, but to cosmic mysteries, evil mysteries and mysteries concerning God's plan for the future.¹⁹

What is important for our purpose is that in Jewish apocalypses the Danielic human-like figure was given a significant part in the divine mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and restoration. In the *Similitudes* of Enoch the Son of man is not only a core of the revealed divine mysteries concerning the end time, but also he is

15 Brown, *The Semitic Background*, 8.

16 Brown, *The Semitic Background*, 2-30; cf. Caragounis, *The Ephesian Mysterion*, 20-34.

17 Caragounis, *The Ephesian Mysterion*, 23.

18 Brown, *The Semitic Background*, 16-18.

19 Brown, *The Semitic Background*, 22-30. The mysteries as God's plans for the future of Israel occur in 1QS 11.3-4 and 1QpHab 7.1-5, 8.

depicted as the mystery itself (1 Enoch 38.2; 48.6-7; 62.1, 6f; 69.26-29).²⁰ In 4 Ezra the Danielic Son of man, having a central role to play in the revealed vision of the end-time judgement-warfare and deliverance of Israel (the remnant), is the core of the mystery concerning the end time (7.28; 12.32; 13:25f; 13.26; 13.32). As Bochruehl puts it, 'the Messiah/or Son of man figures prominently in relation to the eschatological mysteries which, though presently concealed, are already existent in heaven and await their imminent manifestation'.²¹

Thus the revelation of the divine mysteries about the end-time judgement, restoration of Israel and re-creation (salvation of the world) lies at the centre of the apocalyptic eschatology.²² Such a vision usually comes at the pinnacle of a series of visions in the apocalypses of a historical or eschatological type. A typical example of this can be found in the Son of Man Vision of 4 Ezra 13 (cf. 1 Enoch 62).

3.3 *The Danielic Human-like Figure in 4 Ezra*

3.3.1 *Introduction*

4 Ezra provides us with a contemporary example of the way in which the Davidic Messiah and the Danielic human-like figure are appropriated in an apocalypse. Written some thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple (cf. 3.1; 12.48),²³ 4 Ezra presents 'a narrative theodicy' to answer the question of the existence of evil and the concurrent suffering of Israel at the hands of the Roman Empire.²⁴ The impending issue for the author²⁵ was 'the desolation of Zion' (Jerusalem) and the prosperity of the Roman Empire (depicted as Babylon) which is domineering and suppressing Israel, the people of God (3.2). The prevalence of evil leads Ezra even to question the justice of God, for He appears to have failed to provide his people with the ability to keep the Law. That inability, he thinks, led to the destruction of Jerusalem

20 Brown, *The Semitic Background*, 18; Bochruehl, *Revelation*, 37-38.

21 Bochruehl, *Revelation and Mystery*, 38.

22 So Kuchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstradition*, 67.

23 See Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 287; Metzger, 'The Fourth Book of Ezra', *OTPs* 1.520.

24 Stone, 'Revealed Things', 420. The phrase 'a narrative theodicy' is taken from T.W. Willet, *Eschatology*, 51-75.

25 Cf. Harnisch, *Verhängnis*, 327 (n4), who regards 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch as witnesses to a Pharisaic apocalypticism. Cf. Grolet, 'Le Messie', 30-31.

and the temple.²⁶ Ezra's call for theodicy is voiced in the context of the covenant, in which he questions why the God-chosen people are dishonoured and scattered among the Gentiles (5.23-30). Ezra's urge has a strong ethnocentric, or nationalistic thrust in that he believes that Israel is the only legitimate heir of the created world (6.55-59).

By the unfolding of the divine mystery in a series of visions, especially those of the heavenly Jerusalem (ch 7) and the eschatological judgement and restoration of Israel (ch 13), the seer's quest for theodicy is answered in that only a small number of righteous Israelites who are faithfully obedient to the Law will inherit the immortal world to come (7.47, 50, 88ff; 8.3), whereas the world in the present order and those who are inheriting it (including sinful Israelites past and present) are to perish because of their iniquity (7.70f, 127f). This unfolding visionary drama of the end time reaches its climax in the revelation of the Man from the sea in ch 13, which provides an eschatological judgement scene involving the redeemer figure who is revealed to destroy the hostile nations and restore Israel and the creation, delivering judgement and salvation.

3.3.2 *The Man from the Sea as the Danielic Son of Man and the Davidic Messiah*

In 4 Ezra 13²⁷ the human-like figure from the sea in the dream vision is portrayed in a manner similar to 'one like son of man' in Dan 7. Here 'something like the figure of a man' who comes up from the sea and flies with the clouds of heaven in a vision (13.3ff) is interpreted as the one whom the Most High has 'been keeping for many ages' to be 'revealed' as a deliverer of the creation and of the remnant (13.25-26, 32). It has been argued that the phrase 'something like the figure of a man' (13.3) may have had 'a son of man' instead of 'a man' in its original Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage*.²⁸ The Latin, due to *homoioteleuton*, lacks the phrase 'that wind brought up out

²⁶ See Stone, 'Reactions', 201.

²⁷ This chapter exhibits the apocalyptic literary pattern: 1) a dream vision (13.1-13a); 2) a request for interpretation of the vision (13.13b-20); 3) the angelic interpretation of vision (13.21-52); 4) commendation for Ezra (13.53-56); 5) ending (13.57-58) (cf. Longenecker, *Eschatology*, 223). 4 Ezra 14.8-9 reflects the theme of the seer's keeping the things in mind (Dan 7.28) after seeing a vision.

²⁸ Caragounis, *The Son of Man*, 127-128. J.J. Collins, 'The Son of Man', 459-460.

of the sea something like the figure of a man',²⁹ and the other versions (i.e., Arabic, Ethiopic, and Armenian) have 'man'. The Syriac version, which is regarded as the closest among the extant versions to the original, has 'yk *dmwt' dbrnsh'* (Syr.), '(one) like the appearance of the son of man'. This suggests that the original may have **בן אדם** in Hebrew or **בר אנש** in Aramaic.³⁰ But this theory faces a difficulty that it is not unusual to find the original 'man (men)' in Hebrew or in Greek translated 'son(s) of man' in later interpretations and translations.³¹ Especially in Syriac the term *brnsh'* is a common idiom for 'a man', or 'a human being', and is used to translate the Hebrew **אדם** (or the Aramaic **אנש**). For this reason, Casey concludes that 4 Ezra 13 does not provide evidence of a Son of man concept in Judaism.³²

However, despite this ambiguity concerning the original reading of the phrase and despite some arguments to the contrary,³³ most scholars accept that the Man (Son of man, literally) from the sea flying with the clouds (4 Ezra 13) alludes to the **כבר נשא** of Dan 7.³⁴ The verbal correspondences between them are impressive:

4 Ezra 13.3 (Syriac)

'yk <i>dmwt' dbrnsh'</i>	one like the figure of Son of man
'q 'nn' <i>dshmy'</i>	with the clouds of heaven

Dan 7.13 (Peshitta) (MT)

'yk <i>br 'nshyn,</i> כבר אנש	one like the Son of man
'l 'nny <i>shmy',</i> עם ענני שמיא	with the clouds of heaven

29 One Latin ms reads '*virum ascendebat de corde maris*'. Cf. Klijn, *Der lateinische Text*, 81.

30 Müller, *Messias*, 107-155.

31 E.g. **באדם** of Ps 68.19 is translated **נשא לבני נשא** in the Targum, *lbny 'nsh'* ('to sons of man') in the Peshitta. Regarding the *dmwt' dbrnsh'* of 4 Ezra 13.3, we agree with Casey, *Son of Man*, 124-125, that the original Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage* must have been **אדם** or **אנש**, not **אדם** or **בן אדם** or **בר אנש**.

32 Casey, *Son of Man*, 125. Cf. N. Perrin, *Rediscovering*, 165, 170-171.

33 E.g. J. Coppens, 'Le Fils d'Homme', 167-173; Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic*, 522-523, who maintains that Dan 7 and 4 Ezra 13 were composed independently on the basis of the Akkadian 'Vision of the Netherworld', which is disputable.

34 Stone, 'The Concept', 301; Bogaert, 'Les Apocalypses', 59; Casey, *Son of Man*, 123; Lacocque, 'The Vision', 237-258; Caragounis, *The Son of Man*, 128; J.J. Collins, 'The Son of Man', 460-464; T.B. Slater, 'One Like a Son of Man', 195-196.

Furthermore, the author's dependence on the Book of Daniel in the near context of 4 Ezra 13 is undeniable: (a) a conspicuous allusion to, or even an interpretation of Dan 7.7 is made in 4 Ezra 12.11 ('The eagle which you saw coming up from the sea is the fourth kingdom which appeared in a vision to your brother Daniel'); (b) the stone cut out without hands (Dan 2.34, 35, 45) is alluded to in 4 Ezra 13.6 ('he [the Man from the sea] carved out for himself a great mountain') which is interpreted as Zion in 13.36 ('And Zion will come and be made manifest to all people, prepared and built, as you saw the mountain carved out without hands'); (c) the wind arising from the sea and stirring up the waves (4 Ezra 13.2) is reminiscent of Dan 7.2 ('the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea'); and (d) in both what is described is a dream vision of a seer (Daniel 7.2; 4 Ezra 13.1). What we have in 4 Ezra 13, therefore, is an elaborate application or reinterpretation of the son-of-man-like figure of Dan 7.³⁵

It is disputed as to which OT passage(s) is alluded to by the depiction of the Man figure as destroying with the fire from his mouth the hostile crowd (i.e. the gentile nations) from upon the Mount Zion (4 Ezra 13.11-12; cf. 33-38). Some see the picture of the Anointed King destroying the hostile nations in Ps 2 behind it.³⁶ But the affinity seems minimal. More plausible is the view that sees a fusion of the like-a-son-of-man figure of Dan 7.13-14 and the Davidic King, the eschatological warrior of Isa 11.4³⁷:

he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

That Isa 11.4 with its context is probably alluded to in 4 Ezra 13.10-11, 27 can be supported by the following reasons. Apart from the conceptual affinity concerning the breath from the mouth destroying enemies, there are some other thematic correspondences between them: (a) the deliverance of the remnant³⁸; (b) Zion, the holy

35 Cf. Müller, *Messias*, 122; Schreiner, *Das 4. Buch Esdra*, 393 n1, who think of a tradition based on Dan 7. In the Syriac version *brns*^ is used elsewhere (4 Ezra 6.1, 10[2x], 39, 46; 7.8, 29, 78, 127; 8.6, 34, 44; 10.14, 54; 11.37; 13.3[2x], 5, 12), referring to humankind in general or some times to Adam representing the entire humankind (e.g., 6.39, 46).

36 J.J. Collins, 'The Son of Man', 462-463. Regarding 7.28, Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 207-208, thinks that it was a secondary and had probably *παῖς* in the Greek and עֶבֶר in the Hebrew.

37 Horbury, 'Messianic Associations', 43-44; Hartman, *Prophecy*, 96; Bietenhard, 'Der Menschensohn', 328. *Contra* Emerton, 'The Origin', 237.

38 Isa 11.11, 16; 4 Ezra 13.26; cf. 13.16, 18, 22.

mountain, being the central focus of the restoration of the creation.³⁹ It has to be noted that in both the returning of the exiles is presented analogously to the exodus (4 Ezra 13.46-47 [cf. 13 43-44]; Isa 11.15-16). Therefore, although its affinity to Ps 2 cannot be denied—if difficult to establish—,⁴⁰ the influence of Isa 11 is primary in 4 Ezra 13.⁴¹ Consequently, due to the interpretative application of Isa 11 and Dan 7⁴², the Man from the sea represents a conflation of the Danielic human-like figure and the Davidic Messiah. Such a combination is also found in 1 Enoch 62.2ff, where the roles attributed to the Davidic Messiah in Isa 11.2-4 are given to the Son of man: 'The Lord of the Spirits (as identified with the Son of Man) has sat down on the throne of his glory, and the spirit of righteousness has been poured upon him (cf. Isa 11.2; 4a, 5a). The word of his mouth do the sinners in; and all the oppressors shall be eliminated from before his face (cf. Isa 11.4cd)'.⁴³

The term Messiah is already used in 4 Ezra for the end-time deliverer of Israel, who is called 'my Son' by the Most High in some versions (7.28, 29; 13.32, 37, 52; 14.9)⁴⁴ and is identified with the Danielic Son of man whose activity is understood judicially. This element of the eschatological judgement along with the universal dominion given to both figures may be the common factor which combined the Davidic Messiah as depicted particularly in Isa 11 and the 'one like a son of man' in Dan 7. This is suggestive for the interpretation of John 12.34 in which it appears that the author depicts the crowd as identifying the Son of man with the (Davidic) Messiah.

3.4 *The Johannine Son of Man as the Danielic Human-like Figure and the Core of the Divine Mysteries*

The Son of man in John 12.20ff and in the Fourth Gospel in general, like the Danielic human-like figure interpreted in the *Similitudes of Enoch* and 4 Ezra, is not

39 Isa 11.6-9; 4 Ezra 13.26, 35-36. Cf. Mich 4.

40 Grelot, 'Le Messie', 30, and others see the influence of both Ps 2 and Isa 11.

41 Cf. PsSol 17.21-24, which, while primarily influenced by Isa 11.2-4, possibly incorporates Ps 2.9 (Davenport, 'The Anointed', 72, 89-90).

42 So Horbury, 'Messianic Associations', 44; Hartman, *Prophecy*, 96.

43 Black, *Enoch*, 189, 235; cf. Theisohn, *Der auserwählte Richter*, 57-63.

44 For the disputed reading of these passages, see Collins, 'Son of God Text', 76-77, who would prefer 'my son' to 'my servant'. Cf. Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 207-209.

only the revealer but also part and parcel of the divine mystery, or the core of the revealed mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and restoration, though an enigmatic sense may be preserved simultaneously due to the term's generic use before it is explicitly identified as the Danielic figure in 5.27. It is characteristic of the Fourth Gospel that the revelation of the Son of man first and foremost is focused on Jesus' crucifixion as the way to his exaltation and glorification, which is completed in the enthronement of the eschatological universal Judge and King-Messiah on his glorious heavenly throne—a thesis we will argue for in this chapter. This is, we contend, programmatically presented in the first Son of man saying in John 1.51.

3.4.1 *John 1.51*

After the confession of Nathanael that Jesus is 'the Son of God, the King of Israel', which are synonymous to the Davidic Messiah (1.49; cf. 2 Sam 7.12ff; Ps 2.7; 89.26-29; 1Chr 17.13-14; 22.10 28.6)⁴⁵, Jesus says to him, 'You (sg.) shall see greater things than these (*μείζω τούτων ὄψῃ*; *Maiora his videbis*: Vulgata)' (1.50). And Jesus further says, 'Truly, truly, I say to you (*ὕμῖν*), you (pl.) will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man' (1.51). The open heaven is characteristic of an apocalyptic vision.⁴⁶ It is evident that the Son of man is the content of that (apocalyptic) vision which the disciples including Nathanael (note the second person plural *ὄψεσθε*) are promised to see. This is further supported by the phrase 'greater things than these', whose apocalyptic connotation has been overlooked. It is used at the end of the first two apocalyptic visions of 4 Ezra (5.13; 6.31), and functions as a pointer to the following apocalyptic vision/s and interpretation/s.⁴⁷ At the end of Vision I the seer was told by Uriel: 'you shall hear yet greater things than these (*audies iterato horum maiora*)' (4 Ezra 5.13). This promise would suggest that the following apocalyptic visions will develop in a intensifying fashion as they unfold.

45 Kim, *The Son of Man*, 84f; de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 113.

46 Mark 1.10//Matt 3.16//Luke 3.21; Acts 7.56; 11.10; Rev 4.1; 2 Baruch 22.1; TLevi 2.6; cf. Ezek 1.1. See Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 78, 359.

47 See Brandenburger, *Die Verborgenheit*, 98. The promise of further revelation without the phrase 'greater things' is found at 4 Ezra 10.59; 12.39; 13.56.

The series of visions as pointed to by the angelic promises of greater revelations culminate in the vision of the end-time judgement and salvation at 4 Ezra 13, in which the Danielic human-like figure coming from the sea (and identified with the Davidic Messiah) adjourns the divine judgement. The Greek Apocalypse of 3 Baruch, despite its later date,⁴⁸ provides another example of this formula. The angel sent by the Lord says to Baruch after his initial proclamation: *καὶ ὑποδείξω σοι ἄλλα μυστήρια τούτων μείζονα* (3 Baruch 1.6; cf. 3.6), and after the vision of the second heaven: *Ἐλθὲ οὖν ὅπως σοι καὶ μείζονα τούτων ἔργα* (5.3). It is evident that by these expressions the subsequent visions are promised by to be shown to the seer by the angel of the Lord. In light of these uses of the formula, the Johannine Jesus' promise of revelations greater than the wonder shown to Nathanael should be understood as pointing to greater (and more detailed) apocalyptic visions⁴⁹, which are programmatically presented in Jesus' promise of the vision concerning the Son of man with the angels ascending and descending on (toward) him (John 1.51). This has some bearings on the Johannine Christology in that the Son of man's vision promised here *redefines* Nathanael's understanding of Jesus as the Davidic King/Messiah, while affirming in a sense the validity of his claim.

Regarding the vexing question as to what the angels are doing here, C. Rowland has put forward a persuasive thesis.⁵⁰ According to Rowland, John 1.51 is in line with the targumic-rabbinic interpretation of Gen 28.12, in which the angels are ascending to heaven to inform their fellow angels of the fact that the image (עִיּוֹן or עִיּוֹן, a loan-word of *εἰκών*) of Jacob, which is engraved or sitting on the throne of glory and which they were forbidden to see, is now manifest in Jacob.⁵¹ Targum Yerushalmi on Gen 28.18, for example, depicts the angels (who have followed Jacob) as ascending into

48 For the dating of 3 Baruch, see H.E. Gaylord, '3 Baruch', *OTP* 1.655-656.

49 The treatment by Loader, *The Christology*, 126ff, 147, 196, of this formula together with the similar ones in the Gospel fails to note this element.

50 Rowland, 'John 1.51', 489-507.

51 TargNeofiti on Gen 28.12 reads: 'the angels who had accompanied him from the house of his father ascended to inform the angels from on high, saying, "Come and see the just man whose image is engraved on the throne of glory and whom you were longing to see". And so the angels of the presence of the Lord were ascending and descending and gazing on him'. See TgJonathan on Gen 28.12; GenR 68.12; bHullin 91b; HekhalothR 9.

heaven to inform their fellow angels, saying: "Come and behold the just man, Jacob, whose image (אִיקוֹן) is engraved in the throne of glory, which you long to look upon". At this the other angels of the Lord descended that they might behold him'.⁵² Rowland proposes to understand the angels' desire to see Jacob against the background of the apocalyptic belief that the divine mysteries are hidden even from angels (e.g. 1 Enoch 14.21), and maintains that what the angels wanted to see in Jacob is closely related to the most important mysteries of the divine Merkabah.⁵³ Read against this interpretative tradition, John 1.51 would mean, concludes Rowland, that 'the promise which Jesus makes to Nathanael concerns a demonstration of the significance of the Son of Man by indicating that he is the one whom the angels in heaven sought to look at as the one who embodied the mystery of God himself'.⁵⁴ This understanding of the Son of man as the content of the divine mystery coheres with the 'one like the son of man' in Dan 7.13f as interpreted in Jewish apocalypses such as 4 Ezra 13 and the *Similitudes* of Enoch, of which we have seen.⁵⁵ The rather late dating of this tradition in the Targums, which Rowland regards as the second century CE at the earliest, may hinder one from taking this view. But Rowland's thesis is supported by the fact that a similar tradition of angels longing to see the mysteries, albeit without the ascent/descent motif, is known to the author of 1 Peter (1.12).⁵⁶

While acknowledging the indebtedness of the Johannine Son of man sayings to the Jewish apocalyptic interpretation of the 'one like son of man' in Dan 7, some interpreters have recently argued that John 1.51 promises a vision of the Son of man with his glory in heaven.⁵⁷ J. Painter for example bases his argument on the two grounds:

52 Cf. the painting of Jacob's Dream at Bethel in Dura Europos Synagogue (c. 245 CE) which would reflect the same interpretation. See Schreckenberg & Schubert, *Historiography and Iconography*, 201-205.

53 Cf. S. Kim, *The Son of Man*, 82-83.

54 Rowland, 'John 1.51', 504.

55 W.O. Walker, Jr. 'John 1.45-51', 38-42, argues, without much warrant, for the Danielic Son of man here and contends that both the divine and human nature is implied by the title.

56 The phrase *εις ἃ ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἄγγελοι πρακῶσαι* (1 Peter 1.12) refers to the end-time salvation and blessings as the heavenly mysteries revealed to the prophets.

57 A.J.B. Higgins, *Jesus*, 159-160; Loader, *The Christology*, 121-122; Painter, *The Quest*, 323-328; de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 160-161. Most recently Ch. Hoegen-Rohls, *Der nachösterliche Johannes*, 59-66, regards this as a promise to a post-Easter understanding of Jesus as the glorified Son of man in heaven.

(i) by the use of the apocalyptic theme of the opened heaven the focus of the scene is heaven not earth; and (ii) the vision envisages angels 'converge from above and below' towards the Son of man in heaven because the pronoun $\epsilon\pi\grave{\iota}$ + the genitive case means not 'upon' (as in Gen 28.12 (LXX) taking the ladder as the modifier of בן in the MT) but 'towards' the Son of man.⁵⁸ Painter further argues that 'this event' of the ascending and descending angels to the Son of man 'is referred to paradoxically in relation to the crucifixion' in the rest of the Gospel (3.14; 6.62; 8.28; 13.31).⁵⁹ Yet our interpretation would render this interpretation not tenable. First, the apocalyptic formula of the opened heaven can be used to put focus on an earthly event as in the Synoptic accounts of the baptism of Jesus (Mark 1.10//Matt 3.16//Luke 3.21-22). Secondly, the ascent/descent scheme used regarding angels as interpreted in targums on Gen 28.12 also would place the Son of man on earth, because he stands in place of Jacob who was on earth being a destination of angels' ascending and descending. The point is that the vision promised at John 1.51 indicates that the Son of man on earth⁶⁰ is the *locus* of revelation⁶¹ concerning the divine mysteries of the end-time judgement and salvation, and that this promise is fulfilled in his ministry that culminates in his crucifixion and resurrection/glorification/return to his original glory, as portrayed in the subsequent narratives.⁶²

If our interpretation is valid, the author of the Gospel implicitly rejects the Jewish apocalyptic idea of heavenly ascent by a human seer.⁶³ In other words, it is suggested that the heavenly mystery is not to be sought in heaven but to be found realised in the person of Jesus on earth. This symbolic interpretation of the vision of angels ascending and descending has a merit of explaining the lack of its literal fulfilment in the rest of the Gospel. In fact, *themes pertaining to the divine mysteries concerning the end-time*

58 Painter, *The Quest*, 326-328.

59 Painter, *The Quest*, 327.

60 Pace Lindars, *Son of Man*, 149f;

61 So also Schnackenburg, *John*, 1.320-321. The popular symbolic interpretation that Jesus as the Son of man, taking the place of the ladder connecting heaven and earth, symbolises the unity between heaven and earth is misplaced.

62 Pace Brown, *John*, 1.88; Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man*, 37-41; Kim, *The Son of Man*, 86; Lindars, *Son of Man*, 149-150; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 28; Carson, *John*, 164-165.

63 Cf. 4 Ezra 4.8, 21. So also de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 162.

judgement and salvation are mentioned by and in fact realised in the Johannine Jesus in the following narratives that culminate in his death and resurrection/glorification/return to the Father, as we shall soon see.

Since one would expect its interpretation after a visionary scene in Jewish apocalyptic literature, the abrupt ending of the vision of 1.51 without any explicit interpretation of it leaves the reader wondering where to find its interpretation—a literary technique of suspense. The future tense of ὄψεσθε suggests that the seeing of that vision of angels is expected to happen in the future within the life-span of Jesus' disciples whose presence with Nathanael is presupposed in the context.⁶⁴ While it is clearly indicated that the revelation of the divine mysteries will be centred upon the Son of man, the reader is expected to perceive the significance of the revelation concerning the Son of man gradually as the narrative proceeds⁶⁵—a progressive development of revelation characteristic of apocalyptic literature.⁶⁶ Thus, the revelation of the Son of man as the core of the divine mystery in John 1.51 provides a programmatic picture of the further development of the Son of man Christology in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel.⁶⁷ The following investigation will reveal that Jesus the Son of man is the locus of revelation in his ministry which culminates in his death and resurrection/ascent.⁶⁸ In other words, the promise concerning a vision of the Son of Man promised in 1.51 not only is realised in Jesus' earthly ministry but also looks forward to his exaltation to heaven by the way of the cross as a climax of his ministry.⁶⁹

3.4.2 John 3.13-15

64 *Contra* Ashton, *Understanding*, 348, who thinks of the implied readers here. The promise of a vision to the disciples places them in the position of an apocalyptic seer, who, as the wise, will publish (testify) the revealed mysteries concerning Jesus when they are given interpretation (15.26-27; cf. 16.13, 25).

65 Cf. Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 188.

66 See Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 29, 32-33. E.g. 4 Ezra 5.13; 6.31 (cf. Stone, *4 Ezra*, 174).

67 See Colpe, *TDNT* 8.468.

68 Loader, *The Christology*, 121, 126, 135, emphasises the death and resurrection/return over against the idea of revelation as the main attributes of the Johannine Son of man. But he does so on the basis of an inadequate separation of the revelation in Jesus' earthly ministry from the events of the cross and the return to the Father.

69 Cf. Painter, 'Tradition and Interpretation', 435.

The second and third Johannine Son of man sayings (John 3.13, 14) takes a decisive step in revealing the fuller content of the mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation. They appear within a strongly apocalyptic context. And yet each Son of man saying, though appearing in succession with a reference to the same figure, viz. Jesus, has distinctive attributes: the first with the ascent/descent motif and the second with the theme of *ἄψωθῆναι*. We will first consider (1) the context leading to the sayings and then treat each saying (2 and 3). In so doing, a comparison with 4 Ezra (esp. chs 4 and 8), we believe, is imperative. We will argue that (i) *Jesus the Son of man is not only the sole authentic revealer of the heavenly mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation, but also that (ii) he constitutes the focus of those mysteries.*

(1) *John 3 and 4 Ezra 4 and 8*

It is generally noted that Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus resembles the dialogues between the seer and the interpreting angel in Jewish apocalypses.⁷⁰ Yet little work has been done in comparing them in detail. In fact, the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus in John 3.12-13 shows intriguing affinities in specific details to the dialogue between the angel Uriel and the seer in 4 Ezra 4.1ff and 8.1-3, which has a special bearing on our study.

The underlying thrust of 4 Ezra 4 is set by the question of theodicy raised by the pseudonymous seer Ezra concerning the subjugation of Israel to the Roman empire after the first Jewish War. Ezra, distressed by the suffering of Israel under Rome symbolised as Babylon, asks, 'Are the deeds of those who inhabit Babylon any better? Is that why she gained dominion over Zion?' (3.28). Ezra's understanding is that, despite

70 E.g. Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 148.

the fact that only Israel, at least individuals among her, have kept the commandments, God has allowed the sinful enemies to prevail. Ezra's question is not met with a direct answer. Instead, Uriel poses the first of the three riddles which he was sent to show:

⁵And he [Uriel] said to me, 'Go, weigh for me the weight of fire, or measure for me a measure of wind, or call back for me the day that is past'.

⁶I answered and said, 'Who of those that have been born can do this, that you ask me concerning these things?'

⁷And he said to me, 'If I had asked you, "How many dwellings are in the heart of the sea, or how many streams are at the source of the deep, or how many streams are above the firmament, or which are the exits of hell, or which are the entrances of Paradise?" ⁸perhaps you would have said to me, "I never went down into the deep, nor as yet into hell, neither did I ever ascend into heaven".

⁹But now I have asked you only about fire and wind and the day, things through which you have passed and without which you cannot exist, and you have given me no answer about them!'

¹⁰And he said to me, 'You cannot understand the things with which you have grown up; ¹¹how then can your mind comprehend the way of the Most High? And how can one who is already worn out by the corrupt world understand incorruption?' (4 Ezra 4.5-11).

Some observations on John 3.1ff are in order in the light of this passage:

- i. It is noteworthy that the riddling questions about the natural phenomena of fire, wind and the day in 4 Ezra 4.5 belong in fact to מְשָׁלִים (*mtlyn/similitudines*: 4.3). This is in accord with the sapiential tradition in which descriptions of natural wonders are called מְשָׁלִים (*παροιμῖαι/παραβολαί*). This type of interrogatives concerning natural phenomena serving to demonstrate that 'humans cannot know the wonders of nature, and *a fortiori* of the heavenly realm' was not only known in wisdom literature (e.g. Job 37.14-39.30; Sira 1.2-3; WisSol 9.16); it also became a hallmark of apocalyptic communication (e.g. 1 Enoch 93.11-14; cf. 2 Baruch 59.5-11).⁷¹ In the latter the eschatological mysteries are expressed by means of metaphors ('similitudes') of the natural and human world, since the natural and human phenomena provide 'likeness' to the heavenly reality.⁷² In a similar manner, the Johannine Jesus' saying about the wonder of wind (John 3.8) explaining

⁷¹ Stone, 'The Way', 135; Knibb, 'Apocalyptic and Wisdom', 65f; Schürer, *The History*, 3.1.243.

⁷² Cf. Suter, 'Mashal', 201-204.

the birth from above, or being born of the Spirit (3.7-8) is a *παροιμία*, though not named expressly (cf. John 16.25).⁷³ Jesus' saying in John 3.7-8 exhibits a pattern of (a) an eschatological reality - (b) a similitude of a natural phenomenon - (a') an eschatological reality. This pattern is strikingly similar to the words of Uriel in 4 Ezra 8.1-3:

John 3.7-8:

- (a) "You must be born from above".
- (b) The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.
- (a') So (*οὕτως*)⁷⁴ it is with every one who is born of the Spirit (John 3.7-8).

4 Ezra 8.1-3:

- (a) The Most High made this world for the sake of many, but the world to come for the sake of few.
- (b) But I will tell you a parable (Syr: *mtl*; Lat: *similitudo*), Ezra. *Just as*, when you ask the earth, it will tell you that it provides very much clay from which earthenware is made, but only a little dust from which gold comes; *so* is the course of the present world.
- (a') Many have been created, but few will be saved.

It is evident from this contrast that the *παροιμία* of Jesus, like the 'similitude' of Uriel, expresses the way of God by assimilating it to an earthly phenomenon.⁷⁵ Both texts are concerned with the eschatological age of blessing to come, i.e. 'the kingdom of God' (John 3.3) and 'the world to come' (4 Ezra 8.1), respectively.

- ii. The reactions of the seer in 4 Ezra 4 and Nicodemus to the similitudes of the natural mystery/ies are also comparable. As Uriel's riddling questions concerning the natural mysteries lead to Ezra's incomprehension (4 Ezra 4.6), so does Jesus' similitude concerning the mystery of wind make Nicodemus puzzled: 'How can these things be?' (John 3.9). The response of Uriel is to point to more difficult questions concerning cosmological mysteries as well as things in hell and heaven so

73 Some of the 'parables' using natural phenomena are not identified as such in 4 Ezra 4.19; 4.48-50; 7.3-9, 52-57.

74 *οὕτως* in John 3.8 is comparable to the 'Just as..., so...' construction of similitudes in 4 Ezra 8.2.

75 Cf. Mark 4.1-33 where the mysteries of the Kingdom of God are expressed by means of *παραβολαί* of earthly, or natural and human, phenomena.

as to accentuate the seer's incomprehension (4 Ezra 4.7-8). Likewise, the Johannine Jesus expresses his surprise to Nicodemus' incomprehension: 'Are you a teacher of Israel⁷⁶, and yet you do not understand these things?' (John 3.10). Furthermore, in both texts the revealer points out a nature of his speech and reiterates the seer's ignorance with a tone of surprise and even condemnation (4 Ezra 4.9; John 3.11).

iii. Intriguing is the resemblance of 4 Ezra 4.10-11 to John 3.12 in form and content:

4 Ezra 4.10-11

'You cannot understand *the things with which you have grown up*;
how then can your mind comprehend *the way of the Most High*?'
 John 3.12

εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε,
 πῶς ἂν εἶπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια πιστεύσετε;

A comparison of these passages will clarify the meaning of the Johannine contrast of τὰ ἐπίγεια and τὰ ἐπουράνια. This contrast (cf. 3.31) corresponds to 4 Ezra's 'the things which you have grown up with' and 'the way of the Most High' (or, 'those things which we daily 'experience' and 'the ways above': 4.23), respectively. As 'the things which you have grown up with' in 4 Ezra 4 refers to the mysteries of fire, wind and the day, so does τὰ ἐπίγεια refer to the παροιμία concerning the wonder of wind (John 3.8). Although the details of 'the way of the Most High' are not clarified in the immediate context of 4 Ezra, they would become clear in the following context that it is concerned with God's justice expressed in the course of salvation history leading up to the end-time judgement and salvation. Likewise, τὰ ἐπουράνια at John 3.12, referring back to the birth from above, i.e. the birth by the Spirit, is concerned with the eschatological mysteries concerning eternal life and judgement, which is linked with God's sending of his Son in his love of the humanity (3.14ff).⁷⁷ Thus the use of τὰ ἐπίγεια and τὰ ἐπουράνια is fitting in the context expressing the heavenly mysteries in similitudes.⁷⁸

76 For the identification of Nicodemus as a historical figure, see R. Bauckham, 'Nicodemus', 1-37.

77 Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 195, links rightly 'the heavenly things' with the death of Jesus.

78 *Contra* Ashton, *Understanding*, 349, who speaks of the 'exceptional difficulty of giving any acceptable reference to the phrase [τὰ ἐπίγεια] in its present context'.

- iv. The fourth point is concerned with the modes of revelation. In 4 Ezra 4, after the seer's failure to understand the first series of riddles, Uriel goes on to teach him by means of parables the incomprehensibility of the way of the Most High (4.13ff). In John 3.14ff, on the other hand, Jesus explains the two main elements of eschatological mysteries (= τὰ ἐπουράνια), viz. 'eternal life' (3.15, 16) and judgement/condemnation (κρίνειν, κρίσις) (3.17, 18, 19).⁷⁹ This is done by means of a simile, another form of παροιμία/לשׁוֹן⁸⁰, concerning Moses' lifting up a bronze serpent (3.14). The implication is that the monologue of Jesus in 3.16ff is not at all foreign to the preceding context in content, but it rather constitutes a further revelation of the heavenly things which has been at issue in the foregoing dialogue.
- v. Most important in understanding the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus is the incompatibility of Ezra's human perspective with 'the way of the Most High'. On the one hand, Ezra concludes that the ultimate responsibility of the destruction of Zion lay with God (3.27), and insists on his right to question, for he believes that the questions of theodicy in the face of Israel's subjugation to a foreign power are susceptible to human investigation (4.22-25). On the other, Uriel points out that the ways of God are beyond human comprehension (4.1-11). This incompatibility between the human perception and the divine plan underlines Vision I of 4 Ezra and beyond.⁸¹ Such incompatibility seems to characterise the Johannine Jesus' revelation in riddling language and the incomprehension and misunderstanding of its recipients.

The revelation of 'the ways of the Most High', i.e. God's hidden plans in salvation history leading from the time of sufferings to the vindication at the end

79 Bauer, *Johannes*, 61; Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 203; Dodd, *The Interpretation*, 308; Grese, 'Heavenly Journey', 689-690, rightly regard John 3.14-21 as relating the revealed content of 'the heavenly things'.

80 Cf. L. Cerfaux, 'Le thème littéraire parabolique', 24. Though not a natural mystery but an account in the OT, John 3.14 is presented in a 'just as..., so...' construction typical of a similitude in 4 Ezra 4.42 (4.47); 8.2.

81 Koch, 'Ezras erste Vision', 59-74; Stone, 'The Way', 133; Longenecker, *Eschatology*, 60-61.

time,⁸² through a series of the apocalyptic visions makes Ezra's perspective change into conformity with God's. The process of this change reaches a dramatic climax in Ezra's conversion-like experience after seeing the vision in which a woman mourning for the loss of her only son was glorified as a heavenly city, i.e. the glorified Zion (4 Ezra 9.29-10.24).⁸³ The entire process of revelatory visions and interpretations is completed in the vision of the end-time judgement and restoration in 4 Ezra 13. After seeing this vision Ezra abandons his own (human) understanding and submits himself to the ways of the Most High, which is equated with his obtaining wisdom (4 Ezra 13.54-55). This process of Ezra's wonders leading to his conversion-like transformation in response to the apocalyptic visions provides an interesting contrast to the characterisation of Nicodemus in John 3. Like the seer in 4 Ezra 4, Nicodemus, despite his initial inability to understand Jesus' revelation, is not met with a mere rejection but is given a further revelation of the heavenly things! The characterisation of Nicodemus here therefore is not negative or ambiguous as some exegetes tend to think.⁸⁴ Rather, it is a more positive one since it depicts him not only as one who came from darkness to the Light (3.1, 21) but as a recipient of the revelation of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation.

- vi. The final point is concerned with the manners of revelation. Like 4 Ezra which rejects implicitly the cosmic, heavenly, and infernal journeys (4.7), John 3 avoids the speculative elements of the heavenly-journey-type apocalypses (and other known heavenly journeys in the ancient world)⁸⁵ in favour of the revelation of the historical, eschatological mystery.⁸⁶

82 Cf. K. Koch, 'Esras erste Vision', 75. Koch (59) takes that the term signifies 'die göttliche Zuwendung zur Menschheit und göttliche Walten in der Welt', while Stone, 'The Way', 134, defines it as 'God's way of conducting the world' in explaining 'God's injustice towards mankind'. Cf. 1QH 7.31-32; 2 Baruch 14.8; 20.4; Rom 11.33; *bBerakot* 3b.

83 So Stone, 'Reactions', 202-204; 'The Way', 140-141; Longenecker, *Eschatology*, 112.

84 Meeks, 'The Man', 148-149; Rensberger, *Overcoming the World*, 38-39; Bassler, 'Mixed Signals', 639-640.

85 W.C. Grese, 'A Heavenly Journey', 677-693. For the prevalence of the theme of heavenly journeys in the ancient world, see A.F. Segal, 'Heavenly Ascent', *ANRW* II.23.2. 1333-94.

86 See Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 81.

This close resemblance between these two texts may not suggest a direct dependence of the one on the other. Rather it indicates that Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus is presented with a strong apocalyptic overtone and was understandable especially to those who were familiar with the Jewish wisdom tradition as appropriated in Ben Sira and apocalyptic literature. Within this apocalyptic context the Son of man sayings in John 3.13, 14-15 must be read.

(2) *John 3.13*

To the misunderstanding Nicodemus, Jesus says: 'If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things (τὰ ἐπουράνια)? No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man (καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκεν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰ μὴ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου)' (3.12-13).⁸⁷ The dialogue of the seer with the angel in 4 Ezra 4.1ff provides a clue for understanding John 3.13, which also follows a similitude. In 4 Ezra 4.8 Uriel anticipates Ezra's response to his riddling questions concerning the cosmic, infernal and heavenly mysteries, by saying 'perhaps you would have said to me, "I never went down into the deep, nor as yet did I ever descend into hell, nor did I ever ascend into heaven, nor did I enter Paradise'. The implication is that the knowledge of the heavenly things is confined to those who have ascended to heaven. Although 4 Ezra 4.11, a passage similar to John 3.12, is not followed by the idea of ascent and descent, it leads to Uriel's claim that the knowledge of the heavenly matters is limited to the heavenly being or beings, which is comparable to John 3.13. In 4 Ezra 4.21 Uriel challenges Ezra's perception by saying, 'For as the land is assigned to the forest and the sea to its waves, so also those who dwell on earth can understand only *what is on earth*, and he⁸⁸ who is above the heavens can understand *what is above the*

87 O. Betz, *Der Paraklet*, 143-144, has aptly observed the similarity between Enoch of 1 Enoch (14; 17ff; 81; 82.1ff) and the Johannine Jesus (John 3.12ff).

88 Its plural form appears in several textual traditions, designating the heavenly beings (Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 87). In Sira 1.2-10 a similar expression is used in reference to God.

height of the heavens'. It is noteworthy that a claim of God's or heavenly beings' exclusive knowledge of the heavenly matters follows the claim of the human inability to perceive them. Likewise, in John 3.13 Jesus' claim of his exclusive knowledge of the heavenly things as the Son of man follows the saying speaking of Nicodemus' inability to perceive the heavenly matters (3.12).

John 3.13 with the ἀναβαίνειν and καταβαίνειν terminology contains a unique claim of the Fourth Gospel in contrast to Jewish apocalypses, 4 Ezra in particular. The combination of these verbs is found in the OT with respect to Moses' ascent to and descent from Sinai (Exod 19) and an enigmatic passage of Prov 30.4. D. Burkett has recently argued that the descent/ascent terminology reflects not so much Moses' ascent to and descent from the mount Sinai but Prov 30.4, which reads, 'Who has ascended to heaven and descended? Who has gathered the wind in his garments? Who has wrapped water in a mantle? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name and what is his son's name? For you know'. The evident answer to these questions is that it is no one but God himself. Burkett holds that John 3.13 answers the first question by identifying Jesus as Ithiel of Prov 30.4 who ascended to heaven and descended to earth.⁸⁹ Yet there is no direct indication that Jesus' ascent to heaven precedes his descent, for it is not directly with the perfect tense of ἀναβαίνειν but with the participial construction in the aorist tense ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς that the Son of man is identified. The emphasis is on the identification of the Son of man as the one who descended from heaven, implying his existence in heaven before descending to earth. Moreover, there is little ground to legitimise Burkett's conclusion that all the Johannine Son of man sayings are based on the 'Son of (the) Man', called Ithiel (אִיתִיאל, meaning 'God is with me'), in Prov 30.4. On the other hand, P. Borgen

⁸⁹ Burkett, *The Son of the Man*, 80-92, whose view is generally followed by Evans, *Word and Glory*, 94-99.

argued that the fourth evangelist posed a case against Jewish interpretations of Moses' ascent to and descent from heaven.⁹⁰ Burkett denies the importance of Moses's ascent and descent in understanding John 3.13.⁹¹ Yet the motif is not confined to Prov 30.4 or Moses at Sinai.⁹² In fact, as Meeks points out, this motif is prominent in the heavenly-journey type apocalypses for a seer's ascent to heaven to see visions of heavens, as well as in the *Merkabah* speculation.⁹³ In view of this, therefore, what is at issue in John 3.13 is that it is not Moses, prophets or seers taken up for a heavenly journey, but Jesus, the Son of man descended from heaven, who is the only authentic revealer of the heavenly mysteries (τὰ ἐπουράνια).⁹⁴ Although the denial of heavenly ascent in a rhetorical question is a common formula in sapiential tradition (Deut 30.12; Prov 30.4; Bar 3.29), its Johannine expression may have a polemical thrust primarily against other Jewish apocalyptic writings, especially those containing heavenly journeys as a means of obtaining divine revelation.⁹⁵ It may be only secondarily that this motif can be understood against various claims of heavenly knowledge in Antiquity.⁹⁶ Borgen conjectures that John 3.13 presupposes the 'pre-existent ascent' of Jesus into

90 Borgen, 'Some Jewish Exegetical Traditions', 243-244. Philo, *Vit. Mos.* 1.158. See also Josephus, *Ant.* 3.5.7; Pseudo-Philo, *LAB* 12.1; NumR 12.11; *mPs* 24.5; 106.2. Cf. one of R. Akiba's disciples is reported to have opposed this view (Mek. Yitro Bahodesh 4.217). See also Meeks, *The Prophet-King*, 297, 301, who, while pointing to the Moses tradition, opts for the Gnostic connection of the descent/ascent terminology in John 3.13. One of the oldest interpretations of the Sinai event is preserved in 'The Exodus' by Ezekiel the Tragic Poet (the mid-third century BCE) preserved by Eusebius' (*Praep. ev.* ix.29) and Clement of Alexandria's (*Strom.* 1.23) excerpts, where Moses in his dream sees a *Merkabah* vision of God who enthrones him as his viceregent, judge and ruler. See van der Horst, 'Moses' Throne Vision', 21-29; in general, cf. Schürer, *The History*, 3.1.563-566.

91 Burkett, *The Son of the Man*, 80-81. Pace Evans, *Word and Glory*, 97.

92 NumR 12.11, which applies the motif to Elias. See Borgen, 'The Son of Man-Saying', 119 n29. Either of these verbs, though not necessarily in combination, is used for God in the OT; God's ascent: e.g. Gen 17.22; 35.13; Ps 47.5; 68.18; his descent: e.g. Gen 11.5, 7; Exod 3.8; 19.11, 18, 20; Neh 9.13; 2 Sam 22.10; Ps 144.5; Isa 31.41; 64.1, 3; Mica 1.3. See Burkett, *The Son of the Man*, 66 n1.

93 Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 147, following Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel*, 72, 89, and Bultmann, *John*, 150 n1.

94 Pace Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 196. Contra Burkett, *The Son of the Man*, 81.

95 Blank, *Krisis*, 77; Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man*, 54f; Dunn, 'Let John be John', 322-325.

96 Grese, 'A Heavenly Journey', 677-684.

heaven for the 'installation in office' as in Dan 7.13f.⁹⁷ But the author does not seem to be interested in such a 'previous ascent' of Jesus into heaven, since his primary concern was to deny other possible Jewish visionaries' ascension to heaven. This, of course, does not preclude the future ascent of Jesus presupposed by this passage. Indeed, Jesus' ascent in the Fourth Gospel is associated with his enthronement in heaven as the Danielic Son of man/the Davidic Messiah, eschatological Judge and universal King, as we shall see later. Meeks and others connect the ἀναβαίνειν of the Son of man with his ὑψωθῆναι in the manner of the bronze serpent of Moses.⁹⁸ This provides a more persuasive reading in view of the (descent and) ascent motif associated with the Johannine Son of man in 6.62.

As far as John 3.13 is concerned, therefore, we would concur with Bultmann who insisted that the Johannine Jesus reveals himself as the Revealer.⁹⁹ The above exegesis in view of 4 Ezra suggests that the main thrust of this passage is to claim, based on his pre-existence in heaven and descent, that Jesus the Son of man is the sole authentic revealer¹⁰⁰ of the eschatological, heavenly mysteries. Indeed, John 3.14f, connected by the exegetical καί with 3.13 which also starts with καί in the same use,¹⁰¹ introduces what Bultmann dared not to look at, i.e. the 'Was', or the content of the revelation, i.e. τὰ ἐπουράνια, meaning the heavenly mysteries (concerning the end-time salvation and judgement)! This content far exceeds the claim that Jesus reveals that he is sent by God.

(3) John 3.14-15

In response to Nicodemus' question 'How can these things (the birth from above [ἄνωθεν]) happen?' (3.9), Jesus reveals *via* 3.13 a further content of τὰ ἐπουράνια in

97 Borgen, 'The Son of Man-Saying', 103-120.

98 Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 155-156; de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 103, 162.

99 So also Moloney, *Son of Man*, 53.

100 So also de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 162.

101 See BGDF 442, which renders it 'as so'. Cf. Nicholson, *Death as Departure*, 91.

3.14-15¹⁰²: 'And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (Num 21.4-9), so must (*δεῖ*) the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life' (3.14-15; cf. 8.28). The use of Moses' bronze serpent to describe salvation is appropriate, since it was interpreted as a symbol of salvation (*σύμβολον σωτηρίας*) from the wrath of God in WisSol 16.6. This salvation is presented as a revelation of the heavenly mysteries, for these verses fit in form and content with the apocalyptic motif of the revelation of the eschatological mysteries: (1) The *καθὼς-οὕτως* ('as-so') construction, though not concerned with a natural phenomenon, is typical of a *παροιμία*, a simile, in explicating the heavenly matters in earthly terms (cf. 4 Ezra 8.2). (2) That the content of these passages is related to the apocalyptic theme of revelation of the eschatological mysteries is made clear by the reference to the judgement (*κρίνειν*) and the promise of eternal life— both are important elements of the mysteries of the end time in Jewish apocalypses.¹⁰³ (3) The *δεῖ* indicates the divine necessity of his lifting up in its eschatological sense,¹⁰⁴ pointing forward to the future event in the earthly life of Jesus. It can be concluded therefore that *the revealed mysteries of the end-time judgement and salvation are focused on the ὑψωθῆναι of the Son of man*, which is later clarified as the manner of Jesus' death, viz. the crucifixion (12.32-33).

It is argued that *ὑψωθῆναι* has a double meaning designating not only crucifixion but also exaltation.¹⁰⁵ That verb, applied here to the bronze serpent, is not used in Num 21.4ff (LXX), and therefore exhibits the deliberate nature of its use by the author. When applied to a person, *ὑψοῦν* is used frequently for the exaltation of a king

102 Cf. Barrett, *John*, 213; Lindars, *John*, 158, who regards 3.15 as speaking of the purpose of the accessibility of the heavenly knowledge.

103 See Blank, *Krisis*, 89ff.

104 Grundmann, *TDNT* 2.23-24; Kohler, *Kreuz und Menschwerdung*, 253. Grundmann (23) points to Dan 2.28 (LXX) as an example of its apocalyptic, eschatological use. In the NT *δεῖ* in its eschatological sense is used not only in apocalyptic sections (Rev 1.1; 4.1; 22.6; Matt 24.6ff par; Mark 13.10) but also in depicting the suffering and resurrection of Jesus (e.g. Matt 16.21 par).

105 E.g. Wead, *The Literary Devices*, 34-36; Duke, *Irony*, 113-114; Kohler, *Kreuz und Menschwerdung*, 253-254. G. Kittel, 'הָרָקַע', 282-285, argued that the verb is a deliberate rendering of the Aramaic הָרָקַע which can have a double meaning of 'to lift up' and 'to crucify'. Although such a pun would not have been intelligible to the non-Aramaic speaking audience, a more or less similar effect may be achieved even before it reaches the unambiguous explication of its meaning at John 12.33.

(e.g. 1 Macc 1.3; 8.13; 11.16). Furthermore, a pun of the verb 'to exalt' for 'to crucify' was in use in near-contemporary Greek literature.¹⁰⁶ Thus we would concur with Lindars who remarks that the lifting-up of the Son of man, which is interpreted as designating the manner of his death (John 12.33), 'refers to the human death of Jesus, which is the earthly point of revelation of his divine glory'.¹⁰⁷ Noteworthy in John 3.15 is that 'eternal life', viz. a reward for the righteous sufferers¹⁰⁸ (and the people of God in general) in the age to come in Jewish martyr theology and apocalyptic eschatology, is promised to 'whosoever believes in him'¹⁰⁹ ($\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma \delta\ \pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega\nu \acute{\epsilon}\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\hat{\omega}$), the Son of man (3.15). As we have noted, both 'the kingdom of God' and 'eternal life' (John 3.3, 7-8, 15) and 'the world to come' and salvation (4 Ezra 8.1-3) are concerned with the eschatological age of blessing. This would reflect the significant Jewish (and Christian) question of the day as to who constitute the real covenant people of God and on what basis. While the later vision of 4 Ezra 13 makes it clear that those who are adherent to the Law, either in Palestine or in Diaspora, will be saved, the Johannine vision given in John 3.14f places the promise of 'eternal life' in conjunction with the lifting-up of the Son of man and faith in him. If so, the lifting up of the Son of man introduces a new phase of salvation history in which faith in Jesus, instead of adherence to the Law as in 4 Ezra, is the new criterion for the covenant people of God ('wrought

106 Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 171 n63, refers to Artemidorus, *Oneirokritikon*, 2.53; Ps.-Callisthenes, *Life of Alexander*, 2.21.

107 Lindars, *John (NTStudies)*, 84.

108 Tacitus, *The Histories*, 5.6, reports that Jews 'think that eternal life is granted to those who die in battle or execution'.

109 Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 204, maintains that $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\hat{\omega}$ be read with $\acute{\epsilon}\chi\eta$ (cf. 5.39; 16.33), and that the meaning be 'that every one who believes shall in him [the Son of man]...have eternal life'. So also *BGDF* 187; Stimpfle, *Blinde Sehen*, 7-9. It is true that the absolute use of $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega\nu \acute{\epsilon}\nu$ + dat. is not uncommon in the Gospel (e.g. 1.50; 6.47; Stimpfle, *Blinde Sehen*, 8 n5), and that a similar use appears in John 5.39 ($\text{\textit{ὅτι ὑμεῖς δοκεῖτε ἐν αὐτοῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔχειν}}$; cf. 16.33; 20.31). But there is a strong case for reading $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\hat{\omega}$ with $\delta\ \pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega\nu$ in John 3.15: (a) Though used nowhere else in the Gospel and only twice in the whole NT (Mark 1.15), the idiomatic use of $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega\nu \acute{\epsilon}\nu$ + dat. is well attested in the LXX (Ps 77.22; 105.12, 24; Sira 35.21, 23; Jer 12.6. See Turner, *Syntax*, 338. (b) More importantly, the synonymous parallel between 3.15 ($\text{\textit{ὅρα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον}}$) and 3.16c ($\text{\textit{ὅρα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόλληται ἀλλ' ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον}}$) makes any other reading dubious. Because of the tendency for $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ to overlap in meaning in the NT time (Moule, *Idiom Book*, 69, 75, 80-81; *BGDF* 205, 206), the $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega\nu \acute{\epsilon}\nu$ and $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega\nu \epsilon\iota\varsigma$ must have been considered as a parallel by the first-century reader. (c) Furthermore, John 3.36 ($\text{\textit{ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον}}$ [= 6.40] would support our reading (cf. 5.24; 6.47).

by God') who inherit the age to come and the eschatological blessing of eternal life. Disbelief in Jesus in place of rejection of the way of the Law is now regarded as pertaining to judgement/condemnation.

(4) *Conclusion*

Although its allusion to the 'one like son of man' of Dan 7.13f might not be decisive (perhaps apart from the reference to the judgement), the Son of man John 3.13-15 is surrounded by typically apocalyptic characteristics: (i) That he is the sole authentic revealer who also replaces the interpreting angel is expressed in the form similar to the revelatory dialogue between the seer and the interpreting angel in 4 Ezra 4. (ii) Occupying a central place in the revelation of the heavenly mysteries concerning the end-time salvation and judgement, the Johannine Son of man here conforms to the interpretative tradition concerning the Danielic human-like figure as developed as part of the eschatological judgement scenes in the contemporary Jewish apocalypses. Nevertheless, it must be noted that although the view that the Son of man is the exclusively authentic revealer is not unknown in those apocalypses,¹¹⁰ the Johannine Jesus claims such an authority to himself (3.12-13) and thus embodies in himself the interpreting angel and even more the divine Logos/Wisdom, the only Son who was at the heart of God (1.1f, 18). In this revelation of the Son of man, it has to be stressed, his death is suggested, albeit in a subtle and suggestive way, by *ὑψωθήναι*.¹¹¹ The promise of eschatological blessing of eternal life, viz. the kingdom of God, hinges on belief or disbelief in Jesus as the Son of man crucified and exalted (3.15), while it is based on God's love for the world in handing over his own Son (3.16).

Therefore, the primary message of the dialogue with Nicodemus is not that Jesus was incomprehensible to him through and through,¹¹² but that the heavenly mysteries concerning the kingdom of God were revealed to him as an apocalyptic seer despite his

110 See 1 Enoch 51.3 in which 'the Elect One', identified with the Danielic human-like figure elsewhere, is assigned the function of the revealer of the mysteries. Also see 1 Enoch 46.3.

111 Cf. Ashton, *Understanding* 493.

112 Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 148ff, and others.

initial incomprehension, and that their interpretation is provided by the authentic divine Revealer, Jesus the Son of man. The divine mysteries of the end time are revealed to Nicodemus in the sense in which entering the Kingdom of God, viz. obtaining eternal life, means being born from above, or from water and the Spirit (John 3.5-6; cf. Ezek 36.25-27), all of which is linked with faith in the Son of man the one lifted-up.¹¹³ If this reading is correct, Nicodemus is to be understood not as a representative of but as an exception to the negatively assessed Jews (John 2.23-25), to whom Jesus, despite their belief due to the signs, did not 'entrust himself'.¹¹⁴

3.4.3 *John 5.27-29*

Thus far in the Fourth Gospel, the Son of man is depicted as not only the authentic revealer but also part and parcel of the revealed vision of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation. It is at John 5.27-29 that it becomes undoubtedly clear that the Son of man alludes to the 'one like son of man' in Dan 7.13ff.¹¹⁵ Over against the opposing arguments, the allusion to the Danielic human-like figure is strongly indicated for some convincing reasons:

- (i) The commonly held view that the anarthrous use of the term accords with its use in the LXX and the Theodotion of Dan 7.13 is not by itself sufficient. M. Casey argues that the anarthrous 'son of man' here is used as the Semitic idiom in a generic sense, meaning 'a man' or 'a human being' and as such has nothing to do with the human-like figure in Dan 7.¹¹⁶ Casey finds a parallel in TAb 13.3, which speaks of God delegating the function of judgement to Abel by saying: 'I will not judge you, but every man should be judged by a man'. A generic sense of the

113 Meeks' emphasis ('The Man from Heaven', 153-154) that the secret message of Jesus is virtually reduced to the pattern of descent and ascent pertaining to his relationship to God is one-sided.

114 *Contra* Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 149.

115 So Schulz, *Untersuchungen*, 111-114; van Hartingsveld, *Die Eschatologie*, 28ff; Colpe, *TDNT* 8.464; Reim, *Hintergrund*, 253; Moloney, *Son of Man*, 81-82; Lindars, *Jesus the Son of Man*, 153-154; *John*, 225-226; Painter, *Quest*, 321-323; Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 190. *Contra* M. Müller, *Der Ausdruck*, 144-146; R. Rhea, *The Johannine Son of Man*, 32-39.

116 Casey, *Son of Man*, 198-199; so also Burkett, *The Son of the Man*, 44-45. Yet Casey seems to have withdrawn his earlier view ('Idiom', 180).

term, however, makes little sense in the context of John 5.27. Since the judgement is coloured with eschatological overtones and is given a universal or cosmic significance in the Gospel, it is too specific to be a judgement in the ordinary sense as Casey suggests. If the judgement had been given to Jesus because he was a man, it could have been given to anyone else; why the need to mention Jesus here? Rather, the anarthrous 'son of man' is due to the syntactical construction with the predicate placed at the beginning in the *ὅτι* clause for emphasis (cf. 1.1c).¹¹⁷ As its proper translation 'because he is *that* son of man', the phrase seems to point to a well-known figure to the (implied) reader.¹¹⁸

(ii) The immediate context resounds a strong Danielic overtone:

(a) God's giving Jesus 'authority to judge' resembles the judicial function of the 'like the son of man' figure of Dan 7.14 (LXX: *καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία*). In fact, *ἐξουσίαν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κρίσιν ποιεῖν* could be an interpretative combination of the Danielic phrases *ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία* (LXX: Dan 7.14) and *τὴν κρίσιν ἔδωκεν...* (LXX: Dan 7.22; cf. Theod. *κρίμα*). The connection would be further supported by John 5.22 where it is said that *οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ πατήρ κρίνει οὐδένα, ἀλλὰ τὴν κρίσιν πάντων ἔδωκεν τῷ υἱῷ*, the latter half of which reflects the language of Dan 7.22. Some would reject such a connection, by arguing that the human-like figure in Dan 7 is not depicted as judge.¹¹⁹ Against this, it should be stressed that John 5.27 agrees with its contemporary Jewish interpretation of the Danielic figure. The concept of a figure other than Yahweh presiding the heavenly tribunal is already known in the Second Temple Judaism.¹²⁰ Particularly John 5.22 and 27 show close affinity to 1 Enoch 69.27 (some MSS) where it is stated that 'the whole judgement was given to the Son of Man', referring to the Danielic figure.¹²¹

117 The absence of the article before *ἀνθρώπου* has parallel cases in which *νίδος θεοῦ* is used as a predicate (John 19.7; cf. 5.26). See de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 151.

118 See Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man*, 154.

119 E.g. Casey, *Son of Man*, 198-199; Burkett, *The Son of the Man*, 43.

120 E.g. Melchizedek in 4QMelch14.18; 11QMelch 1.9.

121 So Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.107. See also 1 Enoch 55.4; 62.2-13, etc.

(b) The reference to the general resurrection, the righteous among them into life (*εἰς ἀνάστασιν ζωῆς*) and the wicked into condemnation (*εἰς ἀνάστασιν κρίσεως*) at John 5.28-29 seems to reflect the clearest OT reference to resurrection in Dan 12.2.¹²² In Jewish apocalyptic literature the theme of resurrection of which Dan 12.2 is the *Vorlage* is frequently associated with the judgement scene reminiscent of Dan 7. For instance, in the apocalyptic vision of the eschatological judgement in 1 Enoch 51.1-3 the resurrection happens when the Elect One identified as the Son of man of Dan 7 comes (cf. 2 Baruch 30.1-5; 39.1-7).

Thus Jesus, identified here as the Son of man the eschatological judge, is in line with the Danielic figure as interpreted in the *Similitudes of Enoch* and 4 Ezra.¹²³ The uniqueness of the Fourth Gospel is that while the Son of man is expected to come in the future to condemn hostile rulers or nations in the *Similitudes* and 4 Ezra, he, with whom the Johannine Jesus identifies himself, is already (from the perspective of the author) revealed, particularly in connection with his *ὑψωθῆναι* (John 3.14), i.e. the crucifixion (John 12.32, 33).

As to the question of the eschatology expressed here a brief comment may suffice. Because of its apparent reference to the future general resurrection for either judgement or eternal life, many exegetes including Bultmann regard this as inconsistent with the Gospel's emphasis on realised eschatology. In fact, what is set out in John 5.26-29 seems to be described as being realised in the resurrection of Lazarus, who, having heard Jesus' voice while in the tomb, comes forth for life.¹²⁴ Yet Lazarus' resurrection falls short of the general resurrection suggested in John 5.26ff. Consequently, we may conclude that the end-time resurrection is inaugurated by Jesus in his raising of Lazarus, but its coming in its full sense lies still in the future, even beyond the resurrection of Jesus himself.

122 Schulz, *Untersuchungen*, 113; Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man*, 154; de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 152. For the expression *εἰς ἀνάστασιν ζωῆν* see 2 Macc 7.14. Cf. John 11.25.

123 So also Moloney, *Johannine Son of Man*, 79-86; Lindars, *Son of Man*, 153-155; D.C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 116-117.

124 See Reinhartz, 'Jesus as Prophet', 8-9.

3.4.4 *John 6.27, 53, 58, 62*

Although this complex chapter deserves a separate treatment, some brief comments would suffice here. In this Johannine version of the miracle of feeding of thousands, the eschatological blessing of eternal life is presented in conjunction with the Jewish Manna tradition and the Son of man sayings. That the revelation of the Son of man is associated closely with his death becomes clearer in John 6. As in John 3.14-15, in 6.27 and 53f Jesus as the Son of man is associated with eternal life—a popular theme in apocalyptic writings describing the end-time reward for the righteous; here Jesus is the giver of the food for eternal life. To work for the food for eternal life which the Son of man gives is to believe in the one whom God has sent (6.29).¹²⁵ To eat the flesh and to drink the blood of the Son of man presupposes his death in a sacrificial sense (6.53; cf. Mark 10.45).¹²⁶ Moreover, the eating and drinking is identified as a covenant renewal ceremony, which presupposes Jesus' death in giving his flesh for (ὑπέρ) the life of the world (6.51c), an expression whose meaning is disputed as to whether or not it refers to a vicarious atonement.¹²⁷ Another frequently asked question as to whether or not these passages should be understood eucharistically is beyond our scope here.¹²⁸ Finally, regarding the γογγυσμός of the many of the disciples Jesus says, 'Then what if you were to see the Son of man ascending to where he was before?' (6.62). This would signify the return of the Son of man, the heavenly judge as in Jewish apocalyptic interpretation of the human-like figure of Dan 7.13f, to the heavenly realm in which he sits as universal judge. The phrase ἀναβαίνειν ὅπου ἦν τὸ πρότερον implies, as John 3.13 does, not only the prior descent of the Son of man from heaven but also his pre-existence in heaven (cf. 1.18).¹²⁹ This is further supported,

125 See Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 152.

126 Cf. Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man*, 152. For a metaphorical interpretation of this passage as a reference to martyrdom associated with discipleship, see de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 229-231.

127 A positive view is recently taken by Knöppler, *Die theologia crucis*, 201-203, and a negative one by de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 232-235.

128 For recent treatments of this, see e.g. Menken, 'John 6,51c-58', 1-26; de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 226-228.

129 So also Painter, *The Quest*, 331.

since in the context of John 6 *καταβάνειν* is frequently applied to Jesus as the Bread descended from heaven (6.33, 38, 41, 50, 58), which is a counterpart of the ascending Son of man.¹³⁰

3.4.5 *John 8.28*

In John 8.28 the Son of man is linked with *ὑψοῦν*, as in 3.14. The use of the active voice of the verb with the Jews as its subject indicates their direct involvement in the lifting up of the Son of man. The apocalyptic tendency may be minimal in this saying itself. Yet the apocalyptic associations of the Son of man already gained in the earlier Son of man sayings cannot be diminished. Furthermore, it occurs within the context in which the apocalyptic application of the sapiential motif of seek and not find is made with respect to Jesus' departure from the unbelieving Jews (8.21ff). Of considerable significance is that it is at his crucifixion/exaltation that a recognition (*γνώσθητε*) of the identity of Jesus as *ἐγώ εἰμι*, אֲנִי הוּא, will be made.

Soon after this statement Jesus remarks: 'I do nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me, those things I speak. And he who sent me (*ὁ πέμψας με*) is with me. He has not left me alone, because I always do who is pleasing to him' (8.28-29). Thus, the Son of man is closely linked with the Father-Son relationship with the envoy theme. In this manner, the lifting up of the Son of man, which is explicated as showing the manner of his death, i.e. crucifixion, in 12.33, is linked with the commission by the Father.

3.4.6 *John 9.35ff*

The Johannine Jesus, who identifies himself as the Son of man here,¹³¹ is associated with three themes characteristic of the 'one like the son of man' of Dan 7.13-14 as interpreted in Jewish apocalypses: (i) two-level judicial procedure; (ii) revelation; and (iii) faith and worship. As J. Blank has rightly demonstrated, the key motif of the narrative of John 9 is the combination of revelation and judgement in the sense that in and

¹³⁰ de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 159.

¹³¹ For this identification and the self-revelation formula at 9.37, see part III.

through the revelatory sign of Jesus the *κρίσις* is introduced.¹³² For this reason, the themes of revelation and judgement take prominence in our treatment, while the third element shares a peculiar tendency of the Danielic figure as interpreted in the *Similitudes* of Enoch.

i. *Two-level judicial procedure* John 9 exhibits the narrative artistry of the seven scenes of a judicial process concentrically arranged.¹³³ This judicial process exhibits a two-level judgement analogous to that of Dan 7, the proto-type of the eschatological judgement scenes of 4 Ezra 12-13, 2 Baruch 40 and 1 Enoch 62 (cf. Rev 12-13). In Dan 7 the case of the earthly oppression of the people of Israel by gentile kingdoms symbolised by the four beasts is decided in the heavenly assembly. The human-like figure as divine judge presides over the heavenly tribunal along with 'the holy ones'¹³⁴ (Dan 7.13-14, 22), while those who are under oppression and/or persecution ('the people of the holy ones') are rewarded with kingdom and judgement (Dan 7.27).¹³⁵ In a like manner, the judicial procedure¹³⁶ of John 9 has two mutually conflicting levels. It begins as his neighbours and those who have previously seen the formerly blind man as a beggar find a case against him (vv 8-12). Presumably because the healing was done on the Sabbath (9.14), they brought him to the Pharisees to further examine the case (9.13).¹³⁷ The Pharisees in turn begin their trial on the former blind man, first by interrogating the man himself (vv 13-17), secondly by calling his parents to testify (vv 18-23), and thirdly by calling and questioning the man again (vv 24-34). Their verdict on the man was to regard him as a born sinner because of his claim that Jesus comes from God, and to cast him out of the synagogue (v 34, cf. v 22 ἀποσυνάγωγος γίνεσθαι).¹³⁸ On the other hand, this trial by 'the Jews' is concerned not merely with

132 Blank, *Krisis*, 252-263.

133 See e.g. J.W. Holleran, 'Seeing the Light, I', 5-26: a: John 7.1-7; b: 8-12; c: 13-17; d: 18-23; c': 24-34; b': 35-38; a': 39-41.

134 They are generally taken to be angels. See Collins, *Daniel*, 313-319. In a certain strand of early Jewish interpretation, they represent the righteous, vindicated in heaven (3 Macc 6.9; 1 Enoch 47.2).

135 See Collins, *Daniel*, 274-324.

136 Cf. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 354-358; Vander Hock, 'The Function of Psalm 82', 217-222.

137 Martyn, *History and Theology*, 31.

138 Whether ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἐξῶ means 'they excommunicated him' or not is disputed. Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.252, aptly observes that 'ἐκβάλλειν reinforced by ἐξῶ, is a powerful word (cf. 6.37; 12.31) and is probably deliberately used with a double meaning', the actual casting out of the man and his excommunication. Cf. Schneider, *Johannes*, 194.

the healed blind man; it becomes clear that the trial was aimed at Jesus who is judged *in absentia*.¹³⁹ It was according to the Torah on the basis of which 'the Jews' judged Jesus as a sinner (v 24, cf. v 16) since he healed the man born blind on a Sabbath day. It is due to this very understanding that 'the Jews' rejected the claims of the man that Jesus is from God, and drew a verdict and cast him out (of synagogue) (v 34). The Jews' self-boasting as 'disciples of Moses' (v 28) is depicted as having led them ironically to the false judgement of the evidence regarding Jesus' identity. However, John 9 as a narrative irony reveals a deeper (or higher) level of meaning concerning the trial. The trial does not end with the excommunication of the blind, but it finally reveals that Jesus is the real judge of the entire lawsuit. In the higher, heavenly level of the lawsuit the ultimate verdict is delivered by Jesus the Son of man. By claiming that his mission is for judgement (9.39: εἰς κρίμα ἐγὼ εἰς τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον ἦλθον), he delivers a divine verdict on the unbelieving Pharisees: ἡ ἀμαρτία ὑμῶν μένει (9.41). A profound irony is that the real judge is not 'the Jews' who are apparently judging, but Jesus the Son of man who appears to be judged along with the once blind man. In this way, the verdict delivered by 'the Jews', the earthly judges, that both Jesus and the man were sinners are now completely reversed by the Son of man, the divine, universal judge (9.41).

Thus, not only the references to ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου and κρίμα¹⁴⁰ but also the two-level judgement scene strongly points to an appropriation of the human-like figure of Dan 7 as interpreted in 4 Ezra and the *Similitudes*, since the judicial function of the Danielic figure has been granted to Jesus already in John 5.27.¹⁴¹ Though not explicit,

139 See Dodd, *Interpretation*, 357; Duke, *Irony*, 126.

140 That John 5.27 has κρίσις not κρίμα causes little problem, because they are synonymous in the Fourth Gospel. See BAGD 451. κρίσις and κρίμα are used for כִּרְיָה at Dan 7.22 in the LXX and the Theodotion respectively.

141 Ashton, *Understanding*, 363. S.S. Smalley, 'The Johannine Son of Man', 295-296, dismisses the connection of the Son of man with judgement here. Yet, 9.39 should be read in close relation to the preceding Son of man saying:

(i) The text of 9.38, 39a is authentic. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 229, thinks that the omission of these verses by some manuscripts (P⁷⁵ κ* W it^b, (1) cop^{ach}) were made 'in the interest of unifying Jesus' teaching in verses 37 and 39'.

(ii) The formula introducing Jesus' words in 9.39 (καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ...) is cohesive with the foregoing dialogue.

35 Ἦκουσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς...καὶ...εἶπεν·

36 ἀπεκρίθη ἐκεῖνος εἰπεν·

37 εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς·

38 ὁ δὲ ἐφῆ·

Jesus as depicted in John 9.35ff seems to be portrays not only as judge of the heavenly judgement but as advocate acting for the formerly blind man who is persecuted by the Jewish authority.¹⁴²

ii. *Revelation* In reply to the cured man's question who the Son of man is, Jesus identifies himself as such: 'You have seen him and it is he who speaks to you' (*καὶ ἐώρακας αὐτὸν καὶ ὁ λαλῶν μετὰ σοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἐστίν*, 9.37). *ὁρᾶν* and *λαλοῦν* are the characteristically Johannine terminology for revelation. Moloney summarises the concept of revelation related to these verbs in the Fourth Gospel: 'It is impossible for any human being to *see* God (1.18; 5.37), but Jesus reveals what he has *seen* (3.11; 3.32; 8.38). He *speaks* what he has *seen with his Father* (8.38; 6.46; 14.7; 14.9). Those who believe in Jesus, will *see* (1.50-51; 11.47; 16.16-22), while those who *refuse to see* are condemned (3.36; 5.37-38; 6.36; 15.24).'¹⁴³ At a first glance, *λαλοῦν* in 9.37 does not seem to have a strong revelatory connotation. But its combination with *ὁρᾶν* has already appeared in Jesus' revelatory statement at 3.11: ὁ οἶδαμεν λαλοῦμεν καὶ ὁ ἐώρακάμεν μαρτυροῦμεν. Its association with *ἐγὼ εἰμι*—a definitive revelation formula—in the similar self-revelation of Jesus at 4.26 (*ἐγὼ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι*) suggests that the verb in 9.37 retain a similar revelatory connotation. More strikingly, although it is not always noted, in contrast to God's revelation to Moses (9.29) Jesus' self-revelation to the formerly blind beggar (9.37) brings out a vivid scene of theophany. In their claim to be the disciples of Moses, the Pharisees refer to the Sinaitic revelatory event (Exod 34-35) in which God spoke to his servant Moses (*Μωυσεῖ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός*: John 9.29).¹⁴⁴ In stark contrast to God's speaking to Moses, Jesus reveals him-

³⁹ καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς:

(iii) The judgement regarding sight and blindness is in line with the main theme of the present narrative as a whole. The *ἐγὼ* of Jesus who has come for judgement is to be identified with 'the Son of man', since the connection between judgement and the Son of man is eminent in the Gospel (3.14ff.; 5.27; 8.25-28; 12.31-35). See Maddox, 'The Function', 199; Lindars, 'The Son of Man', 55; *John*, 351; Brown, *John*, 1.370-371; Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.253; Moloney, *Son of Man*, 153.

¹⁴² Cf. Luke 6.22f; 18.1-8, in which the Son of man seems to act as advocate in the heavenly court as well as judge in the eschatological judgement. See Yarbrow Collins, 'The Influence of Daniel', 99-100.

¹⁴³ Moloney, *Son of Man*, 154-155. See also Holleran, 'Seeing the Light. II', 379 n228. It is conjectured that the personal and/or existential nature of the encounter with Jesus is emphasised by *ὁρᾶν* (W. Michaelis, 'ὁρᾶν κτλ', *TDNT*, 5.361-364).

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Exod 20.19, where the Israelites say to Moses: καὶ μὴ λαλείτω πρὸς ὑμᾶς ὁ θεός, μήποτε ἀποθάνωμεν, implying that God spoke only to Moses, the mediator to the people (Exod 19.21ff).

self as the Son of man, using the same verb: ὁ λαλῶν μετὰ σοῦ ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν. Although it is not promulgated by the Pharisees in their claim of Moses' discipleship, Moses' seeing God is part and parcel of the Sinai tradition in the tannaitic period. In this connection, the ἐώρακας seems to convey a sense of theophany. The healed man's belief in and worship of Jesus, identified as the Son of man (9.38), suggests the latter's status equal to God (cf. 10.30), and as such echoes the thematic statement of revelation in the Prologue: 'No one has ever seen (ἐώρακεν) God; the Only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known' (1.18).¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, in John 12.45 seeing (θεωρεῖν, a synonym of ὁρᾶν) Jesus is identified with seeing God who sent him.

iii. *Faith and Worship* In John 9 something more is added to 'the one like son of man' of Dan 7.13-14. It is argued that the προσκυνεῖν in 9.38 means 'to pay reverence to'¹⁴⁶, not 'to worship'. But such a reading fails to recognise the impact made by its combination with πιστεύειν in describing the former blind man's reaction to Jesus when the former realises the latter's identity as the Son of man.¹⁴⁷ It is true, as C.L. Porter contends, that the confessional formula (first person singular) of πιστεύειν is scarcely used in the NT.¹⁴⁸ But its paucity by itself is not enough to rule out its use here. Already in John 3.15 it has become clear that πιστεύειν takes the Son of man (ἐν αὐτῷ) as its object. Moreover, it has to be noted that προσκυνεῖν is a verb expressing 'the reactions of men to theophanies in the Old Testament, e.g. Exod 3.6',¹⁴⁹ and that it is used only for worshipping God elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel (4.20-24; 12.20).¹⁵⁰ Because of the peculiarity of προσκυνεῖν taking the Son of man as object, Porter regards the construction as non-Johannine. Yet the idea of the Son of man as the object

145 As for its apparent contradiction with Moses' seeing God on Mount Sinai (Exod 33-34), A. Hanson, 'John 1.14-18', 95-97, remarks that the evangelist's contention is not to deny any account of seeing God in Israel history but to demonstrate that it was the pre-existent Logos who made God known (12.41). Rabbis of tannaim extended Moses' experience of seeing God to the Israelites (SongR 1.2.3; Mek. Yitro Bahodesh 2.211).

146 See BAGD. So Beasley-Murray, *John*, 159-160.

147 So Holleran, 'Seeing the Light. II', 379.

148 Mark 9.24, Acts 27.25, and 1 Cor 11.18. See Porter, 'John IX. 38, 39a', 389.

149 Barrett, *John*, 365; Brown, *John*, 1.376.

150 Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.254; Porter, 'John IX. 38, 39a', 390.

of worship conforms to an apocalyptic interpretation of the Danielic human-like figure. 1 Enoch 48.5 states: 'All who dwell on earth shall fall down and worship before him [the Son of Man]'.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, the use of πιστεύειν with προσκυνεῖν taking Jesus as object points to a more than ordinary meaning. John 3.15 contains a personal pronoun referring back to the Son of man in 3.14: ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον. Likewise, the πιστεύειν εἰς + acc. construction takes the Son of man as its object (9.35, 38), which suggests the equality of Jesus the Son of man with God (cf. 10.30).¹⁵² Since πιστεύειν is not attached to the Danielic human-like figure as is interpreted in the *Similitudes*, it is uniquely Johannine. But, whether the 'one like son of man' is to be identified with Michael or not in its original context of the Book of Daniel,¹⁵³ the Johannine Jesus identified as the Son of man in John 9.35ff resembles the Danielic figure as interpreted in the *Similitudes* in that both seem to be assimilated to the Deity in many respects.¹⁵⁴

Consequently, the Son of man, with whom the Johannine Jesus is identified, does not signify simply his 'human nature'¹⁵⁵ or his 'human vulnerability'.¹⁵⁶ Nor does the circumlocutional reading that the man born blind misunderstood Jesus' self-reference (9.36)¹⁵⁷ make much sense. Rather the term is applied to Jesus even before his ascent so as to show that he is the Danielic divine judge figure who executes heavenly judgement on earthly affairs.

3.5 John 12.23, 34

3.5.1 The Glorification of the Son of man in John 12.23

151 Schimanowski, *Weisheit und Messias*, 188f; Collins, *Daniel*, 81. Schimanowski sees a close parallel between this passage and Isa 49.7. Likewise, Black, *The Book of Enoch*, 210, points to the Isaianic Servant (Isa 49.7; 60.10; cf. IQS^D 5.28).

152 See Lindars, *John*, 338.

153 Though it is disputed, the human-like figure of Dan 7.13f is generally regarded as Michael, while 'the holy ones of the Most High' are considered to be angels or heavenly beings. E.g. Collins, *Daniel*, 304-310, 313ff.

154 So Collins, *Daniel*, 81.

155 So Casey, 'Idiom', 181: 'As Jesus rose to deity, it [ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου] referred to his manhood, while ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ referred to his divine nature, a shift in meaning probably to be detected already in the Fourth Gospel'.

156 So Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 193.

157 So e.g. M. Müller, 'Have You Faith', 291-294.

The report of the coming of some Greeks to see him triggers Jesus' announcement of the arrival of 'the hour'. In the narrative of the Fourth Gospel the glorification of the Son of man in John 12.23 is at a climax of the long expected coming of the hour for the Johannine Jesus. Apocalyptic associations of this passage in itself and of the context are overwhelmingly evident.

As we will see later (II.4), ὥρα is a technical term referring to the decisive hour of the eschatological judgement and salvation as utilised in Jewish apocalyptic literature. δόξασθηῖναι, a divine passive implying that God is the agent of that action, can be rendered 'to be brought to a position of honour by God'.¹⁵⁸ S. Schulz has pointed out that God's glorifying the Son of man in 12.23 (and 13,31f) designates his public and ceremonial enthronement as eschatological judge in the similar way in which the Danielic 'one like son of man' is enthroned.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, the human-like figure in Dan 7.14 is said to be given 'glory' (LXX: δόξα; Theod: ἡ τιμή) as well as 'dominion' and 'kingdom'. In the *Similitudes of Enoch* the δόξα/כבוד terminology is associated not only with that Danielic figure but also with the eschatological judgement. There the Son of Man, who is equated with the Elect One and is already given glory in his existence before creation, is portrayed as sitting on the throne of glory as the eschatological Judge (1 Enoch 45.3; 51.3; 55.4; 61.8; 62.2-13; 69.27; cf. 49.2; 51.3).¹⁶⁰ M.E. Stone has drawn attention to the fact that the ideas of judgement and glorification are closely linked with each other in apocalyptic writings.¹⁶¹ 4 Ezra 7.112-113, for example, states that this present world is not an abiding place of the full glory of God and is to be ended by the day of judgement; this indicates that the manifestation of the glory of God is characteristic of the day of judgement (cf. 4 Ezra 7.42) and the immortal age to follow it. The author of the *Similitudes* finds no problem in associating judgement and glory closely together: 'He is righteous in his judgement and in the glory that is before him' (1 Enoch 50.4). Likewise, due to the correspondence between ἡ ὥρα (John

158 See de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 177-178.

159 Schulz, *Untersuchungen*, 119. So also Colpe, *TDNT* 8.468. E.g. 1 Enoch 51.3; 45.3; 55.4; 61.8; 62.2, 5; 69.27, 29; 71.7. See J. Kovacs, 'Jesus' Death', 240-246.

160 See also Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, 373.

161 Stone, *Features*, 205-206. See 4 Ezra 7.42; 2 Baruch 55.8.

12.23) and $\nu\hat{\nu}\nu$ (12.31), the glorification of the Johannine Son of man is closely linked with the judgement of this world in John 12.31, which, together with the theme of vindication developed in John 12.26, constitutes the apocalyptic end-time judgement scene. Thus the glorification of the Johannine Son of man can be understood as a unique Christian appropriation of the interpretative tradition of the Danielic figure in Jewish apocalypses. In other words, it would be a result of the author's interpretation that finds the glorification, i.e. the enthronement as Judge over the universal judgement and as King of the everlasting kingdom, of that Danielic human-like figure realised in Jesus' event of death-resurrection-ascent.¹⁶²

In addition to (a) the theme of judgement (12.31; cf. 3.14-15; 5.27; 9.35-41), the context following 12.23 contains ideas already associated with the Son of man earlier in the Gospel apart from $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha\sigma\theta\eta\eta\nu\alpha\iota$: (b) the death (12.24; cf. 6.53) and exaltation (12.32-33; 3.14; 8.28); (c) eternal life (12.25; 3.14-15; 6.27, 53-54); (d) to be where I am (12.26; cf. 6.62: the Son of man ascending where he was before). Though not directly related to the Son of man sayings themselves, the theme of light and darkness (12.35-36; cf. 3; 9) also appears in close proximity. Hence John 12.23ff seems to function as a summation of the preceding Son of man sayings. The last Son of man sayings in John 13.31-32 can be regarded as an appropriation of that in John 12.23ff, because of the glorification terminology in conjunction with $\nu\hat{\nu}\nu$ referring back to the coming hour of the Son of man (12.23). Moreover the theme of judgement seems to be associated with this final Son of man saying in the Fourth Gospel. This may be evident in that Jesus speaks of the glorification of the Son of man (and of God) soon after Judas, possessed by Satan to betray Jesus, went out into the night darkness (13.27-30)—the Johannine symbolism signifying judgement.¹⁶³ In this sense the Judas' departure seems to be depicted as the beginning of the casting-out of the ruler of this world (cf. 12.32).

162 Cf. Banks, *Krisis*, 270 n14.

163 So C.R. Koester, *Symbolism*, 209-210.

3.5.2 *The Exaltation/Crucifixion of the Son of man and the Everlasting Messiah in John 12.34*

As to the question of the Son of man occurring on the crowd's lips, G. Vermes argues that John 12.32 and 34 are evidence supporting the view that the Son of man is used as a circumlocution for 'I' or a self-designation of Jesus.¹⁶⁴ But Vermes' interpretation is untenable for the following reasons. First, it has a serious exegetical problem in itself. If the term is a circumlocution, it would be more reasonable to find 'the Son of man' in Jesus' speech at 12.32 instead of *καὶ γὰρ*, than to see the crowd using the term in reference to him. Second, it has been argued that the evidence utilised by Vermes for a circumlocutional use of the phrase *בר נשׁא* is in fact the evidence for its properly generic use meaning 'humankind', or 'each and every man', and that there is no real support for *בר נשׁא* to have been used exclusively as a self-reference equivalent to *ההוא גברא*.¹⁶⁵

Exegetes have been puzzled by the crowd's substitution of 'the Son of man' for Jesus' 'I'.¹⁶⁶ What the crowd is portrayed as doing in their repetition of Jesus' words, however, would be properly explained by seeing other examples of the similar construction of Johannine irony. In John 6.42c the Jews repeat Jesus' words (6.38: *καταβέβηκα ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*; 6.41: *ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ καταβάς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*) with *ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβέβηκα*. They do not reproduce Jesus' words of 6.38 exactly but juxtapose the word order and change the preposition *ἀπὸ* into *ἐκ*, probably influenced by 6.41 which has *ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*. The Jews in 8.33c (*ἐλεύθελοι γενήσεσθε*) also repeats the words of Jesus in 8.32 (*ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς*), omitting *ἡ ἀλήθεια*. Hence the Jews reproduce to some extent what Jesus has just said to them, albeit coloured with their misunderstanding. The substitution of 'the Son of man' for Jesus' 'I' would be best understood as a repetition of the term used in his saying at 12.23, since the perfect tense of the attributive participle *ἔστῳς* that modifies

164 G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 161-162.

165 See J.A. Fitzmyer, 'The New Testament Title', 143-160; Jeremias, *NT Theologie*, 248-249 n21; Borsch, *The Son of Man*, 22-24; Bauckham, 'The Son of Man', 23-33.

166 Some avoid the problem by reading 12.34b in conjunction with 3.14 and 8.28. Bultmann, *John*, 354-356, transposes it after 8.21-29.

the crowd in 12.29 would make the reader assume that they were present when Jesus speaks of the coming of the hour for the Son of man in 12.23.¹⁶⁷ Consequently, the crowd in 12.34 ought to be understood as repeating Jesus' words in v 23 and v 32.¹⁶⁸

Some interpreters doubt the probability of the apparent identification of 'the Son of man' and 'the Christ' made by the crowd.¹⁶⁹ Yet the pattern of misunderstanding and irony endorses this very identification. John 12.34 presents a characteristic literary structure of the Johannine irony similar in form to 6.42 and 8.33.¹⁷⁰ In these texts, the dialogue partner of Jesus makes a claim to knowledge over against his statement, and poses a question by repeating, partially or with omissions, what he has just said. Such a reaction reflects their misunderstanding of Jesus' words.¹⁷¹ Yet it is this very statement based on their misunderstanding that ironically points to a significant fact about Jesus which they fail to conceive. Such is characteristic of the motif of mistaken identity in dramas of concealed identity (e.g. Homer's *Odyssey* and several Greek tragedies), which ironically points to the truth about a hero/heroine.¹⁷²

If we schematise the literary pattern of misunderstanding and irony found in John 12.34f (6.42f; 8.33f), it will be as follows:

In these passages, Jesus' saying is followed by:

- a) Introductory formula for a response by the crowd or the Jews.
- b) Their claim to knowledge or conviction against Jesus' saying.
- c) Question(s) with repetitions of Jesus' words.
- d) Jesus' response.¹⁷³

John 12.34f:

- a) Ἀπεκρίθη οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ ὄχλος.
- b) ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου
ὅτι ὁ χριστὸς μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα,
- c) καὶ πῶς λέγεις σὺ

167 Cf. John 7.37-44.

168 Beasley-Murray, 'John 12,31-32', 70.

169 See Kysar, *John*, 200. Cf. Brown, *John*, 1.478.

170 G.C. Nicholson, *Death as Departure*, 138-139, regards John 6.42; 8.33, 51-53 as partial parallels to 12.34. But in 8.51-53 lacks the same pattern of irony.

171 See Carson, 'Misunderstandings'; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 152-165.

172 Murnaghan, 'ANAGNORISIS', 89-90: 'Mistaken identity is often an ideal vehicle for the presentation of apparent truth, because the audience usually knows the actual truth and is thus given a chance to see what is so compelling about what is false. But while in tragedy this might be a way of showing the power of delusion or the elusiveness of any truth, in epic it is often a way of adding to and qualifying the truth'. The Johannine ironies would belong to the epic type of Murnaghan's characterisation.

173 This does not mean that all the Johannine misunderstandings and ironies fall into one literary pattern. See, e.g. Carson, 'Misunderstandings', 59-91.

ὅτι δεῖ ὑψωθῆναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;
 τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;
 d) εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς...¹⁷⁴

Having heard Jesus refer to his own lifting up (12.32), the crowd answered him by making a claim to their knowledge of the scripture (ὁ νόμος) that 'the Christ remains forever'. As is the case with the other examples,¹⁷⁵ their confidence in that knowledge is stressed by a redundant pronoun: ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν (cf. 6.42b). Even though the content of their knowledge itself may be accurate, their claim to it ironically reveals their misunderstanding of what Jesus exactly means. P.D. Duke's observation of the misunderstanding in 6.42 is applicable here as well: 'the crowd can be both utterly correct in the natural sense and utterly mistaken in the important sense'.¹⁷⁶ The crowd's misunderstanding is exemplified by their question with 'how?' (πῶς), which is 'typical of earthly literal, superficial, understanding'.¹⁷⁷ In this question there is another device typical of the Johannine irony, that is, a partial repetition of Jesus' words. By changing the emphatic ἐγὼ of Jesus (12.32) into 'the Son of man' (which probably comes from v 23), the crowd repeats what Jesus has just said, adding δεῖ to ὑψωθῆναι and omitting of ἐκ τῆς γῆς.¹⁷⁸ Their second question with the interrogative pronoun τίς may also be a signal of irony (cf. 7.20).¹⁷⁹ Moreover, the demonstrative pronoun οὗτος, with a disparaging tone, is another literary device of the Johannine irony.¹⁸⁰ By

174 Cf. John 6.42f:

- a) καὶ ἐλέγον·
- b) οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ,
οὐδ' ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα;
- c) πῶς νῦν λέγει
ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβέβηκα;
- d) ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς:...

John 8.33f:

- a) ἀπεκρίθησαν πρὸς αὐτόν·
- b) σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐσμεν καὶ οὐδενὶ δεδουλείκαμεν πώποτε·
- c) πῶς σὺ λέγεις
ὅτι ἐλεύθεροι γενήσασθε;
- d) ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς:...

175 Duke, *Irony*, 64-69. Cf. John 7.27, 41b-42, 52b; 9.29.

176 Duke, *Irony*, 65.

177 Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 92. See John 3.4, 9; 4.9; 6.42, 52; 7.15; 8.33; 9.10, 15, 16, 19, 21, 26; 12.34; 14.5. See also Schulz, *Johannes*, 168, and Becker, *Johannes*, 2.397.

178 Cf. Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.395; Duke, *Irony*, 64, 90; Becker, *Johannes*, 2.397.

179 Cf. Duke, *Irony*, 90.

180 See John 6.42; 7.15, 26, 27, 35, 36; 9.16, 24. In Aramaic, 'this man' (ܐܘܪܝܢܐ) is used as a circumlocution for 'thou' in the context of a protestation or a curse. See Vermes, 'The Use', 320.

saying 'Who is *this* Son of man?', the crowd distance themselves from Jesus or even disparage him on account of his teaching on the Son of man which they regard as false.¹⁸¹ It is obvious that their response is caused by their misunderstanding, which seems to be triggered by ὑψωθῆναι at 12.32. The fact that this verb is generally regarded as having a double meaning, i.e. exaltation and crucifixion,¹⁸² supports our conclusion that an irony is involved here, because the Johannine irony frequently plays on a double meaning of a word.¹⁸³ The crowd is portrayed as correctly understanding that Jesus the Son of man is to leave by his ὑψωθῆναι.¹⁸⁴ The answer of Jesus in vv 35-36a seems to confirm their understanding in this sense: 'The light is with you for a little longer' (v 35, cf. 7.33-36). It is evident, however, that their blindness is in their failure to perceive that Jesus' lifting up signifies his return to the glory which he as the divine Logos shared with the Father (cf. v 23). Their failure is due to their this-worldly understanding that prevents them from conceiving things heavenly.¹⁸⁵ The irony must have been apparent to the implied readers due to their 'superior knowledge' that Jesus, 'the Son', was said to remain forever in 8.35 (cf. 12.34a) and that the lifting up is a means of his return to the glory of the divine Logos (12.23, cf. 1.1-5,14; 12.41; 17.5). His ὑψωθῆναι does not mean the end of his existence. Instead, it ironically confirms his everlasting reign as the Messiah as is predicted in the Scripture.¹⁸⁶ Thus the very scripture that speaks of Christ's everlasting reign is fulfilled through the death of Jesus

181 Duke, *Irony*, 64, 172.

182 See Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 22-24, 31-33; Blank, *Krisis*, 286-287; Tsuchido, 'Tradition and Reduction', 614, 619; Kohler, *Kreuz und Menschwerdung*, 243; Richard, 'Expressions', 101, 105.

183 See John 3.10; 7.52; 8.48; 9.24; 11.49-50; 18.30. See Duke, *Irony*, 91; Nicholson, *Death as Departure*, 141; Wead, *Literary Devices*, 34-36; Jaubert, *Approaches*, 57; Richard, 'Expressions', 101, 109. Cf. Theobald, *Die Fleischwerdung des Logos*, 385

184 It is not evident whether the crowd in the narrative rightly understood the meaning of ὑψωθῆναι as the death of Jesus on the cross. So Dodd, *Interpretation*, 378; Kysar, *John*, 200; Pancaro, *The Law*, 338-339. But the implicit commentary in v 33 (cf. Bjerkelund, *Tauta Egeneto*, 119-125, especially 123) would suggest that, because Jesus' words were not self-evident even to the implied reader of this Gospel, they were all the more unclear for the easy-to-misunderstand crowd. Therefore it may be that the crowd is portrayed as having understood 'the removal' (Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 499) or 'going away in one form or another' (van Unnik, 'The Quotation', 175) of Jesus by his ὑψωθῆναι. So also Becker, *Johannes*, 2.397.

185 N.A. Dahl, 'The Johannine Church', 127.

186 Kohler, *Kreuz und Menschwerdung*, 244; Dodd, *Interpretation*, 92, Dahl, 'The Johannine Church', 127; Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 31; Forestell, *The Word of the Cross*, 63; Pancaro, *The Law*, 339; de Jonge, 'Word ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ', 72-73; Kysar, *John*, 200; Schnackenburg, *John*, 394-396. Cf. McNeil, 'The Quotation', 32.

the Son of man in the manner of *ἑψωθῆναι*, i.e. crucifixion.¹⁸⁷ In this sense, *δεῖ* which the crowd adds to the Son of man's *ἑψωθῆναι* to express their surprise implies ironically the divine necessity of the crucifixion of Jesus the Son of man as in John 3.14.¹⁸⁸

iv. The crowd found Jesus' saying contrary to their knowledge concerning *ὁ νόμος* that speaks of the eternity of the Christ. S. Pancaro has demonstrated that *ὁ νόμος* is virtually synonymous to *ἡ γραφή* and its plural form in the Fourth Gospel, 'Insofar as *νόμος* stands for the Scriptures or a part thereof'.¹⁸⁹ If *ὁ νόμος* refers to a certain part of the Scripture, to which specific OT passage do the crowd refer here?

Barrett doubts that the evangelist has a specific OT passage in mind.¹⁹⁰ Others think of various messianic passages as a source (Ps 89.36 (88.37 LXX), 110.4; Dan 7.14; Isa 9.7; 1 Enoch 49.1; 62.14: SibOr 3.49-50).¹⁹¹ B. McNeil and B. Chilton have attempted to demonstrate that Targum of Isaiah is the source of 12.34. McNeil¹⁹² contends that the author of the Gospel had TargIsa 9.5 in mind: 'He who lives for ever, the Anointed one (קיים עלמיה משיחא)'. His thesis, however, is criticised by Chilton especially for the shaky argument regarding the early dating of the targum.¹⁹³ Chilton himself holds that TargIsa 52.13, which has a phrase 'my servant the Messiah' who will be exalted, lies 'behind the crowd's assumption that Jesus is speaking of the Messiah, just as the phrase "sons of men" in Isa 52.14 corresponds to their use of it in the singular'.¹⁹⁴ Yet, to suppose the crowd's knowledge of TargIsa 52 is as difficult as to prove the existence of the Targum in the first century CE. A plausible and influential case is put forward by W.C. van Unnik in favour of Ps 88.37 (LXX) which reads: *Tò*

187 Cf. Pancaro, *The Law*, esp. 336-339, who observes that within the centric theme of the cosmic trial of the Gospel the Scripture on the basis of which the Jews condemn Jesus testifies on behalf of him ironically.

188 Cf. Painter, *The Quest*, 338; de Boer, *Johannine Perspective*, 163.

189 Pancaro, *Law*, 327ff, 514-517.

190 Barrett, *John*, 427. So also Nicholson, *Death as Departure*, 139.

191 Dodd, *Interpretation*, 78, 91 points to Isa 9.6-7; Ezek 37.25, while Morris, *John*, 599, refers to Ps 89.36, 110.4; Isa 9.7; Dan 7.14. Dan 7.13, 14 is regarded as its primary source by Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 500. A combination of Dan 7.14, 27 and 1 Enoch 49.1 is suggested by Blank, *Krisis*, 293. Str-Bill 2.522, lists 1 Enoch 49.1; 62.14; SibOr 3.49f.

192 B. McNeil, 'The Quotation', 22-33.

193 Chilton, 'John 12.34', 176-178.

194 Chilton, 'John 12.34', 177.

σπέρμα αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα μενεῖ.¹⁹⁵ Yet Ps 61.6-7 also can be a good candidate, because of its reference to the King's remaining forever (διαμενεῖ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ).¹⁹⁶ It has to be also noted that the idea of the reign of the Davidic Messiah lasting εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα is prevalent in the messianic passage of 2 Sam 7.12-16.¹⁹⁷ These examples only show that the OT contains several passages speaking of the everlasting reign of a messianic figure.

M. Black provides a clue for the solution to this problem. He pointed out that the formula ἀκούειν παρά/ἐκ... (John 3.29; 5.30; 8.26, 38, 40, 47; 12.34; cf. Matt 5.21, 27, 33; Luke 8.18) corresponds to a formula of rabbinic learning: 'The usage reflects the corresponding Talmudic *שמע*, to receive a *תורה*, opinion, tradition, from and hence "to receive (traditional) teaching from", especially on a point of *halacha*: and so simply "to be taught, to learn from": Shabb. 7.1 *et pass*'.¹⁹⁸ It would follow that the formula in John 12.34 may have been understood as reflecting the teaching of the Torah in the synagogue. Given the nature of oral communication, the quotation may not necessarily reflect a specific passage in the Scripture. The fact that their reference is not portrayed as false and that the Hebrew Scripture contains several passages that can be crystallised in the teaching that 'the Christ remains forever' would indicate that the crowd's comment here has to be taken seriously as reflecting a haggadaic commentary of the messianic passage/s of the Torah.

Therefore, the Law on the lips of the crowd is not deprived of its credibility, and thus provides a ground for the Johannine irony to operate. Nor does it detract attention from the true revelation of Jesus; in fact, the Danielic Son of man identified with the Davidic Messiah constitutes the core of the revealed mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation in such apocalyptic texts as 4 Ezra 13 and 1 Enoch 62.¹⁹⁹ In these texts the Danielic Son of man is depicted as presiding over the divine judgement.

195 van Unnik, 'The Quotation', 174-179. So also Brown, *John*, 1.469; Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.395; Moloney, *Son of Man*, 182; Pancaro, *The Law*, 336-339; Becker, *Johannes*, 2.397; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 215; Kohler, *Kreuz und Menschwerdung*, 243.

196 See G. Bampfylde, 'More Light', 87-89.

197 Cf. Reim, *Hintergrund*, 32-34.

198 Black, *Aramaic Approach*, 300.

199 *Contra* Ashton, *Understanding*, 367, who regards John 12.34-36 as a later gloss (367 n86).

K. Koch argues that, although the Davidic Messiah and the Danielic Son of man were brought together in the *Similitudes of Enoch*, 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, they became fully identified only in the NT.²⁰⁰ As we have seen (with respect to 4 Ezra 13 in particular), however, there is enough evidence to suggest that these two figures were closely linked in these apocalypses.²⁰¹ *The identification of these two in the Fourth Gospel is not merely a simple identification but the way in which they are applied to Jesus shows a unique ingenuity of the author as well as his rhetorical purposes.*

The first Johannine Son of man saying programmatically reveals its relationship to the Davidic Messiah. When Nathanael confesses Jesus being the King of Israel/the Son of God, the referent is, without doubt, the Davidic Messiah (1.49: ῥαββί, σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, σὺ Βασιλεὺς εἶ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ).²⁰² It is evident that since it is applied to an individual along with 'the King of Israel', the term 'the Son of God' accords with its messianic sense rather than the communal (as a reference to Israel) or the angelic sense as attested in the Hebrew Bible and other early Jewish writings.²⁰³ It is notable that the promise of the apocalyptic vision concerning the Son of man at 1.51 is projected over against Nathanael's recognition of Jesus as the Davidic kingly Messiah (1.49). Using the quasi-technical term pointing towards a greater apocalyptic vision to be revealed, the author points to a revelatory event with more significance, viz. one concerning the Son of man. It is implied that the revelation of the Son of man is given a value greater than Jesus' miraculous appearance to Nathaniel that let him regard Jesus as the Davidic kingly Messiah (1.49). Thus the Johannine Jesus identifies himself not only as the Davidic kingly Messiah but also with the Danielic Son of man, the very identification that is made in contemporary apocalyptic writings such as 4 Ezra and the *Similitudes of*

200 Koch, 'Messias und Menschensohn', 84.

201 F. Hahn, *The Titles*, 147: 'Only in the *Similitudes of the Ethiopic Enoch* was the idea of the Messiah fully merged with that of the Son of Man'.

202 See 2 Sam 7.12-16, 14. So Painter, 'The Church and Israel', 103-112; 'Christ and the Church', 359-362. Against the thesis of Meeks, *The Prophet-King*, 67, that the kingship of Jesus is radically refined in terms of a prophet's mission, de Jonge, 'Jesus as Prophet and King', 160-177, demonstrates that the titles 'prophet' and 'king' for Jesus are not as central as the Son of God and the Son of man in the gospel: '*Jesus' kingship and his prophetic mission are both redefined in terms of the unique relationship between Son and Father, as portrayed in the Fourth Gospel*' (his italics).

203 For a detailed discussion of the three options for this term, J.F. Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean*, 104; J.J. Collins, 'Son of God Text', 73-82.

Enoch. Yet the emphasis is placed on the identity of Jesus as the Son of man. As the narrative progresses in the Gospel, it will become clear that the future revelatory event with regard to the Son of man is first and foremost concerned with the crucifixion of Jesus. Unlike Jewish apocalyptic hopes concerning the Davidic Messiah/the Danielic Son of man, especially that in 4 Ezra, the ethnocentric, Torah-centred characteristics are not attached to the Johannine Jesus here. It would be that in 1.51 the Johannine Jesus points to a further, probably more important, revelatory event on the Son of man as a significant basis for faith, and thus consequently correct the purely nationalistic understanding of the Messiahship of Jesus by Nathanael.²⁰⁴ The same seems to hold true to the presentation of the Son of man against the Jewish crowd's Messianic expectation in John 12.34.

It must be recognised that in 12.13 a great crowd which gathered in Jerusalem for the Passover have welcomed Jesus on a young ass, identifying him as *ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου καὶ ὁ Βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ* (cf. 1.49). It is implied in the context that the great crowd received Jesus as such due to the sign of the resurrection of Lazarus (12.9-11). Without doubt, 'the King of Israel' is a title for the Davidic Messiah as in its Synoptic parallels (Matt 21.9//Mark 11.10), where the kingship of Jesus in his triumphant entry is depicted in terms of the Davidic covenant.²⁰⁵ In the context following Jesus' entering Jerusalem hailed as the Davidic Messiah, it is natural that the crowd's reference to *ὁ χριστός* (which is a translation of *ὁ Μεσσίας*; 1.41) should be understood in the same light.

In Palestinian Judaism of the first century CE, especially in Qumran and for the Zealots, political reality is inseparably related to their eschatological hope.²⁰⁶ The enthusiastic acceptance by the Jewish crowds' of Jesus entering Jerusalem and their identification of him with the everlasting Messiah (the Danielic Son of man) are to be

204 Cf. Hasler, 'Glauben und Erkennen', 287-289.

205 While in Mark 11.10 the crowd understood Jesus as coming to establish the Davidic Kingdom (*ἡ ἐρχομένη Βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Δαυὶδ*), in Matt 21.9 the crowd identified Jesus as 'the Son of David' (*ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυὶδ*). Cf. Luke 19.38: *ὁ ἐρχόμενος ὁ Βασιλεὺς ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου*. Cf. Meeks, *Prophet-King*, 81-87.

206 Cf. Hengel, *The Zealots*, 310-312.

seen in this context. It is true that Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem would have implied that he is an militant messiah of Jewish expectation. Yet the irony in 12.34 indicate that the political aspect usually associated with the Jewish messianic expectations is played down to make way to a non-political appropriation of the coming messianic kingdom. Furthermore, by choosing the way of the cross the Johannine Jesus as in the Synoptics defied the expectation of the Messiah known to his contemporaries.

(ii) That the Johannine Son of man is not a nationalistic, militant messiah, is also implied by the fact that John 12.23ff shows close affinities to the suffering and glorification Son of man sayings of Mark 8-9:²⁰⁷

John 12.23ff		Mark 8-9
The hour of the Son of man	v23	(cf. Luke 9.51)
The prediction of the Passion		The prediction of the Passion of
	v24+v 32-33	the Son of man 8.31 (//Luke 9.22, 24)
Serving and following Jesus	v26	— Following Jesus with a cross 8.34 (//Luke 9.23-24, 22.26ff)
Loving and hating the $\psi\nu\chi\eta$	v25	— Saving and losing the $\psi\nu\chi\eta$ 8.35
The glorification of the Son of man		
and the judgement	vv23,31	— The Son of man coming with glory (for judgement) 8.38
(The glorification in the heavenly voice	v28	
	—	the transfiguration of Jesus 9.2-8; Luke 9.31f) ²⁰⁸

These correspondences suggest that John 12.20ff is concerned with the prediction of Jesus' Passion and his glorification as its consequence.

Like other apocalyptic writings in which the divine mysteries concerning the end time are revealed in succession, the Son of man sayings in the Fourth Gospel develop in an intensifying manner, providing further characteristics and nuances to the previous descriptions. In the later visions of the *Similitudes* (1 Enoch 48.2; 62.13-14 'that Son of Man') the term 'Son of man' occurs frequently without any specific allusion to Dan 7 and yet its reference to the Danielic human-like figure explicitly established earlier seems to be presupposed (1 Enoch 46²⁰⁹). If the Johannine Son of man sayings ought to be read in a similar manner, not as a collection of diverse traditions lacking any coherence, the identification of the Son of man with the Danielic figure is already clear to the reader before he/she comes to John 12.

207 See Bauer, *Johannes*, 157; Becker, *Johannes*, 2.389; Kohler, *Kreuz und Menschwerdung*, 233-234.

208 Cf. B. Chilton, *Profiles of a Rabbi*, 87-89. For the parallels to Luke 9, see M. Goulder, 'From Ministry', 561-568, though his view that John 12 depends directly on Luke 9-10 is questionable.

209 Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 183-184.

At the same time, however, the uniqueness of its Johannine application has to be noted. As Blank maintains, the Fourth Gospel presents a new interpretation of the apocalyptic visionary material in a full coordination with a new point of reference, that is, the Christ event, the cross in particular.²¹⁰ Due to the similarity between ὅτε οὐν ἠγγέθη ἐκ νεκρῶν at 2.22 and ὅτε ἐδοξάσθη Ἰησοῦς at 12.16 in speaking of a hermeneutical turning point, it is evident that the glorification of Jesus the Son of man is inherently linked with his resurrection.²¹¹ Also the glorification of the Son of man is inseparably associated with the suffering and death, as indicated by the metaphor of the dying corn (12.24) and Jesus' παραχή (12.27). Commenting on 13.31f, Colpe remarks that the threefold aorist ἐδοξάσθη 'makes sense only if the meaning of the glorification as suffering, exaltation and enthronement finds its centre in the self-actualising epiphany of the Son of Man/Revealer that reaches its climax in relation to the parting, which will lead by suffering and death to exaltation and enthronement'.²¹² If the hour for the Son of man's glorification is the hour of his returning to heaven, it is linked with the death at the initial phase of this heavenly return; it must follow that the glorification of the Son of man is the hour of his enthronement as heavenly Judge and King which is inaugurated in his death on the cross, i.e. the Passion. As Blank says, 'Das Kreuz ist selbst bereits der Anfang der Verherrlichung Jesu (gen.obj.)'.²¹³ Thus, both the cross and the resurrection are presented as an unbreakable unity, though chronologically distinctive, in the Johannine perspective.

To summarise, because of the context containing apocalyptic-eschatological notions such as the coming of the hour, the *δοξα/כבוד* terminology, the son of man, eternal life = the kingdom of God, vindication of the followers and their participation in judgement (to be where Jesus is), and the two-level judgement scene with regard to the crucifixion, the Son of man in John 12.23f exhibits striking affinities to the human-like figure of Dan 7 as interpreted in Jewish apocalypses. The glorification of the Son of man in 12.23 in particular is compatible with the Danielic Son of Man in 1 Enoch,

²¹⁰ Blank, *Krisis*, 270 n13.

²¹¹ So Blank, *Krisis*, 267f.

²¹² Colpe, *TDNT* 8.468.

²¹³ Blank, *Krisis*, 269.

depicted as sitting on the throne of his glory presiding over the judgement of the world. In the context preceding John 12.20ff Jesus is depicted as entering Jerusalem as the Davidic kingly Messiah (12.12ff), whose enthronement is naturally expected in what follows. In contradiction to what was generally expected with the nationalistic, militant Davidic Messiah in Jewish messianic expectations, the Johannine depiction of the enthronement of Jesus as 'the King of the Jews' (19.19ff) is focused on the cross. His glorification and execution of the judgement is achieved in and through his death on the cross and the resurrection. Thus the glorification and exaltation of Jesus as the Son of man through the cross is portrayed as the centre of the visions concerning the end-time judgement and salvation; it is the focal point of the eschatological gathering of nations and the source of eternal life.

3.6 CONCLUSIONS

By portraying the ministry of Jesus along the line of the revelation (*apocalypsis*) of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation, the fourth evangelist provides an apocalyptic framework within which the cross and resurrection of Jesus should be looked at. In Jewish apocalypses such as the *Similitudes of Enoch* and 4 Ezra, the human-like figure of Dan 7.13-14 is understood in terms of the Davidic Messiah (who delivers Israel and bring forth the new creation) and is a focus of the revelation of the divine mysteries. Likewise, in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus as the Son of man is the focus of the divine revelation (of the mystery concerning the coming divine kingdom and the end-time judgement), which is set forth programmatically in John 1.45-51. The following could be conceived of as an interpretation of that vision, or an intensification of it, in the deeds and words of Jesus. The content of that apocalypsis or revelation intensifies as the story develops, and reaches its climax at the judgement scene of John 12.20-36, which summarises the eschatological significance of the revelation of the divine mysteries in the cross and resurrection-ascent of Jesus the Son of man.²¹⁴

²¹⁴ The reason why the term Son of man does not occur after John 13.31 may be explained that there is no need of mentioning the cross of Jesus in terms of the revelation in the Son of man's glorification, since such identification is already established unmistakably (especially in John 12.20-36).

On the other hand, the Johannine Son of man differs from its Jewish counterparts in some important respects: (i) Concerning the pattern of the apocalyptic vision and its interpretation the Fourth Gospel is unique. Jesus himself is not only the revealer from heaven but also interpreter of the divine mysteries (of wisdom) revealed in visions and riddles. The Johannine Jesus is the pre-existent Son of man who has descended on earth as the revealer of the heavenly mysteries (3.13)—a unique descent/ascent motif which is not only the reversal of the similar motif used for an apocalyptic seer ascending to heaven to gain wisdom and descending to reveal it (cf. Prov 30.4). Moreover, due to the concealment/revelation motif (used for Wisdom and applied to the Son of man in the *Similitudes of Enoch* [and 4 Ezra]) applied to him, the Johannine Jesus is virtually identified with the personified Wisdom in early Jewish literature.

(ii) The content of the eschatological salvation and judgement is uniquely personalised in Jesus. He is not only the Revealer of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time but the embodiment of them himself. In other words, in Jesus are all the mysteries realised, specifically through his lifting up on the cross. But this personalisation of the divine mysteries does not mean individualisation of salvation. Since Jesus is the incarnated Logos the mediator of the creation of 'all things', the universal traits of the eschatological judgement and salvation are not lost by any means.

(iii) The cross and resurrection of Jesus is depicted as a climax of the revealed divine mysteries, which is presented as the realisation of the divine plan of redemption in the imminent climax of the *Heilsgeschichte*. In this respect, the Fourth Gospel, like Jewish apocalyptic eschatologies,²¹⁵ presents a universalistic, or cosmological, and deterministic (without minimising human freedom and responsibility) view of history.

The Johannine Son of Man and the Christology of the Fourth Gospel

How is the Son of man Christology to be understood in relation to the other Christological elements in the Fourth Gospel? In close conjunction with the theories finding different sources and/or strands in the Gospel, theories of separate Christologies incompatible with one another have been propagated. The differences are attributed either to the use of separate sources or to different life settings in the history of the

215 Cf. Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 90-91; Bochruehl, *Revelation*, 27.

Johannine community. But the Johannine Son of man sayings are fully interwoven with other motifs to such an extent that it is impossible to explain them independently of the other motifs surrounding them. Thus Borsch notes: 'We doubt whether it is very meaningful to speak as though these were separate Christologies, Son of God, Son of Man, Christ, etc. For this evangelist all these titles are subservient to his relevance for the exalted Jesus, and all are influenced by this attitude'.²¹⁶ But Borsch's contention that most of the Johannine Son of man logia bear 'signs of being more primitive than the evangelist's overall Christology' is not persuasive. Such a view fails to do justice to the inner logic of the Son of man sayings set in conjunction with other Christological elements, especially that of the Davidic Messiah. Especially in the context of John 12.23ff, the Son of man, being identified as the Davidic kingly messiah by the (Jewish) crowd (12.34), functions to counter certain elements of the crowd's messianic expectations by emphasising his lifting up (the crucifixion) and glorification, without denying that identification. This is in line with the first Son of man saying (1.51) which in its promise to a greater revelation redefines Nathanael's recognition of Jesus as the Davidic kingly Messiah, i.e. 'the Son of God' and 'the King of Israel' (1.49).

F. Moloney contends that 'John has taken the term "Son of Man" from Christian tradition. He has used the term in a way which betrays his own theological stance in every instance, even in 5.27, but *the Johannine Son of Man is the continuation of a dynamic, growing interpretation of Dan 7.13, which can be found in the Synoptic Gospels, I Enoch, IV Esdras, the Fourth Gospel* and which even extends into the writings of the early Fathers'.²¹⁷ Having come to a conclusion similar to that of Moloney, B. Lindars remarked that the evangelist has taken the term from the tradition and 'works creatively on this basis, in full view of the primary text in Dan. 7, and in the light of developments in Jewish apocalyptic'.²¹⁸ Although neither of them have worked out fully the apocalyptic contours of the Son of man in John 12.23, we cannot but agree with their conclusions in general.

²¹⁶ Borsch, *The Son of Man*, 258.

²¹⁷ Moloney, *Son of Man*, 219. Italics mine.

²¹⁸ Lindars, 'The Son of Man in the Johannine Christology', 59.

Yet what they fail to pursue is the question why the author of the Fourth Gospel is presenting Jesus as the Danielic Son of man in a manner similar to that figure interpreted in his contemporary Jewish apocalypses, notably the *Similitudes of Enoch* and 4 Ezra. G. Nickelsburg, while acknowledging the close affinity between the Danielic Son of man in the canonical Gospels and that in the *Similitudes*, concludes that many Jews who subscribed to the messianism of the *Similitudes* 'may not have accepted the claim that Jesus was that messiah'.²¹⁹ The reason for his conclusion is simply that the Chosen One/the Son of man in the *Similitudes* is never an earthly figure but a heavenly figure, whereas the Jesus of the canonical gospels is an earthly figure as well. Would this view be true and applicable also to the Fourth Gospel which explicitly expresses its purpose that 'you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God' (20.31)? Nickelsburg's conclusion is too simplistic to be applied to the Fourth Gospel at least. Rather the detailed knowledge of the OT, Jewish wisdom tradition, and especially contemporary apocalyptic thought-world and its very sophisticated application to Jesus of Nazareth we have found in the Fourth Gospel points to the contrary. The application to Jesus of the sapiential motif of concealment/revelation of the personified Wisdom and the revelation motif of descent/ascent fits well with the theme of incarnation of the divine *Logos* and Jesus as the human descendent of David. *Within this complex and yet sophisticated presentation of Jesus, the enigmatic figure of the Danielic Son of man as a heavenly, divine king/judge figure with the everlasting dominion, serves well to depict Jesus who on earth reveals the eschatological mysteries to humanity and realises them in his crucifixion as a human being and glorified as universal Judge (and King) after the resurrection.*

Moloney has argued that the Son of man in the Fourth Gospel is primarily the title for Jesus as the revealer on earth, the man, which is announced in 1.51 and completed in Pilate calling him 'ecce homo' in 19.5 which Moloney regards as a Son of man reference.²²⁰ In so doing, Loader points out, Moloney virtually eliminates the dominant motif of the Son of man sayings, namely, the event complex starting at the

²¹⁹ Nickelsburg, 'The Qumran Fragments', 186.

²²⁰ Moloney, *The Son of Man*, 211-213.

cross and ending in the glory.²²¹ By contrast, Loader's contention is to emphasise that the Johannine Son of man is primarily depicted as a heavenly figure of Dan 7.13f glorified in heaven. Thus Loader lays stress not on the earthly revelatory work of the Son of man but on his death and return to the Father. Yet, as we have argued, John 1.51 indicates the Son of man (on earth) as the locus of revelation, which is further elaborated in the revelation the Johannine Jesus in 3.13 in terms of the lifting-up of the Son of man. Related to the lifting-up as the manner of Jesus' death, the glorification of the Son of man in 12.23 (cf. 13.1, 31) points to the event complex of his return to his former glory in heaven through the cross. Loader has also argued that 'the revealer motif is predominantly associated with the Son of Man but with Son-Father'.²²² Contrary to Loader's contention, however, the revealer motif is significantly associated with the Son of man since he is the locus of the revelation of the heavenly mysteries, while at the same time the revelation of (the name of) the Father by the Son remains a prominent theme in the Fourth Gospel.²²³

As to the relation between the two messianic terms, i.e. the Son of God and the Son of man, our study has two implications: (i) Although they are identified with respect to the Johannine Jesus, the revelation related to the former is to be supplemented by the revelation concerning the Son of man (1.49-51). It may be due to the author's contention that the Son of God, which in conjunction with the King of Israel is a messianic title with nationalistic and militaristic connotations in the eyes of the contemporary Jews, is to be redefined by the Son of man as the core of God' revelation. That the revelation in the Son of man is concerned with his lifting-up and glorification as reference to the process of exaltation and glorification of Jesus starting from the cross becomes evident as the narrative develops (3.13; 8.28; 12.23, 32-34). (ii) The Father-Son relationship between God and Jesus, though without the term 'Son of God', appears in the centre of John 12.20-36 surrounded by the references to the Son of man and is connected with Jesus' anguish in achieving the aim of his coming, i.e. his mission (12.27f).

221 Loader, *The Christology*, 123.

222 Loader, *The Christology*, 123.

223 Cf. Loader, *The Christology*, 123.

It has been generally conceived that the Christological formulation in John 20.31 'Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God' lies in the centre of the Johannine Christology and/or its sole criterion. Yet there are a growing number of exegetes who construe the sending Christology as providing unity to the diversity of the Johannine Christology.²²⁴ In fact, the Father-Son relationship appears in the core of the Johannine Jesus' self-understanding as the fourth evangelist depicts it (John 12.27-28). But, at the same time, it is also noted that the Davidic kingly Messiah and the Danielic Son of man/Judge as identified with each other plays significant parts in creating the overall picture of the Johannine Christology in conjunction with the motif of the Father sending the Son. Although it cannot be claimed that John 12.20-36 is central for the understanding of the Johannine Christology, it certainly contains the significant elements of the entire picture of the evangelist's presentation of Jesus, viz. the Father-Son relationship with respect to his mission to glorify the name of the Father²²⁵ and the Son of man identified with the Davidic Messiah not as a nationalistic, militant one nor one with the Torah-centred scheme (as in 4 Ezra 13), but as the one who bring judgement on this world and its ruler (12.31) and gathers all peoples to his Home (12.32) as the eschatological Temple//his resurrected Body, by being lifted up on the cross and glorified by the Father (III.4). It also presents Jesus as the Light who takes the place of the Law (the source of life) in the covenant relationship between God and his people (12.35-36). All these create a concrete tapestry that weaves various messianic threads together to show that Jewish (apocalyptic) expectations of the messiah and the age of blessing to come are realised in Jesus of Nazareth, particularly in his cross and resurrection/ascent.

224 E.g. Loader, *The Christology*, 205-214; M. de Jonge, *Christology*, 145-147; 'Christology and Theology', 1843-1853 (the 'chrisotology of mission'); Hengel, *Question*, 103.

225 Loader, *The Christology*, 30, 92, regards this theme as a centre of the Johannine Christology.

***THE CROSS AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS
AS A CLIMAX OF HIS MISSION AND OF THE APOCALYPTIC ESCHATOLOGY***

4.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapters (II.1-3) we have seen the apocalyptic contours of the Fourth Gospel in general and of the context of John 12.20-36 in particular, and pointed out strong apocalyptic traits associated with the Johannine Son of man sayings and the motif of 'seek and hide' as related to our pericope. It is now time to investigate the other elements of John 12.20-36 in detail with a question how apocalyptic the pericope could be.

Does its content pertain to an apocalyptic revelation of the divine mysteries concerning the end time as its apocalyptic context suggests? To answer this question we begin with issues to which less attention has been paid in the discussion of the apocalyptic nature of the Fourth Gospel. We will focus first on what seems like a main motif determining the apocalyptic overtone of the pericope, i.e. the coming of the hour (*ῥα*).

On a literary level, the pericope John 12.20-36 is located in a significant position within the entire Gospel. Three observations are in order. (i) The overall narrative development of John 1-12 is structured in the way in which Jesus' revelatory ministry, which happens in Galilee, Judea, Samaria, Perea, and Jerusalem, culminates chronologically and geographically in the Passover Feast in Jerusalem.¹ (ii) This chronological culmination of the revelation is closely associated with the Johannine Jesus' self-consciousness of the arrival of the decisive hour for him. Hearing the news of the coming of some Greeks, he says finally that 'the hour has come (*ἐλήλυθεν ἡ*

¹ Rissi, 'Der Aufbau', 48-54.

ώρα) for the Son of man to be glorified' (12.23).² It is evident that this announcement constitutes the decisive turning point of his earthly mission. Before that it is said that his hour is not yet come: Jesus says at 2.4, 'My hour has not yet come' (οὐπω ἤκει ἡ ὥρα μου), and in 7.8, 'my time is not yet completed' (ὁ ἐμὸς καιρὸς οὐπω πεπλήρωται). Those who attempted to arrest him could not lay hands on him (7.30), nor could anyone arrest him (8.20), because his hour had not yet come. Already in 7.4-8, Jesus' revelation of himself in public (ἐν παρρησίᾳ) to the world is regarded as a decisive time for him.³ His negative answer to his brothers' request suggests that it is not at the feast of Tabernacles but at a later occasion when the καιρὸς for Jesus to manifest himself to the world in Jerusalem should come.⁴ The repeated mention of Pasover (11.55; 12.1, 12, 20) and the reference to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (12.12ff) heighten the reader's expectation that the definitive moment of Jesus' revelation to the public has finally come. (iii) Intrinsically related to these two elements of the intensifying or culminating development of the narrative is the shadow of crisis cast over Jesus. In the chapters preceding John 12 the hostility of the Jews against Jesus is depicted as escalating. Not only Jesus' healing on the Sabbath but also his calling God 'his own Father' is said to have led 'the Jews' to seek to kill him (5.18: ἐζητοῦν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποκτείνειν), an attempt which is repeatedly made on their part (cf. 7.1, 20, 25; 8.37, 40; 11.8). There are a mob's attempt to stone him (8.59) and an attempt by the Jews to arrest him for blasphemy (10.39), although Jesus escapes unharmed in both cases. The hostility culminates in the Sanhedrin's decision to kill him (11.53). The mention of the orders given by the chief priests to arrest Jesus at the beginning of the cycle (11.57) and of the chief priests' decision to kill Lazarus as well (12.10) heightens the tension further. It is already implied by the references to the failure to arrest Jesus at 7.20 and 8.30 that the arrest of Jesus is not possible until his 'hour' has come. Under such a threat of arrest and death, the hour of the glorification of the Son of man must

2 Cf. Matt 26.45/Mark 14.41.

3 Jesus in 7.5f does not reject his unbelieving brothers' claim that he should go to Judea and show himself to the world (φανερώσον σεαυτὸν τῷ κόσμῳ) to become openly (ἐν παρρησίᾳ), but answers that his time has not yet fully come.

4 Cf. Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 90.

be understood primarily in relation to the Passion.⁵

The implication of all these would be that what we may expect in our pericope is the definitive manifestation of Jesus, which is to happen at Passover,⁶ and which is intrinsically related to his 'hour' of arrest and death. We will now turn to see in some detail the way in which this overtone of the imminent death of Jesus is developed in the pericope under discussion.

4.2 *The Coming of the Hour as Eschatological Consummation*

The primary element that gives an apocalyptic thrust to John 12.20-36 is the coming of the ὥρα for the Son of man's glorification. Its appearance in what seems like a theme passage of the pericope (12.23) and in the apex (12.27) as well as νῦν, a term obviously related to it (12.27, 31), ὥρα is clearly a dominant concept of the pericope. Despite its being a common terminology designating 'an hour', the concept of ὥρα here seems to pertain not only to its use in Greek literature as a reference to a decisive time in one's life, i.e. death, but also to its Jewish use with apocalyptic-eschatological connotations.

(1) *As a reference to one's death*

The use of ὥρα to designate the final destiny or the death of a person is not unknown in Greek literature⁷ and belongs to the wide-ranging reservoir of terms expressing 'fate' or 'destiny' of a human being.⁸ In the Hellenistic era, the conception of fate, which was significant from the time of Homer, had replaced the earlier, pantheistic Greek pantheon as the centre of the belief system of the Greeks. Alongside the terminology expressing chance or fate (τύχη, μοῖρα in the sense of 'the destiny of death'), various terms for time such as καιρός, χρόνος and ὥρα were used for the same end. That 'Time in particular could be closely associated with the destiny of death' is

5 See Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 75-76.

6 Cf. Brown, *John*, 1.308.

7 Diodorus Siculus (the first century BCE) reports the words of Epaminondas when dying: ὥρα ἐστὶν τελευτᾶν. In the LXX of Dan 11.45 ὥρα is used for the end, i.e., the death, of 'the king of the north'. See G. Delling, *TDNT* 9.676.

8 For the following description see Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.125, 119ff.

evident from the New Comedy and the epitaphs.⁹ The similar use is also found in early Judaism as well.¹⁰ The Johannine use of *ῥα* (and *καίρως*) seems to fall into this category. *ῥα* is applied not only to the glorification of the Johannine Jesus as the Son of man but also to his death (12.27) along with the decisive hour of judgement (12.31). As such it constitutes the climax of the Johannine drama. It is intriguing that a very similar use of the cognate noun can be found in Homer's *Odyssey* in describing the decisive hour of punishment of the antagonists. In *Od.* 21.428-429 Odysseus speaks of his punishment of the suitors in a metaphor: 'the hour has come (*νῦν δ' ῥα*) to get supper too for these Achaeans while daylight lasts'. The coming of this hour lies at the climax of the dramatic development of this Homeric epic. Despite this similarity, however, there is a clear difference that the Johannine Jesus claims his knowledge of his own 'hour' that is beyond the reach of the Homeric hero. The sage of the Koheleth (3.11-12), whose use of *miqre* ('chance') in the sense of destiny of death and *καίρως* is (though not a Graecism) unique in the OT, denies such a knowledge by humans.¹¹ In addition to his foreknowledge, Jesus' obedience to the God-appointed hour is stressed, while the Hellenistic concept of destiny of death had lost its earlier association with gods as its initiators and become an impersonal reality, or sometimes a personified, abstract deity itself, which befalls every human being at the appointed time regardless of one's will.

(2) *As a technical term pointing to the end time*

At the same time, however, we should note that the coming of the 'hour', particularly when applied to Jesus, is meant to convey an idea characteristic of the Jewish expectation of the end time. In Jewish writings from the Second Temple period, *ῥα*, like other temporal concepts, 'acquired a strong eschatological and apocalyptic stress',¹² though its use for a time of death is not unknown.¹³ In the LXX of the Book of Daniel *ῥα* is used as part of a phrase referring to the end time in which the

9 Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.125. This is applicable both to Greek and Latin dramas. The 'evil hour' is used in Seneca's *Oedipus*, 385-387, with a reference to a time of absolute tragedy.

10 E.g. 3 Macc 5.13; cf. 5.8, 15.

11 See Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 119-120.

12 H.-C. Hahn, *DNTT* 3.848. See 2 Baruch 30.1-3 (cf. 72.2).

13 See 2 Baruch 36.9, 11.

eschatological coming of God to punish the evil and to give salvation (eternal life) to the righteous is expected.¹⁴ Especially in Dan 8-12 *ῥρα* is used to translate the term *ץק* ('end time').¹⁵ In Sir 18.20, which reads, 'Examine yourself before you are judged, and at the hour of visitation you will find forgiveness', 'the hour of visitation' (*ῥρα επισκοπῆς*, cf. *עת פקדה* (*ץק*)) signifies the time of the eschatological judgement.¹⁶ In the Damascus Document of Qumran (CD 19.10-11) 'the Messiah of Aaron and Israel', a phrase generally understood as referring to the Qumran's expectation of two messiahs,¹⁷ is said to come for judgement and salvation 'in the time of the visitation' (*ב.ץק הפקדה*). Thus the eschatological coming of the two messiahs, which corresponds to the eschatological coming of God (CD 19.15), is expressed in terms of *ץק*, for which *ῥρα* is a frequent Septuagintal rendering. A comparable expression occurs in Jewish apocalypses as well. In 4 Ezra 7.26, although the same term is not used, the phrase 'the time (*tempus*)¹⁸ will come' is a reference to the coming of the time of the messianic woes (*signis*) at the end time.¹⁹ A similar use is attested in 2 Baruch 25.1: 'You also will be preserved until that time, namely that sign which the Most High will bring about before the inhabitations of the earth at the end of days'. Turning to the NT, the author of the Book of Apocalypse uses *ῥρα* to refer to the apocalyptic event at the end time.²⁰ Rev 9.15 uses the *ῥρα* as part of the series of temporal terms referring to the time of an apocalyptic event of divine punishment, while the term is associated with the eschatological judgement in Rev 14.7 (also 18.17).²¹ If the word *ῥρα* in the Fourth

14 *ץק עת* may not be a technical phrase for the end time in the original context of Daniel. See J.A. Montgomery, *Daniel*, 346. Cf. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 215-216.

15 *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Lexicon zum Alten Testament*, 3.1045; cf. *BDB* 893. The LXX of Daniel translates *ץק עת* ('Endzeit') *ῥρα καιροῦ* (8.17) and its equivalent *ץק מועד ῥρα καιρου συντελείας* (8.19). While *καιρὸς συντελείας* is used for *ץק עת* in 11.35 and *ץק* in 9.26; 12.4, (cf. 11.27; 12.6, 13), *ץק עת* is rendered simply *ῥρα συντελείας* in 11.40 (Theod: *καιροῦ πέρας*). Especially in 11.35 *ῥρα* (*המועד*: 'the appointed time'; cf. Theod. *καιρός*) is equated with *καιρὸς συντελείας*. In the Aramaic section of Daniel the appointed time (*מועד*) when the holy ones receive the kingdom is rendered *καιρός* (7.22). Cf. Dan 4.15, 16; 11.45.

16 Yet see Sir 11.22, 27; 12.25; 32.11; 39.33.

17 CD 12.23-13.1; 14.19; 20.1; cf. 1QS 9.11; 1QSa 2.11-12; 1QSb 5.20-28. For the view of double messianic expectation of Qumran see Schürer, *History*, 2.550-552.

18 It is rendered 'days' in the Syriac and Ethiopian versions, but Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 202, prefers 'time' arguing that 'days' was perhaps influenced by 5.1 and 6.18.

19 Other terms are used for the end time: 7.75; 3.14.

20 Delling, *TDNT* 9.677.

21 Rev 9.15 reads: *ἤλθεν ἡ ῥρα τῆς κρίσεως αὐτοῦ*. Cf. 14.15 (*ἤλθεν ἡ ῥρα θερίσαι*). Elsewhere *ἡμέρα* is used to refer to the day of judgement (2 Pet 3.7; 1 John 4.17; Jude 6).

Gospel refers to the fixed *Zeitpunkt* in the salvation history, it would be almost equivalent to the Greek *καιρός* used in a similar fashion (cf. John 7.6, 8).²² Likewise, PsSol 17.21 links the coming of the Davidic Messiah with the appointed *Zeitpunkt*, *καιρός*.²³ More importantly, the end time is applied personally to the Messiah in the apocalyptic vision of 4 Ezra 13.52; there the manifestation of the, otherwise-hidden, Messiah ('my Son', cf. 7.28) and those who are with him (cf. 6.26; 7.28; 14.9) is said to happen 'in the time of *his day*'.

(3) *The Johannine Use*

In Fourth Gospel *ώρα* along with *καιρός* is predominantly applied personally to Jesus in reference to the time of his glorification through the Passion perhaps together with his departure (John 2.4; 7.30; 8.20; 12.23, 27; 13.1; 16.32; 17.1). It is evident in the Gospel that *ώρα* and *καιρός* contain a strong apocalyptic overtone referring to the *eschaton*. In John 16.25-33 the *ώρα* is used, like the Qumran use of *קָק*, to mean not only (a) the hour of open revelation but also (b) that of tribulation. (a) Likewise, the coming *ώρα* in John 16.25f, which is closely linked with *ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ* of 16.26—a common term for the end time—, brings about a change of the manners of revelation. In 1QH 9.24 *קָק* and *מִוֵּעַד* refer to the end time until which the truth (which may be identical to the mystery of God's wisdom of 9.23) is concealed. In 1QpHab 7.7, 12 'The final age' (*קָק הַאֲחֵרִים*) is associated with the revelation of God's mysteries to the Teacher of Righteousness. (b) In John 16.32 the hour which is coming, and indeed has come (*ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ ἐλήλυθεν*) is identified as the time when every disciple will be scattered into one's home. Thus *θλίψις* in the immediately following verse implies that this hour is to be understood as that of eschatological tribulation. In Qumran 'the age of wrath' (*קָק הַרִּיב*; CD 1.5; 1QH 3.28) refers to the period of tribulation before the end-time salvation.²⁴ This motif is not confined to Qumran literature but is

22 So Haenchen, *John*, 2.7; Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 312; Becker, *Johannes*, 1.236; Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.140; Schneider, *Johannes*, 162-163; Schulz, *Johannes*, 113; Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 67-68.

23 PsSol 17.21: *εἰς τὸν καιρόν, ὃν εἶλον σου, τοῦ βασιλεῦσαι ἐπὶ Ἰσραὴλ παῖδά σου.*

24 In 1QpHab 7.7, 12 a last period of tribulation and suffering before the age of salvation is spoken of by the prolonged 'final age'.

characteristic of Jewish apocalyptic writings (and apocalyptic sections in the NT) also.²⁵

Yet there are some passages in the Gospel that would suggest that the end time has already come during the earthly ministry of Jesus. The famous passage of realised eschatology *ἔρχεται ἡ ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστίν* is used for the coming of the end time, which fulfils the expectations of universal worship of God (4.21) and resurrection of the dead (5.25), for both of them are expected to happen at the end time in Jewish prophetic/apocalyptic eschatology in general. What is meant would be that the promised hour is already come in the mission and/or in the person of Jesus, rather than that it is 'now' only in the time of the readers.²⁶ In the resurrection of Lazarus Jesus's words to Martha confirm that the Jewish traditional expectation of the resurrection of the dead at the end time as expressed in her words (11.24) has now fulfilled in him: 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he dies, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die' (11.25). Therefore, in the Gospel the coming of *ὥρα* as the end time is not only applied to the cross and resurrection (i.e. the lifting-up and glorification) of Jesus but also to the ministry of Jesus on earth as a whole. In other words, the coming of the end time with its characteristic judgement and salvation is applied to the *duration* of Jesus' ministry on earth, which culminates in the eschatological *Zeitpunkt* of his crucifixion leading to his resurrection and ascension.

Since *ὥρα* appears in what can be called the theme passage (12.23) of John 12.20-36, its semantic significance can be overwhelming in the pericope. In particular, due to its recurrence in what is generally regarded as a Johannine version of Gethsemane (12.27) and due to the word *νῦν* which clearly corresponds to the hour that has come, five interesting observations can be made.

- (i) The word *νῦν* modifies the *ταραχή* of Jesus in 12.27. As we shall see in detail later, this anguish of Jesus should be regarded as a messianic woe of the

25 Dan 12.1; (cf. Hab 3.16; Zeph 1.5); Jub 23.22ff; 4 Ezra 6.21ff; 7.8-9; 2 Baruch 15.8; 48.50; SibOr 2.155; Mark 13.19, 24; cf. Mark 13.7-8, 12. Various kinds of woes symbolise the reversal of natural and social order before the divine judgement.

26 So Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 98.

Righteous Sufferer voiced in the context of the attack of the antagonists representing the force of Satan. The apocalyptic language of the Qumran *Hodayot* expressing the anguish of the Teacher of Righteousness comes close to this Johannine use.

- (ii) The Johannine Jesus' negation (ἀλλὰ...) to the petition 'Πάτερ, σῶσόν με ἐκ τοῦ ὥρας ταύτης;', together with other references to Jesus' hour, would suggest that this hour is a divinely appointed time. Even Jesus, already identified as the *Logos* the mediator of creation, cannot escape from the appointed time for him. Such is a characteristic belief observable in Jewish wisdom and apocalyptic traditions that all times at the end are divinely predetermined and all events are under the firm control of God.²⁷ This does not mean that he had a certain resignation in front of the unchangeable fate as Stoics would have done, but as in Jewish apocalypticism the individual's responsibility and freedom of will is scarcely affected by this apocalyptic determinism.²⁸ Rather this hour represents the purpose of his coming, for Jesus says: διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον εἰς τὴν ὥραν ταύτην (12.27d). This is our third point, to which we now turn.
- (iii) This final response to his own anguish indicates the Johannine Jesus' self-awareness concerning the ultimate end of his mission. By making the first half of the Gospel orbit around the repeated references to the coming hour of Jesus, the author lays stress on Jesus' awareness of its final arrival. This knowledge concerning the end time should be a manifestation of the exclusive knowledge concerning the heavenly things claimed by Jesus the Son of man (3.11-12), which he reveals by descending from where he was before in the bosom of the Father (1.18; 3.13). This exclusive knowledge of the end is a characteristic of an apocalypticist concerned with the divine mysteries of the end time.
- (iv) Although it is not directly associated with ὥρα or νῦν, Jesus' prayer and the heavenly voice in 12.28 are closely related to the announcement of the coming hour concerning the glorification of the Son of man. For the second half of the

²⁷ See von Rad, *Wisdom*, 263-283. Dan 2.21; AssMos 12.4f; 1 Enoch 39.11; 92.2; 4 Ezra 6.1-6; 13.58; Jub 32.21; 1QS 3.15f.

²⁸ Cf. von Rad, *Wisdom*, 263.

heavenly voice, *καὶ πάλιν δοξάσω*, would correspond to the glorification of the Son of man expressed in the divine passive *δοξασθήναι* at 12.23 (cf. 13.31), meaning that God will 'glorify', i.e. 'bring to a position of honour and clothe with heavenly splendor' or 'magnify' the Son of man.²⁹

- (v) As the double *ῥῆν* in 12.31 indicates, the hour coincides also with the judgement of this world and the expulsion of the ruler of this world.

In the light of the Jewish apocalyptic use of *ῥῶρα*, we would expect that the terminology of restoration or salvation is linked with this term in John 12.20-36 as well. It would suffice here to mention a few elements related to salvation as well as judgement: the contrast between death and eternal life (12.25), the bearing-fruit effect of the death of a grain (12.24), and the drawing 'all' as a result of Jesus' lifting up (12.32).

Before drawing a conclusion, we cannot avoid the question frequently raised as to whether the 'hour' of Jesus refers to his death, or death to ascension, or resurrection, or ascension. Nicholson argues that it refers simply to Jesus' death and that the other elements are not included. G. Delling, taking the *ῥῶρα* in its ordinary sense of the 'right, fixed favourable time', maintains that the 'hour' is a term deeply-rooted in the Johannine Jesus' consciousness of his mission (2.4; 7.30; 8.20; 12.23; 17.1) and means 'the time for going to the cross'.³⁰ Yet it is undeniable that it primarily refers to the Passion with the cross as its centre; it is not confined to the crucifixion itself. Rather there is some strong evidence that suggests that the hour of Jesus extends from his arrest to ascension. That the hour starts with the arrest is implied by the author's comments that the Jews could not arrest him because his hour had not yet come (7.30; 8.20). Furthermore, since it is also clarified soon afterwards that the hour is for Jesus to 'depart from this world to the Father' (13.1), the hour for Jesus as the Son of man to be glorified would embrace the process beginning with the crucifixion and culminating in his ascension.³¹ Despite such a wider perspective, it cannot be doubted that the hour of glorification of Jesus as the Son of man is focused on the crucifixion. As Thüsing

29 For the discussion of this meaning of *δοξάζειν* in the Fourth Gospel see Loader, *The Christology*, 54, 107-109; de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 177-182.

30 Delling, *TDNT* 9.678.

31 So A. Geroge, 'L'Heure', 396.

remarks, 'Der Kreuzestod ist das zentrale Geschehen des irdischen Werkes in solchem Maße, daß die "Stunde" der Verherrlichung erst gekommen ist, wenn die Passion einsetzt'.³²

Such an application of the decisive eschatological moment to the Passion of Jesus is not unknown to the Synoptics. Set within the context of the ever increasing hostility of the Jewish authorities and their attempt to arrest him, the Johannine Jesus' reference to the coming of the hour can be seen to be analogous to the Synoptic Jesus' announcement of the coming (Matt: ἤγγικεν; Mark: ἤλθεν) of the hour for the Son of man to be handed over (παράδοται) to the hands of the sinners (Matt 26.45//Mark 14.41). Commenting on these passages, D. Allison demonstrates that in Matthew and Mark also the elements that were expected to mark the transition between the present age and the messianic age are used to depict the suffering and resurrection of Jesus.³³

(4) *Conclusion* We have seen the possibility that the Johannine concept of ὥρα (and κairoσ) pertains both to its Hellenistic and Jewish usages. Since the idea similar to its Hellenistic use had already found its way in to Jewish literature (e.g. Dan 11.45 LXX; Koh 9.11-12), it is not surprising to find its personal application to Jesus' death. Yet, it also constitutes a strong point of contact with the Hellenistic culture. At the same time, it has to be stressed that the coming of the hour for the Son of man to be glorified in John 12.23 is presented in the main as corresponding to the Jewish prophetic/apocalyptic expectation of the coming of the *Zeitpunkt* in which the divine judgement of the world is executed and the restoration of the Temple, the covenantal people and the entire creation becomes reality. The amalgamation of these two concepts is brilliantly done by the author of the Fourth Gospel in describing the crucial moment of Jesus' mission.

Regarding ἐγλήυσεν ἡ ὥρα in 17.1 ('Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may also glorify you'), Bultmann holds that the hour refers to an 'eschatological event': 'The evangelist has depicted the work of Jesus in such a way that it can only, and should only, be understood in the light of the end: as eschatologi-

³² Thüsing, *Der Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 100.

³³ Allison, *The End*, 26-50. Here the hour refers to the eschatological hour of tribulation applied to Jesus personally also.

cal event... This [that Jesus' glorification is 'both the exaltation and the humiliation'] is why the coming of Jesus is judgement: it is precisely *the historical figure of Jesus*, precisely *his human history that has become the eschatological event by means of the ὥρα of δοξαθῆναι*'.³⁴ Bultmann might be correct, if it is to be viewed within the context of fundamentally apocalyptic eschatology.³⁵ The fourth evangelist sees the human history of Jesus as the personification of the end time with its judgement and restoration. The ὥρα of the Johannine Jesus is not only one man's moment of the earthly human history pointing to his death on the cross, but also the hour of salvation history.³⁶

4.3 Major Themes of the Apocalyptic Scene concerning the End-Time Judgement and Salvation

As we have seen, the context of Jesus' revelatory ministry in John 12.20-36 is coloured with the terminology of apocalyptic eschatology. The coming of the eschatological *Zeitpunkt* for God's glorification of the Son of man and Jesus' concealment in the manner of the eschatological withdrawal of the divine Wisdom from the unrighteous suggest that what we are handling here is concerned with the revelation of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation. We now turn to a consideration of the Gospel's presentation of the apocalyptic scene of the end-time judgement and salvation, which, we believe, are revealed in the pericope under discussion.

4.3.1 The Coming of the Greeks as the Eschatological Pilgrimage of Gentiles

The entire scene of John 12.20ff is set up by the coming of the Greeks, who are depicted as pilgrims who, having come (to Jerusalem) to 'worship' for the Passover, 'approach' Philip with a request to 'see' Jesus. Three exegetical issues are to be dis-

34 Bultmann, *John*, 493-494. Italics mine.

35 Bultmann, *John*, 117 n1, acknowledges that ὥρα in John 7.30; 8.20; 12.23; 13.1; 16.21; and 17.1 (not in 2.4) means 'the hour determined by God', but fails to see its apocalyptic connotation. Bultmann, *John*, 279 n3, also understands the *καιρός* as an eschatological time.

36 *Contra* J. Schneider, *TDNT* 2.673.

cussed: (1) who are Ἕλληνες who came to see Jesus?; (2) why their approach to Jesus has to be mediated by the two disciples?; (3) what is the narrative function of their coming (or the relation of 12.20-20 to the rest of the pericope, especially 12.23)?.

1. *Who are the Greeks?*

The identification of the Greeks is important in understanding the significance attached to their coming. The description of them as coming 'to worship in the feast' (of Passover) suggests their adherence to Judaism, but scholarly views differ in detail. J.A.T. Robinson and W.A. Meeks maintain that, as *διασπορά* at 7.35 refers to Diaspora Jewry, so does Ἕλληνες here mean 'Greek-speaking Jews' of Diaspora or proselytes and not Gentiles.³⁷ Some with Bultmann would regard them as proselytes,³⁸ while others as God-fearers (*σεβομένοι τὸν θεόν*).³⁹ While maintaining that the term refers to proselytes, on the other hand, Bultmann and Dodd have interpreted that the evangelist depicted them as the 'representatives of the Greek world'.⁴⁰ An elaborate interpretation synthesising these two interpretations is put forward by K. Tuchido, following Martyn's two-level drama scheme that the experience of the Johannine community is projected into the narrative of Jesus' history.⁴¹ Tuchido argues that Ἕλληνες is used by the evangelist to refer simultaneously to the *προσήλυτοι* or *σεβόμενοι* in Jesus' day and "the representatives of the whole pagan world" in the evangelist's time.⁴² How suggestive it may be, Tuchido's interpretation requires more precision, and his two-level drama theory needs more warrants. Rather, the following considerations suggest that they are God-fearers of Greek learning, and the narratological significance of their approach to Jesus will be discussed afterwards.

The term used in 12.20 is not Ἑλληνισαί, which would have meant Greek-speaking Jews,⁴³ nor Ἑλληνικοί which would mean Greek-speaking Jews, or 'the Hel-

37 Robinson, *The Priority*, 60; Meeks, 'Breaking Away', 97.

38 Bultmann, *John*, 423; BAGD 252; Ruiz, *Der Missionsgedanke*, 139-140; W.E. Moore, 'Sir We Wish', 75f. Bultmann remarks: 'Doubtless they are so called proselytes; if they are not described as such (as *προσήλυτοι* or *σεβόμενοι*) but are called Ἕλληνες, obviously this is because they should be viewed as representatives of the Greek world'.

39 E.g. Loisy, *Le Quatrième Évangile*, 369; de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 190.

40 Bultmann, *John*, 423; Dodd, *Interpretation*, 371.

41 See Martyn, 'Glimpses', 149-175.

42 Tuchido, "ΕΛΛΗΝ", 348-350; *Tradition and Redaction*, 134-136..

43 Cf. Hengel, *Jesus and Paul*, 9.

lenists' to use the term of the Book of Acts.⁴⁴ Nor is it *προσήλυτοι*, which is used for full proselytes, or those who have become full Jews through circumcision.⁴⁵ But the term used here is the plural of *Ἕλλην*, which, in general, is used for non-Jews who had Greek language and education regardless of one's ethnic origin.⁴⁶ Isocrates' famous formulation, which was supported at the beginning of the Hellenistic age by Aristotle, would have held true in the first century CE as well: 'The designation "Hellene" seems no longer to be a matter of descent or of disposition, and those who share in our education have more right to be called "Hellenes" than those who have a common descent with us' (*Panegy.* 4.50).⁴⁷

For Josephus, who is approximately contemporary with the Fourth Gospel, a favourite antithesis is not *Ἰουδαῖοι*-*Ἕλληνες* but *Ἕλληνες*-*βάρβαροι*.⁴⁸ For Josephus *Ἕλληνες* generally refers to those belonging to the educated middle and upper strata of the Roman Empire, while *βάρβαροι* refers to all other inhabitants, perhaps including Jews.⁴⁹ He also reports that among the people who were not allowed to partake the Passover sacrifice in Jerusalem were 'the foreigners, who were present in great numbers for worship' (*War.* 6.472). In the Book of Acts *Ἕλληνες* is used for Greek participants of the synagogues as well as Greeks in general. On the one hand, it refers to Greek/Gentile God-fearers, who, along with *Ἰουδαῖοι* (full members of the Jewish people by birth or circumcision), constituted the synagogues in the diaspora of Asia Minor where Paul preached (Acts 14.1; 18.4; cf. 13.16, 26; 16.14; 17.4 [*σεβομένοι Ἕλληνες*], 17; 18.7).⁵⁰ They, though attending synagogue worship, had not become *Ἰουδαῖοι* by proselyte conversion. On the other, in Acts 19.10 *Ἕλληνες* seems to refer to the non-Jewish residents of Asia: 'all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks'. *Ἰουδαῖοι τε καὶ Ἕλληνες*' there would be an idiom used

44 See Josephus, *Ant.* 12.240, 263; 18.63; some manuscripts of Luke 23.38; Rev 9.11. Cf. Robinson, *The Priority*, 61-62.

45 Cf. K. G. Kuhn, *TDNT* 6.731. Cf. *bJeb* 62a

46 See H. Windisch, *TDNT* 2.504-516. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, 150-151

47 See Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 65; Windisch, *TDNT* 2.505.

48 Josephus, *War* 5.117; 6.119; *Ant* 1.107; 4.12; 8.284; 11.299; 16.146; 18.20; *AgAp* 1.58.

49 So Schreckenberg, *Historiography and Iconography*, 23.

50 K. G. Kuhn, *TDNT* 9.743-744.

to represent the totality of mankind,⁵¹ with the Ἕλληνες meaning Greek-speaking pagans rather than God-fearers.⁵² In Acts 17.4 the expression σεβομένοι Ἕλληνες is used specifically of 'God-fearing Gentiles'.⁵³

Thus, the view that sees Ἕλληνες to be proselytes militates against the contemporary usage of the term. Although they were ranked lower in the Israelite society,⁵⁴ proselytes were included in the people of Israel.⁵⁵ The Greek-speaking God-fearers who, yet without circumcision, were regarded as being outside the people of Israel despite their respect for Judaism, may be a likely referent of the term.

Those who argue that Ἕλληνες refers to the Diaspora Jews tend to regard διασπορά in John 7.35 as referring to Diaspora Jewry as its English equivalent does.⁵⁶ But W. C. van Unnik argues persuasively that in the LXX διασπορά (הגולה, גלות, ארמית) is conventionally used in a geographical sense (referring to the areas outside Palestine), and that since it, without any modification, could mean Babylonia or Egypt, the term followed by the genitive of οἱ Ἕλληνες suggests that the author's interest is in the Greeks.⁵⁷ Taking the term as 'Greek-speaking Gentile', Hengel argues that in John

51 Acts 19.10; 20.21; [14.1; 18.4; 19.17] Rom 1.16; 2.9f.; 3.9; 10.12; 1 Cor 1.24, etc.

52 Hengel, *Between Jesus and Paul*, 8.

53 God-fearers are mentioned in Josephus, *Ant.* 3.318-319; Suetonius, *Tiberius* 32.2; *Domitian* 12.2; Epictatus, *Dissertationes* 2.19-21; *Dio Cassius* 67.14.1-13; cf. Martial *Epigrammata* 4.4, lines 7-12 (Stern, *GLAJJ* 1:523-524); Plutarch, *Du Superstitione* 3.166a. See Stern, *GLAJJ* 1:549. It is well attested that the Gentiles participated in Temple worship in Jerusalem. Josephus, *Bell.* 6.427-8. Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 3.318-319.

54 Philo, *Life of Moses* 1.27.147. The Qumran community ranked the proselytes also low among Israelites (CD 14.3-6), excluded them from the middle court of the temple (11QTemple 40.6; cf. 39.5-11) and from the eschatological temple (4QFlor 1.3b-5a, 6-7). For the rabbinic classification of the proselytes, see Moore, *Judaism*, 1.330 n4; 331.

55 In Deut 29.1-15, the προσήλυτοι (פְּרִיטִים) in the camp of Israel are counted among the people of God; in the vision of restored Israel of Ezek 47.21-22 προσήλυτοι living and regenerating among Israel will share the land with the twelve tribes. Josephus, *Ant.* 14.10.8, depicts them as participating in the synagogue and in the sacred meals. See Schürer, *The History*, 3.145, 28. Cf. Acts 2.5, 11. In Rabbinic Judaism, the proselyte is said to be 'like an Israelite in all respects' (*bYeb.* 47b).

56 So also Brown, *John*, 1.311.

57 van Unnik, *Das Selbstverständnis*, 79, 81. Schlatter, *Johannes*, 198, also regards 'Diaspora of the Ἕλληνες' as referring to a geographical area.

7.35 a further Gentile mission that goes beyond the boundary of Judaism is implied in the 'typical Johannine prophetic irony', and that the mission to bring the universal message of salvation in Jesus is geared not to Syrians but to Greeks.⁵⁸

In conclusion, the Ἕλληνες who came to see Jesus were not Diaspora Jews; nor is it likely that they were full proselytes (with circumcision), in which case the author would have used προσήλυτοι. Thus it is more likely that they were understood as σεβομένοι Ἕλληνες, God-fearers of Greek ethnicity or culture who, despite not being formally part of the people of God, nevertheless observed certain Jewish laws and customs such as going up to Jerusalem at Passover to worship in the Temple (12.20).

2. *The Significance of the Mediation by the Two Disciples*

The Greeks who came to see Jesus first approached Philip and then after reporting it to Andrew, Philip, along with Andrew, takes the request to Jesus (cf. 1.40, 43-46; 6.5, 7; 14.8-9). The mediation needed between the Greeks and Jesus might infer a physical or socio-religious distance between them. But there is no information given as to whether the Greeks were in the Court of Gentiles⁵⁹ while Jesus was in the inner court, as the temple regulation required. At least the author is not interested in such detailed information, so the solution must be sought at another level, presumably a literary or symbolic one.

In fact, commentators have seen some symbolic meanings in the mediation by the two apostles. Some regard it as an expression of modesty or politeness of the Greeks,⁶⁰ while others attribute it to an unusual circumstance of the situation⁶¹ or to a custom in which a foreigner or a newcomer should be recommended by two members

58 Hengel, *Question*, 122. So also Beasley-Murray, *John*, 112-113.

59 E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 75, illustrates the general situation of the court of Gentiles: 'there was an enormous court into which Gentiles could enter, and presumably they could buy in the shops outside the temple, walk up the steps, and stand in the Court of Gentiles and gawk at the porticoes, they might touch a Jew on his or her way past the balustrade'.

60 Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.382.

61 J. Schneider, *Johannes*, 229.

of the community.⁶² Some argued, based on the probable Greek knowledge of Philip⁶³ and the tradition of Philip and Andrew playing prominent roles in Asia Minor and in the mission to the Greeks,⁶⁴ that this passage symbolised the mission to the Gentiles, especially in Asia Minor. Though plausible and suitable for the supposed Asian provenance of the Fourth Gospel, this theory cannot be held with any degree of certainty. Philip whom Eusebius mentions along with Andrew as living in Hierapolis is not one of the twelve disciples but one of the seven Hellenists. A similar type of symbolic interpretation is offered also by Bultmann who maintained that the mediation by the disciples has 'a symbolic meaning: the access of the Greek world to Jesus is mediated through the apostles'.⁶⁵ T. Onuki considers the indirectness of the Greeks' approach to Jesus to be a symbol of the post-Easter manner of following Jesus: 'Die Funktion des Einleitungstextes (V.20-22) besteht darin, die *historische Indirektheit* dieser nachösterlichen Nachfolge zum Ausdruck zu bringen — Indirektheit in dem Sinne, daß für die johanneische Gemeinde keine direkte, reale Nachfolge in der Form einer realen Lebensgemeinschaft mit dem historischen Jesus mehr in Frage kommt, die eben nur vorösterlich möglich war'.⁶⁶ Yet both Bultmann and Onuki fail to note that some of the early disciples of Jesus were also called indirectly through the witness of John the Baptist and the earliest disciples of Jesus such as Andrew and Philip (1.35ff).

It is clear that the accounts of the witness by Andrew and Philip are deliberately set in parallel to each other: (a) The calling of them is summarised in the word 'following': while Andrew with his fellow disciple of John the Baptist 'followed' (1.37, 38, 40) Jesus through their teacher's witness (1.39), Philip is called directly by Jesus who said 'Follow me' (1.43). (b) Immediately after their encounters with Jesus, each of

62 Bultmann, *John* 423 n5, rejects this view.

63 R. Riesner, *Jesus*, 412. The fact that Bethsaida lies in the vicinity of a Hellenistic city called Julias which was built by Tetrarch Philippos in 2cBCE (Josephus, *Ant.* 18.28.108; *Bell* 2.168; 3.515) suggests Philipp's knowledge of Greek. Cf. Robinson, *Priority*, 62 n127. Andrew, Philip, Thaddeus, and Simon are Greek names (Riesner, *Jesus*, 413).

64 So Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.382. According to Eusebius, Philip was a highly respected figure in Asia Minor (*HE* III.31.2; V.24.2) and Andrew comes first in Papias' list of disciples (*HE* III.39.4; cf. Dodd, *Tradition*, 305).

65 Bultmann, *John*, 423. Similarly H.B. Kossen, 'Who are the Greeks', 97-110.

66 T. Onuki, *Gemeinde und Welt*, 67.

them finds someone else and begins to witness. Andrew tells Simon Peter that 'we have found' the Messiah (1.41), while Philip tells Nathaniel about 'him of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets wrote' (1.45). These witnessing events are reported in the same pattern: *εὐρίσκει...καὶ λέγει αὐτῶ* ...*εὐρήκαμεν*. (c) Both take them to Jesus (1.42: Andrew brought (*ἤγαγεν*) Peter to Jesus; 1.46: Philip says to Nathanael, 'Come and see'.). Their appearance in parallel, in conjunction with the 'following' Jesus, seems to suggest that 12.20ff is set in an envelope pattern with 1.35-51, thus forming an *inclusio* of the cycles of narratives concerning Jesus' ministry represented by the signs.⁶⁷

3. *The Narrative Significance of the Coming of Greeks*

The news of the coming of the Greeks is portrayed as evoking the Johannine Jesus' declaration of the coming of the hour, the hour of his glorification as the Son of man (12.23; cf. 2.4; 7.30; 8.30; 13.1; 17.1). Since we have dismissed the alleged *aporia* between John 12.22 and 23, a symbolic significance suggested in their coming to see him has to be explicated.

W.J. Bittner⁶⁸ proposes an interesting view that John 12.20-23 is to be read in the light of Isa 11 and the *ὑψωθῆναι* of Jesus (12.32f) in the light of Isa 11.12, where the Davidic Messiah's lifting up as an ensign to the nations triggers the eschatological gathering of the people of God.⁶⁹ His argument is based on two grounds: (i) As the Johannine Jesus is depicted as one with knowledge, so is 'a shoot from the stump of Jesse' said to receive the Spirit of knowledge (Isa 11.2). (ii) At the report of the coming of the Greeks to see him, Jesus realises that the coming of *ἥρα*, a fixed time of God, in the sense of Isa 11.10-11, has come. There 'that day' (*ביום ההוא*, meaning the fixed time) is concerned with 'the root of Jesse', i.e. the Davidic Messiah, who stands as an ensign to peoples (*עממים/ἐθνῶν*), for whom Gentiles (*גוים*) seek (*יִדְרֹשׁוּ*). In Isa

⁶⁷ See John 12.37; cf. 2.11, 18, 23; 3.2; 4.54; 6.2, 14, 26; 7.31; 9.16; 10.41; 11.47; 12.18.

⁶⁸ Bittner, *Jesu Zeichen*, 253, 266-267.

⁶⁹ Bittner, *Jesu Zeichen*, 188-189, 249-250.

11.12 it is said that the Lord will 'raise an ensign for the nations' (נשא נס לגוים/ἀρεῖ σημεῖον εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, cf. לבס עמיים: 11.10) to gather the dispersed of Israel. Bittner holds that יקרו, the Targum's translation of נשא of Isa 11.12, has a double meaning 'to raise' and 'to execute', and is reflected in the Johannine presentation of the ὑψωθῆναι, or lifting-up/crucifixion of Jesus.⁷⁰ Although his reference to Isa 11.2 may be valid because of John 1.33, the difficulty of Bittner's view is that it hinges on a highly elaborate theory of finding in the ὑψωθῆναι of Jesus a double meaning of the Aramaic קר which in turn translates נשא of Isa 11.12 in the sense of raising 'an ensign for the nations'. Furthermore, the σημεῖον/נס equation seems to be foreign to the Johannine signs, and that the LXX, on which the Johannine citations mainly rely, uses ἀρεῖν instead of ὑψωθῆναι in Isa 11.12.

Although it is difficult to see Isa 11 directly behind John 12.20-23, there are some grounds for the view that the coming of Greeks symbolises the eschatological gathering of peoples.

(i) The scene of the Greeks coming was set by 12.19, where the narrator reports the Pharisees' words of desperation: 'Look, the (whole) world has gone after him'. Immediately after this reference to ὁ κόσμος which obviously meant the great Jewish crowd by the Pharisees, the interest of the Greeks to Jesus is announced (12.20f). Many commentators note its ironic tone implying the entire human world following Jesus, which is to be explained in the episode of the coming of the Greeks.⁷¹

(ii) The coming of Greeks could be read in conjunction with 12.32 which speaks of Jesus' lifting-up as 'drawing πάντα to him'.⁷² In the OT ἐλκύειν is frequently associated with the love of Yahweh, which comes into expression especially in Jer 38.3 (LXX) in conjunction with the new covenant (Hos 11.4; Cant 1.4).⁷³ The Greeks coming to see Jesus in John 12.20-22 can be seen as a narrative echo of 6.44, where Jesus

70 Bittner, *Jesu Zeichen*, 254-255. He also believes that the eschatological gathering of all the peoples in Isa 11.11-12 is also reflected in John 10.16-18; 11.51f (256).

71 Bauer, *Johannes*, 156; Barrett, *John*, 420; Brown, *John*, 1.464; Lindars, *John*, 425; Schneider, *Johannes*, 227; Becker, *Johannes*, 2.379; M.R. Ruiz, *Missionsgedanke*, 132-133.

72 So also de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 191.

73 Kohler, *Kreuz und Menschwerdung*, 240.

says: οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με ἐὰν μὴ ὁ πατὴρ ὁ πέμψας με ἐλκύσῃ αὐτόν. The saying of John 12.32 should also be understood within this context. Furthermore, ἐλκύειν πάντες seems to be echoed in the post-Easter fishing episode which uses the verb for the disciples' dragging the net full of fish (21.8).⁷⁴ Whatever its exact meaning may be, the symbolism intended by the number 'one hundred and fifty-three' (21.11), it is generally agreed, is concerned with the mission to all nations. In the context of the ironic truth of the entire world following Jesus (12.19) and the approach of Greeks, πάντες in 12.32 would mean, as in Paul, all peoples including both Jews and Greeks.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the phrase πρὸς ἑαυτόν has an idiomatic sense 'to one's own home or house' in 14.3 and 20.10 (some mss).⁷⁶ This phrase in 14.3, used in reference to the Father's House (14.2), would correspond to the (eschatological) rebuilt Temple which is identified as his own Body by Jesus in 2.19-21.⁷⁷ This may be further supported by the fact that in John 14 Jesus' promise to invite the disciples to his home (14.3) is juxtaposed with the resurrected Jesus' and the Father's dwelling with the community of believers (14.23), for such is the characteristic of the Temple as a dwelling place of God. It would follow that πάντας ἐλκύσω πρὸς ἑμαυτόν in 12.32 means Jesus' gathering the eschatological people of God including the Gentiles (represented by the Greeks) to his House through his ὑψωθῆναι as a reference to the manner of his death (12.32-33).

This reading mitigates against the views expressed by R. Schnackenburg that in the Fourth Gospel the horizontal, temporal perspective of salvation history (such as this age and the age to come) is replaced by the 'vertical' opposition between the earthly and heavenly sphere in that the evangelist 'regards the goal of salvation as lying in the heavenly world', and that the evangelist's 'searching is concerned more with the exist-

74 So also U. Busse, 'Die "Hellenen"', 2098.

75 Cf. J.D.G. Dunn, 'The Justice of God', 9, who points out that for Paul πάντες (Rom 3.22; 4.11; 10.4; Gal 3.26; cf. Rom 4.16) means primarily 'all, that is, Gentiles as well as Jews'.

76 BAGD 212; Josephus, *Ant.* 8.124.

77 M. de Jonge, 'The Radical Eschatology', 486, takes πάλιν ἔρχομαι in John 14.3 to refer to the parousia. But our reading would suggest that it is a reference to Jesus' return to the disciples through his sending the Paraclete.

ential situation and the ultimate fate of the individual'.⁷⁸ It is true that the vertical perspective is emphasised with respect to the theme of revelation and to the origin of Jesus (3.12, 13, 31; 6.32, 62; 8.23, etc.); the horizontal perspective is evident in the prospect of the gathering of the people of God. Thus, salvation the Johannine Jesus depicts is expressly 'communal'⁷⁹ and 'horizontal', though not at the cost of its individual aspects.

E.P. Sanders⁸⁰ criticises the view that Jesus, by pointing to the Gentile mission, was opposed to contemporary Judaism whose attitude towards the Gentiles are generally negative,⁸¹ and argues cautiously that, though the evidence is not enough to reach a precise picture, most Jews in the pre-70 period most likely expected in one form or another the Gentiles' return to God at the end time. Sanders finds six discernible ideas related to the Gentiles in the end-time among the biblical prophets, which were inherited in the post-biblical literature.⁸² Since some ideas are overlapping one another, we would categorise them rather widely: 'positive' and 'negative':

1. The 'positive' side of the future expectations on the Gentiles is concerned with the universal acknowledgement of and worship of God.⁸³ Because of Israel being the light for the nations, salvation reaches to the end of the earth.⁸⁴ As a result the wealth of nations will flow into Jerusalem,⁸⁵ while the kings will worship the God and the nations serve Israel.⁸⁶ Thus the Gentiles will be saved and included in Israel.⁸⁷

78 Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.434-435.

79 This aspect is emphasised by M. de Jonge, 'The Radical Eschatology', 485-486.

80 Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 212-218. Sanders points to PsSol 17, which speaks of both the destruction, punishment, and submission of the Gentiles (17.25, 28-30) and their acknowledgement and worship of God in Jerusalem (17.34-35).

81 Cf. Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise*, 40-41.

82 Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 214. For the eschatological development of the Zion tradition, see M. Weinfeld, 'Zion and Jerusalem', 75-115.

83 See Weinfeld, 'Zion and Jerusalem', 111-112.

84 Isa 49.6; cf. Isa 51.4; 2.2ff; Mic 4.1ff.

85 Isa 45.14; cf. Isa 60.5-16; 61.6; Mic 4.13; Zeph 2.9; Zech 14.14; Ps 68.31; Tobit 13.11; 1QM 12.13f; PsSol 17.31 (based on Is 55.5).

86 Isa 49.23; cf. Isa 45.14, 23; Mic 7.17; Zech 14.16; Ps 68.29, 32; 1 Enoch 90.3; 1QM 12.23f; PsSol 17.30.

87 Isa 45.22, 56.6-8; cf. Zech 2.11; 8.20-23; Tobit 14.16f; 1 Enoch 90.30-33.

2. The 'negative' side of the expectations concerning Gentiles is to do with their destruction as the enemies of God and Israel.⁸⁸

Seen in this wide eschatological perspective of early Judaism, the Johannine depiction of the coming of the Gentiles seems to correspond to the 'positive' view of the Gentiles at the end time. Hence we agree with U. Busse who views the coming of the Greeks as corresponding to the eschatological gathering of Gentiles to Jerusalem as developed in the Zion tradition.⁸⁹ This would agree with the general import of J. Jeremias who argued that Jesus' proclamation and death were for the purpose of incorporating the Gentiles into the people of God at the end time,⁹⁰ since the condition for gathering πάντας to his home (the restored Temple/the Body of the Resurrected) is his crucifixion (ὑψωθῆναι: 12.32). This perspective of the Fourth Gospel shows a marked difference from the Jewish apocalypses nearly contemporary to it. The end-time judgement scene in 4 Ezra 13.11, 37-38 contains a vision of the gathering of the nations for their punishment by means of the Law symbolised as fire coming out of the Danielic human-like figure as judge. Likewise, the end-time judgement scene of 1 Enoch 62 has the enthroning of the Son of man on his throne of glory as judge in conjunction with 'the day of judgement' and the theme of the punishment of the mighty rulers of the world when recognising the Son of man (62.3). 2 Baruch 72.2 speaks of the coming of the time after the eschatological signs of war, earthquake and famine when the Anointed One (the Servant) comes and calls all nations for the final judgement.

Okure astutely conceives that the desire of the Greeks to see Jesus is to be seen in conjunction with that of Andrew and his unnamed fellow disciple of John the Baptist (1.37-39), of Simon Peter (1.41), of Nathanael (1.45), of Nicodemus (3.1ff), and of the Samaritans (4.29-30, 40): 'Their coming completes the universal cycle, lends full force to the πάντας in 12.32 and ironically illustrates the truth in the fear of the

88 Mic 5.10-15; Zech 12.2-9; 14.3, 12-14; Ezek 38.22; Joel 4.9ff; Ps 68.21, 30; cf. Jub 2.30; TMos10.7; 4 Ezra 13.11, 37-38; PsSol 17.22, 24-25.

89 Busse, 'Die "Hellenen"', 2092-2093. He bases his argument on the view that sees Zech 9.9 cited in John 12.14b-16 as corresponding to Isa 2/Mich 4. Cf. Weinfeld, 'Zion and Jerusalem', 100-102.

90 Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise*, 73.

Pharisees (12.19)'.⁹¹ Likewise, M. de Jonge observes that 'In vs. 32 it is made clear that what is meant is a bringing-together in the Father's house (14.1-3) of all God's children who are scattered over the whole world (11.49-51; 10.16). On the other hand it is clear from the coming of the Greeks (cf. also 12.19 and the allusion in 7.35) that for "John" the coming together of Greeks and Jews from Palestine and the Diaspora into the community is already the beginning of realisation of the promised eschatological unity of the people of God'.⁹²

(4) Conclusion

It is not surprising that the Greeks disappear in the following narrative, since their narrative function is symbolic, paving the way for Jesus' declaration of the coming of the eschatological 'hour' for the glorification of the Son of man. The author is not interested in their response, but what matters is their coming to see Jesus. Their coming, depicted in a positive manner, symbolises the eschatological pilgrimage of the nations to Jerusalem and its Temple. The fact that there is no mention of the Temple here may imply that Jesus the Son of man who is glorified and lifted up, occupies the centre of the eschatological pilgrimage (cf. John 2.18-22) instead of the Temple of Jerusalem (cf. Isa 60.1ff). This interpretation would explain the lack of the Synoptic account of the Cleansing of the Temple (Matt 21.12-13/Mark 11.15-17; Luke 19.45-46) immediately after the Triumphal Entry, in which the universal nature of the Temple as the house of prayer for all nations (esp. Mark 11.17; cf. Isa 56.7) is stressed.⁹³ For the fourth evangelist the House of Jesus as that of the Father is the eschatological Temple to which all peoples are drawn and which is equated with Jesus' Body. Although it may not be a direct allusion to the post-Easter Gentile mission,⁹⁴ the coming of the Greeks to see Jesus in John 12.20f should be seen as a fulfilment of the eschatological gathering of peoples.

91 Okure, *Mission*, 202.

92 de Jonge, 'Eschatology', 174. Cf. Olsson, *Structure and Meaning*, 241-248.

93 Cf. W.E. Moore, 'Sir, We Wish to See Jesus', 75-93.

94 Cf. Bultmann, *John*, 423; Loisy, *Le Quatrième Évangile*, 370.

4.3.2 *Jesus' Death as Fruit-Bearing*

Related to the eschatological gathering of peoples is the theme of the fruit-bearing in John 12.24, a metaphor also characteristic of the age to come in Jewish apocalypses. Following the double ἀμήν formula Jesus says in an antithetic parallelism (12.24):

- | | |
|----|--|
| a | ἐὰν μὴ ὁ κόκκος τοῦ σίτου πεσῶν εἰς τὴν γῆν ἀποθάνη, |
| b | αὐτὸς ὁ μόνος μένει· |
| a' | ἐὰν δὲ ἀποθάνη, |
| b' | πολὺν καρπὸν φέρει. |

While his view that takes 12.24f to be an ethical teaching is untenable, W.D. Davies's observation of this verse's link with 12.23 is of value: 'it is a kind of exegetical pendant designed to unfold the meaning of the hour which has come at which the Son of Man is to be glorified (xii.23). It is thus not introduced primarily for its intrinsic worth, but merely as explanatory of an event, the work of Jesus, his death.'⁹⁵ Because of the application of the fruit bearing to portray the resurrection in 1 Cor 15.20ff and a life presupposed by the dying as its counterpart, it is undeniable that the resurrection of Jesus is presupposed.⁹⁶ Yet it would be reading too much into the text if we think of the general resurrection in this metaphor in John 12.24. O. Betz might not be far from the target when he maintains that the 'much fruit' produced by the dying grain of wheat signifies the eternal life given to the believers.⁹⁷ However, if we turn to the use of the related metaphors in the rest of the Gospel, the soteriological and mission thrust of the metaphor becomes evident.

(1) *The Grain Imagery in the Eastern Mediterranean*

The metaphor of a seed and harvest, which is not uncommon in the Graeco-Roman culture, albeit without the term 'grain' but with 'seeds' (σπέρματα, *seminum*), may be comparable to the Johannine grain metaphor. In discussing the Parable of the Sower in Mark 4, B. Mack pointed out that the sowing and harvesting is the 'standard analogy for *paideia* [teaching and culture]' in the Hellenistic culture, in which education is assimilated to sowing which would produce harvest in due time.⁹⁸ Hippocrates

⁹⁵ Davies, *The Setting*, 408.

⁹⁶ Berger, *Die Amen-Worte*, 112-113, is of the view that John 12.24 refers to Jesus' death and resurrection.

⁹⁷ Betz, *Der Paraklet*, 126.

⁹⁸ Mack, *A Myth*, 159-160. Cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 5.11.24.

remarked that 'Learning from childhood is analogous to the seeds falling betimes upon the prepared ground' (*Law III*). 'As is the seed that is ploughed into the ground, so must one expect the harvest to be, and similarly when good education is ploughed into your persons, its effect lives and burgeons throughout their lives, and neither rain and nor drought can destroy it (Antiphon, fr. 60 in Diels, *Vorsokratiker*). Seneca (*Epistles*, 38.2) states that 'Words should be scattered like seed; no matter how small the seed may be, if it once has found favourable ground, it unfolds its strength and from an insignificant thing spreads to its greatest growth'. Although it is embedded in a pedagogical setting and not related to death and salvation as in John 12.24, its wide-spread nature would imply that those acquainted with the metaphor could recognise the distinctiveness of the Johannine expression.⁹⁹

A grain imagery is also utilised in some Hellenistic-Roman cults, in which it, like John 12.24, symbolises death and life in a religious sense. In ancient Egypt the death of Osiris, the fertility god and the source of light, was regarded as a cause of some vegetation (perhaps wheat); a commonly found symbol is 'the burial of an Osiris image stuffed with grain or grain and dirt, and these images are usually idly pharic'.¹⁰⁰ The mummified body of Osiris yielding corn stalks is a well-known imagery. In the myth of Osiris his death by Seth's dismembering and re-birth or reincarnation is assimilated to the sowing and harvest. Since Osiris is identified with Dionysus in the Roman Egypt (cf. Dio, L. 24-25),¹⁰¹ it is likely that the originally Egyptian cult was assimilated to the originally Greek cult of Dionysus in the eastern Mediterranean where the Fourth Gospel was probably written and read. In contrast to the wider popularity its counterpart the Isis cult enjoyed in the Hellenistic-Roman world, it is doubtful that the cult of Osiris was practiced widely. Yet as Plutarch's famous treatise *De Iside et Osiride* and other literature (Diodorus Siculus [Book I], Apuleius, *Meamorphoses*) suggest that the myth may well have had wide appeal; even if that was not the case, it was no doubt well known at least to the literal elites outside Egypt. Another use of the grain imagery is the cult of Mithra, a cult associated with the Roman legionaries. Being also a mili-

99 Cf. Mack, *A Myth*, 160.

100 Goodenough, *Symbols*, 5.193-194. See further, L.H. Martin, *Hellenistic Religions*, 73-76.

101 G. Hölbl, *Zeugnisse*, 21-22.

tary centre, the city of Ephesus had the station for the Roman legionaries. On a marble statue found in Ephesus three ears of grain are depicted, coming out of the wound of a ritually slain bull, in place of the tail.¹⁰² Since the bull-slaying and ritual meal represents the giving of life in this cult, the grain symbol here would most likely denote life. In Ephesus an inscription was found, which refers to *ὁ ἱερεὺς καρποφόρου Γῆ[ς]*, the temple of Fruit-Bearing Earth.¹⁰³ When read against these cultic beliefs (although we do not advocate the Ephesian provenance of the Fourth Gospel in its narrow sense), the Johannine Jesus' dying and bearing much fruit as its salvific consequence finds closer parallels than the seed-harvest analogy for *paideia*.

(2) *The Metaphor of Grain in Judaism*

That the symbol of corn of wheat is a widely used national emblem for Israel together with palm branches, reed, and less frequently a bunch of grapes with a leaf, is attested in the designs on the coin struck in the first century CE. Unlike Herod the Great who conformed to the Roman coinage, his sons used either of those images on their coinage, while the Roman prefects (6-41CE) after the death of Herod Archelaus (ethnarch of Judea, Samaria and Idumeneae) tended to use those Jewish emblems on newly issued coins.¹⁰⁴

The metaphor of grain and harvest is frequently utilised in Jewish prophetic, wisdom, apocalyptic writings. The Johannine imagery shows particularly close affinity to the image of the restored earth at the end time used in early Judaism. One of the characteristics of the messianic age is that nature will become extremely fruitful.¹⁰⁵ In 2 Baruch 29.5 it is stated that 'The earth will also yield fruits ten thousandfold. And on one vine will be a thousand branches, and one branch will produce a thousand clusters, and one cluster will produce a thousand grapes, and one grape will produce a core of wine'. In 1 Enoch 10.18-19 every seed will yield thousand-fold product (*σπόρου*

102 Cf. van den Heever, 'Theological Metaphors', 97.

103 Oster, 'Ephesus', 1696-7 n280.

104 See Burnett/Amandry/Ripollès, *Roman Provincial Coinage*, I.1.678-685; 2.178ff. Exceptions were Pontius Pilate and Philip, tetrarch of Gaulantis, Trachontis, Batanea and Paneas (4BCE-39CE). While the former used a symbol of ladle Roman priests used to pour wine in honour of their gods, the latter preferred to use portrait of Augustus and the temple dedicated to him in his allegiance to Rome. But both used, perhaps infrequently, a hand holding three ears of corn as well (*Roman Provincial Coinage*, I.1.681).

105 Cf. Schürer, *The History*, 2.533ff.

ποιήσει καθ' ἑκάστον μέτρον); σπόρος is used for a grain of wheat in the parable of a sower (Mark 4.26, 27; Luke 8.5, 11). Speaking of the judgement and dominion of God the Sibyle says, 'For the all-bearing earth will give the most excellent unlimited fruit to mortals, of grain, wine, and oil and a delightful drink of sweet honey from heaven, trees, fruit of top branches, and rich flocks and herds and lambs of sheep and kids of goats. The cities will be full of good things and the fields will be rich' (SibOr 3.620-623, 743-750; cf. Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 5.33.3-4). All these are concerned with the theme of restoration of the earth in the age to come. Of further interest is that for Rabbis זרע קרש (cf. Isa 6.13) meant a good seed sowed by God 'to bear fruit in abundance'.¹⁰⁶ The Qumran community identified itself with this 'holy seed (זרע הקודש)' (1QIsa^a 6.10).¹⁰⁷

Another kind of affinity can be found in a text from the Babylonian Talmud in which R. Meir comments, in the form of a parable (משל), on the resurrection of the dead in his response to Cleopatra: 'Queen Cleopatra asked R. Meir, saying, I know that those who sleep will live, as it is written *May they [men] blossom forth from the city like the grass of the field* (Ps 72.16). But when they rise, will they rise naked or with their clothes? He said to her, [You may reason] *a fortiori* from the grain of corn which is buried naked but comes out with many clothes. How much more will the righteous do so who are buried with their clothes?' (*bSanh* 90b).¹⁰⁸ If such a use of the metaphor of grain could be proved normative in the first century CE,¹⁰⁹ the Johannine use to depict the death of Jesus and its consequence should be understood in a likely manner. But the lack of enough evidence would prevent one from drawing such a conclusion. While it remains possible that the Johannine metaphor of the grain of corn applied to Jesus refers to his death and resurrection, a definitive clue should be sought in the context of the Fourth Gospel, since the apocalyptic motif of abundant harvest remains to be a viable option.

¹⁰⁶ See J.W. Bowker, 'Mystery and Parable', 315.

¹⁰⁷ Evans, '1QIsaiah^a', 538-542. The quotation of Isa 6.10 in the first summary section of John 12.40 may suggest that the context of Isa 6 is in view in the context of John 12.24ff.

¹⁰⁸ Vermes, *The Religion of Jesus*, 96 n18.

¹⁰⁹ 1 Cor 15.36; 1 Clem 24.4f; cf. Theoph ad Auto 1.13.

(3) *In the Fourth Gospel*

Within the Fourth Gospel, there is no reference to *κόκκος τοῦ σίτου* but in John 12.24, but the term *καρπός* is used in 4.36 (*συνάγει καρπόν*), 12.24 (*πολὸν καρπὸν φέλει*), and the section on the vine tree (John 15.2 [3x], 4, 5, 8, 16 [2x]). Despite the use of the different metaphors of a grain of wheat and a vine tree in 12.24 and ch 15, the combination of *καρπός* with the verb *φέρειν* in these passages suggests their close relationship. All these passages can be understood as related one another within the Johannine metaphoric world in terms of fruit bearing.¹¹⁰ Of prime importance for the understanding of the metaphor in 12.24 is John 4.36: *ὁ θερίζων μισθὸν λαμβάνει καὶ συνάγει καρπὸν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*. Occurring in a context of mission using the metaphor of sowing and reaping the harvest in 4.34ff, the *καρπός* there refers to the result of mission.¹¹¹ Harvest as the eschatological judgement of the nations (Joel 4.13) and the gathering of the scattered Israel (Isa 27.12: the Lord will thresh out the grain from Egypt). In the Jewish apocalyptic works written toward the end of the first century CE the imagery of sowing and reaping evil seeds and good seeds refers to the end-time judgement of the nations and restoration of Israel.¹¹² In the NT Matt 13.30, 39; Mark 9.29; and Rev 14.15 utilise it for the similar purpose.¹¹³ The field being white (*λευκαί*) at John 4.35 would suggest that the fruit metaphor here speaks of the harvest of a grain field. Therefore we would conclude that the use of the fruit metaphor is very similar to that in 12.24. When 12.24 is read, the readers must have been reminded of the reaping the *καρπὸν* at 4.36, which is said to be *εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*, pointing to the result of mission.

Therefore we argue that, although a soteriological significance of the death of Jesus may be dominant in John 12.24, the perspective for mission that persists rather strongly with the fruit-bearing imagery in the rest of the Fourth Gospel overshadows its use here. It is unique to the fourth evangelist that the fruit bearing expected to be

110 Cf. Okure, *Mission*, 206 n36, who thinks that John 15.2 looks back to 4.36

111 Commentators are generally agreed in a mission interpretation here. So Brown, *John*, 1.181-184; Barrett, *John*, 229, 240-243. Schnackenburg, *John*, 1.448-454. Paul also uses the crop metaphor for mission (Rom 1.13; 1 Cor 9.7; Phil 1.22).

112 4 Ezra 4.28-32; 2 Baruch 70.2.

113 Okure, *Mission*, 153 n52.

abundant in the eschatological age of blessing is applied to the soteriological effect of the death of Jesus as a grain of wheat (as the context announcing the coming of the end time [12.23] legitimates such an interpretation), and that it has probably the fruit-bearing mission in the post-Eater period in view (cf. 12.32).¹¹⁴

4.3.3 *The Judgement of This World and its Ruler (John 12.31)*

Earlier we have seen the apocalyptic contrast of reward and judgement reflected in John 12.25-26 and 31. Here we will see the latter element in some detail. Due to the double $\nu\tilde{\nu}\nu$, (i) the judgement of this world as well as (ii) the casting out of its ruler (12.31) are connected with the eschatological $\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$ for the glorifying and lifting up of Jesus the Son of man.¹¹⁵ This twofold theme of judgement is exhibited in a synthetic or developing-thought parallelism:

- a $\nu\tilde{\nu}\nu$ κρίσις ἐστὶν τοῦ κόσμου τούτου,
 a' $\nu\tilde{\nu}\nu$ ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἐκβληθήσεται ἔξω.

Bultmann took this cosmic language to be that of the Gnostic myth.¹¹⁶ However, given that the theory of the evangelist's reliance on the Gnostic myth has been convincingly rejected,¹¹⁷ the language of cosmic judgement here must find its homeground somewhere else. Undoubtedly the contemporary Jewish apocalyptic literature provides an answer.¹¹⁸ One of the characteristics of a 'historical' apocalypse is, to use Ph. Vielhauer's term, 'the eschatological dualism' of the two ages, i.e. this age/world and the age/world to come.¹¹⁹ In this scheme 'this age/world' is thought to be subject to the rule of the demonic powers represented by the Devil and/or to be

¹¹⁴ So also de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 191. Cf. Okure, *Mission*, 165-166.

¹¹⁵ See Allison, *The End*, 54-55.

¹¹⁶ Bultmann, *John*, 427.

¹¹⁷ See Colpe, *Die religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, esp. 171-208; Meeks, *Prophet-King*, 14-16. The unpopularity of this theory is attested in Brown, *John*, 1.LII-LVI; Schnackenburg, 'The Gnostic Myth', 543-557; Appold, *The Oneness Motif*, 148-149; E.M. Yamauchi, *Pre-Christian Gnosticism*, 30-34; Ashton, *Understanding*, 60-61.

¹¹⁸ *Contra* Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 365.

¹¹⁹ Vielhauer, 'Introduction', *NTApoc*³ 2.588-589. In 4 Ezra 7.11 'the day of judgement' signals 'the end of this age and the beginning of the immortal age to come'.

characterised by the human evil dominant in it.¹¹⁷ What is expected at the turn of ages is the ultimate eradication of evil through the divine judgement, by which the angelic ruler of this evil world is defeated and punished (in military and forensic terms) and the evil people condemned.

It might be argued that in the Johannine perspective the *spatial* correspondence between 'from this world'/'from below' and 'not from this world'/'from above' is predominant, almost at the sacrifice of the temporal perspective. Yet the employment of *vūv*, a term that corresponds to the ἔσρα designating the end time, introduces a *temporal* horizon to the judgement of this world (12.31). Furthermore, the casting-out of its ruler from the heavenly assembly would imply the enthronement of Jesus King/Judge to his heavenly throne of glory, from which he rules over the human world in place of its previous ruler cast out.¹¹⁸ Such a perspective is in keeping with the above *temporal* perspective.

(1) *The Judgement of This World*

A typically apocalyptic characterisation of 'this world' as evil seems to predominate in the Fourth Gospel's characterisation of the world. To elucidate this point we must turn to a consideration of the way in which 'this world' is characterised in the Fourth Gospel.

(a) R. Bultmann limits the meaning of the cosmos to the human world when he emphasises its 'exclusively' evil nature.¹¹⁹ Essentially, the peculiar nature of the κόσμος is darkness (8.12; 12.35, 46; cf. 1 John 1.5f; 2.8f, 11). It loves darkness over light (3.19).¹²⁰ And its appropriate judgement is blindness (9.39-41; cf. 12.40; 1 John 2.11). While Jesus is depicted as the truth, the world is designated as falsehood (14.6;

117 M. de Boer, 'Paul', 174-176. The *Book of Watchers* (1 Enoch 1-36) is concerned with the demonic origin of evil which entered into the human world. See further Hanson, 'Rebellion in Heaven', 195-233; Nickelsburg, 'The Qumran Fragments', 184. 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch do not mention any evil angelic powers, and the present age is depicted as being under the influence of Adam's sin (4 Ezra 3.5-7, 20-21; 4.30-31; 7.118-119; 2 Baruch 17.2-3; 23.4; 48.42-43; 54.14, 19; 56.6).

118 So also de Jonge, *Stranger*, 158. Similarly, Blank, *Krisis*, 282, remarks that the κόσμος 'ist "dieser Äon", der durch das Verherrlichungsgeschehen, i.d. durch Kreuz und Auferstehung Jesu, in seine Krisis kommt'. See also Bultmann, *John*, 431.

119 Bultmann, *Theology*, 2.15.

120 Bultmann, *Theology*, 2.15-16.

17.7; 18.37; 8.43-45; cf. 1 John 21, 27). The *κόσμος* is in essence in bondage to devil (12.31; 14.40; 16.11), to sin, and thus under the sway of death (8.21, 24), from which one is to be freed by the truth (8.32). Since the world is already in the state of death, Jesus is portrayed as the water of life (4.10), the bread of life (6.27ff.), the light of life (8.12), the resurrection (12.25) and life itself (14.6). This predominant picture of the world as evil presented in the Fourth Gospel has led some exegetes to virtually neglect neutral and even positive aspects of the world characterised in the Gospel.

L. Schottroff goes as far as to maintain that the evangelist confuses the physical universe with the human world, because, she conjectures, 'the world' in the Fourth Gospel is similar to the Gnostic understanding of the *κόσμος*, salvation form which is achieved by isolating oneself from the material evil world by *gnosis*.¹²¹ However, although the boundary might not appear evident, it is clear in the Gospel that the human world with its ethical traits is distinctive from the creation as its entirety. Only in John 17.5 and 24 *ὁ κόσμος* seems to denote the entirety of the creation as in the title of the Book of Genesis in the LXX.¹²² As N.H. Cassem has demonstrated, the *κόσμος* in the Fourth Gospel is both the entirety of the creation and the particular aspect of the human kind representing the creation in its distance from God, without both being able to be separated from each other.¹²³ M. Davies also acknowledges the two distinctive references of the Johannine *κόσμος* both to the physical creation and the human world and posits it against the self-sufficiency of the Stoic concept of *κόσμος*.¹²⁴ Moreover, when it is used to designate the whole humanity, *κόσμος* is not always used in a negative sense. Sometimes it has a neutral connotation referring to the human world in general, without conveying any ethical traits (4.42; 12.19). Most importantly, despite its evil inclination, the *κόσμος* is even the object of God's love which prompted his sending of His only Son not for its condemnation but for its salvation (3.16-17; cf. 6.14;

121 Schottroff, *Der Glaubende*, 228-296.

122 So Ashton, *Understanding*, 207. Balz, *EWNT* 2.768-769, includes 9.5, but this passage seems to have more to do with humanity in its context.

123 Cassem, 'The Use of *κόσμος*', 81-91.

124 Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 154-155. She changes the nuance rightly from that of her earlier work. Pamment, 'Eschatology', 82.

11.27). Thus the *κόσμος* in the Gospel has a twofold character: it is both the object of judgement because of its unfaithfulness to Jesus and therefore to the Father (9.39) and the object of salvation (1.29) due to the Father's love towards it (6.33; 51; 12.47).¹²⁵ As many exegetes have stressed, what is emphasised in the Gospel is the evil nature of the *κόσμος* as the human world that rejects not only Jesus (15.18b) and thus the Father who sent him but also the disciples (15.18-19; 17.14). Yet the Johannine Jesus' answer is explicit in the declaration: 'I have overcome the world' (16.33; cf. 1 John 5.4-5), which will be the source of courage for the disciples who face hatred in the *hostile* world.¹²⁶

Leading up to the pericope under scrutiny the human world's hatred towards Jesus is portrayed representatively in the escalating hostility of the Jews and their leaders against him.

(b) *Characterisation of the Jews*. The characterisation of 'the Jews' in the Fourth Gospel is a difficult issue, for its predominantly negative portrayal has led many exegetes to understand it as an expression of anti-Judaism. In fact, there would be little doubt that *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι* designate an ethnic-religious entity and/or the inhabitants of Judea. They as a mass, including the religious authorities at times, can occasionally show 'a constant hostility toward Jesus'.¹²⁷ Yet, at the same time, the Johannine Jesus is portrayed as performing signs in front of them and engaging a polemic with them for their salvation (5.34), which resulted in many of them believing in Jesus (8.31; 12.11, 42).¹²⁸ From John 5.16 and 18 onwards the hostility of the Jews towards Jesus is more pronounced, and may be comparable to the Matthean characterisation of them.

M.A. Powell maintains that the passion narrative of the First Gospel must be read within an apocalyptic context.¹²⁹ He observes, 'It is this recognition that the conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders is actually derivative of a basic conflict between

125 See de Jonge, *Stranger*, 155-157.

126 de Jonge, *Stranger*, 158-159.

127 Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 126.

128 Trumbower, *Born from Above*, 83, who is aware that the boundary between the believers and the Jews are not tightly fixed. Cf. van Wahlde, 'Jews', 33-60.

129 Powell, 'The Plot', 603-613.

God and Satan that leads to a conclusion that Matthew's passion narrative must be read in an apocalyptic context.' Matthew, continues Powell, 'characterises the religious leaders in a way that neither Mark nor Luke do, as 'irredeemably evil' representatives of Satan whose opposition to Jesus derives from enmity with God'.¹³⁰ It is not likely, however, that the Jewish leaders in the Fourth Gospel are characterised as irredeemably evil, as the reference to many believers among the Jewish authorities (12.42) indicates. It is without doubt that the boundaries between 'the Pharisees and the chief priests', 'the Jews', 'the crowd', and 'the world' in the Fourth Gospel are not as clear as one would like to suppose.¹³¹

Nevertheless, like the Matthean 'Jews' as Powell understands them, the Jewish authorities and 'the Jews' in the Fourth Gospel are depicted as the representative of the Evil in conflict with God. They are portrayed frequently as hostile to Jesus and become the target of harsh criticism by him. 'The Jews' are characterised as representing 'this world' which, being subject to its ruler, rejects the envoy from God. In John 8.44 Jesus regards them as having the Devil as their father and being subjugated to his will. This characterisation of 'the Jews' as the earthly representative of the force of Evil is to be seen within the judicial framework within which their debate with Jesus is presented.¹³² This portrayal of the conflict between Jesus representing God and the power of evil manifests an apocalyptic dimension.¹³³

The hostility against Jesus by the Jews and their religious authorities becomes evident first in John 5.10ff and intensifies as the narratives proceed. On the one hand, the hostility of the Jews is expressed by their occasional attempts to stone Jesus (8.50; 10.31) and reaches its climax in the Sanhedrin's decision to kill him (11.53).¹³⁴ On the other hand, the judicial process between the force of Evil and Jesus reaches its first

130 Powell, 'The Plot', 613.

131 Even the *ἄχλος πολὺς* which went out of the city to receive Jesus as *ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰσραήλ* (12.12-13) is designated as *ὁ κόσμος* by the Pharisees in 12.19.

132 Harvey, *Trial*, 15ff; also see Dahl, 'The Johannine Church', 135f; Ashton, *Understanding*, 228; Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, 19.

133 So Painter, *The Quest*, 250.

134 *ἐβουλευσαντο ἵνα ἀποκτείνουσιν αὐτόν* means 'they decided that they should kill him', not 'they took counsel how to put him to death' (RSV).

climax in Jesus' victory over the death of Lazarus and is completed in his final victory through the cross and the resurrection. The Farewell Discourses (chs 13-17) continue the theme of judicial process between God-Jesus and Evil by focusing on Judas Iscariot who represents Satan on earth. This conflict is carried into the post-Easter period as the conflict between this (hostile) world and the disciples with the Paraclete as an advocate on their side (15.26f; 16.7-11). The disciples are reminded of the fact that the world would hate them as it has hated Jesus before (15.18ff). But the judgement has been already won by the cross and resurrection of Jesus as first Advocate and universal Judge. In John 18-19 the judicial process between Jesus and the Jews results in his arrest and trials before the Sanhedrin and before Pilate the prefects a in the Roman judicial court, which leads to his capital punishment by crucifixion.

(c) Occurring at the pinnacle of this judicial process, John 12.20-36 presents its summation by means of the apocalyptic end-time judgement scene (12.31), which is to unfold in the trial scenes before the Sanhedrin and Pilate and to be concluded in his crucifixion. The intensification of the hostility of the Jews towards Jesus corresponds very well to the apocalyptic motif of the intensification of evil before the end-time judgement (e.g. 1 Enoch 91.7). This can be further supported by the use of the sapiential motifs, if somewhat modified, of the return of Jesus to the Father¹³⁵ and the concealment of Jesus himself from the Jewish crowd, both of which lead to the end-time judgement in Jewish apocalyptic writings.

(2) *Casting Out of the Ruler of This World*

Also emphasised is the casting out of the ruler of this world (John 12.31b), whose abrupt appearance here may puzzle the reader. Although a different term is used, he was mentioned in John 8.44 as *ὁ διαβόλος* who, as father, exhorts influence upon the Jews who reject Jesus. Thus, the ruler of this world is depicted as the evil

¹³⁵ The difficult saying of the function of the Paraclete who convicts the world *περι δικαιοσύνης δέ, ὅτι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα ὑπάγω καὶ οὐκέτι θεωρεῖτέ με* (16.10) may signify a proof of the conviction against the unbelief of the world (v 9) which was already judged/punished by the punishment of its ruler (v 11).

ruler of this faithless, evil human world that rejects Jesus. He reappears later as represented on earth by Judas Iscariot: when apparently referring to Judas, it is said that 'the ruler of this world is coming' (14.30), and that 'the ruler of this world is judged' (16.11). Elsewhere Judas is not only called 'a devil', but Satan the devil is portrayed as having entered into his heart (13.2, 27; cf. 6.70). Thus Barrett remarks that 'It seems probable that John saw in Judas the eschatological character who must appear before the manifestation of the glory of Christ (just as in 1 John 2.18, 22; 4.3 heretical teachers are represented as Antichrist)'.¹³⁶

Spitta holds that Satan in John 12.31 appears, as in the Synoptic Temptation Narrative, as the ruler of this world who has brought his authority in conflict with the kingdom of God brought about by Jesus.¹³⁷ This picture, construed Spitta, is close to the apocalyptic scene of Rev 12.7ff in which the judgement results in the casting of the great dragon onto earth, which is announced as the triumph of the kingdom of God and the glorification of his name. Regarding 1 John 2.18 (*ἡκούσατε ὅτι ἀντίχριστος ἔρχεται*), R. Schnackenburg aptly pointed out that the antichrist represents the antagonist of the messianic figure in the end time as in Jewish apocalyptic literature.¹³⁸ Indeed, in later Jewish apocalyptic writings and in Qumran literature, Belial, the evil angelic figure, plays an important role as the anti-messiah in the end-time conflict between God and Evil.¹³⁹ In the War Scroll of Qumran (1QM), for example, the eschatological war is depicted as being fought between the archangel Michael and Belial who represent the sons of light and the sons of darkness respectively. 1QM 17.7-12 depicts the defeat of Belial at the divinely appointed time—a characteristic of the apocalyptic thinking: 'This is the day appointed by Him for the defeat and overthrow of the Prince of the kingdom of wickedness'. In the *Book of Watchers* (1 Enoch 1-36) 'the Watchers' are the evil angels who have fallen on earth and have deceived humanity by being united with women (1 Enoch 9.1ff; cf. Gen 6.1-4); yet their demonic descend-

¹³⁶ Barrett, *John*, 508.

¹³⁷ Spitta, *Das Johannes*, 277-278. Cf. Luke 10.18.

¹³⁸ Schanckenburg, *The Johannine Epistles*, 145-149. Cf. 2 Thess 2.9-10; 1 John 2.18, 22; 4.3; 2 John 7; Rev 13.17; 19.19-21.

¹³⁹ E.g. 1QS 2.7ff; 1QH 3.7-18; 1QM 13.4-6; 4QTestim 2.3-30 (where there seem to be one or two antimessiahs); 4Q246; 11QMelch. See F.G. Martinez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic*, 174-179.

ants are to be slaughtered and destroyed at the great day of judgement (1.9; 16.1-3; 19.1); this leads to 'the great age' (16.1), in which the elect will inherit the earth and live in blessings characterised by light, joy, peace, wisdom, righteousness, truth, and long life (5.7-10; 10.16-22). In 4 Ezra 5.6 the evil one is depicted as reigning over the wicked ones.¹⁴⁰ In later apocalyptic writings Belial is portrayed as reigning the wicked ones and waging war against the redeemer figure and constitutes a part of the apocalyptic vision of the end time.¹⁴¹

In the context of this eschatological conflict one should see the casting out of ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου in 12.31 (cf. 16.11). The expression ἐκβληθῆσεται ἔξω here would point to an eschatological destruction.¹⁴² There should be little doubt that it corresponds to Satan's falling down from heaven as depicted in visions of Luke 10.18 and Rev 12.9.¹⁴³ Seeing the Johannine Jesus' activity, death and resurrection within the context of the eschatological conflict with Satan, Grundmann construes that behind this saying stands the picture of Satan, the heavenly accuser, 'being thrown out of heaven' to give up his place to the advocate.¹⁴⁴

To summarise, *the Jews' rejection of and hostility towards Jesus in the time before the cross is depicted as the escalation of evil and unrighteousness before the end-time judgement. Thus the Fourth Gospel presents the process of Jesus to the cross as an apocalyptic drama of the end time in the way in which the eschatological conflict between God and Evil, presented as a judicial (and non-military) confrontation, reaches its climax at the crucifixion of Jesus, which signifies in an unexpected way the judgement of this world and his triumph over it and its ruler.*

Conclusion

Therefore, what is depicted or at least presupposed in John 12.23ff is the heavenly court, in which the Son of man sits in heaven on the judgement throne

140 *Contra* Volz, *Jüdische Eschatologie*, 83, who thinks that Satan was not yet the ruler of the world in late Jewish literature.

141 Cf. AsMos 8.2; ApElijah 3.5, 13, 18 ('son of lawlessness'); 2.3 ('king of injustice'); ApPet 2. Schnakenburg, *The Johannine Epistles*, 137.

142 See Blank, *Krisis*, 283-284; Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 364-365. In contrast, ἐκβάλλειν ἔξω in John 6.37; 9.34, 35; and 15.6 may mean expulsion from the community (or the people of God).

143 Painter, *The Quest*, 250.

144 Grundmann, 'The Decision', 310 n69. So also Dahl, 'The Johannine Church', 135.

glorified and the vindicated disciples/martyrs are promised to take positions as part of the divine assembly along with that universal Judge (12.26), and from which the ruler of this world is cast out (12.31) with the result of nullification of his power to accuse the righteous.¹⁴⁵ All this focuses on the passion and exaltation of Jesus as the locus of the eschatological judgement.¹⁴⁶ The crucifixion of Jesus and his judgement on this world and its ruler is pertinent to the climax of an apocalyptic vision of the end-time judgement and salvation. At the same time, in the Farewell Discourses the two-level judicial process is applied to the post-Easter period as a conflict between the believers with their heavenly representative, or their Advocate (the *Paraclete*) in court and Satan with its earthly counterparts, i.e. 'this world' (John 13, 15.26, 16.7-15).

4.3.4 *Eternal Life, to Be Where Jesus Is, and Divine Honour as Rewards for the (Suffering) Righteous in John 12.25-26*

Jesus' sayings in John 12.25, 26 are often compared with their Synoptic parallels and are regarded as unrelated to each other and as isolated from the context. We would argue, instead, that these passages must be read together and are concerned with the cost of discipleship and its reward, expressed in terms of a martyrdom and a vindication, which serves as a counterpart to the judgement and condemnation in an apocalyptic vision of the end-time judgement and salvation depicted in John 12.20-36.

John 12.25-26, following the first double *ἀμήν* saying (12.24), consists of a pair of parallelisms.

- a ὁ φιλῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ
 b ἀπολλύει αὐτήν,
 a' καὶ ὁ μισῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ
 b' εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον φυλάξει αὐτήν.
- c ἐὰν ἐμοὶ τις διακονῇ, ἐμοὶ ἀκολουθεῖτω,
 d καὶ ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ ἐκεῖ καὶ ὁ διάκονος ὁ ἐμὸς ἔσται.
 c' ἐὰν τις ἐμοὶ διακονῇ, (ellipsis)
 d' τιμήσει αὐτὸν ὁ πατήρ.

145 Cf. E.T. Mullen, Jr. 'Divine Assembly', *ABD* 2.214-217.

146 de la Potterie, *Saint Jean*, 1.114.

John 12.25

John 12.25, like v 24, exhibits an antithetical parallelism. But the metaphoric language of v 24 concerning a grain of wheat disappears in v 25. Although it is not very clear due to the paratactical relation between these sentences, the referent seems to change from Jesus to his follower (cf. Mark 8.35//Matt 16.25//Luke 9.24).¹⁴⁷ But between these verses there are some semantic links observable: ἀποθνήσκειν (v 24) corresponds to ἀπολλύει τὴν ψυχὴν (v 25), while the contrast between death and fruit bearing in v 24 is shifted to the contrast between death and eternal life in v 25. These links establish the intimate relation between the signified of the falling and dying grain of wheat and the referent of the one who does not love the life in this world. Thus Jesus' death and its salvific effect in v 24 are closely associated with the disciples' following him even to death and to where he is. Such an amalgamation of a christological statement and a statement on discipleship is not uncommon in the Synoptics.¹⁴⁸

With regard to its syntax, John 12.25 utilises a substantival participle of condition¹⁴⁹ (ὁ φιλῶν..., καὶ ὁ μισῶν...) in contrast to its Synoptic parallels (Mark 8.35//Matt 16.25d//Luke 9.24) which use the combination of a relative pronoun + ἐὰν/ἂν + subjunctive. Since many would see some affinities to the Synoptic tradition, a comparison with these Synoptic parallels is of some interest:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a) Mark 8.35//Matt 16.25//Luke 9.24 | - relational |
| b) Matt 10.39//Luke 17.33 (Q) | - participial |
| c) John 12.25 | - participial ¹⁵⁰ |

Such variations accord with the practice of the translators of the LXX who rendered Hebrew conditional participles either with an articular participle, a relative clause, or an adjective.¹⁵¹ Similar phenomena are attested especially among Synoptic parallels of aphoristic sayings of Jesus, which can be called 'performancial variations'.¹⁵² There

¹⁴⁷ So also Berger, *Die Armen-Worte*, 113.

¹⁴⁸ Dunn, 'Footwashing', 249; Thomas, *Footwashing*, 123-124.

¹⁴⁹ So Beyer, *Semitische Syntax*, 204, 211. Beyer (207-208) holds that the antithetical parallelism of substantival participles with a conditional meaning may be influenced by Hebraism (John 12.25; 3.36; Luke 11.6 (cf. John 12.47f); 16.10; 1 John 2.10-11).

¹⁵⁰ See J.D. Crossan, *In Fragments*, 89-94.

¹⁵¹ Beyer, *Semitische Syntax*, 197-199.

¹⁵² Aune, 'Oral Tradition', 237. In some parallels participial, relational and conditional clauses are substituted each other. E.g. Matt 12.30//Luke 11.23//Mark 9.40; Mark 4.9 (ὅς ἔχει) = Mark 4.23 (εἰ τις ἔχει) = Rev 2.7 (ὁ ἔχων).

are variations in choosing the verbs as well. The Synoptic use of the contrast shows a chiasmic arrangement: save/lose//lose/save (Mark 8.35// Luke 9.24); save/lose//lose/find (Matt 16.25; 10.39) or gain/lose//lose/preserve (Luke 17.33). While retaining loosely this chiasmic arrangement, the fourth evangelist uses an antithetical parallel combination of the verbs which are peculiar to this Gospel: love/lose//hates/keep.¹⁵³ This would reflect the evangelist's use of a common tradition since such a modification would underscore the recitation composition of the day in which a *chreia* is reproduced in various expressions,¹⁵⁴ though John's use of an independent saying of the same discourse cannot be ruled out.¹⁵⁵

In content, John 12.25 shows important characteristics of apocalyptic eschatology. C.H. Dodd saw a clear two-age construction only in the Johannine saying in contrast to its Synoptic parallels: 'The Fourth Gospel alone has given it form which obviously alludes to the Jewish antithesis of the two ages: he who hates his soul הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה will keep it הַבָּא הַלְלוֹם , and consequently will possess $\text{הַבָּא הַלְלוֹם הָיִי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא}$ '.¹⁵⁶ Characteristically Christian in this formula is that 'eternal life' as the eschatological blessing for the people of God is promised to those who hate their lives in earth in service of Jesus (John 12.25-26). This *chreia*-like saying must be read in close relation to v 26, because both are concerned with the cost of discipleship (cf. John 13.33, 36) and its reward. As eternal life is a reward for the righteous, so is the privilege of being where Jesus is and receiving the honour of God.

John 12.26

John 12.26 exhibits a synthetic parallelism which, like 12.24, consists of two anticipatory conditional sentences. But the referent here is, as in the preceding verse, the follower of Jesus. In the symbolic language of being 'where I (Jesus) am' (ὅπου ἐμὶ ἐγὼ) is depicted as a result of one's being a servant of Jesus and following him which seems to signify martyrdom (John 7.34; 14.3; 17.24). Because of its parallel to

¹⁵³ While in John 15.19 'love' and 'hate' are an antithetical parallel combination, 'keep' and 'lose' constitute another antithetical relation (12.47; 17.12). Cf. John 11.25.

¹⁵⁴ Robbins, 'Chreia', 17-18; 'Writing', 147.

¹⁵⁵ So Black, *Aramaic Approach*, 189 n1.

¹⁵⁶ Dodd, *Interpretation*, 146.

the Father's honouring (12.26d), the follower's 'being where Jesus is' is equivalent to the heaven where Jesus returns to share the glory with the Father. This uniquely Johanne phrase ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ requires some more explication.

In the OT it is acknowledged that the heavenly tribunal consists not only of God but also of others who are identified as 'holy ones' (קדושים; Dan 7.22; Zech 14.15). In Zech 14.5, on the Day of the Lord when the nations waging war against Jerusalem are judged by the Lord standing on the Mount Olives, 'the Lord will come, and the holy ones with him'. קדושים, who are generally taken to be angels in the original contexts,¹⁵⁷ were later interpreted as the resurrected righteous.¹⁵⁸ In the Jewish apocalypses, the righteous are depicted as either sitting in the heavenly council or accompanying the redeemer figure. In 1 Enoch 108.12b the Lord remarks, 'I will place each one on the throne of his honour'.¹⁵⁹ In 4 Ezra, at a certain point of the eschatological period following the messianic woes, the Son will be revealed with 'those who are with him' (4 Ezra 13.52). These people seem to be identified with 'the men who were taken up, who from their birth have not tasted death' (4 Ezra 7.25). At the end of the visions, Ezra is given a promise that he will join that privileged group: 'for you shall be taken up from men, and henceforth you shall live with my Son and those who are like you, until the times are ended' (4 Ezra 14.9). The Qumran community regarded themselves as participating in the heavenly court with the angels of the Most High. The community believed that they are the direct receiver of the divine revelation, and that they are 'together with the angels of the most High and there is no need for an interpretation' (1QH 6.13; 3.20; 11.10; 2.10; 1QS 2.5-10).¹⁶⁰ In the *Apocalypse* of the Christian canon those who participate in the heavenly council are not only 'the twenty-four elders' but also the martyrs (Rev 3.21; 4.4; 5.6; 20.4).¹⁶¹ The twenty-four elders sitting on the thrones around the divine throne in Rev 4.4 are inter-

¹⁵⁷ See Collins, *Daniel*, 313-317.

¹⁵⁸ For rabbis they were unknown prophets whose prophecies will be published when God comes (CantR 6.11; RuthR 2; EcclR 1.11). In Didache 16.7, they refer to the saints coming with Christ at his parousia. Cf. 1 Enoch 1.9: R. Bauckham, 'A Note', 136-138.

¹⁵⁹ 1 Enoch 61.8; 62.2; 69.27; 45.3; cf. 55.4; 57.3.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Segal, *Rebecca's Children*, 77.

¹⁶¹ Rev 20.4 ('Then I saw the thrones, and seated on them were those whom judgement was committed [κρίμα ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς]') obviously alludes to Dan 7.9 and 22. See U.B. Müller, *Die Offenbarung*, 335.

preted either as glorified saints or as angels. J.M. Baumgarten, pointing out its parallel in the Qumran literature, argues that the elders are participants of the heavenly court as their judicial function mentioned later on (Rev 11.8; ch 14) makes it clear.¹⁶² Therefore, the thrones on which they sit are the thrones of judgement (cf. Matt 19.28; Luke 22.30). Thus it would be that to join the end-time judgement with God is one of the rewards given to the martyrs for the vindication of their righteous sufferings.

That the Johannine concept of being ὄπου εἰμι ἐγὼ is related to this idea of participation in the heavenly court becomes evident when we turn to the Synoptics. It is well established in the Synoptic tradition that Jesus' promise of the disciples' participation in the (heavenly) royal tribunal is based on either their service as a διάκονος or their ἀκολουθεῖν Jesus, the combination of which terms appear in John 12.26 as well. Baumgarten argues that in Matt 19.28//Luke 22.30 the disciples are depicted as participating in the heavenly tribunal.¹⁶³ In Matt 19.28 Jesus' disciples are depicted as future judges of the restored Israel.¹⁶⁴ They are to judge/rule¹⁶⁵ the twelve tribes of Israel when the Son of man sits on his throne of glory at the time of the regeneration, or new creation. John 12.26 is comparable to Matt 19.28, since in both texts the following of the disciples is to be rewarded with a reward of one form or another. It is significant to note that, while the reward for the twelve disciples' following is their enthronement with the Son of man on the judgement thrones (Matt 19.28), the reward for every follower's (παῖς ὄστις) sacrificing his/her familial relations and properties is specified as inheriting *eternal life* (Matt 19.29).¹⁶⁶ It seems as though eternal life here is a reward

162 Baumgarten, 'The Duodecimal Courts', 145-171.

163 Baumgarten, 'The Heavenly Tribunal', 220: 'The apostles were in fact portrayed as future members of the celestial Sanhedrin where they would judge the world as co-assessors with the Son of Man'.

164 Against Vielhauer, 'Gottesreich', 68f and others, E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 98-104, regards Matt 19.28 as authentic. For Sanders the restoration of Israel had a prominent place in the historical Jesus' consciousness of his mission (106).

165 The meaning of κρίνειν here is disputed. An exclusively judicial interpretation 'to rule' is taken by Vielhauer, 'Gottesreich', 67; Tödt, *The Son of Man*, 63-64; E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 103-105. D. Marguerat, *Jugement*, 464, argues that the verb here conveys a double meaning, and concludes that the twelve disciples are promised to be the rulers of the eschatological Israel with the Son of man, exercising both rule and judgement. Cf. BAGD 452.

166 Marguerat, *Jugement*, 466-467.

given ordinary followers (cf. John 12.25), while the enthronement with the Son of man is specifically applied to the twelve disciples (cf. John 12.26).¹⁶⁷ Yet no such distinction seems to be evident in John 12.25 and 26.

The idea of the disciples' enthronement to judge the twelve tribes of Israel is also found in Luke 22.30, albeit without any reference to the Son of man. In the Lukan context the issue is the importance of servanthood for Jesus' disciples emphasised in Jesus' answer to the dispute who is the greatest among the disciples (Luke 20.24ff.; cf. Mark 9.35). It is without doubt that the disciples' enthronement to judge the twelve tribes of Israel and their participation in the royal table (which is lacking in Matt 19.28) are related to the 'kingdom', which is assigned to them (Luke 22.28). This privilege is portrayed as a reward for their having remained with Jesus through his trials.¹⁶⁸ It would be that to be one who serves (ὁ διακονῶν in Luke 22.26, 27) is the ground for participating the heavenly royal (and judicial) court in the kingdom of Jesus, which is assigned to the disciples as to Jesus (Luke 22.19). Although the service of the disciples here is obviously directed to others and not to Jesus as in John 12.26, the similarity to John 12.26b is striking.¹⁶⁹

Consequently, it is beyond reasonable doubt that the idea of being where Jesus is in John 12.26 corresponds to the Synoptic promise of the participation of believers to the heavenly court as a reward for their following Jesus (even to death).¹⁷⁰ It is not always evident that a judicial connotation is attached to the phrase ὅπου εἰμί ἐγώ (John 7.34; 14.3; 17.24; cf. 6.62; 20.17) and its equivalent ὅπου [ἐγώ] ὑπάγω (8.22; 13.33, 36; 14.4) elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel. But the context of John 12.26 which contains the glorification of the Son of man and the judgement of this world (as part of the end-time judgement scene) casts a strong judicial overtone to the phrase. That the phrase is

167 Dan 7.22, suggests a close link between judgement and inheriting the kingdom (cf. Luke 22.29-30).

168 Tödt, *The Son of Man*, 64, remarks that in contrast to Matt 19.28 the promise is given to all disciples of Jesus as well as to the twelve.

169 Cf. Matt 20.20-28 par.

170 This interpretation can be further supported by *Pistis Sophia* 96, in which John 12.26 is interpreted in line with Matt 19.28//Luke 22.30: 'In the place where I will be, there will be with me my twelve servers'. Cf. Schmidt/MacDermot, *Pistis Sophia*, 232.

a reward for the righteous (sufferers) is evident by its parallel to receiving the divine *τιμή* as in the end-time judgement scenes in Jewish apocalypses, as we have seen earlier (I.2).

A very important christological implication can be drawn from this. The phrase *ὅπου εἰμί ἐγώ* presupposes Jesus' return to the Father, to where he was before, to be with his glory and enthroned as Judge/King.¹⁷¹ It is also implied that his return to the Father serves as his vindication from the death on the cross which he unjustly faces (cf. 16.10).¹⁷² The context also supports this interpretation in that in his lifting up and glorification Jesus is vindicated and at the same time the sinful world is judged.¹⁷³

Conclusions

As we have tried to show, the vindication of the righteous, the followers of Jesus, is closely linked with his death and resurrection/ascent as vindication. As is characteristic of the early Christian teachings, the question of *passio iustorum* of the Christian martyrs is answered in John 12.25-26 in conjunction with the *passio iusti* of Jesus. In other words, the vindication of the martyrs is achieved on the basis of the exaltation/glorification of the crucified Martyr, Jesus, by leading them to be where he is to be glorified by the Father (12.26). To the culture where honour was highly important over against the loss of it, or shame, the author claims that the shame (some of) the believers may have incurred in the form of persecutions or even martyrdoms is more than well paid by their receiving the utmost honour and glory from the Father as Jesus did. As a counterpart to the vindication the judgement of this world and casting out of its ruler (from the heavenly court) are mentioned (I.2).

The sociological functions of the theme of vindication of righteous sufferers like this are not simple. It functions, for example, in the Books of Maccabees to answer the cry of theodicy after experiencing the violent death of the righteous by the hand of the evil force. In the *War Scroll* of Qumran it seems to function as a guarantee of the

171 Cf. Loader, *The Christology*, 81, who connects John 12.26 with Jesus the Son's return to the Father.

172 Blank, *Krisis*, 337; Onuki, *Gemeinde und Welt*, 145; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 282.

173 Cf. Loader, *The Christology*, 16.

future bliss for the freedom fighters against the supposed oppressors, *i.e.* the Romans. By identifying those who die in the war as the righteous and providing the certainty of God's vindication for them, the vindication scene seems to be used to encourage the fighters to fight to the end. It could be a combination of both that the fourth evangelist is using this concept. On the one hand, it would give comfort for those who have seen the martyrdom of their teachers and perhaps their fellow members that their death is not in vain since they are now in the bliss of being where Jesus is, participating in his judgement of this world. On the other, it would encourage them to do the works they were assigned to do, that is, the mission to the world. It is not necessarily the case that the Johannine martyr theology here reflects the sectarian sentiment of the community. But its function can be more positive (as in 2 Macc and the *War Scroll*), encouraging the reader/audience to see the problem theodicy caused by the real (John 13.37; 21.18) or potential violent deaths of the righteous being resolved in their special bliss. *The function of the vindication of martyrs as addressed in John 12.25-26 and 31 is not to reflect or validate the social setting of the community which has secluded itself from the outside world because of the experience of severe persecutions and martyrdoms, but, by providing the sure promise of the vindication of the martyrs (in the past and in prospect), to encourage the members to continue the 'works' of mission in which they have been engaged, despite the (probable) persecutions.*

Our interpretation would be in line with the martyr theology of early Christian writers that repeatedly stresses the primacy of divine power over secular laws and mortal rulers.¹⁷⁴ That the concept of being where Jesus is concerned with the martyrs' participation as judges may be reflected in early Christian martyr theologies. Tertullian reports that the would-be martyrs believed that eternal life would be given to them and that they would sit with Christ as judges thereafter (Tertullian, *Mart* 2.4). Polycarp the martyr is said to have overcome the unjust ruler (τὸν ἄδικον ἄρχοντα), to have won the crown of immortality, and to be rejoicing with the apostles and all the righteous

¹⁷⁴ *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, 9; Jusutin, *Apol.* 1.13; Athenag, *Apol.* 18; Tertullian, *Apol.* 33; Origen, *Cels.* 8.73-75.

glorifying God and praising Jesus (*The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, 19.2).¹⁷⁵ In the *Passio Sanctorum Scillitanorum* a martyr says 'Today we are martyrs in heaven. Thanks be to God'.¹⁷⁶

4.3.5 *The Eschatological Urgency and the Johannine Two-Way Theology in John 12.35-36*

Jesus' reply to the misunderstanding crowd in John 12.35-36 also contains strongly apocalyptic characteristics. His saying here shows a well crafted parallelism with a theme sentence at the beginning:

ἔτι μικρὸν χρόνον τὸ φῶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστί.

ab περιπατεῖτε, ὡς τὸ φῶς ἔχετε,

c ἵνα μὴ σκοτία ὑμῶς καταλάβῃ.

d καὶ ὁ περιπατῶν ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ οὐκ οἶδεν ποῦ ὑπάγει.

ba' ὡς τὸ φῶς ἔχετε, πιστεύετε εἰς τὸν φῶς,

c' ἵνα υἱοὶ φωτὸς γένησθε.

abc and *ba'c'* constitute a synthetical parallelism, with the two imperatives and the two identical clauses ὡς τὸ φῶς ἔχετε juxtaposed chiastically. It is evident that *περιπατεῖτε* is set in parallel to *πιστεύετε εἰς τὸν φῶς*. The *ἵνα* clauses *c* and *c'* are set in parallel in that the purpose of walking/believing is expressed in the negative and in the affirmative, respectively. Picking up *περιπατεῖν* and *σκοτία* from *abc*, *d* seems to serve as a double-duty passage providing a reason for the preceding and a ground for the following. Based on these observations, three important themes are to be elucidated: (1) the eschatological urgency related to Jesus as the Light; (2) the Johannine two-way theology; and (3) the sons of the Light (Jesus) as the people of God.

(1) *The Eschatological Urgency (ἔτι χρόνον μικρόν)*

175 The date of Polycarp's martyrdom can be placed sometime in the latter half of the second century. See Frend, *The Acts*, xii.

176 Musurillo, *The Acts*, 89.

In John 12.35f the shortness of Jesus' time is expressed in terms of the time for the light to be with people: *ἔτι μικρὸν χρόνον τὸ φῶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστίν* (cf. 1.9). A similar expression in 13.33 (*ἔτι μικρὸν μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι*) indicates that *ἔτι μικρὸν χρόνον* is equivalent to *ἔτι μικρὸν*. This theme also appears in 7.33: *ἔτι χρόνον μικρὸν μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι καὶ ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με*, and 14.19: *ἔτι μικρὸν καὶ ὁ κόσμος με οὐκέτι θεωρεῖ*. These sayings are generally understood personally with regard to Jesus' earthly life before his departure to the Father through his death and resurrection. Yet, reading it within the contemporary Graeco-Roman and the Jewish-Christian contexts will provide a more nuanced reading of this expression.

The phrase *ἔτι χρόνον μικρὸν* is very rare in Greek literature outside the NT, appearing in the church fathers' citations from John 7.33 or Job 2.9a (LXX),¹⁷⁷ and is used only once in the NT outside the Fourth Gospel (Rev 6.11).¹⁷⁸ Its equivalent *ἔτι μικρὸν* (טעם קטן), however, is frequently used in the LXX as a semi-technical term to designate the eschatological shortness of time before the judgement of the wicked and/or the salvation of Israel (Jer 51.33; Isa 10.25; 29.17; Hag 2.6; Ps 37.10).¹⁷⁹ In early Jewish writings, an equivalent expression used technically to express the idea of shortness of time or urgency is characteristic of apocalyptic eschatologies.¹⁸⁰

In this eschatological sense the term seems to be used in the Fourth Gospel. In John 16.16 the concept of the eschatological shortening of time is applied to Jesus' disappearance and reappearance as a reference to his death and resurrection: 'A little while (*μικρὸν*) and you will see me no more; again a little while (*πάλιν μικρὸν*) you will see me' (cf. 16.19). Explaining this passage, the Johannine Jesus compares his death and resurrection to the travail of a child-bearing and the joy at a birth; this pattern of tribulation and redemption is typical of traditional Jewish eschatological hopes.¹⁸¹

177 John 7.33: Basilius, *Regulae morales*, 31.865.43; Eusebius, *Generalis elementaria introductio*, 102.23; Chrysostom, *In Matthaëum*, 58.617.41; *In Johannem*, 59.280.65; 59.281.5; 59.374.51; 59.393.20; John 12.35: Chrysostom, *In Johannem*, 59.374.41; Job 2.9a (LXX): Chrysostom, *In epistolam i ad Corinthius*, 61.237.41; *Fragmenta in Job* 64.557.20; 64.560.17; *Eclogae i-xlviii ex diversis homiliis*, 63.709.20; Origen, *Epistula ad Africanum*, 11.56.8.

178 Cf. Rev 12.12 (*ὀλίγον καιρόν*); 20.3 (*μικρὸν χρόνον*).

179 Leroy, *Rätsel*, 57-58; Fischer, *Die himmlischen Wohnungen*, 314.

180 E.g. Sir 33.10 (LXX: 36.7); 4 Ezra 4.26, 34; 2 Baruch 20.1; 83.1; cf. 1 Cor 7.29. See Volz, *Jüdische Eschatologie*, 162-163; Stuhlmann, *Das eschatologische Maß*, 58.

181 Allison, *The End*, 57.

Intriguing is that the author of 2 Baruch uses the phrase 'after a short time' in depicting the imminent destruction of the Temple (i.e. 'the building of Zion': 32.2) and its consequent restoration (68.5) after a short period of desolation (32.3). This schematisation of the end-time destruction and restoration of the Temple shows a unique contrast with its Johannine counterpart that has Jesus' death and resurrection representing the Temple's destruction and restoration (John 2.18-22). In addition, an apocalyptic tone of ἔτι χρόνον μικρὸν is particularly evident in John 7.33ff and 13.33f, in which the phrase and its equivalent ἔτι μικρὸν are closely associated with the apocalyptic-sapiential motif of 'seek and not find' and its Johannine modification (the inability to follow where Jesus is going) respectively.

Returning to John 12.35f, therefore, it is without doubt that the author sees the departure of Jesus the Light as an event of the eschatological judgement and salvation, which is expected to come ἔτι χρόνον μικρὸν.¹⁸² In other words, the time before Jesus' departure is shortening because his departure, the process of which starts with the cross, coincides with the arrival of the end-time judgement and restoration and the age to come. Functioning as a title passage to the following light and darkness sayings (12.35b-36c), this passage corresponds to the coming of the eschatological 'hour' (12.23) and thus adds a strong eschatological colouring to the pericope.

(2) *The Johannine Two-Way Theology*

John 12.35-36b has frequently been taken to be foreign to the preceding context, mainly due to the light-darkness symbolism. Yet the apocalyptic traits of the pericope provide a natural context for the light and darkness contrast. Although widely attested both in the OT-Jewish tradition and Hellenism, the light-darkness symbolism is also used frequently in early Jewish apocalyptic writings and especially in Qumran litera-

182 The urgency related to the coming of the eschatological summation is frequently mentioned in the NT (Mark 13.20 par; Matt 24.22; Rev 1.3; 22.10: *καιρὸς ἐγγύς*; 12.12: *ὅτι ὀλίγον καιρὸν ἔχει*; 2.16; 3.11; 22.7,12, 20: *ἔρχομαι ταχύ*). See Stuhlmann, *Das eschatologische Maß*, 46ff. Heb 10.37 speaks of the imminent coming of the eschatological judge by *ἔτι...μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον* (cf. Hab 2.3: מועד and קץ; Dan 8.17; 11.35).

ture.¹⁸³ Furthermore, the generally-neglected fact that the contrast of light and darkness is integrated with the theology of two ways here makes this passage suitable within the apocalyptic context of John 12.20ff.

Most commentators have failed to note the existence of a two-way theology in John 12.35f and consequently its significance.¹⁸⁴ Yet, it is evident that the two conflicting destinies symbolised by light and darkness constitute a Johannine version of two-way concept due to the $\gamma\lambda\eta/\text{περιπατεῖν}$ terminology, which is elsewhere applied to the way of God's commandments (e.g. Deut 30.15ff). Although *περιπατεῖτε* is not followed by *ἐν τῷ φῶτι*, it is evident that *περιπατεῖν ὡς τὸ φῶς ἔχετε* is set in contrast to *περιπατεῖν ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ*. Although it is widely used both in early Judaism¹⁸⁵ and early Christianity¹⁸⁶ with no explicitly apocalyptic traits, the concept of two ways here is in accord with its use in early Judaism with apocalyptic inclinations.

Its classic Biblical expression occurs in Deut 30.19, in which the Lord, addressing to Israel through Moses, says: 'I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live'. The concept of two ways is intrinsically linked with the covenant which God made with his people, for the contradictory fortunes of the two ways reflect the theme of blessing and curse of a covenant in the OT.¹⁸⁷ This concept increases its significance especially in wisdom and apocalyptic literature as well as in Qumran documents.¹⁸⁸ For example, 4 Ezra 7.129 and 2 Baruch 19.1 contain the concept of two ways paraphrasing Deut 30.19.¹⁸⁹ When Ezra laments on the final damnation of the lawlessness in the end-time judgement in 4 Ezra 7.112ff, Uriel insists on God's justice in the judgement by reminding the seer of the command of Moses to choose the way of life, i.e. the way of the Torah, against disbelief. Here the concept of two ways is exemplified in the eschatological judgement and functions to emphasise the importance of adherence to the Law in the end time.

183 See Böcher, *Der johanneische Dualismus*, 97-98.

184 Schanckenburg, *John*, 2.395-396; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 215; Carson, *John*, 446.

185 1QS 3.20-21; 5.10ff. The theology of two ways can be found in the Mandates of Hermas, the Testament of Asher, Wisdom of Solomon, 1-5.

186 Matt 7.13-14; *Did.* 1.1.

187 Cf. TAsher 1.3-5; *mAb.* 2.9. See K. Balzer, *The Covenant Formulary* (1971).

188 Sir 15.17; 1 Enoch 91.18; 98.4-8; TAsher 1.3, 5-7; 2 Enoch 30.15. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.140, 2.91 n224.

189 See de Boer, 'Paul', 179-180.

Of particular significance for the understanding of John 12.35-36 is that the symbolism of light and darkness is incorporated with the two-way theology in two texts from the Second Temple period:

- (i) In the *Manual of Discipline* (1QS 3.13-4.26), a full-fledged expression of the Qumran doctrine of two ways is combined with the dualism of light and darkness. 1QS 3.19, 20-21 reads: 'Those born of truth spring from a fountain of light, but those born of falsehood spring from a source of darkness. All the children of righteousness (כל בני צדק) are ruled by the Prince of Light and *walk in the ways of light* (ובדרכי איר יתהלכו), but all the children of falsehood (בני עול) are ruled by the Angel of Darkness and *walk in the ways of darkness* (ובדרכי חושך יתהלכו)' (Vermes).¹⁹⁰ Here the eschatological colouring of the covenant theology is combined with the cosmological presentation of the sons of light and the sons of darkness characteristic of the apocalyptic perspective.¹⁹¹ Although whether 1QS 3.13-4.26 is apocalyptic or not is disputed, it appears to us that the apocalyptic perspective is conceivable from the entire section, which is concerned with the divine mysteries concerning the history of the dual division of humanity, which leads to God's eschatological visitation (פקודה: 3.14,18,26; 4.19, 26) for either blessings and rewards (4.6-8) or curses and punishments (4.12-14).¹⁹² These mysteries are to be informed to 'all the sons of light' by the wise man (3.13f). In this context the covenantal concept of two ways linked to the ideas of blessings and curses is used to depict the fundamental division in humanity until the end-time judgement (משפט) (1QS 4.20).¹⁹³
- (ii) In 2 Baruch the covenantal theology of the two ways merges with the light and darkness symbolism. Speaking of the few who imitated Moses and the many who did not (2 Baruch 18.1-2), the author implicitly equates 'life and death' as the promise and the curse of the Mosaic covenant (2 Baruch 19.1 alluding to Deut

190 Italics mine. Cf. von der Osten-Sacken, *Gott und Belial*, 116f.

191 F.J. Murphy, 'Apocalypses', 162. Yet both Balzer, *The Covenant Formulary*, 104-105, and H. Stegemann, 'Zu Textbestand', 125, characterise it simply as eschatological.

192 See Balzer, *The Covenant Formulary*, 104-105; H. Stegemann, 'Zu Textbestand', 125. Also note עת קץ in 1QS 4.25 which obviously coincides with משפט/פקודה and 'the new creation'.

193 Stegemann, 'Zu Textbestand', 124-125.

30.19) with light and darkness. For him 'light' as well as 'a lamp' represents the Law (2 Baruch 17.4), and the way of light means adherence to the Law (2 Baruch 18.2), while darkness characterises the lawlessness (2 Baruch 18.2; 19.3; cf. 4 Ezra 14.20-21). Here also the two-way theology conveys strong eschatological traits, since the Mosaic covenant is referred to as a reminder within a context of eschatological urgency before the end-time judgement (2 Baruch 19.5: 'the end of times'; 20.1ff speaking of eschatological urgency and the divine judgement).

These texts are in agreement in that light and darkness correspond to righteousness as adherence to the Law and wickedness, which in turn correspond to the blessings and curses of the covenant as exemplified in the end-time judgement.

Furthermore, the first chapter of the *Book of Weeks* of the *Ethiopic Enoch*, though devoid of the light and darkness terminology, provides a good comparison to the Johannine two-way theology in John 12.35-36. In 1 Enoch 91.17-19 (cf. 91.4¹⁹⁴) the two ways are expressed as 'the way of righteousness' and 'the way of wickedness'. Like its Johannine counterpart, a call to walk in the way of righteousness follows Enoch's prediction of the characteristic end-time themes such as the intensification of evil followed by the divine judgement, the resurrection of the righteous and the destruction of sinners (91.5-11). Although it does not follow the chronological schematisation of the *Book of Weeks*,¹⁹⁵ John 12.20-34 contains the analogous themes such as the end-time judgement of the world and the punishment of the Evil (12.31-32), the reward (resurrection) of the righteous (12.26), and the intensification of evil as symbolised in the disbelief of the Jewish crowd and the concealment of Wisdom (12.29-30, 34, 36). In the *Book of Weeks* the call to walk in righteousness reflects the eschatological urgency, since the end-time judgement reveals the true people of God who will receive eschatological blessings. Such would be the case with a call to faith in John 12.35-36. It is also noteworthy that for Enoch the two ways are part of the revealed mysteries

194 In this passage, Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary*, 165-166, finds blessing and curse of the covenant formulary. See also 1 Enoch 94.1ff.

195 The end-time events in 1 Enoch 91 are schematised by means of weeks.

concerning the end time (1 Enoch 91.18); such an understanding accords with our view that John 12.20-36 is the climactic revelation of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation.

Thus, the two-way theology of John 12.35f, integrated with the symbolism of light and darkness and being under a strong overtone of the eschatological urgency (*ἔτι μικρὸν χρόνον*), is analogous to the concept of two ways as appropriated in Jewish apocalypses. This Johannine two-way theology is, therefore, a warning or an exhortation to the Jewish crowd to walk in the way of righteousness, or 'light' in this case, in view of the imminent end-time judgement, which is linked with the departure of Jesus the Light.

(3) *The Children of the Light as the Eschatological People of God*

Inherently linked to the two-way theology is *υἱὸς φωτός*, which must be also understood in covenantal terms. An expression equivalent to this occurs in the *Community Rule* of Qumran. There 'the sons of light' (e.g. 1QS 1.9; 3.13, 24), a signifier of the Community which considered itself to be the eschatological people of God, are characterised by their observance of the Law. As Brown summarises, they are 'the doers of the Law in the house of Judah whom God will deliver from the house of judgement for the sake of their labour and their "faith" in the Teacher of Righteousness'.¹⁹⁶ In John 12.36, however, it is not adherence to the Law but *faith in Jesus the Light* that characterises the people of God (cf. 12.46; 8.12): 'John's whole outlook has been radically reoriented by the revelation that is Christ'.¹⁹⁷ The Fourth Gospel lacks the Qumranites' idea of the military conflict between the sons of light and the sons of darkness and between spirit of truth and the spirit of unrighteousness (the angel of darkness) found in Qumran (e.g. 1QS 4.18-19) is lacking in the Fourth Gospel. It may be implicitly emphasised to the readers in the post-Easter period that, since this world is already judged with its ruler being cast out by the cross of Jesus, the force of evil is understood to have been nullified (in principle) that its force is not depicted in equal

¹⁹⁶ Cf. Brown 'The Qumran Scrolls', 192-194.

¹⁹⁷ Brown, 'The Qumran Scrolls', 195.

terms in its conflict with the sons of light: 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it' (John 1.5).¹⁹⁸ The Johannine term of 'the prince or ruler of this world' (12.31; 14.30; 16.11) would be the counterpart of the Qumranite term 'prince of darkness', while we have 'the Light' instead of the Qumran term 'prince of light'.

A similar designation of the people of God in terms of light, albeit without the concept of two ways, is found in 1 Enoch 108.11-15, which reads: 'And now I will summon the spirits of the good who belong to the generation of light, and I will transform those who were born in darkness, who in their flesh were not recompensed with such honour as their faithfulness deserved. And I will bring forth in shining light those who have loved my holy Name, and I will seat each on the throne of his honour.¹⁹⁹ And they shall be resplendent for times without number, for righteousness is the judgement of God; for to the faithful he will show faithfulness in the habitations of upright paths'.²⁰⁰ Light imagery is also used in 1 Enoch 38.4 to describe the vindicated righteous: 'They shall not be able to look on the faces of the righteous because the Lord of Spirits shall cause his light to shine on the faces of the saints and the elect righteous'.²⁰¹ A midrash of Dan 12.3 in the Qumran *Manual of Discipline* understands the resurrection of the righteous in terms of shining of their faces and clothes in the world to come, which itself is a restoration of the original glory of Adam before the fall.²⁰² Thus, in the Second Temple Judaism light imagery is used to describe the people of God under eschatological bliss. Read in this context, the Johannine *νιὸν φωτὸς* designates the eschatological people of God. Further, the concept of two ways indicates, the basis of this eschatological bliss is not adherence to the Law as in Judaism but faith in Jesus the Light.

(4) *Conclusions*

198 Cf. Brown, 'The Qumran Scrolls', 189. Cf. La Sor, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 198.

199 *καθίσω ἑκαστον ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον τῆς τιμῆς αὐτοῦ*: a reconstruction by Black, *The Book of Enoch*, 385.

200 Black, *The Book of Enoch*, 325, thinks that 108.15 refers to the punishment of the sinners.

201 Cf. 2 Enoch 22.8; PsSol 17.34f.

202 See Kittel, *TDNT* 2.246. 1QS 4.23.

The Johannine two-way theology here exhibits some important characteristics in view of its Jewish counterparts.

(a) *Faith in Jesus vs. the Torah* First and foremost, the focus of the covenantal way of life in the Fourth Gospel is no longer the Torah but Jesus the Light. While the observance of the Torah is the way of life in 4 Ezra and the way of light in 2 Baruch, it is belief in Jesus that is the criterion of the children of the Light as the new covenantal people of God. In the light of the covenantal institution of Deut 30.15-20, it would be that Jesus' exhortation to choose the way of light by believing in him as the Light over against the way of darkness must have been understood as replacing the covenantal exhortation to walk in the Law. Consequently, for the fourth evangelist, faith in Jesus replaces the Torah as the basis for people's covenantal relation to God.

(b) *Social Function* This community based on faith in Jesus the Light does not dispense with cultural differences, which themselves are unique manifestations of each social entity, ethnic or national. Rather it overcomes the ethno-centric exclusiveness which so often made absolute the peculiarity of one ethnic-religious or cultural group and created antinomies among humanity with the formulae such as 'Greeks and barbaroi' and 'Jews and Gentiles'.²⁰³ Moreover, in view of the prevalence of the Greek *paideia* in the early imperial period which distinguished 'the cultured' few from 'the uncultured' mass,²⁰⁴ the Johannine criterion of justification by faith also enabled its community to overcome the social divisions based on wealth, power and status.

(c) *Freedom of Will* Another implication of the use of the concept of two ways in John 12.35-36 is the issue of freedom of will, which can be drawn by studying the way in which the concept is utilised by Ben Sira. The concept of two ways (*δύο τρίβους*: Sir 2.12) is, as in Deut 30.15ff, concerned with adherence to the Torah and its rejection. 'It was he who created humankind in the beginning, and he left them in the power of

203 Cf. Sordi, *The Christians*, 156-157.

204 Cf. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.65ff.

their own free choice. If you choose, you can keep the commandments, and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice (ἐὰν θέλῃς, συντηρήσεις ἐντολάς καὶ πίστιν ποιῆσαι εὐδοκίας). He has placed before you fire and water; stretch out your hand for whichever you choose. Before each person are life and death, and whichever one chooses will be given' (Sir 15.14-17). The phrase πίστιν ποιῆσαι/יִמְנַת ('to act faithfully') is set in parallel to the συντηρήσεις ἐντολάς, or adherence to the Law.²⁰⁵ This subtle propagation for adherence to the Law is based on the freedom of will and is aimed at refuting the deterministic tendency prevalent among young, rich aristocrats of Jerusalem influenced by (Iranian) astrology and/or some elements of wisdom influenced by Hellenism of the day.²⁰⁶ Although it is not clear whether or not the authors of the apocalypses around the turn of the first century BCE were concerned with fatalism, the lack or rejection of the astrological speculations may imply their distaste of fatalism. The Johannine formulation of the two ways seems to contain a similar thrust, though the explicit reference to free will is lacking. The stress on the human responsibility whether to chose faith in Jesus or not shows a critical thrust against the popular belief in fate or destiny (*fatum*, τύχη), or rather against something between blind chance and canny *Nemesis*, among the Hellenistic-Roman populace — the fatalism from which, it is generally agreed, many escaped to oriental mystery religions for salvation.²⁰⁷ Like Seneca who, representing the first-century Stoicism, propagated human responsibility against the popular belief that the world was under the sway of Fate,²⁰⁸ the author of

205 In the first Johannine light-darkness saying describing the two ways (John 3.19-21) the 'do the truth' (3.21) is applied to the coming to the Light, a symbolic expression of faith in Jesus. What distinguishes the Johannine presentation sharply from Ben Sira, however, is that πίστις in Jesus is set in place of πίστις understood as adherence to the Law.

206 So Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.140.

207 See C.W. Mendel, *Our Seneca*, 154. The emphasis on destiny in Seneca's tragedies, for example, are said to have appealed to this popular belief, while he in his moral essays did not adhere to mere determinism but emphasised the human responsibility in one's strife for virtues (e.g. *De Vita Beata*, 20.2). See A.L. Motto/J.R. Clark, *Senecan Tragedy*, 157-158.

208 Although it was in the second and third centuries CE when the Stoic defence of human responsibility against the determinism was strongly put forward in the debate in philosophical schools, Seneca's insistence on the freedom of will is noticeable especially in his moral essays.

the Fourth Gospel seems to uphold the freedom of will and human responsibility, though implicitly, in the employment of the concept of two ways in order to encourage to walk in the Light.²⁰⁹

(d) *Not Existential Decision but Adherence* Our finding of the concept of two ways here poses a strong case against Bultmann's insistence on the importance of the existential decision in the Johannine concept of faith. His argument is well summarised in the following: 'The encounter with the Revealer turns the present moment into the eschatological moment. If this moment could be prolonged, it would no longer belong to the eschatological time but to the worldly one. It is this which gives the moment of encounter its importance and responsibility, which makes it the moment of decision concerning life and death.'²¹⁰ However, the present imperatives *περιπατεῖτε* and *πιστεῦετε* in John 12.35, 36 point to the contrary. They indicate that it is not a decision at one point that counts, but continuous adherence to the Light like that to the Torah.

Summary

The Johannine two-way theology as presented in John 12.35-36 provides a suitable conclusion to the pericope starting with the coming of the Greeks. They are introduced as representing a faithful response to Jesus and his message and thus portrayed as symbolising the eschatological pilgrimage of the Gentiles. The intermediary works of Philip and Andrew may be thought to point to their missionary activities (particularly in Asia Minor). The question of the praxis of the Mosaic Law as the basis for being the children of God is no longer put forward. Instead, faith in Jesus the Light is now the sign of the people of God. Regarding this issue, Hengel remarks, 'the question of the law and "orthopraxy", i.e. the question of the fulfilling of the commandments of the Torah of Moses and their significance for salvation, which dominated the early period of Christianity between 30 and 60 in Paul and still even in

²⁰⁹ If it is true that the doctrine of '*duae viae*' functioned as a catechetical purpose for the community members of Qumran as it did in *Barnabas* 18-20 and *Didache* 1-6 (Schürer, *The History*, III.1. 172-173 n83), its Johannine formulation may well have served as a catechism.

²¹⁰ Bultmann, *John*, 355-356.

Acts..., and which also plays an essential role in Mark and in the rest of the Synoptic tradition, fades right into the background in John'.²¹¹ It is without doubt that the evangelist's emphasis is on *solus Christus* and *sola fide*, but these principles are set forth in contrast, albeit implicit, to the law and adherence to it.²¹² It may be, as Hengel thinks, that the question of the 'works of the law' and faith in Christ is not or never was a topic for discussion in the Fourth Gospel.²¹³ But it is also arguable that such an implicit contrast between Jesus and the law and between faith in the former and adherence to the latter is a sophisticated apologetic way of answering the same question. If the Gospel was set in a context of controversy with the synagogue which must have emphasised the importance of adherence to the law, the 'implicit' contrast would become stark, for the contrast would have been evident to the first-century Jews. The Johannine answer to such a controversy as to who constitute the people of God would be that since the law is now fulfilled in Jesus, only faith in him provides the basis of being the people of God. This could be conceived of as a polemic against Judaism, but the reference to the faith of many Jews despite the rejection by the rest would indicate that his mission has a concern for the Jews also. Indeed, John 12.42-43 may well have functioned to encourage the believing Jews to come out of the synagogue to join the Christian communities or to show the legitimacy of remaining in the Christian communities for those who are tempted to rejoin the synagogue.

4.3.6 *Jesus' Anguish, the Bath Qol and the Glorification of the Name of the Father*

Lying at the apex of the pericope (I.2) with these apocalyptic contours, John 12.27ff must contain its central theme. In the Johannine version of the Gethsemane scene Jesus expresses his agony: 'Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? "Father, save me from this hour"? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father glorify thy name' (John 12.27-28). In response the heavenly voice comes,

²¹¹ Hengel, *Question*, 119-120.

²¹² Compare Hengel, *Question*, 120.

²¹³ Hengel, *Question*, 120. U. Schnelle, *Antidocetic Christology*, 31-34, also argues for the gulf between the Gospel and Judaism in understanding the law and rejects the view that the Gospel reflects Jewish Christianity recently separated from its mother religion, i.e. Judaism.

saying 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again' (12.28). Our consideration here concentrates on three main issues as related to the apocalyptic contour of the context, namely, (1) Jesus' anguish as a messianic woe; (2) the heavenly voice as a means of revelation and the theme of glorification referring to the end-time judgement and restoration. Surrounded by these elements, Jesus' mission becomes explicit, i.e. he came to this hour (of judgement) to face death, from which he does not ask for deliverance.

4.3.6.1 *The ταραχή of Jesus the Righteous Sufferer (12.27)*

At 12.27 Jesus says: *Νῦν ἡ ψυχὴ μου τετάρακται* (cf. Matt 26.38//Mark 14.34: *Περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἕως θανάτου*; cf. Ps 41.6 LXX).²¹⁴ Due to *νῦν* here, the hour is not only applied to the glorification of Jesus as the Son of man but also to his *ταραχή*. The perfect tense *τετάρακται* would express the mental state of the Johannine Jesus concurrent with his announcement of the arrival of the hour, i.e. the divinely appointed time for his glorification through the passion and death.²¹⁵ Occurring frequently in connection with *ἡ καρδιά σι τὸ πνεῦμα* in the Farewell discourse (13.21; 14.1, 27; cf. 11.33), the anguish of Jesus' heart is an important theme in the face of the hour that has come. Questions must be asked as to the significance of this motif and the intertextual issue that brings that motif into perspective.

The association of *ψυχὴ* with *ταράσσειν* is extant both in Hellenistic Greek and early Jewish literature.

(i) Diodorus Siculus (1c. BCE) reports the words of Alexander the Great at the prediction of his death: *ἐταράσσετο τὴν ψυχὴν*.²¹⁶ If read in this context, this Johannine theme of the anguish had a point of contact with a wider Mediterranean audience and it is possible that it served to point to the imminent death of Jesus. As we shall argue later, such an expression of suffering can be understood as a *pathos* (suffering) of a tragic hero which constitutes a climax in Graeco-Roman dramas.

214 A parallel of *ταράσσειν* and *εἶναι περίλυπός* can be proved by the fact that both are used to translate ΠΠΨ in the LXX.

215 Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 75-100; cf. X. Léon-Dufour, 'Père', 158.

216 Cf. BAGD 805.

In Jewish literature, the same association is found in the canonical Psalms and the Qumran *Hymns of Thanksgiving (Hodayot)*.²¹⁷

(ii) *The OT* In the Psalms of the OT, petitionary prayer for God's deliverance from anguish of suffering or death inflicted by one's enemies is a typical feature of what C. Westermann and others classify as 'the lament of the individual'.²¹⁸ Some exegetes see in John 12.27 the fulfilment of Ps 42.6: מִמַּתְּוֹחַי נַפְשִׁי וְתַהֲמִי עָלַי / πρὸς ἐμαυτὸν ἢ ψυχῆ μου ἐταράχῃ (LXX 41.7).²¹⁹ J. Beutler goes a step further and argues that John 12.27, together with 11.33, 35, 38; 14.1-9, 27; and 19.28, constitutes a midrash on Ps 42/43, which he thinks the evangelist adapts to the Gethsemane tradition.²²⁰ It is true that there is a parallel between John 12.27 and Ps 42.6. But the wide-spread nature of this motif makes it impossible to restrict the allusion to that single psalm.²²¹ Ps 6.3-4, another lament of the individual, shows even a closer affinity to John 12.27.²²² Ps 6.3-4 reads: 'My soul is struck with terror (MT: וַנִּפְשֵׁי נַאֲדָר וְנִבְהַלְתָּ מֵאֵד; LXX: καὶ ἡ ψυχῆ μου ἐταράχθη σφόδρα), while you, O Lord—how long? Turn, O Lord, save my life (κύριε, ῥῦσαι τὴν ψυχὴν μου)'. The combination of (a) 'the lament over personal suffering' and (b) the petition for deliverance²²³ shows a striking parallel to John 12.27 in form and content. Regarding the second element, Jesus' self-reflective question (καὶ τί εἶπω;) together with the petition for deliverance in a form of a rhetorical question (πάτερ, σῶσόν με ἐκ τῆς ὥρας ταύτης;),²²⁴ introduces a different thrust. As the adversative conjunction ἀλλά following this conventional petition indicates, the purpose of Jesus' coming or mission must contradict with making such a

217 Cf. TDan 7.4 where the motif appears within the context of moral teaching on anger.

218 Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 181-194; K. Koch, *The Growth*, 171-182.

219 Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 79; cf. Barrett, *John*, 425.

220 Beutler, 'Psalm 42/3', 33-57. Cf. Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, 79; A.T. Hanson, *The Prophetic Gospel*, 157.

221 Cf. Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 425, who refers to Ps 42.5, 6 and 55.4, 5. See also Moo, *The Old Testament*, 241.

222 Cf. Reim, *Studien*, 160; Moo, *The Old Testament*, 241; Hengel, *Die Frage*, 198 n138, who points to Ps 6.4f (cf. Ps 31[30 LXX].40; 42[41 LXX].6f).

223 See also Ps 41(42).6; 54(55).4; 108(109).22. The combination of (a) anguish, (b) petition, and (c) reference to the enemy or accusers appears, albeit in varying orders, in these psalms as well as in Ps 6.

224 This petition should be amended as a rhetorical question, since the conjunction ἀλλά in 12.27 seems to 'be used after a question to one's self as in classical' (BDF 448[4]). Cf. BDF 496. Westcott, *St John*, 182, regards this as a real prayer.

petition for deliverance.²²⁵ Instead, he voices a prayer asking for the glorification of the Father: *πάτερ, δόξασόν σου τὸ ὄνομα*. This prayer, together with the departure from that convention of the individual lament psalms, lays emphasis on Jesus' willing obedience to the Father's will that involves his (imminent) suffering that is suggested by his *ταραχή* as that of a righteous sufferer.

Another element that is apparently lacking in John 12.27f when compared to the individual lament psalms is a mention of or a complaint about the enemies of the lamenter who are plotting and threatening to kill him.²²⁶ Yet, a theme comparable to this element seems to underlie the words of Jesus here. Jesus' anguish is set within the wider context in which the Sanhedrin has decided to kill him and has given an order to arrest him (John 11.53, 57). Indeed, it is the coming of the adversary, viz. Satan entering Judas, that causes Jesus' *ταραχή* in 13.21.²²⁷ As we have demonstrated, the accusations of Jesus by the Jews and their leaders are presented as part of the cosmic law-suit between Evil and Jesus. This is exactly what is found in the lament psalms of the individual, since the lamenter's anguish and petition for deliverance are voiced when he is threatened by his enemies accusing him before the heavenly tribunal.²²⁸ Westermann argues that these lament psalms have a function to refute the enemy within the people of God by indicating that whereas the lamenter takes God seriously, the enemy is not taking God seriously any longer and is able to mock him in impurity.²²⁹ If so, the evangelist's application of this *topos* to Jesus' anguish would be to indicate his righteousness in front of the sacrilegious and godless nature of his fellow Jews.

(iii) In the Qumran *Hodayot* the motif of anguish or distress of the righteous sufferer is given an apocalyptic and eschatological thrust. Most of the hymns of 1QH can be categorised as individual thanksgivings in H. Gunkel's classic categorisation.²³⁰

225 See X. Léon-Dufour, 'Jean 12,27', 160-162.

226 Cf. Ps 6.8, 10; 42.9-10. See Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 189-193.

227 Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 77, points to the allusion to Ps 42.6 here. The replacement of *ψυχή* by *πνεῦμα* is due to the translational variance. *Contra* Moo, *The Old Testament*, 241 n2.

228 S. Mowinkel, *The Psalms*, II.2-4, 6-8.

229 Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 193-194.

230 Gunkel, *Die Psalmen*, ix. See B. Kittel, *The Hymns*, 2. The three elements characteristic of Gunkel's individual thanksgiving can be found in most of the hymns of 1QH: (a) the description of the psalmist's distress; (b) the cry for help; (c) the description of deliverance. Cf. H.-W. Kuhn, *Enderwartung*, 22-26.

Yet, in view of the tendency of the earlier, distinct psalm forms to be mixed in later Hebrew poetry in general²³¹ and the multiformity of the hymns of the *Hodayot* in particular, it is hardly surprising to find themes similar to the canonical individual laments in the *Hodayot*.²³² In 1QH 5.19ff the motif of anguish is applied to the 'I' of the psalmist and is linked with the theme of a messianic birth pang (cf. Isa 13.8 and 21.3). In 1QH 5.30-31 the author says: 'Anguish (ולעופות) [seized me] like the pang of a woman in travail,²³³ and my heart is troubled within me' (ויהם עלי לבי).²³⁴ Earlier in 1QH 3.7-10 this motif of birth pang, used with a theme of anguish, is considered to be a messianic woe through which 'a wonderful counsellor' is born. This passage may be an allusion to Isa 9.6,²³⁵ although it has been argued, rightly, that this phrase does not directly refer to the Messiah *per se*.²³⁶ Holm-Nielsen remarks that 'the psalm comes to represent the suffering sustained at that time by the community and in particular by their leader, the "Teacher of Righteousness", with the idea that these sufferings were warnings of the dawn of the Messianic era'.²³⁷ O. Betz, on the other hand, would argue that the suffering of the psalmist reflects that of the Teacher of Righteousness through whose travail the redeemed community emerged.²³⁸ Regardless of the dispute as to whether the individual lament reflects the experience of the Teacher of Righteousness or to what extent, if affirmative, it does so,²³⁹ it is sufficient to note that the motif of individual anguish before one's enemies is expressed in terms of birth pang before the dawn of the new age²⁴⁰ and is contemporaneous with the judgement. Noteworthy is that, as in the canonical psalms of individual lament, the suffering is thought to have been inflicted by the inner-group antagonists: '[All who have ea]ten my

231 Gunkel, *The Psalms*, 36-37; Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 201-213.

232 In fact, Holm-Nielsen, *Hodayot*, 308-309, concludes that its terminology concerning thanksgiving for deliverance and that of lament of tribulations are taken primarily from the individual thanksgiving and the individual lament psalms. So also A. Chester, 'Citing the Old Testament', 146-147.

233 Cf. Isa 13.8; 21.3. See Holm-Nielsen, *Hodayot*, 109. Holm-Nielsen (802-804) suggests that 1QH 5.30-31 is dependent on these Issaianic passages.

234 See also 1QH 7.5 (ויהם לבי לכלה). Cf. 1QH 4.33-34.

235 Delcor, *Les Hymnes*, 111; Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 176; Grant, *Salvation*, 15. In 1QH 7.19 the hymnist is portrayed as the 'branch' (נצר); the counsellor of Isa 9.7 is later identified as the 'branch' in Isa 11.1.

236 See Mansoor, *The Thanksgiving Hymns*, 90-92.

237 Holm-Nielsen, *Hodayot*, 63. For the discussion see Kittel, *The Hymns*, 9ff.

238 Betz, 'Die Geburt', 318-320; 'Das Volk', 68. So also P. Garnet, *Salvation*, 14. Cf. 1QH 3.7-10.

239 Cf. Schürer, *The History*, III.1.453-454.

240 Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 175.

bread have lifted their heel against me, and all those joined to my Council have mocked me with wicked lips.' (5.24; cf. Ps 41.9).

However, there appears to be little warrant to argue for a comparison of the *Hodayot* hymns to the canonical psalms of individual lament and consequently to the Johannine Jesus' lament at John 12.27. The self-evident verbal correspondences are in fact few between the individual laments of the OT and the *Hodayot*.²⁴¹ The author's favourite expression is the Niphal of נהם ('to groan') with לבי ('my heart') as its subject and does not always use the terms of distress or anguish which can be rendered *ταραχή* and *ταράσσειν* in the LXX. But, given that they belong to the wealth of biblical terminology expressing anguish or distress,²⁴² the comparison must not be dismissed. Furthermore, the elements of lament contained in most of the psalms of 1QH encourage such a comparison. Indeed 1QH 5.5-19, which can be categorised as an 'individual thanksgiving',²⁴³ contains the themes characteristic also of the canonical individual lament psalms such as anguish²⁴⁴ and deliverance (though not petition for deliverance) (5.13), and the enemy identified as 'the wicked and fierce' (5.17). The psalmist says, 'For Thou has not forsaken me in my soul's distress; and Thou hast heard my cry in the bitterness of my heart' (5.12).

Of particular significance of 1QH 5.19ff is its incorporation of the apocalyptic motifs of the concealment of wisdom from the wicked (5.25) and the messianic birth pang to describe the adversaries of the psalmist and the suffering they inflict on him

241 As far as the OT is concerned, *ταράσσειν* used with *καρδία* or *ψυχή* in the LXX corresponds to בהל, עשש, חרר, שחח, עשש, חרר, שחח, עשש, חרר, שחח, עשש, חרר, שחח in the MT.

242 Three examples would suffice here. (a) The phrase ויהם לבי, a favourite expression of the *Hodayot* (1QH 5.31), is akin to ויתהולל לבי בחלהלה (1QH 10.33: 'And my heart is stricken with terror'), which speaks of the divine judgement. חלהלה is rendered *ταραχή* in the LXX. (b) In 1QH 3.25 the distress of the psalmist's 'I', identified as נפש אביון ('the soul of the poor one'), is said to be in the midst of great tribulation (מהרומת רבה); מהרומה is also *ταραχή* in the LXX (Isa 22.5). (c) In the synthetic parallelism of 1QH 5.34:

כי עששו מכעס עיני
 ונפשי במרירי יומ
 truly, my eyes are dimmed by grief,
 and my soul by daily bitterness.

it is without doubt that because of the ellipsis in the second colon נפשי is to be read with עשש, which is translated *ταράσσειν* in Ps 6.7 (LXX) that also refers to the dimming of the eye of the psalmist owing to his foes.

243 M.P. Horgan and P.J. Kobelski, 'The *Hodayot*', 185.

244 The terminology of anguish in 1QH 5.12-13 includes 'in my soul's distress' (בצרת נקשי), 'in the bitterness of my soul' (במרורי נפשי), and 'in my groaning' (באנהתי).

(5.30-31). Such a combination of the motifs is presented in the framework of the (eschatological) cosmic conflict between God and Evil²⁴⁵ and is exactly analogous to the context of the anguish of Jesus at John 12.27!

(iv) *The Johannine Use in the Light of the Hodayot*

In the Fourth Gospel the motif of *ταραχή* appears more frequently than in the Synoptics, and seems to have a discrete literary effect (John 12.27; 13.21; 14.1, 27; cf. 11.33: *ἐνεβριμήσατο τῷ πνεύματι*). Appearing with *νῦν* which points to its direct relation to the end-time (*ῥα*) and the judgement of the world, the *ταραχή* of Jesus at 12.27 has an undoubtedly apocalyptic, eschatological contour and means a messianic woe before the end-time judgement. The expression of his anguish in 13.21 is followed by the double *ἀμήν* saying suggesting the cause of the distress: 'one of you will betray me'. It is intriguing that as in the individual lament psalms and the *Hodayot* Jesus' anguish is linked with the activity of the antagonists among his fellow members participating in a communal meal. As in 1QH 5.24, the motif of betrayal from within (cf. Ps 41.9) is applied to Judas in the Fourth Gospel (13.26) as well as in the Synoptics (Matt 26.23//Mark 14.20//Luke 22.21).²⁴⁶

The *ταραχή* is not confined to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. In John 14.1 Jesus says to his disciples, *μὴ ταρασσέσθω ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία* ('Do not let your heart start to be troubled'), suggesting that they will be in a situation that would cause anguish. Appearing at the beginning (14.1) and at the end (14.27), the motif constitutes an *inclusio* for the entire chapter. Such a turn is not surprising because they are elsewhere said to experience a messianic woe in terms of a birth pang (Matt 24.8; Mark 13.8). In the *Hodayot* (e.g. 9.25-27) to destroy the elect is one of the purposes of Belial who through his earthly representatives causes the anguish of the psalmist. Likewise, in the Fourth Gospel 'the hour' is depicted as a time of tribulation not only for Jesus but for the disciples, who are said to leave their leader and be scattered into their homes (16.32)—another motif of the end-time tribulation. Thus the eschatological, messianic *ταραχή* is applied not only to Jesus but to his disciples at the coming of the end-time judgement (16.20-21).

²⁴⁵ See Kittel, *The Hymns*, 13.

²⁴⁶ Cf. V.K. Robbins, 'Last Meal', 29-30.

Therefore, the *ταραχή* of Jesus at 12.27 is to be seen as an anguish of the Righteous Sufferer in the face of the suffering inflicted by the adversaries. They consist of the hostile Jews, the misunderstanding crowd, and one of his followers in particular, all of whom are under the sway of the ruler of this world. As in the *Hodayot* (e.g. 9.25-27) this struggle of Jesus and his disciples with the opposing forces is depicted as corresponding to the struggle or judicial procedure going on at a cosmic level between God and Satan.

A question arises as to how we are to account for this parallel between the Qumran *Hodayot* and the Johannine description of Jesus' anguish. It is arguable, on the basis of the above observation, that the Fourth Gospel relied on the *Hodayot*, or that some of the Johannine community had a Qumran connection.²⁴⁷ But it must be noted that there are some distinctive differences between them that render these arguments improbable.

(a) First of all, in the *Hodayot* it is always God who, in association with the heavenly hosts, executes judgement on the wicked and is thereby glorified, and there is no reference to the sending of a figure of Messiah and/or Judge.²⁴⁸ By contrast, in John 12.20ff the judgement of this world is closely associated with the reciprocal glorification between the Son of man (who has just been in anguish) and the Father (12.28). In this respect the Fourth Gospel is closer to the *Similitudes* of Enoch and 4 Ezra in which the Messiah/Judge plays a significant role in the end-time judgement.

(b) Another important difference is that while the death of Jesus has a salvific effect, the suffering of the psalmist of the *Hodayot* is regarded simply as representing the messianic woe before the divine judgement on his adversaries.²⁴⁹ Although it is not only for the salvation of himself but also for that of the community, the suffering of the psalmist, perhaps the Teacher of Righteousness, is not given any salvific function for others. Salvation of the Teacher of Qumran is construed as being achieved through his

247 A well-known hypothesis is that the Gospel's Essene connection is due to the existence in Ephesus (where the Gospel was traditionally known to be written) of the disciples of John the Baptist some of whose teaching is assumed to have affinities to the Qumran literature. But see R. Brown, 'The Qumran Scrolls', 207.

248 See Holm-Nielsen, *Hodayot*, 297.

249 Pace J.L. Price, 'Light from Qumran', 35.

trials as his judgement (1QH 5.8-11) and by the covenant mercy of God (7סד: 1QH 2.23; 7.27), while salvation of the members of the community is thought to be achieved by the truth taught by the Teacher (e.g. 1QH 2.13f).²⁵⁰

Regardless of these dissimilarities, the *Hodayot* and its apocalyptic-eschatological interpretation of the motif of individual anguish caused by adversaries are relevant for the understanding of the *ταραχή* of the Johannine Jesus. Although there is no knowing how wide-spread such an interpretation was in the first-century Judaism, the *Hodayot* provides an ample example of such a tendency. In fact, L. Ruppert classifies the individual lament of the *Hodayot* within the wider category of the suffering of the righteous in early Judaism, along with the Servant Songs of Deutero-Isaiah and the individual lament Psalms.²⁵¹ The intertestamental period is known as the period of the foreign domination under which those who adhered to the Torah frequently suffered unjustly as the Maccabean martyrs did. In such a context the question of *passio iustiorum* poses a burning question of theodicy. As Ruppert puts it: 'Im Lauf etwa eines Jahrtausands israelisch-jüdischer Religionsgeschichte ist aus dem von Israels Frommen in notvoller Situation immer wieder erfahrenen Skandalon der *passio iusti* (vgl. die Gebete der Angelegten) über "Gesetzes"-Formmigkeit (Ps 119; späte Weisheit) und die Armentheologie der Septuaginta schließlich in der späten Apokalyptik ein "Dogma" vom Leiden des Gerechten (*passio iusti*) beziehungsweise vom Leiden der Gerechten (*passio iustiorum*) geworden'.²⁵² Seen in this context, the *Hodayot* may well be evidence that the individual lament psalms were applied to solve the problem of *passio iustiorum* by means of the vindication of the righteous sufferer.²⁵³ Although it may not be advisable to argue for the existence of a well developed dogma of the *passio iusti*, it is undeniable that the motif of suffering and exaltation/vindication became a consistent feature in Jewish apocalyptic literature in answering the vexing question of theodicy in

250 See Garnet, *Salvation*, 17-21. Salvation of the psalmist is also understood in terms of the revelation of the mysteries (רזי פלאכה) 'Thy marvellous mysteries': 1QH 7.27; 11.10; סוד אמתכה 'The mystery, or counsel, of Thy truth': 11.4, 9; סוד אמת: 11.6). Kuhn, *Endervartung*, 169, argues that this indicates that the Qumran community understood itself to be endowed with the eschatological gift of revealed mysteries in the present (cf. 1 Enoch 41.1f; 58.5; 71.3; 103.2f).

251 Ruppert, *Jesus*, 22. Cf. Isa 53; Prov 1.11; 6.7; Ps 9.24; 34.37.

252 Ruppert, *Jesus*, 28.

253 E.g. 1QH 15.14-17; WisSol 2.12-20; 5.1-7 (cf. Isa 52.13-53.12); 4 Macc 18.6b-19. See Ruppert, *Jesus*, 23ff.

the face of persecutions by or sufferings under foreign powers. Indeed, the scheme of suffering and exaltation is applied to righteous sufferers in a collective manner in the end-time scenes of judgement and vindication found generally in the Jewish apocalyptic writings.²⁵⁴

In view of this development of the concept of *passio iusti*, the fact that his death is combined with the verbs *δοξάζειν* and *ὑψοῦν* indicates that Jesus is depicted as the Righteous Sufferer in the context of John 12.27. As E. Schweizer points out, the description of the righteous sufferer in the OT and early Jewish literature is associated with the themes of suffering and exaltation.²⁵⁵ The scheme of exaltation *after* suffering is applied to the Suffering Servant of the Lord in Isa 52.13-53.12. In its later development in early Judaism, the exaltation of the sufferer, it is thought, is realised implicitly already, and is to be completed in the world to come after the end-time judgement, in which his adversaries are condemned.²⁵⁶ E. Schweizer contends that this scheme of humiliation and exaltation is integrated with the Son of man in the Synoptics, although he would not support the apocalyptic Son of man.²⁵⁷ Likewise, the glorification/exaltation of the Johannine Jesus as the Son of man in John 12.23ff is associated with the theme of righteous suffering. Due to the connection established between the coming of 'the hour' at 12.23 and the *ὑψοῦν* at 12.27, the glorification of the Son of man is directly linked with the *ταραχή* of Jesus as an anguish of the righteous sufferer before his suffering afflicted by his opponents.

Therefore, we would conclude that the Fourth Gospel's presentation of Jesus' passion has to be seen against the background of the developing interpretative lore of the suffering of the righteous,²⁵⁸ and the differences it exhibits ought to be regarded as a manifestation of the author's rhetorical purposes to make Jesus' event unique in contrast to other righteous sufferers.

254 E.g. 1 Enoch 47.1-4; 48.7; 62.12; 2 Baruch 52.6f (cf. 48.49). Cf. Ruppert, *Jesus*, 24-25.

255 Schweizer, *Erniedrigung*, 26-31.

256 E.g. 1 Macc 2.58; Jub 4.23; 4 Ezra 14.9, 49; 1 Enoch 71.14; 89.52; 90.3; WisSol 2-5

257 Schweizer, *Erniedrigung*, 33; 'The Son of Man Again', 261.

258 *Contra Moo*, *The Old Testament*, 285-300, who holds that there is no need to go beyond the individual lament psalms of the OT to account for the themes of lament and mockery depicting the passion of Jesus.

Conclusion

To summarise, the passage expressing the *παράχῃ* of Jesus in John 12.27 does not seem to be a direct citation from, an allusion to, or an interpretation of a single OT passage (cf. Ps 6.3). Rather, it shows all the characteristics of the same motif of individual distress before one's enemies as utilised in the (apocalyptic-)eschatological texts of the Qumran *Hodayot*. There the accusation by the enemies is construed as representing the judicial process in the heavenly tribunal, and the anguish of the hymnist (the Teacher of Righteousness) is believed to be the eschatological, or messianic woe before the divine judgement on the wicked. Likewise, the *παράχῃ* of Jesus is enclosed within the contrast between vindication and judgement (John 12.26, 31). This is a typical contrast of the end time in Jewish martyr theology and apocalypses which is appropriated within a context of the heavenly tribunal corresponding to the earthly persecutions and/or sufferings of the people of God. In this context, the Johannine Jesus as the Righteous Sufferer expresses his anguish in terms of the messianic woe, at the coming of the end time in which the judgement of this world is achieved and the messianic age of salvation (or the messianic kingdom) commences.²⁵⁹

If, as we have noted, the psalmist's anguish in the *Hodayot* is depicted as an appeal before the heavenly court, the heavenly voice to the Johannine Jesus can be understood in that context, since a heavenly voice which rabbis called *בת קול* (a daughter of voice) was conceived of as a reflection of the heavenly council.²⁶⁰ If so, the heavenly voice here means a heavenly 'Yes' to Jesus' prayer which is presented within the framework involving the earthly conflict and the heavenly tribunal which corresponds to it.

4.3.6.2 *The Glorification of the Name of the Father and the Bath Qol*

²⁵⁹ See e.g. 4 Ezra 6.12-35; 9.3, 8; 13.29-34.

²⁶⁰ Cf. *ySotah* 13.2; 9.13. Vermes, *Jesus and the World*, 92, 206, maintains that its function is not for a new revelation but to commend teachers of the Law in public. Cf. B. Chilton, *Profiles of a Rabbi*, 78.

A response to the prayer of the Johannine Jesus asking for the glorification of the name of the Father comes as a voice from heaven, saying: *Καὶ ἐδόξασα καὶ πάλιν δοξάσω* (John 12.28).

(1) *The Bath Qol*

A voice from heaven, or *בַּת כּוֹל*, is evidently a revelatory event. C. Rowland points out that hearing the voice of God together with seeing angels is characteristic of an apocalyptic visionary scene.²⁶¹ In 2 Baruch 22.1ff, for example, (as in the Synoptic baptismal scenes) the voice from heaven is part of the apocalyptic vision of the open heaven. In the dialogue with the distressed seer the voice from on high promises him the certainty of the coming of the end time when the divine judgement and vindication is executed (2 Baruch 24.1ff). It is clear that this apocalyptic vision is a divine answer to the cry for theodicy by Baruch, who is in distress with God's 'long-suffering' in the tragedy befallen on his people and Jerusalem (21.21). 'How long', the seer questions, 'will corruption remain, and until when will the time of mortals be happy, and until when will those who pass away be polluted by the great wickedness of this world?' (21.20). And what Baruch urges for is the immediate intervention of God to exercise judgement on the wicked (the Romans) and to achieve the restoration of Israel. It is noteworthy that God's immediate intervention in judgement is expressed in terms of the revelation of his glory: 'And now, show your glory soon and do not postpone that which was promised by you' (2 Baruch 21.25; cf. 21.23). If read in this Jewish apocalyptic context in which the revelation of God's glory designates the end-time judgement and restoration, the prayer of Jesus for the glorification of the Father's name and the divine response in the affirmative would be understood as pointing towards such a decisive event, that is, the cross.

Furthermore, Schnackenburg maintains that the idea of the heavenly voice which is thought to be a thunder comes from Jewish apocalyptic tradition.²⁶² Indeed, God's

²⁶¹ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 116. E.g. 1QM 10.8ff (which regards hearing God's voice and seeing angels as privileges of Israel as the covenant people of God); TLevi 18.6-14. See P. Kahn, *Offenbarungsstimmen*, 21-22.

²⁶² Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.389-390.

voice is alluded to as a thunder especially in Jewish apocalyptic writings (1 Enoch 69.23; Jub 2.2; ApAbr 17.15; cf. SibOr 5.344-345; Rev 4.5; cf. 1QH 3.34). Though of a late date,²⁶³ the Merkabah vision in 3 Enoch 16, a heavenly court scene comparable to Dan 7, 1 Enoch 62 and 4 Ezra 13, contains a reference to 'a divine voice came out from the presence of Shekinah' (16.4). Consequently, it is likely that the heavenly voice mistaken to be a thunder or an angel speaking in John 12.28-29 may be understood as constituting an element of the apocalyptic throne theophany scene.

(2) *The Glorification of the Name of the Father*

The self-understanding of the Johannine Jesus concerning his mission is focused on the glorification of the Name of the Father (12.27-28; cf. 17.2ff). Most exegetes would agree that the aorist and future tenses of *δοξάζειν* of the *bath qol* refer retrospectively to the earthly ministry of Jesus represented by his works of signs and prospectively to his glorification through the crucifixion and resurrection, respectively.²⁶⁴ What we have here is the (implied) author's understanding of Jesus' consciousness of his mission, which in other places is expressed in the motif of the Father sending his Son. As the Johannine Jesus' self-understanding of the divine necessity of the crucifixion (*ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ*) of the Son of man in John 3.14-15 is explained (*γάρ*) in terms of the Father's initiative in giving his only Son (3.16), so is his consciousness of his mission 'for this hour' of the glorification given approval by the heavenly voice. The Father's glorification of his name is the purpose of Jesus' coming, which culminates on the cross.

As regards the Christology developed here, it should be noted that the words of the Johannine Jesus and the Father's response in the *bath qol* in 12.27-29 are indicative

263 P. Alexander, *OTPs* 1.225-229, locates its final redaction in the fifth or the sixth century CE, while acknowledging the existence of some old tradition dating back from the Maccabean era.

264 There seems to be a general consensus on this view. See Blank, *Krisis*, 278-280; Schnackenburg, *John*, 2.388; M. Pamment, 'The Meaning of *doxa*', 13; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 212; Loader, *The Christology*, 51; Ashton, *Understanding*, 493. Yet Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung*, 193-198, is of the opinion that the aorist refers to the entire earthly ministry of Jesus including 'the hour' and that the future tense refers to the post-resurrection work of Jesus among the disciples. De Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 197, takes a different line of interpretation in that the former refers to 'the hour' of the Son of man's glorification while the latter is concerned with the promise made to the disciples regarding eternal life and being where Jesus is to be honoured by God in 12.25-26.

of the filial relationship of Jesus with the Father.²⁶⁵ This relation between the Father and the Son, the latter of which is absent but clearly implied here, constitutes part of the entire Johannine theme of the sending or mission Christology which is expressed acutely by the repeated use of *ὁ πέμψαν με* and its cognate.

Jesus' request *δόξασόν σου τὸ ὄνομα* in 12.27 may be concerned with the manifestation of God's glory (*כבוד*), which is a term for theophany in the OT in general. In prophetic and hymnic literature the future salvation of the people of Israel is described in conjunction with the revelation of God's glory (Isa 4.5; 24.23; 25.6). In Deutero-Isaiah and some Psalms *כבוד* has become synonymous with God's righteousness and salvation, and elsewhere the glory of Yahweh has taken an eschatological overtone and is associated with the universal recognition of Yahweh.²⁶⁶ This eschatological tendency is carried into early Judaism. In the Zion hymn of Qumran (11Q) even the fullness of Zion's glory, which is equivalent to God's glory,²⁶⁷ is equated with the day of her eschatological redemption.²⁶⁸ In 1 Enoch the glory of God is a main theme of the revelation of the cosmological mysteries which 'have a clear eschatological tendency, as they embrace the sphere of God's judgement on angels and sinners as well as God's reward for the righteous'.²⁶⁹

Against these eschatological and/or apocalyptic connotations should the theme of the glorification of the Name of Father be understood. Occurring within the context of the divine judgement and vindication of the righteous, this theme seems to be in harmony with the apocalyptic scene of the final judgement which is associated with the manifestation of the glory of God (1 Enoch 62.2ff; 4 Ezra 7.24). The belief behind it is that the revelation of God's glory means judgement since the sinful world cannot stand it without being justly judged and condemned.²⁷⁰ Simultaneously, the coming of the messianic figure in glory is an indispensable component of the scenes of the end-time judgement and salvation in Jewish apocalypses.²⁷¹

265 Lèon-Dufour, 'Père', 164.

266 E.g. Isa 11.9; Hab 2.14. Cf. Weinfeld, *ThWAT* IV.36-37.

267 Cf. Weinfeld, *ThWAT* 4.37.

268 J.A. Sanders, *DJDJ* IV.77.

269 Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.207.

270 E.g. 1 Enoch 50.4.

271 In 2 Baruch 30.1 the messiah comes in glory, while the messianic figure in the *Similitudes* of Enoch sits on the throne of glory (1 Enoch 45.3; 51.3; 55.4; 61.8; 62.2ff; 69.27ff).

In relation to the glorification of the name of God, Jesus' revelation of his Father's name is of interest. The Name of the Father in the Fourth Gospel has a certain christological connotation. In the Father's response at John 12.28 the omission of ὄνομα μου as the object of ἐδοξάσα and δοξάσω may suggest that Jesus is identified with God's Name since the object of the past (cf. 2.11) and the future glorification is obviously Jesus (12.23; 13.31-32).²⁷² This identification may be supported by a parallel between 12.28 (δόξασόν σου τὸ ὄνομα) and 17.1 (δόξασον σου τὸν υἱόν) and by the existence of some later witnesses reading τὸν υἱόν in place of τὸ ὄνομα at 12.28 (L X fl,¹³ 33 1071 1241 pc vg^{mss} sy^{hm}g bo) which is obviously an assimilation to 17.1.²⁷³ Moreover, an overt identification of Jesus with the divine Name may be found in John 18.5ff, where those who come to arrest Jesus fall down without recognising his identity when he first reveals himself by saying 'ἐγώ εἰμι'. Since the divine Name was thought in (some trends of) early Judaism to reflect the presence of God with all his power and might,²⁷⁴ the falling down of those who came to arrest Jesus—a typical reaction to theophany—is explicable. In fact, a Hellenistic writer Artapanus speaks of Pharaoh falling down into a dead faint as Moses uttered the divine Name in response to the question 'Who is the Lord?'.²⁷⁵ Though late in date, in Rabbinic Judaism the Hebrew for ἐγώ εἰμι, אֲנִי וְהוּא, was regarded as 'a mumbled version' of the Name (*mSukka* 4.5). Such an identification is already attested in Isa 52.6, which reads: 'Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore in that day they shall know that it is I (אֲנִי וְהוּא, ἐγώ εἰμι)'. Dodd suggests that Jesus' ministry of manifesting the Name of God should be understood against 'the rabbinic saying that while in this age the true name of God is unknown, in the age to come it will be revealed'.²⁷⁶

272 Cf. de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives*, 196, who argues that, because of the parallel between 1.28a and 17.1, 'the name' in 12.28a is 'an indirect reference to Jesus himself'. See also Draper, 'The Heavenly Feast', 139.

273 See B.M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 237-238; F.G. Untergrasbair, *Im Namen Jesu*, 95.

274 Urbach, *The Sages*, 124, defines the belief as follows: 'the Name itself, even if it is not an instrument or implement that works and achieves miracles and wonders, reflects the presence of the Deity and expresses His power and might'. This belief is attested already in the first century. E.g. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.275; Jub 36.7; 1 Enoch 69.14; cf. Deut.R. 3.8; *Bava Batra* 73e.

275 Urbach, *The Sages*, 125.

276 Dodd, *The Interpretation*, 96. He goes further to speculate: 'It is difficult not to suppose that there are some reference here to the revelation of the *shema hamnephorash*; and if so, then the Name takes the form, not merely of אֲנִי וְהוּא, ἐγώ εἰμι, but of אֲנִי וְהוּא, ἐγώ καὶ ὁ πέμψας με'.

Indeed, the name of God is one of the heavenly mysteries which *merkabah* mystics were eager to know.²⁷⁷ Thus it is not unreasonable that the Name of God was already hypostatised in the first-century Judaism, as 'the name' was given a highly hypostatised status along with δ $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ by Philo. Against this background, it can be said that Jesus' ministry is presented as a fulfilment of a Jewish eschatological hope concerning the Name of God.

Yet, as F.G. Untergaßmair points out, there is a clear distinction between 'the name' of the Father and 'his Son'.²⁷⁸ The Johannine Jesus' coming and doing the works are said to be in the name of God (5.43; 10.25; 12.13), the entire mission of Jesus is summarised as a manifestation of the name of God: 'I have manifested ($\epsilon\phi\alpha\nu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega\sigma\alpha$) thy name to the men whom you gave me from the world' (17.6); 'I made known ($\gamma\nu\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\omega$) thy name' (17.26; cf. 8.19, 28; cf. Isa 43.10). It has to be noted that the glorification of the Son as the $\delta\nu\omicron\mu\alpha$ of the Father (12.28) is related to the coming of the hour for the glorification of the Son of man (12.23) which is presented in conjunction with the fruit-bearing death of Jesus (12.24). The prayer of Jesus asking for glorification of the name of the Father in 12.28 is thus voiced in the face of the crucifixion, which is presented as the fulfilling the Johannine Jesus' mission to manifest the name of the Father. At the same time, the future tense of $\delta\omicron\xi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\omega$ in the *bath qol* would point beyond the cross; if the aorist $\epsilon\delta\omicron\xi\alpha\sigma\alpha$ refers to the entire work of Jesus on earth till his 'hour', the future would point to the glorification of Jesus in his heavenly glory following his being lifted-up on the cross.

4.4 Summary

We have seen how well apocalyptic motives are integrated into the narrative of John 12.20-36, which serves to provide a strong eschatological tone to the whole pericope due to its midrashic, or interpretative, objective.²⁷⁹ Jesus is presented as the Messiah of Jewish eschatological hopes, who in the fullness of time has come to achieve his salvific purposes in the world. Bultmann has astutely observed that 'it is

²⁷⁷ *Hekahlot Zutarti* 23-25. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 77-78.

²⁷⁸ Untergaßmair, *Im Namen Jesu*, 96-99.

²⁷⁹ See A. Del Agua, 'The Narrative', 346.

precisely the historical figure of Jesus, *precisely* his human history that has become the eschatological event by means of the ὥρα of δοξαθῆναι.²⁸⁰ Bultmann's emphasis on the personalisation of the eschaton in Jesus is such that the universal history of salvation is almost absorbed into the personal history, or even the person of Jesus. This, of course, accords well with his personalisation or existentialisation of eschatology. However, we would argue that, although personalised in Jesus, the universal perspective of the salvation history, eschatology, is not lost altogether. The apocalyptic terminology used for the coming of the end time is applied to Jesus' crucifixion as his glorification and lifting up/exaltation event. The hour of glorification of the Son of man is the hour of his crucifixion, towards which the entire ministry of Jesus is directed in John 1-12, and by which his mission is completed (19.30: *τετέλεσται*).²⁸¹

Located just before the passion and resurrection narrative (John 13-21), John 12.20-36 prefigures these climactic events not only of the personal history of Jesus but also of the salvation history of the world. This pericope provides the significations of the cross and resurrection (and return) in the symbolic language which is comparable to that used in expressing Jewish eschatological messianic expectations in near contemporary apocalypses; the passion and resurrection narrative, though not pertaining to the apocalyptic genre itself, is to be read as a historical acting out of the divine mysteries of the end time revealed earlier, and particularly in John 12.20-36.

To summarise our study thus far, various concepts and terms associated particularly with apocalyptic eschatology occur in an impressive frequency and density not only in our pericope but also within the context where it is set. The focus of all the terms of the apocalyptic eschatology is laid on Jesus on the cross as the occasion of the end-time judgement and salvation. It is of particular importance that the whole structure of the cycle which starts at 11.54 is dominated by the motif of the revelation of the hidden mystery (or wisdom) and the people's seeking for it. As we saw, the riddles accompanying this revelation lead the Jewish crowd into misunderstandings and result in Jesus' hiding himself from them. If the context is as such and full of apocalyptic

280 Bultmann, *John*, 493-494. Italics mine. For Bultmann the ὥρα is a transcendental, or better, existential hour in history.

281 So Müller, *Das Heilsgeschehen*, 34.

associations, in this light we must look at the main content of our pericope, which is centred on the glorification and lifting up of the Son of man. Hofbeck maintains that the fourth evangelist conceives that the eschatological, messianic expectations, which the Jewish apocalyptists hoped in the (imminent) future, are fulfilled in the person of Jesus.²⁸²

Insisting on the apocalyptic colouring of the Johannine idea of revelation, Ashton remarks that 'there are no heavenly mysteries revealed to Jesus by God except those disclosed in his own life and death'.²⁸³ He concludes that the content of revelation is also apocalyptic as its form: 'What the divine agent "heard" from God is disclosed not in his words but in his life; the "what" is displayed in the "how". The matter of the Gospel, its true content, is indistinguishable from its form: the medium is the message.'²⁸⁴ Ashton's position may require some modifications, however. It is not only in the life of Jesus that the hidden heavenly mysteries are revealed, but also in his deeds and words, and everything surrounding him is part of the entire picture of the end-time judgement and salvation. In Jesus on earth time is shortened for the coming judgement. Around him peoples are gathered for the end-time judgement and for eschatological worship and the covenant people as a new humanity transforming the conventions of the world are created. Lying at the centre of all this is the *ὑψωθῆναι* and *δοξασθῆναι*, i.e. the cross and resurrection/ascension of Jesus the Son of man who is the core of the mysteries. What these terms signify provides the basis for the evangelist's answer to the question of *passio iustiorum* of Jesus and his followers, that is, the vindication of the Righteous One who received divine judgement on the cross (which coincided with the divine judgement of this world [12.31]) to inaugurate the new, eschatological covenant with God.

282 Hofbeck, *SEMEION*, 40. See also Rengstorf, *TDNT* 7.245-256.

283 Ashton, *Understanding*, 551.

284 Ashton, *Understanding*, 553.

II.5 CONCLUSIONS TO PART II

Our contention of Part II has been that the main theme of John 12.20-36 and of the Fourth Gospel is the revelation of the divine mysteries concerning the end time revealed climactically in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus himself embodies the divine mysteries concerning the end-time in his cross and resurrection. Such an understanding seems to be attested in an early interpretation of the Gospel. In the conclusion of the *'Éloge de saint Jean le Théologien'*, transmitted by John Chrysostom (BHG³ 932f), the author summarises the beginning of the Prologue as the revelation of the ineffable mysteries which St John the theologian gained through meditation with the Trinity:¹ οὕτως ἡμῖν ὁ μακάριος Ἰωάννης μεσιτεύσας πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ καὶ ἀγίῳ πνεύματι καὶ τὰ ἀπόρρητα μυστήρια πᾶσιν ἀπεκάλυψεν καὶ εἶπεν· Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος (VII.2-6). Although this comment is confined to the beginning of the Prologue without referring directly to the crucifixion and the revealer is not Jesus but John the Theologian, the use of the idea of revelation of the divine mysteries in describing a theme of the Fourth Gospel is significant, suggesting that the apocalyptic nature of the Fourth Gospel was known to a church father.²

The fact that this apocalyptic scheme of the once hidden mystery of God now revealed is applied to the Johannine Jesus should not be a surprise, for the *kerygma* of early Christianity commonly contains such a scheme (Rom 16.25; 1 Peter 1.20-21; Eph 3.4ff; 2 Tim 1.10; Col 1.25-27; cf. 1 Cor 2.7 ['the secret and hidden wisdom of God']; Heb 1.3.).³ For example, 1 Pet 1.20-21 reads: 'He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake'.

1 See, Jund/Kaestli, *Acta Iohannis*, 1.402-419.

2 This passage reflects an early Christian understanding of the function of apostles as mediators of revelation (W.A. Bienert, 'The Picture of the Apostle in Early Christian Tradition'. *NTApo* (1992) 2.5-27, esp. 14-25).

3 N.A. Dahl, 'Form-Critical Observations', 32-33, calls it a 'revelation schema' which he extracted from Pauline and deutero-Pauline materials. Cf. Ashton, *Understanding*, 388, 392; P.-G. Müller, *EWNT* 3.989. Note that *φανεροῦν* is used for the verb 'to reveal' in 1 Pet 1.20, 2 Tim 1.10, and Col 1.26, and *ἀποκαλύπτειν* and its cognate in Eph 3.4 and Rom 16.25.

Our study has shown that the lifting up and glorification of the Johannine Jesus as his crucifixion and resurrection is depicted as the eschatological hour of the revelation of the divine mystery. This is so despite the fact that the term *μυστήριον* is not used in the Gospel. Our investigation would suggest that the Gospel is an extended, dramatic narrative of that *kerygma* whose language, despite variations, has strong apocalyptic elements in common.

This conclusion has a further implication. Several attempts to place the Johannine community elsewhere in a periphery of early Christianity and call it an esoteric seclusive sect would fail in this respect. If P. Hanson is right when he claims that apocalypticism was confined to a movement, our claim that the Fourth Gospel is apocalyptic would mean that the Johannine community belongs to an apocalyptic movement and thus is perhaps esoteric and sectarian. But apocalyptic eschatology was something like a *Zeitgeist* among Jews and Christians in the first century CE and a little afterwards, with literature of some genres attested both from Palestine (the Testament of Moses, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, and Qumran [1 Enoch]; 4 Ezra; 2 Baruch; ApAbr) and from Diaspora (2 Enoch; TAbr; 3 Baruch) characterised with this tendency.⁴ Furthermore, recent studies on apocalypticism have shown that apocalypse as a literary genre or apocalyptic thought cannot necessarily be associated with any specific social setting such as a group in crisis or the oppressed, the marginal and the powerless, and that it can accommodate a wide range of social settings.⁵ Therefore, as far as its apocalyptic understanding of the cross and resurrection of Jesus is concerned, it does not point to any particular provenance of the Fourth Gospel. Rather it serves to make the options wide open within the confine of wider Christian movement towards the end of the first century CE. A clue should be found elsewhere, internally within the Gospel itself and from without as well. In view of the highly apocalyptic nature of the Book of Revelation which was written as a circular letter to the churches consisting presumably of predominantly Gentile Christians in Asia Minor, it is not surprising if the Gospel was addressed to a similar audience. Our finding thus does not

4 Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, esp. 205.

5 J.J. Collins, 'Genre', 19; Grabbe, 'The Social Setting', 27-47.

go counter to Hengel's reappraisal of the traditional view that the external evidence points to the provenance of the Fourth Gospel only in Ephesus, although Hengel himself does not pay attention to the apocalyptic nature of the Gospel.

Christology:

(i) The identification of the Davidic Messiah with the Danielic Son of man is well known among first-century Jewish apocalyptic works such as the *Similitudes of Enoch* and 4 Ezra. Thus, the identification of them by the Jewish crowd in 12.34 must have been received without difficulty at least towards the end of the first century CE.⁶

(ii) *The Johannine Jesus as Wisdom Concealed and the Son of man the Divine Mystery Concealed and Revealed.* As we have seen (II.2), the motif of concealment/revelation, which is characteristic of the divine Wisdom as is developed in Jewish apocalypses, gives a framework to Jesus' revelatory ministry in John 11.54-12.36 and therefore is applied to Jesus. As divine Wisdom in Jewish apocalypse hides herself from the exceptional wickedness of the human world before the end-time judgement, so does Jesus hide himself from the unbelieving (Jewish) crowd (12.36). On the other hand, the concept of hiddenness and revelation is applied to the Johannine Jesus identified as the human-like figure of Dan 7.13f, who as in the *Similitudes of Enoch* and 4 Ezra is interpreted as the divine mystery that is hidden from before the creation of the world and is revealed at the end time. It has to be noted that they are distinctive from each other in that whereas Wisdom conceals herself in the face of the human wickedness leading to its judgement, the Son of man has been concealed in God as a mystery and is revealed at the end time as a central figure of the divine judgement and salvation. Yet the motif of Wisdom's concealment at the end time and that of the Son of man's revelation from hiddenness work well together in the Johannine presentation of Jesus in completing the pattern of hiddenness from before the creation — revelation at the end time — concealment before the divine judgement.

⁶ Also in 2 Baruch 40.1-4 'the Anointed One' (Messiah) appears as Judge in the context of judgement of the 'last ruler', reminiscent of Dan 7 and 4 Ezra 13, and thus is identified, though implicitly, with the 'one like son of man'. Remarkable is that 'his dominion' is said to 'last forever (cf. Dan 7.14, 28) until the world of corruption has ended and until the times which have been mentioned before have been fulfilled' (2 Baruch 40.4).

(iii) *The Johannine Jesus as the Son of man is not only the revealer of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and restoration, but also is himself the core of the mystery hidden and now revealed. Thus, he is the Danielic Son of man/the Davidic Messiah, universal Judge and King, expected to come at the end time to bring forth justice to the evil and restoration of the covenant people of God. It is not difficult to see here the universal widening of the scope of the people of God embracing all the nations under the name of Jesus. As John 12.20-36 makes it clear, the core of the mysteries concerning the Son of man is his ὑψωθῆναι and δοξαθῆναι which refers to his crucifixion and resurrection/ascent.*

Apocalyptic, John and Gnosticism

S. Schulz predicted our conclusion that the apocalyptic plane of early Judaism is manifested in the Johannine Son of man Christology in conjunction with the end-time eschatology connected with it. Yet, at the same time, Schulz suggested that this reinterpretation of the apocalyptic motifs represents the crystallisation of Gnostic-Hellenistic elements.⁷ An examination of his latter claim will be attempted in III; there we will argue for non-Gnostic characteristics of the Hellenistic elements integrated with the Johannine apocalyptic Son of man sayings. It would suffice to point out here some points suggesting otherwise. It is clear that the cosmology of the Gospel and its soteriology are far from those of Gnosticism which conceives the cosmos both physical and human irredeemably evil and a salvation in terms of liberation of the inner man from the corruptible material world of the body. In contrast to Gnosticism, the Gospel presents a positive view of the creator and its creation. Consequently it is difficult to dismiss the thesis that the Gospel presents an anti-Gnostic Christology.

Eschatology

As a number of commentators emphasise, the realised eschatology predominates the Fourth Gospel,⁸ and it is truly so with regard to John 12.20-36. The 'now' of the

⁷ Schulz, *Menschensohn-Christologie*, 179.

⁸ The reason of the Johannine emphasis on the realised eschatology is conjectured variously: i) the influence of gnostic and Hellenistic ideas (Bultmann, 'ζῶν' *TDNT* 2.870-872); ii) the emphasis on the individualistic eschatology (C.F.D. Moule, 'Individualism', 171-190); iii) the corporate worshipping experience of the community (D. Aune, *The Cultic Setting*, 45-135); iv) a reaction to the

fulfilment of the eschatological hopes is emphasised. This 'now' does not have any existential thrust, but is inseparably linked to the coming of the eschatological hour, the hour of Jesus' lifting up on the cross. Therefore, the things expected at the end-time are conceived of as having been already fulfilled at the cross of Jesus. The eternal life, the judgement of the wicked, the salvation of all nations, and the restoration of Israel or the creation of the new people of God are all fulfilled in Jesus and his cross. In this sense the eschatology of the Fourth Gospel focuses on the earthly Jesus, and is therefore personalised in this sense.⁹

Commenting on John 12.31, R. Bultmann remarks: 'The turn of the ages results now; naturally in such a way that the "now" of the passion stands in indissoluble unity with the work of Jesus in the past and with his future glorification; indeed it actually established this unity (v 28). Since this "now" the "prince of the world" is judged (16.11); the destiny of man has become definitive, according as each grasps the meaning of this "now", according as he believes or not (1.36; 5.25)'.¹⁰ Bultmann's scheme of de-eschatologized judgement understood in existentialist terms is evident here. J. Ashton, following Bultmann closely, rejects the notion of 'realised eschatology' and remarks that 'For the most part John effectively *de-eschatologizes* judgement by making it the immediate consequence of an option for or against Christ in the lifetime of each individual'.¹¹ But this view is untenable. First, Ashton fails to see the apocalyptic drama of the end time in the Johannine presentation of Jesus' ministry and cross. Secondly, although the process of judgement is carried into the present dispensation, the idea of judgement in the Gospel is not totally devoid of future elements (e.g. 5.27). Thirdly, the post-Easter period is also regarded as the end time in which the persecutions of believers are conceived of as messianic woes as is the crucifixion of Jesus.

Then, are we to take, following Bultmann, only the realised eschatology from John 12.20ff as well? Or can we find any sign of the futuristic eschatology in our

delayed *Parousia*. Both realised and future eschatologies are held together by Holwelda, Blank, Ricca, Böcher, Aune (106) and others.

9 Blank, *Krisis*, 179-180, both embracing the realised and future elements of eschatology.

10 Bultmann, *John*, 431.

11 Ashton, *John*, 223.

pericope? As David Aune demonstrated rightly, in John the bestowal of eternal life is understood as both present experience (3.15, 36; 5.24, 40; 6.40, 47, 53, 68; 10.10) and the future expectation (4.14, 36; 5.29; 6.27; 12.25; 1 John 2.25) of the community.¹² Yet the future tense of *φυλάξει* ('will keep it [one's life] for eternal life') does not necessarily indicate a future bestowal of eternal life, but rather the continuation of the present life with eternal life seems to be presupposed. The recent scholarship has shown that Jews in the first century (pre-70) CE were expecting God's definitive act in history which would bring about on Zion the universal kingdom in which the Gentiles would come to recognise the rule of the Lord, God of Israel.¹³ A hope for such an age, however, coexists with an expectation of the final judgement and vindication. The community of Qumran understood themselves as already living in the age of salvation provided by the covenantal renewal by God of Israel (realised eschatology. 1QS). Simultaneously, they expected the future coming of the two 'Messiahs Aaron and Israel' (1QS 9.11), and 'the day of revenge' (9.23).¹⁴ Even stronger evidence of the co-existence of realised eschatology and future eschatology, though of the post-70 Judaism, can be found in 4 Ezra. There the fulfilment of the end-time judgement, salvation and restoration of Israel (new creation) does not mean the catastrophic destruction of the world but rather the coming of the Messianic age, the age to come in which eschatological blessings abound (4 Ezra 7.28ff). The final judgement, though pre-enacted by the Davidic Messiah = the Danielic Son of man, lies in the future after four hundred years. If such a two-step eschatology was known among the Jews of the first century CE, Jesus' fulfilment of the eschatological hope in himself would mean the arrival of the eschatological time to come, the Messianic kingdom, not the final catastrophic destruction of the world as such.

As in 4 Ezra the centre of the Johannine vision of the end-time judgement and salvation is the redeemer figure Jesus identified as the Davidic Messiah and the Danielic Son of man who is given traits of divine Wisdom. Unlike 4 Ezra which

12 Aune, *The Cultic Setting*, 106.

13 Sanders, *Judaism*, 303, remarks, 'The hopes centred on the restoration of the people, the building or purification of the temple and Jerusalem, the defeat or conversion of the Gentiles, and the establishment of purity and righteousness.'

14 Cf. so far Wright, *The New Testament*, 439-440.

applies a militaristic imagery to the Davidic King who destroys the force of Evil by the Law (the fire from his mouth), the Johannine Messiah's conflict with Evil is depicted only in terms of judicial procedure, which culminates on the cross. Since this judicial procedure is presented within the framework of two-level lawsuit, the cross is to be seen as the occasion for a judgement on Jesus from the earthly perspective and on the entire human world from the heavenly perspective. For the fourth evangelist the solution to the universal question of the human tragedy of *ἀμαρτία* is Jesus the crucified and resurrected, who despite his innocence was judged/condemned on the cross in the place of humanity. Thus, at the core of the revealed mysteries of the end time in the Fourth Gospel lies the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Based on this representative sacrifice, the Johannine Jesus starts his process of recreation of the world from the new covenant people of God, who are classified as such on the basis not of the practice of the Torah but faith in Jesus the Light (12.35-36), and who are encouraged to patiently engage themselves in mission in the same manner as the Father's sending of his Son (John 20.21), by forgiving and retaining the sins of people (John 20.23).

Thus far we have seen the apocalyptic nature of the concept of revelation as a central motif of the Johannine Christology. Yet, when we read the Fourth Gospel within the wider context of Hellenistic Roman literature, another, very important, side of the revelation as related to the Johannine presentation of Jesus' life and work in a dramatic narrative.

JESUS AS A HOMECOMING HERO-KING:
The Johannine Jesus' Self-Revelation in the Light of *Recognition* (ANAGNORISIS)
in Graeco-Roman Poetics and Homer's *Odyssey*

RECOGNITIONS IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL AND THE DRAMATIC CHRISTOLOGY

1.1 *Introduction*

Thus far we have emphasised the apocalyptic characteristics of the Johannine idea of revelation as related to the Son of man sayings concerned with the revealed divine mysteries of the end-time judgement and salvation. As in 4 Ezra the content of the divine mysteries which is revealed in a simplistic manner in the early part of the Gospel is explicated in a progressive manner, not unambiguously for the reader, as the narrative develops. Yet, at the same time, the plot of gradual revelation and recognition of the identity of a hero is not foreign to the Graeco-Roman audience in Antiquity. In the dramatic genres of epic, tragedy and novel, the revelation and recognition ever so often constitutes the climax of a story. Of course, the motif of a dramatic revelation of the real identity of a hero in disguise followed by a scene of recognition is not unknown in the Hebrew Scripture as it is brilliantly executed in the Joseph cycle (esp. Gen 38, 44-45).¹ Yet the literary device of *anagnorisis* does not seem to be further developed or even employed in the Hebrew Scripture as elaborately as in Graeco-Roman poetics. We will argue that the scenes depicting the self-revelation of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel are best understood in the light of the plot device of recognition (*anagnorisis*) which was widely used in Graeco-Roman poetics and can be found universally in literary creation in general.² Our ultimate purpose here is to see how this popular plot-pattern is incorporated with the Jewish (apocalyptic) idea of revelation that is associated with the Johannine Son of man sayings in general and John 12.20-36 in particular.

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- 1 Gen 38 has a tragic tone conjured up by the mistaken identity of Tamar and its consequence revealed in Judah's recognition of her through tokens. The famous recognition scene of Joseph with his brothers is described with *ἀναγνωρίζειν* (Gen 45.1). Manoah's recognition of 'the angel of the Lord' in Judge 13.20-21 (after his initial *agnoia*: 13.16) happens at the angel's ascent (*ἀναβαίνειν*).
- 2 Aristotle's definition of *ποιητική* differs from poetry in its modern sense; it covers 'in common usage the composition of epic, drama, elegy and lyric' and 'belongs to a genus of "mimetic" arts employing speech, rhythm and harmony—any or all of them—in the representation of human character, emotion (or "suffering") and action' (D.A. Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity*, 13).

The Fourth Gospel has been frequently regarded as a drama, without necessarily being compared with the contemporary dramatic conventions.³ F.R.M. Hitchcock, however, has argued that the overall structure of the Gospel pertains to that of the Hellenistic drama, tragedy in particular.⁴ P.D. Duke holds that the Johannine techniques of irony are akin to those in Homeric epics and Greek tragedies rather than to the ones in the OT.⁵ Yet to make too sharp a distinction between the two literary traditions is problematic.⁶ Stibbe argues that the passion narrative is a tragedy, with the overall plot-structure as introduced in the Prologue and developed in the Passion Narrative in John 18-19 being comparable to the story of Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae*.⁷ R.A. Culpepper has recently emphasised the importance of *anagnorisis* in understanding the plot of the Gospel.⁸

Developing these observations, we will attempt to show two points: (i) The Fourth Gospel, like Homer's *Odyssey*, consists of a series of revelation-recognition scenes.⁹ This makes the Gospel go beyond the convention of the genre of tragedy and look more like an epic of a moderate scale (i.e. epyllion) presented in the form of a biography of Jesus of Nazareth (with a chronologically-ordered prose narrative). Within such a context of recognitions the revelation of Jesus as a messianic figure, the Son of man in particular, must be seen. (ii) The main plot-structure of the Fourth Gospel resembles that of the *Odyssey*, a proto-type of later dramas (tragedies in particular) and novels. Such a reading not only helps to locate the Fourth Gospel within the wider context of the first-century Hellenistic-Roman literature, but also it has some indispensable bearings on the understanding of the Johannine Christology. The methodology we employ here is that of literary criticism (comparative literature) with socio-

3 E.g. Martyn, *History and Theology*, 3-16, 69 (he regards John 5.1-7.52 and 9.1-10.42 as two-level dramas); Smalley, *John*, 192-203, who regards the Gospel as a drama with a prologue, two acts and an epilogue.

4 Hitchcock, 'Is the Fourth Gospel a Drama?', 307-317.

5 Duke, *Irony*, esp. 140-141.

6 C.H. Gordon, 'Homer and Bible', 43-108, pointed out a surprising number of parallels between the world of Homer and that of the Hebrew Bible, and argued for the cultural homogeneity of the eastern Mediterranean world despite diversities.

7 Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, 126ff.

8 Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 81-84.

9 A similar conclusion is reached by Culpepper, 'The Plot', 347-358, but he does not provide a detailed methodology for identifying the Johannine *anagnorisis*. Cf. Ashton, *Understanding*, 549-550 n53.

anthropological considerations when necessary. We will compare the Johannine recognition scenes with Aristotle's theory and classification along with similar deployments of this emplotment device in dramatic literature towards the end of the first century CE.

1.2 Recognition (*Anagnorisis*) in Aristotle's *Poetics*

Anagnorisis, according to Aristotle, is one of the three most important constituents of the plot of tragedy, along with *peripeteia* ('reversal') and *pathos* ('suffering').¹⁰ Aristotle defines it as follows: 'As the word itself indicates, *anagnorisis* (recognition) is a change from ignorance to knowledge (ἐξ ἀγνοίας εἰς γνῶσιν μεταβολή), and it leads either to friendship¹¹ or to enmity (εἰς φιλίαν ἢ εἰς ἔχθραν) between persons destined for good or ill fortune' (*Poetics* XI.4f).¹²

The definition of recognition as a shift from ignorance to knowledge would be suitable for elucidating the Johannine recognition scenes. In the Fourth Gospel *agnoia* is expressed by a negation of *οἶδεν* in narratological comments or a false claim to knowledge by the characters, while a change to *gnosis* is either evident from the context or is expressed with *οἶδέναι* (4.42; 21.12) or *γινώσκειν* (6.69; 8.28), both of which belong to a typical *anagnorisis* terminology in Greek dramatic literature.¹³

The latter part of Aristotle's definition, which is concerned with consequences of *anagnorisis*, can be translated into the following Johannine formula: a recognition leads to faith (expressed at times in conjunction with the theme of guest-friendship) and/or worship appropriate to Jesus' real, divine identity, whereas a failed recognition leads to rejection of the homecoming King (of the Jews) leaving the unbelieving in oblivion, viz. darkness. A comment is needed here concerning our contention that faith in Jesus

10 That *anagnorisis* was given the prime importance in literary creation of antiquity is suggested by the fact that Aristotle uses more space to the discussion of *anagnorisis* (*Poetics* XI.4ff; XIV.12-XVIII.16) than to *peripeteia* and *pathos* (*Poetics* XI.1-3; XI.10).

11 *φιλία* here is used in the sense of 'kinship' (D.W. Lucas, *Aristotle*, 131). *φιλία* embraces both 'kinship' and 'friendship' in general, for the latter is expressed in terms of the former in antiquity.

12 Italics mine.

13 The lack of the more direct terms of *anagnorisis* such as *ἀναγνωρίζειν* and *ἐπιγινώσκειν* in the Gospel may be rendered insignificant.

is a legitimate expression of the Johannine recognition. That 'faith' is linked with the Johannine recognition may be suggested by the close association of *πιστεύειν* with *γνωσκειν* in Peter's confession recognising Jesus' identity as 'the Holy One of God' (6.69).¹⁴ Though it is absent in Aristotle's definition, *anagnorisis* also involves authorisation, power, and legitimation, to use sociological terminology.¹⁵ For example, the recognition of Odysseus meant the reassertion of his legitimacy as father, head of the household, husband, son, and king of Ithaca. The legitimation of his lordship of the household and kingship of Ithaca also meant the judgement of the wicked suitors who failed to respect the legitimacy of Odysseus (and Telemachus, his heir). In Euripides' *Bacchae*, the revelation of Dionysus should have led Pentheus and the people of Thebes to a recognition of Dionysus' divine legitimacy by offering libations to him and naming him in prayers. Likewise, it is appropriate to have faith and worship as an expression of a recognition of the true identity of the Johannine Jesus, the *Logos* incarnate and the Davidic King/Messiah, the Son of God, and the Son of man.

Aristotle classifies five different species of recognition in accordance with the means by which it is achieved (*Poetics* XVI.1-12)¹⁶:

1. 'recognition by visible signs (*διὰ τῶν σημείων*)', which, being the most common type, is regarded by Aristotle as the least artistic one and as being used mostly out of inadequacy. 'These signs may be birthmarks..., or acquired after birth; there are two kinds of the latter, bodily ones like scars or external ones like necklaces and...the cradle.' Best-known of such signs would be Odysseus' scar on the thigh recognised by his nurse Eurycleia in the *Odyssey* or the scars of Oedipus' ankles pinned together at birth (*Oed. Tyr.* 1132-1134);
2. 'those manufactured by the poet (and consequently inartistic)'; this category may not be useful for our purpose, since it is not clearly defined and its interpretation is a matter of dispute.

14 That *πιστεύειν* belongs to a recognition terminology may be suggested by Homer (*Od.* 21.217-218): 'I shall show you another clearly recognisable sign, so that you can know me well and have trust in your hearts (*καὶ σῆμα ἀριφραδὲς ἄλλο τι δείξω, ὄφρα μὲν ἐν γνῶτον πιστωθῆτόν τ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ*)'. But it must be borne in mind that *πιστεύειν* in the Gospel is mainly concerned with faith in Jesus as in God, while its counterpart in the *Odyssey* is concerned with the assurance of the recognition.

15 See S. Goldhill, *Poet's Voice*, 6.

16 We have basically followed M.E. Hubbard's translation of Aristotle's *Poetics* in Russell & Winterbottom, *Classical Literary Criticism*, 90-132.

3. Recognition is achieved 'by means of memory (*διὰ μνήμης*), when the sight or hearing of something leads to the required understanding';
4. Recognition by reasoning or inference (*ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ*) or by false reasoning (*ἐκ παραλογισμοῦ*) of the other character. As the term *συλλογισμός* indicates, this type of recognition is achieved by a character's reasoning in syllogism as Aristotle's example shows: in Aeschylus' *Choephoroe* (168-234), we have the argument: 'Somebody like me has come; nobody but Orestes is like me; therefore he has come'¹⁷;
5. Recognition 'which arises from the actions alone, with the surprise developing through a series of likelihood', a type of recognition Aristotle regards as the best. As examples, he lists Sophocles' *Oedipus (Tyrrannus)* and Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris* (725-803).

This categorisation by Aristotle, it is said, does not fully explain the complex variations of *anagnorisis* in Graeco-Roman poetics. For example, these species of *anagnorisis* cannot avoid mutual overlappings in epic and dramatic practice, and some are considered to be ambiguous.¹⁸ Moreover, this presentation also fails to draw any distinction 'between cases where a character's identity is revealed to him by a twist of events, those where one character willingly discloses his identity to others, and those where one character realises or uncovers the identity of another'.¹⁹ Despite these shortcomings, however, this analytical categorisation by Aristotle is useful in identifying *anagnorisis* scenes in the Fourth Gospel if they are explicated and supplemented in comparison with examples in epics and dramas of antiquity. As in the *Odyssey*, these diverse means of recognition, perhaps except the second one, are indeed utilised in the Fourth Gospel.

As a seminal work of literary criticism, Aristotle's *Poetics* exerted a considerable influence in the literary scene of late antiquity.²⁰ Due to the sustained popularity of Homer's epics and of the classics of Greek tragedians such as Sophocles and Euripides,

17 Cf. Halliwell, *The Poetics*, 144.

18 See Cave, *Recognitions*, 38-40.

19 Halliwell, *The Poetics*, 144.

20 R. Lamberton, *Homer the Theologian*, 120; N.J. Richardson, 'Recognition Scenes', 219-235.

Aristotle's *Poetics* is still applicable to the analysis of the Fourth Gospel as a dramatic narrative of the first century CE. In addition, Homer's epic *Odyssey*, which Aristotle (*Poetics* XXIV.3) regarded as containing an ideal plot-structure for epic and drama, and whose popularity was sustained even in the post-classical era through its reading in schools²¹ and its wide circulation in copies (though it may have been limited to the upper strata of the society),²² exerted an considerable influence in various literary genres including epic, drama and novel known in the first century CE.²³

1.3 *Recognitions in the Fourth Gospel*

1.3.1 *Recognitions in the Passion and Resurrection Narratives*

Hitchcock has drawn attention to four recognition scenes in the Fourth Gospel, only in the passion and resurrection narratives: the first recognition by the soldiers (18.4ff), then by Pilate (18.28ff), by Mary Magdalene in the garden and finally by Thomas (20.28).²⁴ Yet the first two do not take the emotional and positive tone of the recognitions by Mary and Thomas, and should be called failed recognitions. Because of this apparent difference, it is advisable to treat the passion narrative separately from the resurrection narrative.

(a) *The Passion Narrative*

Jesus' encounter with Judas and the Roman soldiers together with the police sent from the Jewish authorities provides an occasion of failed *anagnorisis* (John 18.3-8). In contrast to Judas in the Synoptic accounts who takes an initiative in identifying Jesus

21 See Reynolds & Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars*, 45; W.V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 227. Starbo, *Geography* 1.2.3, mentions that Greek communities provide children with their first education through poetry. Dio Chrysostom recommended to his students Homer and Euripides among others, while Quintilian, representing the Hellenised Latin world, calls Homer a 'universal genius and a master of rhetoric' and recommends student rhetors to read Homer along with Virgil (*Institutio Oratoria* 10.1.46, 85-86). The number of Plutarch's citations from the Homeric epics, especially in the essays collected in the *Moralia*, is as phenomenal as that of his extant works.

22 For the popularity of the stories of Odysseus, *Ulysses* or *Ulixes* as the Romans called him, among Greek- and Latin-speaking people, see W.B. Stanford and J.V. Luce, *The Quest for Ulysses*, 39, 161-175; Stanford, *The Ulysses Theme*, 138-145.

23 Chariton in the *Chaereas and Callirhoe* quotes from and alludes to Homer's epics so often that this novel seems to presuppose the readers well versed in them.

24 Hitchcock, 'Is the Fourth Gospel a Drama?', 315-316. Ashton, *Understanding*, 507, points to the recognition by Mary.

(Matt 26.48-50/Mark 14.44-46; cf. Luke 22.47-48), the Johannine Jesus takes an initiative by approaching those who come to arrest him and reveals his identity. That his identity is concealed to those being approached is evident in that they do not recognise the one who asks, 'Who are you looking for?'. Jesus, in turn, identifies himself as 'Jesus of Nazareth' twice by using ἐγώ εἰμι (18.4-6, 7-8).²⁵ The pattern of antagonists' ignorance and a protagonist's revelation of his own identity is unmistakable here. While the Jewish idea of the mysterious power of the divine Name as equated with ἐγώ εἰμι is reflected here, the act of falling down must have been understood to be an epiphanic event by non-Jews as well, for such account is not unknown in Graeco-Roman literature.²⁶ Thus, by falling down, the soldiers are depicted as unknowingly pointing to the divine identity of Jesus. The motif of the true identity of a god in a mortal disguise being suggested unknowingly by antagonists is used in Euripides' *Bacchae* 920f. There Pentheus, when he disguises himself as a woman in order to spy on the Bacchic rite, sees Dionysus in a guise of stranger for the first time as a bull with two horns—a characteristic of that deity—without fully recognising his true identity. Similarly, the soldiers of Pilate show their ironic ignorance of the real identity of Jesus by mocking him as 'King of the Jews' (19.3). It is noteworthy that in both cases the audience knows the real identity of the divine figure, and hence the irony of these incidents cannot be unnoticed.

On the other hand, in his reaction to Jesus, Pilate shows some sign of recognition of the true identity of the one whom he interrogates.²⁷ He expresses great fear (μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη) after hearing the Jewish crowd say that Jesus claimed himself to be the Son of God and that he should be judged as a blasphemer (19.8). His fear expresses itself in his question asking Jesus' origin: πόθεν εἶ σὺ; (19.9). He attempts to release him when Jesus has spoken of his inability to arrest him without a concession from

25 The pattern of seeking and revelation here may be analogous to Oedipus' appearance to the searching band from Colonus in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* (138-139), where the tragic hero reveals himself by saying 'Here—I am the man you want!'. But the similarity ends there. Whereas the Johannine Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι is met with a typical reaction to theophany, the identity of Oedipus is revealed to the chorus and recognised by them with fear of seeing the most disgraceful man on earth (*Oed. Col.* 203-226).

26 Cf. Bultmann, *John*, 225-226 n3.

27 For the similarity between Pilate's interrogation scene and that of Dionysus by Pentheus in the *Bacchae* see Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, 142-144.

above (19.11-12). This fear of Pilate is explicable in the light of the popular myth of gods appearing in human disguise in antiquity. Bultmann remarks, Pilate 'really does experience anxiety, for he hears that Jesus claims to be a son of God, and therefore (since he can understand it only in this way) a superhuman being who awakens numinous fear, and on whom to lay violent hands as a *θεομάχος* [viz. 'one who fights against God'; cf. *Bacchae* 45] would be crazy. After all, who can know in what form the deity may meet him?'.²⁸ Despite Jesus' revelation as the king of the kingdom that is 'not from this world', however, Pilate is swept away by fear of the Jewish crowd (18.33ff; 19.8-16). The tragedy is that despite his well-founded suspicion of Jesus' heavenly origin, Pilate fails to recognise him fully and hands him over to the Jews to be crucified against his conviction of his innocence in political terms (19.4-7, 12).

M. Stibbe observes that the Johannine passion narrative, John 18-19, exhibits a plot-structure of tragedy like that of Euripides' *Bacchae*. Seeing the Jews' failure to understand Jesus' identity in terms of *hamartia*, Stibbe remarks that the Jews' '*hamartia* consists of the fact that they seem resolutely blind to the truth that Jesus is God's Son. Their hubris consists of the fact that they are stubbornly rebellious in the face of divinity. As the *theomachus* of the fourth gospel, they are the embodiment of tragedy's most perverse emotions. Not only do they suffer from lack of recognition and pride, but they also suffer from *agnoia*: they are ignorant throughout the story of the identity of the Son who points them to their Father'.²⁹ Despite his welcome contribution of comparing John 18-19 to the *Bacchae*, however, Stibbe's use of the Aristotelian terms of poetics is misleading³⁰ and his presentation of the Euripidean play requires some refinements. Particularly, Stibbe's interpretation of the crime of Pentheus as *hamartia* and thus that of the Johannine unbelieving Jews as such is problematic. According to Aristotle, *ἀμαρτία* refers to a crime unknowingly committed by a person 'of high repute and good fortune' (*Poetics* XIII.5) and thus conjures up the feeling of

28 Bultmann, *John*, 661; cf. 661 n4. Cf. Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, 4.44, where Apollonius tells his name and home town in response to the question who he is.

29 Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, 137-138, following Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, 191 n86 and Bultmann, *John*, 639 n7.

30 Stibbe's use of '*peripeteia*' may not be accurate, when he says that 'a protagonist...undergoes and extreme transition from prominence to disaster (the *peripeteia*) through some *hamartia* or *agnoia* (failure of recognition)' (*John as Storyteller*, 128).

'pity and fear' among the audience. Its good example is Oedipus who committed crimes of killing his own father and marrying his own mother involuntarily without his knowledge (*Poetics* XIV.1).³¹ On the contrary, Pentheus' rejection of Dionysus is a crime committed freely and wilfully 'by wickedness (*διὰ μοχθηρίαν*)' (cf. Aristotle, *Poetics* XIII.6) despite a series of signs pointing to his divine identity and thus deserves the divine wrath he receives.³² Likewise, the Jews' rejection of Jesus is freely and knowingly done as a result of their refusal to acknowledge Jesus' repeated signs and self-revelations demonstrating his exact identity. It is exemplified in their repeated attempts to stone him and culminates in the Sanhedrin's decision to kill him (11.53). The tragic irony is that they put their own (heavenly) King to death, as the placard attached on to the cross eloquently manifests. Therefore, unlike the pitiful end of Oedipus, there is no more place for the feeling of 'pity' to be evoked for the sake of the unbelieving Jews than for Pentheus as a fighter against god (cf. *Poetics* XIV.5). Against the Jews who have disregarded the self-witnesses and the works of the divine figure, the verdict of guilty is delivered by Jesus as Judge in the heavenly court (John 15.22, 24).

In the passion narrative, therefore, there are no recognition scenes in the positive sense but the incidents of failed recognition. Being characteristic of such scenes, the Jews, Pilate and his soldiers, in their failure of recognition, ironically point to the truth concerning the identity of Jesus, of which the audience is aware. As for the tragic nature of John 18-19, Hitchcock perceives that the Jewish crowds' rejection of Jesus in favour of a bandit named Barrabbas (18.40) marks 'the *peripeteia* of the tragedy'.³³ *περιπέτεια*, according to Aristotle, means 'a change of the action in the opposite direction' such as the arrival of the Corinthian messenger in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* who comes to bring good news for Oedipus but in fact reveals his tragic origin (*Poetics*

31 So D.W. Lucas, *Aristotle*, 274-275. Aristotle seems to regard it as a judicial term (*Rhetoric* 1.13). He drops *κακία* as a motif of tragedy in favour of *ἀμαρτία* which he thinks has an effect of evoking pity as well as fear among the audience.

32 See e.g. A.P. Burnett, 'Pentheus and Dionysus', 19-20. Fisher, *HYBRIS*, 451-452, points out that unlike the Aristotelian ideal of tragedy, the human prevalence for actions of *hybris* wilfully incurring shame on others is the basis for the Euripidean tragedies, in which tragic events falling upon central characters do not evoke moral pity among the audience as they do in Sophocles' tragedies.

33 Hitchcock, 'Is the Fourth Gospel a Drama?', 316.

XI.1ff). Hitchcock's observation is right in that Pilate's intention to release Jesus yields exactly the opposite result. Yet there is an even greater *peripeteia* (reversal) to come in the passion narrative. The reversal of the Passion Narrative lies in the fact that the Jews with their authorities and Pilate, by acting as judge themselves, deliver their own King and the Son of man the eschatological divine Judge to a capital punishment for blasphemy in their law and for treason in the Roman law, while their disregard for the divine figure is punished (representatively) in Jesus the crucified.

(b) *The Resurrection Narrative*

The post-Easter appearances of Jesus are the most explicit *anagnorisis* scenes in the Fourth Gospel.³⁴ First of all, Mary Magdalene's recognition of Jesus envisages an unmistakable change from *agnoia* to *gnosis*. Her initial *agnoia* is emphasised in that, despite seeing Jesus standing (*θεωρεῖ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐστῶτα*), she did not know that it was Jesus (*οὐκ ᾔδει ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν*: 20.14), and she mistook him for a gardener (20.15). But her recognition is pronounced in her calling him as she must have used to, 'Rabbouni!' ('my teacher' in Aramaic), in response to his calling her with her own name, 'Mary!' (20.16)—an interaction presupposing the previous intimacy between the two. This recognition falls without doubt into a kind of recognition based on memory. Jesus' summoning Mary *μή μου ἅπτου* at 20.17, which should be translated 'Stop touching me',³⁵ can be understood as suggesting that an emotional embracing, typical of such a reunion scene as in the *Odyssey* and other dramas and novels, has already taken place.³⁶ This very fact must have implied that the bodily resurrection of Jesus actually happened, since touching was considered to be impossible in the Graeco-Roman belief about the souls of the dead.³⁷ S. van Tilborg points out the similarity of

34 Despite the absence of the resurrected one, the beloved disciple at the empty tomb is given the traits of recognition: he is depicted with the term of recognition (*εἶδεν καὶ ἐπίστευσεν*) in 20.8, which is followed by an implicit commentary explicating his previous ignorance (20.9: *οὐδέπω γὰρ ᾔδεισαν*). Yet in this case, the recognition is not regarding the identity of the resurrected one but regarding 'the scripture that he has to be raised from the dead' (20.9).

35 So *BDF* 336(3); Turner, *Syntax*, 76. Cf. John 2.16; 5.45; 6.43; 19.21.

36 A Syriac version clarifies a recognition by Mary by adding: 'und sie erkannte ihn'. Cf. W. Bauer, *Johannes*, 224.

37 See G. Riley, *Resurrection*, 23-58, 117-118. Cf. Vergil, *Aeneid*, 2.272-273, 277-279, where Hector's ghost is depicted as bearing the mortal wound caused by Achilles' spear as well as his previous wounds.

this scene to the climactic recognition scenes in some of the Hellenistic-Roman novels.³⁸ The recognition scene cut short here is reminiscent of the recognition scene of Odysseus by the two loyal herdsmen whose kissing and embracing their king after the recognition is cut short for they have an urgent, important task to do, the retribution on the hubristic suitors (*Od.* 21.226ff). Likewise, Mary is summoned to be an emissary bringing the message to the disciples of his imminent ascent to the Father. As in a good drama, the recognition accompanies a change of fortune (*metabasis*) as it is evident in Mary's change from weeping for the loss of Jesus' body (20.11, 13, 15) to a (joyful) surprise of the recognition implied by the economical expression of Mary's response. Perhaps a *peripeteia* or 'reversal' is also involved in that Mary, who has come to the tomb to anoint the corpus of Jesus, witnesses his resurrection instead, and is sent back to report that fact.

The second recognition scene after the resurrection is based on the visible signs of Jesus the crucified. It was by Jesus' showing his (wounded) hands and (pierced) side that the disciples recognised the identity of Jesus the resurrected. Their recognition is expressed in their rejoicing 'when they saw the Lord' (John 20.20). Absent at that time, however, Thomas doubts Jesus' appearance to his fellow disciples and insists persistently that until he sees the tokens of the crucified he would not believe (John 20.24-25). Such a denial of others' recognition and a request for proof are characteristic of the recognition of Odysseus by his wife Penelope (*Od.* 23.1ff). Whilst the identity of the returning hero has been revealed to his allies in the palace, Penelope is left uninformed and doubts the news of the homecoming of her long-lost husband. This doubt prompts her to provoke Odysseus to reveal his true identity with tokens of recognition known only to themselves. Only when he reveals the secret of their marriage bedroom built around a live olive tree, her doubt is cleared in an emotional recognition scene (*Od.* 23.173-230).³⁹ Likewise, after his initial denial, Thomas recognises Jesus only when he is shown the wounded hands and pierced side (John 20.27-28). The

38 Van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love*, 203-206. Cf. Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe*, VIII.1.7ff. It has to be noted that although they are frequently featured, love and travel are not indispensable elements of novels, while the exploitation and manipulation of emotion is. So L.M. Mills, 'The Jewish Novellas', 236.

39 A similar plot is used in Ion's recognition of his mother in Euripides, *Ion*, 1395-1444.

expression of his *anagnorisis* 'My Lord and my God' is not surprising in view of some of the Johannine *anagnorisis* scenes in which Jesus' divine identity is recognised and evokes faith appropriate to him (e.g. 9.38).

The last revelation-recognition scene of the entire Gospel occurs at the Sea of Tiberias (John 21.4-7), a scene whose inclusion of *anagnorisis* is not always noted. The disciples' initial *agnoia* of the man standing on the shore: οὐ μέντοι ἤδεισαν⁴⁰ οἱ μαθηταὶ ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν (21.4). It is through Jesus' summoning 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some' and the enormous catch that followed, that their initial *agnoia* gives way to the beloved disciple's recognition of that stranger as 'the Lord'. It is without doubt that it is based on a series of events which seem to be intrinsically linked with the memory of the beloved disciple. Although a pre-Easter miraculous fishing episode is not recounted in this Gospel, the *anagnorisis* here seems to presuppose the audience's knowledge of an event similar to Luke 5.1-11 as it might have been known to the beloved disciple and the other disciples.⁴¹ Peter's hasty reaction to plunge into the water could be understood as an expression of his eagerness to be reunited with his master triggered by the beloved disciple's recognition. The narrative comment that when offered a breakfast the disciples did not dare to ask his identity saying οὐ τίς εἶ; (—a question asking a stranger's identity often posed during a meal—) because they *knew* that it was the Lord (εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ κύριός ἐστιν: 21.12) would suggest that the disciples have recognised who this stranger is. This recognition scene ends with Jesus giving the bread and the fish to them (21.13), recalling the earlier event inextricably related to their master (John 6.11), which in effect confirms the disciples' recognition of the stranger as Jesus.⁴² It is interesting to note that this recognition, like that by Cleopas and his companion at Emmaus (Luke 24.13-35),⁴³ happens during a

40 Note the pluperfect here.

41 This would encourage the view that identifies the beloved disciple with John, the brother of James and the son of Zebedee (Luke 5.10).

42 Cf. Xenophon of Ephesus, *Ephesiaca*, 59, where a first recognition is confirmed by a self-revelation of a hero/heroine in disguise.

43 The *agnoia* of Cleopas and the other is in that they took him for a stranger (*παροικεῖς*), with their eyes prevented from recognising (*ἐπιγινῶναι*) him (Luke 24.26). The irony is unmistakable in their explaining that stranger about what had happened to Jesus. The recognition occurs in the setting of guest-friendship at Emmaus, a recognition achieved by means of memory evoked by their seeing and hearing Jesus offering a blessing and breaking a bread (24.29-31).

meal and is evoked by the way in which Jesus serves bread. This recognition scene is the third manifestation of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection from the dead: *τοῦτο ἡδὴ τρίτον ἐφανερώθη Ἰησοῦς τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἐγερθεὶς ἐκ νεκρῶν* (21.14).⁴⁴

The recognitions of the Fourth Gospel as a whole are not of the type of mutual recovery between the two parties, but, as in the case of Odysseus in Ithaca in the *Odyssey* the concealed identity of the protagonist is recognised by others (cf. Aristotle, *Poetics* XI.20-21). They can be further categorised into two kinds: While the recognition scenes in the resurrection narrative belong to the type of 'recovered recognition' or what we call 'reunion type', those in the pre-Easter recognition scenes can be categorised as 'acquired recognitions'.⁴⁵ In contrast to the 'reunion' recognition scenes in the *Odyssey*, Xenophon of Ephesus' *An Ephesian Story* and so on, the post-Easter reunions lack an elaborate description of overt expressions of emotions characteristic of such scenes in Graeco-Roman dramatic literature, such as kissing, hugging, shedding tears, etc. But emotional elements are not at all missing in the Johannine reunion scenes. Instead, by the simple narration of the events, the author succeeds in bringing out, even more dramatically, the disciples' surprise, excitement, 'joy' caused by the re-discovery of the risen Lord.

1.3.2 *Recognitions in John 1-12*

In order to understand the pre-Easter recognitions properly, it is imperative to put them in perspective within the entire narrative of the Fourth Gospel. We would categorise *the Fourth Gospel as a dramatic narrative of concealed identity in which the identity of a protagonist is disputed in a lawsuit*.⁴⁶ The last part of Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, though written from the third to the fourth century CE, shows a close resemblance, because it uses the motif of the self-claimed identity of a stranger inter-

44 Such a delimitation of the recipients of Jesus' revelation after his resurrection is earlier predicted by Jesus himself in the farewell discourse (14.19, 21).

45 These categories derive from Italian humanist Castelvetro. His contemporary Piccolomini 'distinguishes the case where something is known, unknown and known again and the case where something is known that was previously unknown', which Castelvetro calls 'recovered recognition' and 'acquired recognition', respectively. So Cave, *Recognitions*, 61.

46 For a recent treatment of the entire narrative structure of the Fourth Gospel in terms of a lawsuit, see Lincoln, 'Trials', 3-30.

rogated at his/her homecoming in a lawsuit on the basis of evidence or tokens and a witness for the sake of *anagnorisis*. The heroine Charicleia, though born as a princess of Ethiopia, was secretly adopted by a Greek merchant because of her unusual white skin. In her youth she returns to her homeland with her fiance Theagenes after adventures and sufferings; but she is captured and designated for sacrifice in Ethiopia. The irony is that, like the Johannine hero, the homecoming heroine is interrogated as a stranger in her own country. Hydaspes, her father and the king of Ethiopia, asks her identity in terms of her father and the place of origin: *τίνας καὶ πόθεν εἶεν* (*Aethiopica* 9.25). To it she makes a self-defence by claiming that she is the daughter of the king, and presents the tokens given by her mother Persinna (10.14). The mother recognises her immediately, but the king, believing that she died at birth, expresses doubt about her identity. After recognising the identity of Charicleia as his own daughter at last, the king delivers a verdict: 'My dearest child, that you are my daughter is proven by the tokens of recognition (*γνωρίσματα*) and confirmed by the testimony (*ἐμαρτύρησε*) of Sisimithres [a wise man serving the king]' (*Aethiopica* 10.18).

The narrative presentation of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is mainly concerned with his origin or identity unrecognised by the unbelieving Jews and recognised by those who have become his friends. This is comparable to the wider category of dramatic narratives of *concealed identity*, in which the proof of the hero's or heroine's identity in terms of his or her parentage, lineage and geographical origin is very important. To this category do Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey*, Oedipus in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* (also Seneca's *Oedipus*) and *Oedipus at Colonus*, Ion in Euripides' *Ion*, Dionysus in the *Bacchae*, Chaereas in Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe* (IV.2.15; cf. II.4.7: *τίς εἶ καὶ πόθεν*);, Heliodorus' *An Ethiopian Story*, and so on, belong. In all these works, the *anagnorisis* of the protagonist whose identity is hidden to other characters is a crucial element of the plot, as is the case with the Johannine Jesus. The questions of Jesus' origin (*πόθεν*: John 7.27; 8.11; 9.29-30; 19.9) are analogous to the widely-practised convention in the eastern Mediterranean world of antiquity of questioning the identity of a stranger as is evident in Homer's *Odyssey*, in some

tragedies and novels of concealed identity, as well as in the OT. Among the above mentioned dramatic stories, the *Odyssey* and the *Aethiopica* are concerned with a homecoming hero/heroine. The Johannine Jesus is like Odysseus in Ithaca and Charicleia in the palace of Ethiopia in that recognition of the exact identity of the homecoming hero/heroine appearing as a stranger is the central concern of the story. As far as the motif of the legal procedure through which the identity of the homecoming hero/heroine as a stranger is interrogated and determined, the Fourth Gospel resembles the last part of the *Aethiopica*.

In the Fourth Gospel, the tokens and/or witnesses that prove the messianic identity of Jesus in a judicial setting are summarily presented in the debate between Jesus and the Jews following the healing by the pool of Beth-zatha (John 5). This healing of the man suffering from illness of thirty-eight years leads to a trial on Jesus because it happens on a sabbath. Both the interrogations by the Jews and Jesus' defence are focused on the identity of Jesus, which is indicated by the Jews' question to the healed man *τίς ἐστίν ὁ ἄνθρωπος...*; (5.12). The juridical procedure is brought in by the Jews when they, having heard that Jesus is the one who cured him on the Sabbath, began to 'prosecute' (*διώκειν*)⁴⁷ Jesus. Jesus' response is to appeal to the Jewish tradition that, despite Gen 2.3 and Exod 20.11, Yahweh was believed to have worked even on the Sabbath to sustain the creation.⁴⁸ Accused of making himself equal to God, Jesus begins his defence in a form of his self-revelation of his own identity in the three successive double *ἀμὴν* sayings (5.19-29). In response to the Jews' accusation that he is merely self-witnessing, implying that his testimony is therefore not valid, the Johannine Jesus points to multiple witnesses (cf. Deut 17.6) testifying to his messianic identity on his behalf in a judicial setting, including his own self-witness:

- i. Jesus' own witnesses in the form of self-revelation; as is the case with John 5.19-29 (cf. 8.13-14, 18), Jesus' self-revelations contain strongly apocalyptic elements, including the term 'Son of man' frequently (John 1.51; 3.11-21; 6.27, 35, 40; 9.35-37; 11.25; 12.23ff).

47 For this juridical sense of the verb, see Lidell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 440.

48 See Dodd, *Interpretation*, 321-322; Barrett, *John*, 255-256; Brown, *John*, 216-217.

- ii. John the Baptist who has been testifying (*μεμαρτύρηκεν*) to the truth (5.33-35), which obviously points back to his witness in John 1.19ff; indeed, the recognition by Andrew and his friend is based on his testimony (1.36-37; cf. 10.40-42);
- iii. The works (*ἔργα*) that the Father has given Jesus to complete testify (*μαρτυρεῖ*) that *the Father has sent him* (5.36; cf. 10.25-26, 37-38); this type of witness, Jesus says, is greater than John's. The recognitions based on the miraculous works/signs of Jesus are found in John 2.1-11; 4.46-54; chs. 6, 9⁴⁹;
- iv. The Father who has sent him has testified (*μεμαρτύρηκεν*) on his behalf (5.37; cf. 8.18). A heavenly voice (cf. 1.33; 12.28bc) and direct epiphany are ruled out as its means, and the inner-abiding word⁵⁰ of the Father is denied as far as the unbelieving Jews are concerned (5.37b-38). It is the Scriptures that are singled out as the Father's means for testifying on Jesus' behalf in the earthly court (5.39).⁵¹

We will see that in the narrative of the Jesus' ministry various combinations of these four witnesses⁵² are employed in tandem with or without Jesus' own revelation/witness to achieve *anagnorisis* of Jesus' messianic, divine identity, and thus provide an overall categorisation within which the Johannine Christology ought to be understood. This is so, despite the fact that not all the Johannine recognition scenes are set within an

49 While *ἔργα*, being applicable to Jesus, disciples and so on, is a more comprehensive term than *σημεῖα*, the latter is confined only to Jesus' miraculous, revelatory works. Thus, when applied to the Johannine Jesus the former could be called *σημεῖα* because of the function of the former to signal a profound truth about Jesus as the Messiah to come at the end time. Cf. Matt 11.2, where *τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Χριστοῦ* are the signs of the end time (Matt 11.5; cf. Isa 29.18).

50 So Barrett, *John*, 267.

51 So Bultmann, *John*, 268. The Scriptures, or Moses' writings, are also given the function of a prosecutor accusing (*κατηγορεῖν*) the unbelieving Jews in the heavenly tribunal (John 5.45-47). Elsewhere it is said that the word of Jesus judges (*κρινεῖ*) those who reject him and do not receive his word (identified with God's commandment [*ἐντολή*]) in the heavenly tribunal (John 12.48-50). In the post-Easter period, the disciples (John 15.27; 19.35) and the Paraclete (15.26; 16.14; cf. 1 John 5.6) join the rank of the manifold witnesses. See Westcott, *St. John*, xlv-xlvii.

52 In addition to these witnesses designated by Jesus, there are other figures portrayed as testifying of Jesus, such as the Samaritan woman (4.39), the crowd (12.17), the beloved disciple (19.35; 21.24 cf. 20.8-9), the disciples (15.27) and the Paraclete (15.26; 16.13, 14). Cf. Lincoln, 'Trials', 6-12, 28. It is clear that the latter three groups of witnesses are concerned with the post-Easter period after Jesus' departure to the Father and thus are not our primary concern here. For the view that the beloved disciple is the ideal witness to Jesus and as such is the ideal author of the Fourth Gospel, see Bauckham, 'The Beloved Disciple', 36-39.

explicitly judicial setting. Therefore, the Aristotelian theory we have earlier presented ought to be supplemented by this characteristically Johannine theme of witness concerning the identity of Jesus as far as the pre-Easter *anagnorisis* scenes are concerned.

John 1

The first chapter of the Gospel consists of a series of recognitions. The recognition of Jesus' identity as the Davidic Messiah is presented in a succession of the characters' changes from ignorance to knowledge about his identity along with other characteristics of *anagnorisis*.

The body of the Gospel begins with the witness of John the Baptist concerning Jesus. To the delegates from Jerusalem asking his identity, *σὺ τίς εἶ;* (1.19), a characteristic question asking the identity of the unknown, he not only reveals his own identity but also points to the one who is to come. As John's identity is clarified in the Prologue both negatively with respect to 'the Light' and positively as a witness to 'the Light' (1.6-8), so does he deny his being 'the Messiah', 'Elijah', or 'the prophet' and reveals his function as the forerunner of the coming Lord as prophesied in Isa 40.3 (John 1.20-23). He insists that the purpose of his mission of baptising is in order that the one who comes after him and who is greater than him might *be revealed* (*φανερωθῆ*) to Israel (1.31). By the twice repeated *καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ᾔδειν αὐτόν* (1.31, 33), John lays stress on his original *agnōia* concerning the identity of the One who is to come after him and was before him (1.30). At the same time, he points out the Pharisees' ignorance of the One who has already been standing among them (1.26, *ὃν ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε*).⁵³ John's recognition and identification of Jesus as the One to come is shown in his calling him 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world' (1.29; cf. 1.36) and 'the Son of God' (1.34). The way in which the *agnōia* of John the Baptist is turned into recognition is stated in his witness (1.32-34): John emphasises that it is after he saw the Spirit descending from heaven and remaining on Jesus and when he heard the voice of his sender, or a heavenly voice, affirming the identity of Jesus as a Baptiser in the Holy Spirit, that he (recognises and) testifies that Jesus is 'the Son of God'. Thus it is evident that John's recognition of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah

⁵³ So Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 169.

is based on two elements at least, the sign of the Spirit alluding to the well-known messianic passage of Isa 11.2⁵⁴ and the affirmation by the heavenly voice.⁵⁵ The first *anagnorisis* of Jesus' messianic identity characteristically ends with a strong thrust of witness (John 1.34, cf. 5.33-35), which leads to a series of recognitions.

The second *anagnorisis* of Jesus' identity as the Messiah is made by two disciples of John the Baptist including Andrew. Their quest for Jesus' identity by asking *ποῦ μένεις* is followed by his invitation, 'Come and see', and results in their seeing the place where he is staying, and spending a night there (1.38-39). This simple episode bears a mark of guest-friendship, suggesting that through the offering of hospitality Jesus entered a relationship of friendship (*φιλία*) with the two disciples. Their recognition of Jesus' identity is made openly in Andrew's witness to his brother Simon Peter: 'We have found the Messiah' (1.41). The second such scene is concerned with Nathanael, whose initial *agnoia* is expressed in his doubt about Philip's witness that Jesus of Nazareth is the one whom the Hebrew Scripture writes about. He questions, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' (1.46). But Nathanael finally recognises Jesus as 'the Son of God', 'the King of Israel' (1.49). Since his recognition of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah is caused by Jesus' reference to his having seen him under the fig tree, which would be best construed as a sign of the coming age of the Messiah (Zech 3.10; cf. 3.8; 6.12),⁵⁶ it would be due to the reasoning from his messianic expectation as a Jew — Aristotle's fourth category. To this is added Jesus' self-revelation concerning the Son of man (1.50-51), albeit without a recognition scene. It is noteworthy that in this first series of the Johannine *anagnorisis* scenes the motif of witness plays a significant role; the witness of some lead others to a recognition of the messianic identity of Jesus (1.36, 41, 45). In John 2.1-11 Jesus' revelation of his glory through the miraculous 'sign' at the wedding in Cana had led to the disciples' faith in him, a typically Johannine expression of one's recognition of Jesus' identity (2.11).

John 4.1-42

54 See O. Betz, 'Kann denn aus Nazareth etwas Gutes kommen?', 392-393.

55 Divine oracles are important media affirming someone's identity for *anagnorisis* in Graeco-Roman poetics.

56 So C.R. Koester, 'Messianic Exegesis', 26-27.

The Samaritan woman's initiation into faith contains some important elements of *anagnorisis*. This story shows some affinities to the story of Abraham's chief servant and Rebekah at a well (Gen 24). The chief servant as a stranger from a foreign land asks Rebekah for water for himself; she draws water even for his camels, and her brother Laban offers him and his company meals and an abode (Gen 24.31ff). It is unmistakable that the social institution of guest-friendship is exercised to its full in that incident. Likewise, Jesus as a stranger Jew asks the Samaritan woman for water, which is obviously done in the expectation of her offer of hospitality appropriate for a stranger. But due to the complex religio-ethnic hostilities that prevented Jews from a table-fellowship (4.9: *συγχράομαι* meaning sharing vessels together⁵⁷) with Samaritans for the fear of defilement, he is met with her surprise. Jesus uses this as an occasion to turn the issue into his own identity and the living water that he will give. 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you (*εἰ ᾔδεις τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ λέγων σοι...*), "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water' (4.10). The woman's *agnoia* concerning the true identity of Jesus is indicated by the protasis of an 'unreal' condition with *εἰ* + pluperfect indicative *ᾔδεις*. Through the dialogue with Jesus, especially after his telling her unusual marital experiences the Samaritan woman first recognises, though insufficiently, that he is a prophet (4.19). But she seems to be depicted as recognising his true identity fully after Jesus' self-revelation (4.26: *ἐγὼ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι*) made in reaction to her statement that the coming Messiah will reveal (*ἀναγγελεῖ*) all things (4.25). Her pre-recognition ignorance of the messianic identity of the Jew to whom she speaks is implied in the irony contained in this statement of hers (4.25); she speaks of a truth concerning the Messiah to come, without realising that it in fact applies to Jesus.⁵⁸ The woman's question posed to the villagers in 4.29 (*μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός;*) can be taken to imply her genuine recognition. Some exegetes think that the interrogative with *μήτι* + an indicative verb here expects a negative answer as is the case with the *μή*

57 Carson, *John*, 218. Cf. Schnackenburg, *John*, 1.425 n19, who prefers the more general sense of 'to associate with'.

58 H. Boers, *Neither on this Mountain*, 54.

interrogative,⁵⁹ and that it implies the uncertainty of her conclusion.⁶⁰ But grammarians have detected some difference in its use here and suggested some degree of certainty in her judgement, for the use of this construction for a 'cautious assertion' is attested in classical Greek.⁶¹ The fact that Jesus told all about her complex marriage experience seems to be considered as a sign revealing the identity of him as the Messiah, as it is stressed in her witness to the town people (4.29) and in the fact that many of the Samaritans in town believed because of this very witness of hers (4.39). If so, the recognition by the Samaritan woman belongs to Aristotle's fourth category, i.e. recognition *διὰ συλλογισμοῦ* (John 4.25, 29):

*the major premise: When the Messiah comes, he will proclaim all things (*ἅπαντα*) to us;

*the minor premise: This man told me everything (*πάντα*) I have ever done;

*the conclusion: He must be the Messiah, mustn't he?

It has to be noted that the recognition of Jesus' messianic identity by the Samaritan woman takes a characteristically Johannine thrust: it becomes a means of her mission to her neighbours.

In addition, the unique reference to the request of Samaritans for Jesus to stay there and his doing so for two days (4.40) may fit in the theme of guest-friendship.⁶² Jesus' further stay in Samaria, which meant his nullification of the religio-ethical boundary that prevented a guest-friendship between Jews and Samaritans, served to add a further mission success. The Samaritans' belief in Jesus is depicted as their knowledge (*οἶδαμεν*) of Jesus' identity: *οὗτος ἐστὶν ἀληθῶς ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου* (4.42). This passage invites a comparison with the *σωτήρ* titles attributed to the Roman emperors,⁶³ and implies that Jesus is recognised as the universal saviour who brings about a universal worship of God regardless of the religio-ethnic boundaries among humanity

59 So S.J. Porter, *Idioms*, 277.

60 Brown, *John*, 1.73. Cf. Westcott, *John*, 74. *μήτι* in an interrogative is also used in John 8.22; 18.35. While the latter expects a negative answer, the former seems to express a cautious assertion of the speaker.

61 W.W. Goodwin, *Syntax*, 269. See also Turner, *Syntax*, 283; BDF 287(2); Okure, *The Johannine Approach*, 169; A. Link, *Joh 4.1-42*, 299-300.

62 Cf. Exod 2.20-21.

63 See C.R. Koester, 'The Savior of the World', 665-680; Link, *Joh 4.1-42*, 362.

(4.21, 23).⁶⁴ As they insist, the recognition is based on their hearing Jesus' word (διὰ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ; αὐτοὶ...ἀκηκόαμεν: 4.41-42)—a recognition based on Jesus' self-witness/revelation.

Summary

These *anagnorisis* scenes, representing only a few examples in John 1-12,⁶⁵ suggest that even the sections which are generally excluded from the consideration are concerned with *anagnorisis* provoked by Jesus' signs and/or other witnesses.

3.3 *Anagnorisis and the Revelation of the Johannine Son of Man*

If the Fourth Gospel abounds in scenes of recognition, it is imperative to see whether or not *anagnorisis* has any thing to do with the Johannine Son of man sayings which are primarily concerned with Jesus' self-revelation or self-witness testifying to his own identity (1.51; 3.13-14; 5.27; 6.53; cf. 9.35-38). An affirmative answer is suggested, programmatically, by the fact that the promise of the vision about the Son of man follows directly Nathanael's recognition of Jesus as the Davidic kingly Messiah (1.49, 51). The significance of this promise is paramount, because it comes at the peak of the series of recognitions of Jesus' messianic identity, and because as a promise placed at the end of a narrative it creates a sense of suspense in the mind of the audience who expects its fulfilment in what follows—a narrative technique commonly found in epics, dramas and novels.⁶⁶

John 3

Despite the apparent lack of a recognition scene, the Nicodemus discourse contains two indispensable elements of *anagnorisis*, viz. *agnoia* and revelation. His *agnoia* is expressed in his misled claim for knowledge concerning Jesus's identity: 'we know (οἶδαμεν) that you are a teacher come from God' (3.2b).⁶⁷ It comes very close to the truth to the eye of the audience who is already informed of Jesus being the divine *Logos* incarnate. But his reasoning fails to attain to the full truth about Jesus' identity,

64 See Schulz, *Johannes*, 78; H. Boers, *Neither on This Mountain*, 199-200.

65 See also 4.43-54; 11.25-27.

66 See Hägg, *Narrative Technique*, 324-327.

67 Commenting on this passage, Origen speaks of Nicodemus' ἄγνοια: ἀλλ' οὐ θεὸν εἶναι ἐνόμιζεν (GCS Origen 4.509).

when he says, 'for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him' (3.2c). Such a failure of perceiving the true identity of a protagonist accords with the conventions of a dramatic narrative of concealed identity, especially in the case of a divine figure appearing in disguise. Nicodemus' ignorance is compounded by his misunderstanding of the heavenly mystery of the kingdom of God which is revealed in riddles (*παροιμῖαι*) (3.3ff). Even Jesus' denial of Nicodemus' inability to comprehend (3.10-12) is characteristic of the apocalyptic mode of revelation to a seer as we have earlier seen (II.3.4). To this misunderstanding Nicodemus the seer, Jesus reveals his identity as the Son of man who is not only the one and only revealer (3.13; cf. 1.18) but the core of the divine mysteries concerning the end-time blessing and judgement (3.14-21).⁶⁸ It is curious, however, that, despite the references to Nicodemus' *agnoia* and the painstaking efforts of revelation on Jesus' part, a recognition scene is lacking. Since the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus in John 3.8ff shows characteristics of an apocalyptic dialogue between the interpreting angel and the seer (II.3), a question arises as to whether it is legitimate to seek for a revelation-recognition scene here as in Graeco-Roman dramatic literature. Yet it is very likely that a recognition scene of Nicodemus is in suspense—a narrative technique common in epics and in novels in particular⁶⁹—, which leaves the audience wondering whether or not Nicodemus will recognise Jesus' true identity.

Although the pattern of ignorance-revelation is not followed by a recognition, the depiction of Nicodemus as coming from darkness to light hints a positive outcome (3.2, 20). This type of suspense can be called a 'suspense of uncertainty', in which the audience is not given any information as to the manner in which their expectation is to be fulfilled.⁷⁰ The second appearance of Nicodemus at 7.50f, which is related to his first approach to Jesus, portrays him as a Pharisee advocating for a fair legal procedure concerning Jesus, a description that seems to differentiate him from the rest of the

68 A similar failed-recognition scene can be found in Homer's *Odyssey* in Telemachus' encounter with his homecoming father (*Od.* 16. 91-111, 187ff).

69 See T. Hägg, *Narrative Technique*, 324-327; G. Anderson, *Ancient Fiction*, 123, 127-130.

70 The 'suspense of uncertainty' is set against the 'suspense of anticipation' in which 'the reader knows beforehand the outcome (of a separate episode or of the main plot)', but he/she remains in a state of emotional tension eager to see what he/she either wishes or do not wish to see happen. Hägg, *Narrative Technique*, 325.

Pharisees who misunderstand Jesus' identity.⁷¹ Yet this episode conveys no explicit indication of his recognition of Jesus, although its tone is by no means a negative one, because his request is fitting in the context where Jesus demands a fair judgement (7.24; cf. Isa 11.3). It is at the burial scene that his recognition of the messianic identity of Jesus is exemplified, albeit in a subtle manner. It is noteworthy that he is introduced with the reference to his first appearance, not to the second one, establishing a link with his first visit to Jesus the Light at night (19.39; 3.2).

Nicodemus' participation in the burial seems more eloquent than a verbal form in expressing his recognition. First of all, it has to be emphasised that a burial scene in ancient biography has a significant part to play in the biographer's overall characterisation of the life of his subject. In antiquity, burial exhibiting a due respect to the dead was one of the fundamental moral norms upon which civilisation and society are based.⁷² As such it was thought to summarily exemplify one's life, and its various manners were utilised by Plutarch in his *βίοι* with great dramatic effects. Since burial meant the final show of honour to a deceased person in the Graeco-Roman world to be conducted by the kin and close friends, Nicodemus and Joseph must have been understood by a Graeco-Roman reader/audience as fulfilling a duty of *φίλοι/amici* by offering Jesus the final honour appropriate to a king in the absence of his kin and other friends.⁷³ This is more so in the absence of Jesus' closer disciples who have fled out of fear. Thus Nicodemus, together with another secret disciple Joseph, publicly associates himself with the defiled body⁷⁴ of the criminal who has been incurred the utmost form of shame—a sheer contrast to the Jews who dared not to enter Pilate's praetorium to avoid defilement (18.28).

71 *Contra* Barrett, *John*, 322; de Jonge, 'Nicodemus and Jesus', 343ff; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 134-136; Rensberger, *Overcoming the World*, 39.

72 See G. Xanthakis-Kramanos, 'Remarks', 416-417.

73 Cf. Plutarch, *Pompey* 80.3, where Philip, Pompey's freedman (ἀπελευθέρως), or *amicus*, is joined by a Roman (citizen), who served him previously, in the funeral of their former master when his kin had to escape from the Egyptians in the sea. In antiquity, the burial is the last expression of honour, and the denial of it for victims of war or criminals meant the infliction of the utmost shame on them as well as their kin (and friends). See Fisher, *HYBRIS*, 147-148, 180-181, 311f, 318-322.

74 In the regulation concerning Passover those who were unclean at the time of the *seder* were relegated to the second Passover which was held a month later (on the fourteenth of Iyyar). See e.g. *mPesahim* 7.6; 9.1; *mZebahim* 12.1; *bPesahim* 66b; *jPesahim* 8.8.

Some exegetes argue that the excessive quantity of myrrh and aloes which Nicodemus brought for the burial of Jesus reflects his lack of faith beyond the tomb.⁷⁵ But, in the first-century Roman world, it must have meant that it is not an ordinary kind of burial but a kingly one appropriate for 'the King of the Jews'.⁷⁶

All these seem to point to the interpretation that this scene ought to be construed as representing Nicodemus' public recognition of Jesus' true identity. This is fitting, because the lifting up of the Son of man constitutes a significant theme of Jesus' revelation to Nicodemus (3.14). Furthermore, since the reader/audience is already informed that the lifting up/crucifixion is the time of the Jews' recognition of Jesus identity as ἐγὼ εἰμι (8.28), he/she would not fail to see that the burial of Jesus by Nicodemus and Joseph testifies to the sentence written on the placard attached to the cross, i.e. 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews'. The tragic irony is that, despite the homecoming of their King 'from above', most Jews failed to recognise his identity as such, and sentenced him with the verdict of blasphemy in their court and compelled Pilate to crucify him by accusing him of *maiestas*, or treason against the emperor, according to the Roman law (19.12, 15).⁷⁷ But Nicodemus seems to be depicted as a φίλος of Jesus, representing those who have received Jesus and in turn are to be given the authority of becoming children of God (John 1.11-12). Since the explicit intention of the author in writing this Gospel is to demonstrate that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah, the Son of God (20.31), Nicodemus' symbolic action at the burial seems to be used in a subtle way as a pointer to that very fact. Nicodemus, therefore, is not a 'communal symbol' of the secret Christians among the high ranks of Judaism who are condemned by the author of the Gospel as Rensberger would argue.⁷⁸ Rather he is depicted as an ideal for those hidden Christians whose coming out in public is artfully and yet concretely portrayed in the Gospel.

75 Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 149; de Jonge, 'Nicodemus and Jesus', 343; Duke, *Irony*, 110; Rensberger, *Johannine Faith*, 40. But Nicodemus' ability to see beyond the tomb is not at issue here since everyone including the disciples lacked in this respect (cf. John 20.9).

76 Cf. Plutarch, *Sulla* 38, who relates that an excessive amount of spices was contributed for the general Sulla's burial by women in Rome; Josephus, *Ant* 17.199, depicts the funeral procession of Herod the Great as being followed by five hundred servants carrying spices. See also Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 536; Haenchen, *John*, 1.207; Brown, *John* 2.960; *The Death*, 2.1267; J.N. Suggit, 'Nicodemus', 100; Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, 117; Bauckham, 'Nicodemus', 32.

77 Cf. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society*, 32-47.

78 Rensberger, *Johannine Faith*, 38ff, 113ff. A comparable view was presented by Basseler, 'Mixed Signals', 635-642, who contends that the deliberate ambiguity surrounding Nicodemus' episodes is

If our interpretation is correct, it would mean that the evangelist is exploiting the affinity between the apocalyptic transformation of a seer from ignorance to knowledge (wisdom) through revealed visions and their interpretation (cf. 4 Ezra 14.47), and the transformation of a dramatic character from *agnoia* to *gnosis* of *anagnorisis* in ancient poetics.

John 5

The episode of the healing by the pool of Beth-zatha does not contain any positive recognition scene. Yet there are the *agnoia* of the healed man (5.13) and the self-revelation/witness of Jesus (5.19-29) which shows close affinities to that in John 3.11-21, concerned with the Son (of the Father) and the (Danielic) Son of man as well as giving eternal life (resurrection) and judgement. This account of the healing on a sabbath is in suspense until it is taken up again in the lawcourt setting of John 7-8, as references to this miraculous work show (7.21, 23).

John 6

In this extended midrash on the Exodus incorporating the themes of Manna, covenant making and *γογγύσμος*, the plot-structure of revelation and recognition, though combined with the motif of testing,⁷⁹ seems to operate in John 6 as well. The overall plot-structure of John 6 is that Jesus performs a miraculous sign of feeding thousands, which leads to the observers' recognition of him as the prophet-king to come⁸⁰; distancing himself from their attempt to make him king, Jesus further reveals his identity as 'bread of life', the source of eternal life and the Son of man (6.27, 32-33, 35, 39-40, 47-51, 53-58). These self-revelations of Jesus concerning his own

to condemn the type of faith with half-commitment to the Johannine Jesus while retaining dangerous connections with the world, the Jews, the darkness.

79 Cf. Anderson, 'The Christology', 372, 377-378.

80 Meeks, *Prophet-King*, 67, argues that the concept of kingship applied to Jesus is radically 'redefined in terms of the mission of the prophet'. He also holds that the identification of Jesus as prophet-king is not rejected by Jesus' flight to the mountain, and that what is denied is the time and the way in which people tried to make him king (99).

identity cause suspicion among the Jews (6.42, 52) and, in turn, leads to the departure of the (uncommitted) disciples (6.60-66). It is noteworthy that the Jews' suspicion on Jesus' claim of his being a bread from heaven is based on their knowledge of Jesus' identity in terms of his parentage: οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ, οὐ ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα; (6.42). While the Exodus theme of the test in the wilderness and the people's γογγύσμος is dominant, these further self-revelations of Jesus may be comparable to the homecoming king's revelation in testing the members of his household in Homer's *Odyssey*. Odysseus, before revealing himself, tests the loyalty of his two servants by seeing whether they offer hospitality to him appearing as a stranger beggar and later by asking that their commitment to their master be secure. Similarly, the Johannine Jesus tests the commitment of the disciples by revealing his identity as the Son of man whose flesh and blood are for eternal life. In Odysseus' case the suitors of Penelope show strong antagonism against him, whereas it is only to those who have proven trustworthy by offering him hospitality that he reveals his true identity. In Jesus' case, many of the disciples leave him because of the difficulty of Jesus' teaching (6.60ff), whereas only the twelve remain committed, expressing their belief (in *anagnorisis*) that Jesus is 'the holy one of God' who 'has the words of eternal life' (6.66ff).

John 7-8

John 7-8 is a single narrative cycle concerned with Jesus' real origin and identity disputed in a lawcourt setting by the Jews and their authorities. The setting in Jerusalem at the feast of Tabernacles provides the occasion for the Jewish crowds and authorities to interrogate Jesus about his claim that he is the God-sent Christ—a legal setting as a continuation of that which has followed the healing on a sabbath in John 5. It is Jesus, however, who sets the agenda by referring to the important messianic passage of the book of Isaiah (11.3): 'Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgement' (7.24). The main agenda of the lawsuit is Jesus' Messiahship, as some Jerusalemites think it possible (7.26). The judgement is divided and causes a *σχίσμα* among the Jews. On the one hand, many in the crowds believed him by means of a syllogism based on the evidence of Jesus' signs. The rhetorical question posed by some Jews,

'When the Christ comes, will he do more signs than this man has done?' (7.31), presupposes the first and second premises: when the messiah comes, he will do many signs; and Jesus has done as many signs as any messiah could perform. On the other hand, the rejections of Jesus' identity as the Messiah by some of Jerusalemites and the Pharisees are due to their knowledge of his geographical origin (7.42, 52). Some Jerusalemites reject Jesus' messianic identity on the basis of both the known fact of the intelligibility of the Christ' origin and their claim to knowledge of Jesus' origin: ἀλλὰ τοῦτον οἴδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν (7.27). Jesus' response, 'Do you know me? And do you know whence I am?' (7.28),⁸¹ however, questions that very claim. The evidence on which the Pharisees base their claim is that Jesus is from Galilee and not from Bethlehem as required of the seed of David. This is partially correct, but it falls short of attaining to the full recognition of the fact that he is in fact the Messiah 'from above' send by God (7.29; 8.23, 42). Some Jerusalemites' denial of Jesus' Messiahship on the basis of their knowledge of his origin ironically points to the fact that 'when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from' (7.29). The Pharisees further accuse Jesus of witnessing on his own without following the Jewish judicial practice requiring more than two witnesses. To this, Jesus not only claims the validity of his witness because of his knowledge of his origin and destination but also points to the Father and the Law as his witnesses (8.13-18). Jesus shakes the conviction of the Pharisees about his origin being from Galilee by claiming that he is 'from above' (8.23). Their question οὐ τις εἶ; indicates their confusion about their previous judgement, while at the same time suggesting that the issue is the hidden identity of Jesus (8.25). Jesus responds by suggesting that their recognition (γνώσεσθε) of Jesus' real identity (ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι) will be achieved when they lift up the Son of man, i.e. at the crucifixion (8.28).⁸² The tragedy is that, despite Jesus' revelation of his identity as being 'from above', the Light, the Son of man, the Son (of the Father), 'before Abraham, I am', etc., the Jews

81 The annotation of *καὶ οἴδατε καὶ οἴδατε πόθεν εἰμί* is problematic. The first two verbal units are generally taken to be indicatives (NA, UBS, AV, RV, NEB, NRSV). But they should be understood as interrogatives (RSV, ZB), because this passage is not an approval of the Jerusalemites' judgement but a denial of their claim.

82 Cf. Charicleia in the *Aethiopica* who predicts that the *anagnorisis* of her identity and her parents' will happen when she will be sacrificed in a ritual sacrifice: τῶν θεῶν οἷς ἱερεῖα φυλακτόμενοι συνίμεν, ἐμὲ τε καὶ τοὺς ἐμὲ φύνας γνώσεσθε (IX.25).

escalate their antagonism against him even to the extent of attempting to stone him to death (8.59).

In sum, John 7-8 as a whole proceeds in a judicial setting in which the exact identity of Jesus is interrogated on the basis of witnesses of his miraculous work and self-revelations; the entire cycle is a presentation of a failed recognition of Jesus' messianic identity by the majority of the Jews and consequently their rejection of him. Even those who first expressed their faith (8.30-31) reject him and accuse him of blasphemy (8.59).

John 9

The recognition in a context of lawsuit is most dramatically executed in the story of the healing of the man born blind in John 9. Dodd remarked that 'As sheer drama, this trial scene is one of the most brilliant passages in the gospel, rich in the tragic irony of which the evangelist is master'.⁸³ Indeed, John 9 contains the essential elements of the 'complex' plot (*mythos*) of tragedy as Aristotle described it (*Poetics* X), i.e. a change of fortune (*matabasis*) for the man from blindness to sight, accompanied by his *anagnorisis* of Jesus' divine identity and a *peripeteia*.

The setting of John 9 is that of a two-level lawsuit which may have been known to Jews (Daniel 7, the books on Maccabean martyrs and some apocalypses) and Greeks (*Bacchae*) alike. After the healing of the blind man on sabbath, the interrogation of the previously blind man by the Pharisees, 'the Jews', is concerned with the origin and identity of Jesus (9:27, 30). Yet, in accordance with the convention of a story of concealed identity, the identity of Jesus is already clearly known to the reader/audience not only in the Prologue but at the beginning of the chapter. To his disciples Jesus reveals himself both as the one sent by God (vv 3-4) and as the Light (v 5). The man's response 'οὐκ οἶδα' to the question: ποῦ ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος; (v 12) shows his initial *agnoia* of the identity of the one who has given sight to him. But his knowledge of the identity of his healer increases gradually: he first identifies him as 'a man called Jesus; he next regards him as παρὰ θεοῦ (v 33) referring to a messenger or prophet of God, and finally acknowledges him as 'the Son of man'. It is characteristic of a dramatic narra-

⁸³ Dodd, *The Interpretation*, 357.

tive of concealed identity that the story reaches its climax in the *anagnorisis* scene, in which the true identity of a protagonist in disguise is revealed and recognised. Having found the man who have been excommunicated by the Jewish authority, Jesus asks him, 'Do you believe in the Son of man?', to which he responds by asking the identity of the Son of man: *τίς ἐστίν, κύριε, ἕνα πιστεύσω εἰς αὐτόν*; Then Jesus reveals himself as the Son of man by saying, 'you have seen him and the one speaking with you is he' (9.37). It is evident that the evangelist shares the similar understanding of the enigmatic identity of the Danielic Son of man figure as in the *Similitudes of Enoch* in which the seer asks the accompanying angel about the identity of 'that Son of Man' by using the interrogatives asking a stranger's identity, 'Who is he and whence is he?' (1 Enoch 46.1). The Pharisees' emphatic denial of their knowledge of the origin of Jesus at 9.29 (*ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἐστίν*) ironically contributes to the enigmatic identity of Jesus, the Son of man. On the other hand, this revelation scene is reminiscent of a type of dramatic revelation of the hero's identity in the *Odyssey*. Odysseus reveals himself to his loyal *φίλοι*, the swineherd Eumaeus and the cowherd Philoetius, by saying, 'I myself am that very man, returned home (that is, here before your eyes)' (*Od.* 21.207; cf. 24.321). The striking resemblance of this revelation scene to that in John 9.35-37 (cf. 4.25-26) is that the two servants speak of the homecoming of Odysseus in their prayers unknowingly in front of that very hero, whilst the man born blind expresses his intention of believing in the Son of man unknowingly in front of that very person. In the dramatic transformation of the man's status from ignorance to knowledge of Jesus' identity, *anagnorisis* is achieved, which is symbolically portrayed in his passage from blindness to sight. Another characteristic of the recognition by the formerly blind man is that he recognises the divine identity of Jesus as the Son of man by believing in him and worshipping him (9.28; *προσκυβεῖν*: cf. 4.20-24 [9x]; 12.20). By contrast, the Jewish authorities, despite their claim to sight or knowledge, show their blindness or ignorance concerning the identity of Jesus ironically (9.29).

Aristotle insisted that 'a recognition is most effective when it coincides with reversals (*περιπέτεια*)' (*Poetics* XI.5).⁸⁴ Although failing to discuss the *anagnorisis*

84 Cf. Halliwell, *Aristotle's Poetics*, 212f.

here, Dodd succinctly points out that 'Then comes the dramatic *περιπέτεια*. Jesus swiftly turns the tables on His judges, and pronounces sentence' pleading guilty to the Jews'.⁸⁵ This *peripeteia* has a symbolic dimension appropriate for the Fourth Gospel: the previously blind man's recognition of Jesus as the Son of man is based on his restored sight ('you have seen him'), whereas the Jews, the antagonists, are given a verdict of guilty, which itself, according to their standard, means blindness (cf. John 9.34).

As Dodd noted, what is interrogated in the lawsuit is not simply the identity of the former blind man but the identity of Jesus who is judged *in absentia*.⁸⁶ Thus John 9 presents a recognition achieved through a lawsuit, a pattern which is utilised later by Heliodorus and others.⁸⁷ The evidence for Jesus' real identity is the healing of the man born blind, which the Jewish authorities dismiss as irrelevant because of his breaking the Sabbath law and their ignorance of his real origin, and the weight of which the healed man carries to its full extent.

John 12.20ff

Although it is not our main concern to delimit various dramatic acts in the Fourth Gospel, many exegetes would agree that John 12.20ff constitutes a (first) climax of the drama. Smalley, for instance, observes that 'By the end of this first "act" [John 2-12],... a truly dramatic climax has been reached'.⁸⁸ Indeed, this pericope contains dramatic devices of (i) revelation and failed recognition together with (ii) the *pathos* of the protagonist.

i. *Revelation and Failed Recognitions* A recognition scene in its positive sense is lacking in this section, but it contains disclosures concerning the identity of Jesus and failed recognitions by the crowds. Disclosures happen in two respects: Jesus' self-revelation regarding his glorification and exaltation as the Son of man (12.23, 32) and

85 Dodd, *The Interpretation*, 358.

86 Dodd, *The Interpretation*, 357.

87 See Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*. Cf. Cave, *Recognitions*, 10-24.

88 Smalley, *John*, 198-199; the quotation is from 199. He follows the suggestion of Lindars, *John*, 53, that the Evangelist organises his discourse material into a series of dramatic disclosures leading towards a climax.

the epiphanic event of **בַּת קוֹל** (12.28). In both respects the crowds fail to attain to the true knowledge of who Jesus is. On the one hand, the misunderstanding of the crowds about the identity of Jesus as the Son of man to be lifted up is expressed in their question 'Who is this Son of man?'. They doubt Jesus' identity as the Messiah, because they are taught by the Law that the Messiah remains forever. In line with a typical scene of failed recognition, the irony is clear to the audience who knows that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah who, being the divine *Logos* incarnate, remains forever (through the resurrection despite his death).⁸⁹ On the other hand, the heavenly voice in 12.28 clearly points out the filial relationship of Jesus with the Father. This is one of the only two examples of the Father's direct witness concerning Jesus' identity in the Gospel (1.33); its intelligibility to the unbelieving Jews is already suggested in John 5.37 (cf. 8.18). Jesus' words to the crowds failing to recognise the voice of God, 'This voice has come for your sake, not for mine' (12.30), may be discernible in this context of revelation-recognition, for they should have recognised Jesus' intimate relationship with the Father through the divine voice.

ii. *The Pathos of Jesus* John 12.20ff contains an important element of tragedy in Jesus' expression of agony in facing his own death. The *ῥοα* of Jesus is concerned with his death in Graeco-Roman terms as well as the end time in Jewish apocalyptic terms, as we have shown. Hitchcock pointed out that the crucifixion of Jesus can be understood as the suffering (*πάθος*), the third constituent factor of the plot-structure of tragedy, together with *anagnorisis* and *peripeteia*, as Aristotle defines it: 'A *pathos* is an act involving destruction or pain, for example deaths on stage and physical agonies and woundings and so on' (*Poetics* XI.10).⁹⁰ To apply this cannon, Jesus' agony can be regarded as a *pathos*, a public display of bodily anguish, in the sense of a prefiguration of what is to come on the cross.⁹¹ Like martyrs who, being aware of the fate

89 See II.3.4.1.

90 Hitchcock, 'Is the Fourth Gospel a Drama?', 316. For Aristotle *anagnorisis* and *peripeteia* are intrinsic elements of the plot-structure of tragedy, while *pathos* is its constituent element. See Halliwell, *The Poetics*, 119-120.

91 Cf. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 84.

befalling upon them, willingly submit themselves to it, the Johannine Jesus is not only aware of the arrival of his decisive hour, but also does he follow the will of the Father in whose mission he has come (John 12.27-28).

iii. *Divine Approval* Along with the *pathos*, John 12.20ff contains another dramatic scene which marks a decisive turning point in the dramatic development depicting Jesus' mission. Concerning the crowd's misunderstanding the heavenly voice as thunder (12.29), W. Bauer drew attention to Homer, *Od.* 20.102f; 113 and Virgil, *Aeneid* 2.692f, in which thundering functions as a divine sign.⁹² In fact, Jesus' prayer for the glorification of the Father's name and God's response in a *bath qol* show an intriguing similarity to a scene in the Book XX of the *Odyssey* in which Odysseus' plan is divinely approved. There, outraged by the conducts of the suitors and his maid servants who have fallen sway to them, Odysseus nourishes the idea of revenge (*Od.* 20.1ff); yet, since there was a possibility of vengeance, he asks Zeus for a sign of divine approval of his plan. In response, Zeus thunders from heaven (*Od.* 20.103). When he hears a faithful maid servant interpret it as a sign ($\sigma\eta\mu\alpha$) for someone and wish the end of the suitors on that day, Odysseus becomes convinced that Zeus approves his plan to slaughter them (*Od.* 112-119, 120-121). Likewise, when the Johannine Jesus resolves the anguish in his determination (John 12.27-28), the divine approval is heard as thundering to the crowd's ear. Therefore, Jesus' prayer and the Father's response in the heavenly voice which the crowd misunderstands as a thunder or an angel speaking to him has a dramatic function in that the main purpose of Jesus' mission and his submission to it are approved by God (who has devised it).

3.4 Summary

The pre-Easter recognitions and failed ones pertain to the type that the identity of a protagonist is recognised or not recognised by others who have already known of him/her (in this case the Jewish expectation of the Messiah to come) and have not yet encountered him/her. The means of recognition are John's witness, Jesus' direct self-revelations, his miraculous works as signs, and the Scripture which underlines the other

92 Cf. Pindar, *Pythian Odes* 4.350. See Bauer, *Johannes*, 158.

witnesses. The Johannine Son of man sayings and the dramatic presentation of Jesus in John 12.20-36 in particular are inherently related to this formulation of *anagnorisis*. As we have demonstrated earlier, John 12.20-36 is a climax of the apocalyptic visions of the end-time judgement and salvation. It looks as though these two ideas are well integrated in conjunction with the description of the glorification and exaltation of Jesus the Son of man through the cross. Despite the signs and the repeated calls to faith which Jesus directed to them (5.46; 10.37f; 12.35-36), the Jewish crowds continue to show their ignorance and disbelief. Thus, the negative result of the public ministry summarised at John 12.37 is to be seen as the failure of recognition of Jesus as the divine Logos incarnate by the majority of Jewish people. Despite the *σημεία*, tokens or signs pointing to his identity as the Messiah, the King of Israel, the Jewish crowd did not believe him. By contrast, the followers of Jesus are expected to be believing/walking in the Light (12.35-36) and following Jesus even to where he is (12.26). One's being a servant of the hero is proven by following him even to death, since through it his/her privilege to be where Jesus is guaranteed (12.26). This positive result is stressed in the following summary section: 'Nevertheless many, even of the authorities, believed in him' (12.42). Here also is echoed the pattern of rejection and reception summarily presented in the Prologue (1.10ff).

All in all, the Fourth Gospel consists of a series of recognitions and failed recognitions, which prompts us to call it 'recognition throughout', the very characterisation of Homer's *Odyssey* by Aristotle. This fact differentiates the Gospel from tragedies of concealed identity, which are generally emplotted in such a way as to reach a climax at one single *anagnorisis*. Rather, in its own mode the Fourth Gospel pertains to an epic like the *Odyssey*—a conclusion which reminds a characterisation of this Gospel by Westcott as a 'great Hebrew epic'.⁹³ This conclusion would legitimate a further com-

93 See Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 42.

parison of the Johannine homecoming hero-king to the Homeric hero of Ithaca. Furthermore, the series of recognitions of the Fourth Gospel as a whole can be seen as happening in a court setting in which the homecoming hero is interrogated. This shows a considerable resemblance to Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*. While there are abundant witnesses presented supporting his messianic identity, his subjects, 'the Jews', question such an identity and deliver him to a capital punishment for blasphemy. Such characteristics also point to the Johannine Jesus as a homecoming hero.

Homer's Odyssey and the Main Plot-Structure of the Fourth Gospel

We have seen that the Fourth Gospel consists of a series of recognitions.⁹⁴ As an important device of emplotment in Graeco-Roman dramatic literature, it is legitimate to suppose that these recognition scenes are organised into an elaborate plot. A question has to be asked as to how the series of recognitions and failed recognitions is incorporated into a single, overall plot in the Fourth Gospel as a dramatic writing. The previous chapter has elucidated the way in which the Johannine idea of revelation is not only related to the eschatological and messianic ideas in Jewish apocalypses but also significantly linked with this dramatic convention of *anagnorisis* as widely known in the ancient Mediterranean world and as developed particularly in Graeco-Roman dramatic literature. This chapter is concerned with the elucidation how the Johannine Christology could have been understood in conjunction with the plot of the Gospel those recognitions formulate.

2.1 *The Prologue and the Main Plot-Structure of the Fourth Gospel*

Like some Graeco-Roman dramas and *βίοι* as well as Luke's Gospel (1.1-4) in particular, the Fourth Gospel starts with a formal prologue distinct from the body.⁹⁵ A consideration of the function of a prologue in Graeco-Roman poetics would shed some light on the vexing question of the relation between the Johannine Prologue and the body. This, in turn, will clarify the main plot of the Fourth Gospel.

In Graeco-Roman poetics, both in theory and practice, the primary function of the prologue (*πρόλογος*) of a drama or the proem (*προοίμιον*, *prooemium*) of an epic

94 Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 82-83, has rightly explained the plot of the Fourth Gospel in terms of *anagnorisis* and rejection.

95 Cf. Burridge, *What are the Gospels?*, 133-134, 161-162, 194-195, 222-223. Due to his main concern with the subject's name in a prologue, Burridge does not discuss the function of a prologue.

or an oration is to introduce the main plot of the narrative which is about to be told. Aristotle stresses its importance, saying: 'in speeches and in epics the exordia (δεῖγμα) provide a sample of the subject, so that the hearers can know beforehand what the work is about and the mind not be kept in suspense, since what is undefined makes the attention wander.... And the tragedians similarly tell what the play is about, if not at once as Euripides does, still somewhere in the prologue, like Sophocles....' (*Rhetoric* 3.14.6).⁹⁶ In tragedies of concealed identity (involving recognitions) such as Euripides' *Bacchae* and *Ion*, Sophocles' Oedipus tragedies and so on, the audience is informed in the prologue of the identity of a hero/heroine and/or his/her end, whether happy or unhappy.⁹⁷ The revelation and recognition of it by himself/herself and/or by other characters is the focus of the entire plot. Its function is to inform the audience prior to the unfolding of the drama, providing a superior knowledge to characters in the drama and be able to perceive ironies characteristic of such stories.

Due to its hymnic or poetic style and its use of the key words such as λόγος and χάρις which do not reappear in the body, the Prologue is often thought to be distinctive from or even independent of the rest of the Fourth Gospel. Although the solutions proposed to the question of the Prologue's origin, its literary and/or thematic unity, and its relationship to the body of the Gospel are legion,⁹⁸ the importance of the Prologue in understanding the body (and consequently the Johannine Christology) has been frequently recognised.⁹⁹ In fact, the apparent difference between prologue and body is not unknown in ancient tragedies and novels.¹⁰⁰ The theory that sees the Prologue as a later addition to the Gospel is substantially weakened by its failure to take into account

96 For the significance of the *prooemium* see e.g., Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1119-1263; Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 3.14.1-12; Terence, *Andria* 1ff.

97 Graeco-Roman tragedies do not always have 'tragic' ends. Euripides' *Ion* has a happy ending. Aristotle, *Poetics* XI.7, suggests that an *anagnorisis* scene in tragedy leads to either a happy (τὸ εὐτυχεῖν) or an unhappy (τὸ ἀτυχεῖν) ending.

98 See Müller, *Salvation-History*, 2-10.

99 E.g. Dunn, 'Let John Be John', 330.

100 In Seneca's *Thyestes* the prologue, consisting of a dialogue between two characters who disappear thereafter, stands apart from the rest of the play, while at the same time it contains a plot summary of the entire drama (*Thyestes* 22-67). See H. Hine, 'The Structure', 259-275. An *Ephesian Story* by Xenophon of Ephesus (c. the second century CE) introduces a main plot concerning sufferings and a happy ending of a young couple by means of a divine oracle (1.6.2), which is distinctive from the prose narrative of the body. Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* begins with a prologue in which the main plot is presented by means of a painting, whose interpretation unfolds in its body.

this literary convention of Graeco-Roman dramatic genres. Nor does the view that denies the intelligibility of the Prologue to the Graeco-Roman audience¹⁰¹ do justice to the evidence we have just pointed out. It is in full accord with the convention of the Graeco-Roman poetics that the author(s) of the Gospel in its present form arranges the recognitions and failed recognitions in accordance with the main plot laid out in the Prologue.

2.2 Homer's *Odyssey* and the Johannine Homecoming Hero-King

In the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel the reader is given information not only of the identity of its hero, i.e. the *Logos* incarnate, but also of the main plot of the drama of the νόστος, homecoming, of a heavenly hero. Being characteristic of a drama of concealed identity, the Prologue enables the reader/audience to be aware of ironic overtones found in the misunderstandings by the characters who encounter Jesus.¹⁰² The overall plot of the Gospel seems to be summarily introduced in John 1.9-13: the divine *Logos*, identified with the true Light, came into the human world (ὁ κόσμος); he was in the human world but the human world did not know (ἔγνω) him; he came to his home land (τῆ ἔδῃ),¹⁰³ but his own people (οἱ ἴδιοι)¹⁰⁴ in turn did not receive him; yet those who received him were given the power to become the children of God.¹⁰⁵ John 1.10c states the case in general terms that the human world did not recognise the *Logos*/the true Light. John 1.11f expresses the case in specific terms that his own people, the Jews, despite his homecoming to his own land or territory, rejected him.¹⁰⁶ As M.D. Hooker astutely puts it, 'for John the point at issue is the question of

101 E.g. Ashton, 'The Transformation', 179. Cf. Dodd, *The Interpretation*, 283, 292-296, who argues that the Prologue is intended to prepare a reader in the Hellenistic world for the Gospel.

102 Cf. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 89.

103 The ἔδῃ is related to one's personal attachment to the house and soil of his/her birth. See M&M 298 and Bauer, *Johannes*, 19. So also in John 16.32; 19.27; Luke 18.28; Esther (LXX) 5.10; 6.12; 3 Macc 6.27, 37; Josephus, *Ant.* 8.15.4, 6. Cf. A.L. Humphries, 'A Note', 356. He interprets John 1.11 in terms of the homecoming of Jesus, but without relating it to the *Odyssey*.

104 See Bauer, *Johannes*, 18-19. The term refers to one's own comrades in battle (2 Macc 12.22; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.10.4) or of belief (John 13.1; Acts 4.23; 24.23).

105 Many would agree with R.E. Brown, *John*, 1.29, that these verses constitute a summary of the ministry of Jesus as depicted in the Fourth Gospel.

106 τῆ ἔδῃ and οἱ ἴδιοι here refer to the land of Israel and the Jews respectively, not the world and the human beings. Pace e.g. Ashton, 'The Transformation', 173-174, 176. *Contra* e.g. O. Hofius, 'Struktur', 21-22; Ed. L. Miller, *Salvation-History*, 75.

Jesus' origin: those who reject him fail to *recognise* that he is "from above".¹⁰⁷ There is a tragic tone in this presentation of the Johannine Jesus as the *Logos* incarnate. 'This tragic tone', Strachan observes, 'is heard all through the Gospel, as Jesus faces enemies who are his own people, and God's chosen race'.¹⁰⁸

There is a good reason to believe that this passage in the Prologue presents programmatically the main plot for the whole Gospel.¹⁰⁹ Indeed, the motif of revelation and recognition or failed recognition introduced in the Prologue is not only demonstrated in the body, but also it is stated expressly in the summary statements of the Gospel. On the one hand, after the miracle of changing water into wine it is reported that 'Jesus did this, the first of the signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and the disciples believed in him' (2.11). It is true that the *σημεία* in the Fourth Gospel refer primarily to the messianic signs of Jesus; but, at the same time, it could be construed as meaning signs or tokens that prove one's identity, a commonest type of *anagnorisis* in Graeco-Roman poetics. If so, the Johannine *anagnorisis* may be expressed in terms of faith in Jesus in reaction to the revelation of his true identity by means of *signs*. By contrast, on the other, the Jews' failure to recognise Jesus' divine origin is demonstrated throughout the body of the Gospel.¹¹⁰ The failed recognitions of Jesus' heavenly origin as well as his messianic identity may be expressed in terms of disbelief in Jesus despite his signs: 'Although he performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in him' (12.37). Culpepper perceives this and says 'Plot development in John, then, is a matter of how Jesus' identity comes to be recognized [sic] and how it fails to be recognized'.¹¹¹

The overall plot of the Fourth Gospel is concerned with the *homecoming* of Jesus, the divine *Logos* incarnate, interrogated like a stranger with respect to his Messiahship in terms of his origin and identity so that he is either recognised by his *φίλοι* or

107 Hooker, 'The Johannine Prologue', 44. Italics mine.

108 Strachan, *The Fourth Evangelist*, 101.

109 So Hooker, 'John's Prologue', 44ff; Ashton, 'The Transformation', 175; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 87.

110 See Hooker, 'The Johannine Prologue', 44-45. She points out that the rejection of Jesus by 'the Jews' is caused by Jesus' claim to his divine authority (John 5.17f; 10.30-39; 4.41f; 7.25-30; 8.23-30, 42-47, 58f). She points out succinctly that Jesus' divine origin is at issue at 9.29 and 19.9 (cf. 18.36) as well, where the *πότεν* of Jesus is questioned.

111 Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 88.

rejected by others. And if the Fourth Gospel is 'recognition throughout' as Homer's *Odyssey* is, the Johannine plot of the homecoming hero rejected by many and received by some shows even closer affinity to the main plot-structure of that Homeric epic, at least in its last half which is concerned with the homecoming Odysseus in Ithaca.

In the *Odyssey* the protagonist Odysseus in his homecoming reveals his identity to his son Telemachus and his allies in the recognition scenes, the process of which is geared towards the eventual defeat of the antagonists.¹¹² The plot consisting of a series of recognition scenes develops progressively until it reaches its climax at the recognition scene by his chaste wife Penelope, which is followed by his father Laertes' recognition. The appearance of the protagonist in a guise of a stranger is a time of test for those who encounter him: if they show hospitality, that is regarded as a sign of their trustworthiness, they meet with the revelation of the hero whom they recognise. When Odysseus appears in a guise of an old beggar (with a help from the goddess Pallas Athene), the antagonists (the suitors of his wife who tried to squander Odysseus' wealth by marrying her and to lay plots against his son) mistreat him and fail to recognise his real identity. It is due to their fatal obtuseness that, despite the repeated suggestions and warnings, the suitors are prevented from recognising Odysseus; even when he comes close to revealing himself in full they misunderstand his identity totally (*Od.* 21.288-310).¹¹³

While the homecoming of *Odyssey* is based on the will of Zeus and the help of Athene, the homecoming of the Johannine *Logos* is based on his being sent by the Father. The way in which recognition (and failed recognition) as a significant constitutive feature of emplotment in antiquity is incorporated into the main plot is similar in the Homeric epic and the Gospel. In both, rejection or failed recognition leads to enmity and punishment, whereas recognition happens within the framework of friendship.

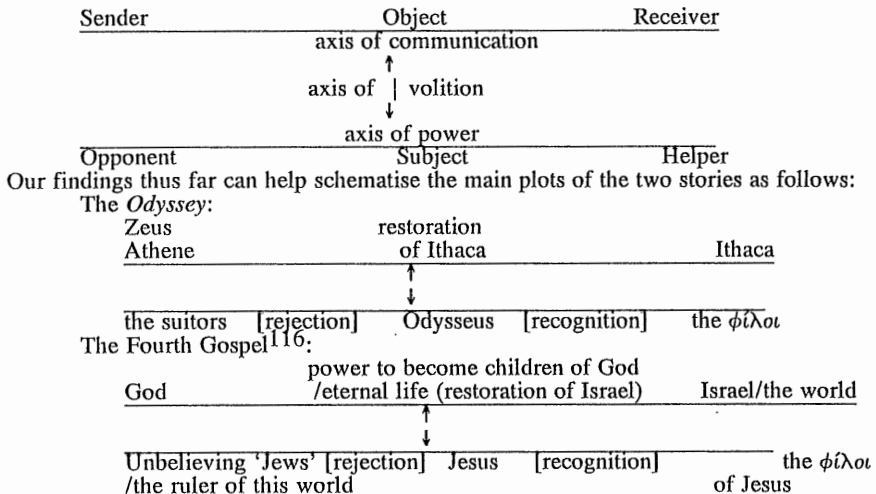
Another similarity of the Fourth Gospel to the *Odyssey* is concerned with its ending. The Fourth Gospel does not end with the *pathos* of the tragic hero and an

¹¹² Here we follow S.H. Murnaghan, '*ANAGNORISIS*' (1980).

¹¹³ Antinous, representing the suitors who fear that the old beggar might string the bow of Odysseus, despises his request to participate in the bow contest by attributing it to his drunkenness.

unhappy ending as do many of Euripidean tragedies including the *Bacchae*—the best tragic plot in Aristotle's evaluation (*Poetics* XIII.8-10). Instead, like the revelation and recognition scenes of the homecoming king of Ithaca at the climax of Homer's *Odyssey*, the resurrected one reveals himself, in disguise, as it were, due to the unexpected nature of his appearance after the cross, to his disciples in order to be recognised and to gather them for a particular purpose. Odysseus revealed his identity only to a few of his servants and his son. This was done with a view to punishing the suitors with their help, so that the land would prosper again (*Od.* 23.283-284) and the social harmony disrupted would be restored (*Od.* 24.485-486). Likewise, the Johannine Jesus reveal himself to the disciples to send them on the mission analogous to his own (John 20.21). Their mission is concerned with the building of the community of believers which is expressed in the terms characteristic of the covenant people Israel in being in charge of the initiation into and excommunication from it (John 20.23)¹¹⁴ and in tending it as Jesus' sheep (21.15-17; cf. 10.1-30)—the motifs concerned with the restoration of Israel.

The similarity between the main plot-structure of the Fourth Gospel (1.10-13) and that of the *Odyssey* may be exemplified by applying the actantial analysis based on A.J. Greimas' structuralist theory.¹¹⁵ This theory assumes that the deep structures of stories are universally and cross-culturally equivalent and can be schematised as follows:



114 See e.g. D.C. Duling, 'Binding and Loosing', 3-31. After examining the formula in Matt 16.19; 18.18, and John 20.23, Duling denies the saying's authenticity.

115 See D. Patte, *What is Structural Exegesis?*, 41-43; M. Stibbe, "Return to Sender", 189-191.

116 Our analysis shows a considerable difference from that of Stibbe, "Return to Sender", 196. This is

Since this theory by Greimas is not suited to elucidate the peculiarities and specificities of a given text, we need to locate these plots within the context of the Hellenistic-Roman culture of the Mediterranean world.

2.3 *Theoxeny, or Divine Epiphany and Guest-Friendship*

The similarity of the main plot-structure of the Fourth Gospel to that of the *Odyssey* can be further extended. In both, the homecoming of a hero-king is linked with the themes mutually related each other, that is, the myth of divine epiphanies and the social institution of guest-friendship, which seem to have been wide-spread in the Eastern-Mediterranean world. This will prove very important for the understanding of the reception and rejection of the Johannine Jesus by his compatriots.

It is noteworthy that the homecoming of Odysseus is patterned on a Greek myth concerning gods wandering on earth *incognito* in mortal disguise. 'Greek mythology provides many examples of gods who disguise themselves as mortals, go among men, usually for the purpose of testing them, and ultimately disclose themselves'.¹¹⁷ Intrinsically associated, in many cases, with this motif is the social institution of guest-friendship (ξενία). that mortals reveal their own religiousness or a lack of it by either offering them hospitality or refusing to do so. The *locus classicus* of this popular belief called 'theoxeny' (θεοξενία) is found in Homer's *Odyssey* 17. When Antinous mistreated Odysseus in the disguise of a beggar, some of the suitors of Penelope accuse him, saying: 'you will rue it if this proves to be some god from heaven (εἰ δὴ ποῦ τις ἐπουράνιος θεός ἐστι). Gods often take upon themselves the likeness of strangers (θεοὶ ξείνοισιν) from far countries; they assume all manner of shapes, and visit the cities,

partly because he does not see much significance of John 1.11ff for the emplotment of the Gospel. As to the Receiver as ὁ κόσμος/Israel, we agree with A. Lincoln, 'Trials', 15-16.

117 Murnaghan, *Disguise and Recognition*, 11-12.

observing both outrage (*ὑβρῖν*) and righteous dealing (*ἐὐνομίην*) among humankind' (*Od.* 17.484-487).¹¹⁸ E. Kearns has argued convincingly that the return of Odysseus is patterned on this myth.¹¹⁹ We would argue that as in the *Odyssey*, there is in the Fourth Gospel a similar pattern, which is closely associated with the question whether *anagnorisis* is achieved or not. In other words, it will be shown that (i) like Odysseus the Johannine Jesus appearing as a stranger reveals his divine traits, and that (ii) the *anagnorisis* of his messianic, divine identity is achieved only among his *φίλοι*, while (iii) divine retribution (*nemesis*) that should be shown against the *hybris* of those who reject him seems to be reserved in a specific manner.

(i) *Divine Epiphany* It is acknowledged that the disclosures of Odysseus' identity from a state of disguise are assimilated to scenes of epiphany.¹²⁰ Odysseus' self-revelations take the forms of divine epiphanies such as sudden transformation (*Od.* 22.1-2), the manifestation of divine powers (*Od.* 22.8-12), and the announcement of punishments and rewards (*Od.* 22.35-41).¹²¹ Likewise, the self-revelations of the Johannine Jesus are coloured with traits characteristic of theophanic events; he receives the honours reserved only for God (9.38; 20.28), and his self-disclosure to the soldiers and police sent to arrest him causes them to fall down, a typical scene of theophany (cf. Ezek 1.28); Jesus' miraculous signs are explicitly stated as manifestations of his divine glory (John 2.11)¹²²; to him is given the authority to judge and announce the rewards of faithfulness (e.g. John 5.27; 11.25-26; 12.26). The attribution of the divine traits to the Johannine Jesus is, of course, not surprising, given that the Davidic Messiah is expected to assume some of the traits reserved only for Yahweh in contemporary Jewish apocalypses. Simultaneously, however, it is very likely that, for the non-Jewish audience, that very characteristic of Jesus appeared congenial to the popular pagan belief of a god appearing in a human form.

118 Quotations of this passage are frequently made, e.g. Plato, *Soph.* 216.c4f (*Od.* 17.486); 216.b3 (*Od.* 17.487); Plutarch, *Maxime 777* (*Od.* 17.487); Chariton, *Chaereas and Callirhoe* II.3.7 (*Od.* 17.485-487). Also see *Chaereas and Callirhoe* I.14.1, where seeing the extraordinary beauty of Callirhoe and thinking that they have seen a goddess, Leonas and others are awestruck—a typical reaction to the epiphany.

119 See E. Kearns, 'The Return', 2-8.

120 H.J. Rose, 'Divine Disguisings', 63-72; Murnaghan, *Disguise and Recognition*, 11-16.

121 Murnaghan, *Disguise and Recognition*, 12-13.

122 Note the use of *φανερωθῆναι*, a language of epiphany. So F. Pfister, *RCA* suppl. 4.322.

(ii) *Guest-Friendship* The other element of the above myth is the guest-friendship (*ξενία*). It is a social institution of antiquity through which outsiders were brought into the kin or family group and thus were entitled to the privileges normally allowed to *φίλοι*.¹²³ The characteristic activity of guest-friendship includes giving food, lodging, and protection to transients. It is generally acknowledged that the main motif of Homer's *Odyssey* in which Odysseus in a disguise of a beggar tests the suitors of his wife and the members of his household whether they show hospitality or not reflects this social institution.¹²⁴ On the one hand, Odysseus' loyal servants such as Eumaeus (*Od.* 14.508-517, 520-522) and Philoetius, his son Telemachus (17.336-448; 18.304-342; 20.257-344; 21.312-313), and his wife Penelope (19.253-254) offer him hospitality. To them Odysseus reveals his true identity, when his status as a guest has been secured by receiving hospitality. As Murnagahn summarises, 'Odysseus' hospitable reception leads to his recognition: it is as he attains the status of guest...that he is, in each case, revealed to be Odysseus, son of Laertes'.¹²⁵ On the other hand, the suitors, being self-appointed guests to the household of Penelope, commit acts of *hybris* by abusing their privilege in their exploitation of the house and by disregarding the honour of the beggar in their sense of superiority and for the sake of pleasure.¹²⁶ As a result, they could not recognise the homecoming, legitimate king of Ithaca until the elderly beggar revealed his true identity in order to judge them (*Od.* 22.35-36).¹²⁷ A similar contrast is also found in Gen 18-19, where theoxeny and angeloxeny are used

123 Plato, *Epistulae* 7.333e, lists guest-friendship as one kind of *φιλία*, along with ordinary and higher-level initiations into the religious cults (*ἐκ τοῦ ξενίζεω τε καὶ μυστῶν καὶ ἐποπτεύειν*); for him a superior kind of *φιλία* is the one based on philosophy (*ἐκ φιλοσοφίας*). Also see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 8.3.4; 8.12.1. For a socio-anthropological explanation of friendship in terms of 'fictive kin', see Esler, *The First Christians*, 27.

124 For the importance of this social institution in the *Odyssey*, see Murnaghan, *Disguise and Revelation*, 76-77, 91-117. See also Gen 18.1ff; 24.22ff; Judge 13.15.

125 Murnagahn, *Disguise and Revelation*, 91. Receiving hospitality necessarily leads to revelation of the identity of a stranger, since it means entrance into the alliance of guest-friendship (*Od.* 9.16-18).

126 Antinous throws a footstool at Odysseus the beggar in the court of Ithaca (*Od.* 17.483), and Eurymachus does the same with the others wishing that the beggar Odysseus had not come to spoil their feast (*Od.* 18.400-404).

127 J.S. Clay, *The Wrath of Athena*, 213-239, points out that the *Odyssey* is in its entire structure concerned with *theodicy* in terms of the divine retribution against the suitors' *hybris*, or infringement of honour, in their wrong doings and exploitation of the house of Odysseus; the punishment of the suitors is not only presented as an answer to the prayer of Telemachus asking Zeus for his retribution (*Od.* 1.378-379) and a similar hope of Odysseus (*Od.* 20.169-171), but it is also regarded by Odysseus and Laertes as an accomplishment of divine justice (*Od.* 22.412-416; 24.351-352).

in conjunction with the theme of reward and punishment,¹²⁸ although it is not accompanied with such elaborate recognition scenes as in the *Odyssey* and Greek (and Roman) tragedies and novels.

In the Fourth Gospel *anagnorisis* seems to be intrinsically related to friendship in general terms. John 2.23-25 would suggest that recognitions of Jesus' messianic identity are confined within those who are in friendship with Jesus, or, to use Aristotle's term, that *anagnorisis* leads to friendship (*Poetics* XI.4). This bridge section plays an important role in indicating a plot development. It is stressed that Jesus, due to his knowledge concerning all people (*διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν γινώσκειν πάντας*), did not entrust himself to those who had believed in him by seeing his signs during the feast of Passover (2.24: *αὐτὸς δὲ Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἐπίστευεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς*). There is evidence that suggests that *πιστεύειν* with a reflective pronoun + a dative (pro)noun is an idiomatic expression for intimate friendship, because it is used in expressing the trustworthiness between friends. A fragment from Diodorus Siculus (1c. BCE) contains a similar expression: *οὐ τοῖς τυχοῦσι φίλοις ἑαυτὸν ἐπίστευσεν*, 'he did not trust himself to casual friends' (Diod.S. 34+35 fgm. 39a). The same expression is used by Josephus (*Ant.* 12.396), for describing (formerly hostile) groups entering a diplomatic relationship of *φιλία* and *εἰρήνη*.¹²⁹ If the same sense is intended in John 2.24, it means that this passage expresses a caution shown by the Johannine Jesus in choosing his *φίλοι* to whom he will entrust himself.¹³⁰ Jesus here could be compared to Odysseus' caution in revealing himself only to those who have become his *φίλοι* through guest-friendship, whilst being in danger of the suitors' realisation of the hero's return. The difference is that the hero of Ithaca had to test their loyalty or disloyalty by appearing in disguise of

128 Abraham's hospitality to the three strangers is rewarded with the promise of birth of Issac. On the other hand, Lot's earnest attempt to show hospitality to the two strangers leads to his and his daughters' salvation, whilst the Sodomites who have disregarded their honour by their wicked attempt are punished. See Philo, *Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesis* 4.2, who compares Gen 18.2 to *Od.* 17.485-487.

129 Cf. Plutarch, *Moralia* 181D.

130 E. Stauffer's view based on John 2.24 that the Johannine Jesus is 'AGNOSTOS CHRISTOS' (292) in that 'Er ist immer noch ein incognitus, auch nach und trotz aller revelatio' not only misses the mark but fails to do justice to the genuine recognitions in the Gospel.

a beggar from a foreign land, whereas the Johannine Jesus, it is stressed, does not have to rely on other's witness because of his (supernatural) knowledge of 'what was in everyone' (John 2.25).¹³¹

Although the relationship between Jesus and his disciples is not confined to it, the social institution of guest-friendship in particular is closely associated with the Johannine theme of reception of and faith in Jesus.¹³² The guest-friendship in the Gospel is most explicitly indicated by *παραλαμβάνειν*, meaning 'to take along with one's self' or 'to take in one's company'. In John 14.3, where Jesus promises the disciples to receive (*παραλαμβάνειν*) them to his (heavenly) home (*πρὸς ἐμαυτὸν*)¹³³ when he comes again.¹³⁴ In John 1.11a the rejection of Jesus by his own people is expressed with this verb and a negative *οὐ*. Its cognate verb *λαμβάνειν* is used to describe the reception of him in John 1.11b. It is generally thought that this verse is 'a specifically Johannine expression' of faith and lack of it.¹³⁵ But this view may not be sufficient in expressing the fuller connotations of *παραλαμβάνειν* and its cognate taking Jesus as object.¹³⁶ That these verbs in the Prologue may entail the social institution of guest-friendship seems to be indicated by the fact that the exchange of hospitality between believers and Jesus is frequently referred to in the body of the Gospel. On the one hand, there are some unmistakable descriptions of the believers offering hospitality to Jesus. As in the *Odyssey* where hospitality shown to the hero disguised as a stranger leads to revelation-recognition scenes, the Johannine Jesus is offered hospitality in Samaria and as a result is recognised as 'the Saviour of the world' (John 4.39-42). The

131 Cf. Stauffer, 'AGNOSTOS CHRISTOS', 293, who points to Ps 139, etc. and exclaims with respect to Jesus at John 2.25, 'Ecce Deus!'

132 The Johannine theme of friendship (*φιλία/amicitia*) is wide-ranging, from the advocacy of its philosophical ideal (15.13; cf. 10.11; 13.37-38) (Plato, *Symp.* 179b; *Apol.* 28bc; Aristotle, *NE* IX.8.9; Seneca, *Ep.* I.9.10; Epictetus, *Ench.* 31.1; Plutarch, *Against Colotes* 1111B (Epicurus); cf. van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love*, 150-154.) to the motif of betrayal and restoration (Peter: 18.15-27; 21.15-19; cf. 13.36-38), and from the application of its legal obligation (*ὁ παράκλητος*) to the motif of liberation of slaves into friends (freed persons) of Jesus (15.15) (both are related to client-patron relationship in aristocratic friendship), etc.

133 *πρὸς ἐμαυτὸν* is an idiom referring to one's own home or house (John 20.10; 1 Cor 16.2). See Humphries, 'A Note', 356.

134 For the similar use of *παραλαμβάνειν* see e.g. Xenophon of Ephesus, *Ephesiaca* 5.10.12, where after their recognition of Habrocomes, two servants of his take him into their house.

135 E.g. Haenchen, *John*, 1.188.

136 Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 146, rightly comments on John 1.12-13 that 'There are children of God who receive Jesus into their house'. *καταλαμβάνειν*, a cognate of *παραλαμβάνειν*, is used with *οὐ* to describe people's rejection of Wisdom in Sir 15.7.

narrative comment about the Samaritans' request to Jesus to stay and of Jesus' staying (*μεινωι*) there for two days (4.40), which may appear at first sight an unnecessary gloss, can be explained nicely in the light of this social institution. At Bethany before the Passover, while Martha shows hospitality to Jesus by serving at the table, Mary, her sister, extends an utmost degree of hospitality to a guest by pouring the precious pure nard to anoint Jesus' feet (12.3).¹³⁷ On the other hand, the disciples are recipients of hospitality from Jesus. The account of the first two disciples who stayed (*ἔμεινον*) overnight with Jesus where he was dwelling (1.39) would be the first of such an incident in the Gospel. Most impressive is the scene of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples at the table at Passover in John 13, for washing feet is a significant element of guest-friendship in antiquity.¹³⁸ Introduced directly after the narrator's comment of Jesus' departure to the Father (13.3), this scene may look like a prefiguration of the promise of offering hospitality to the disciples at his heavenly home, the house of the Father (14.3). It is thus probable that Jesus' command that the disciples should do the same for each other (13.14-15) is made to encourage the mutual expression of hospitality among them as appropriate for *φίλοι*.¹³⁹ The uniqueness of the Johannine Jesus is that he, despite being called 'Teacher' and 'Lord', performs the act of service normally assigned to slaves.¹⁴⁰ The disciples are encouraged to follow this example of Jesus' humble service as summarised in his own words in the farewell discourse: 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you' (15.12). The post-

137 Anointing a guest's feet with oil after washing them at his arrival and before a meal is part of the social convention as is shown in detail in the *Odyssey*.

138 See J.C. Thomas, *Footwashing*, 26-56. E.g. Homer, *Od.* 2.60-61; 19.308ff.

139 The view advocated by J.C. Thomas, *Footwashing*, esp. 115, that the footwashing here constitutes the first part of the disciples' preparation for Jesus' departure and for their mission which involves fellowship may be too general. If Mary's washing of Jesus' feet means a preparation for his death on the cross, Jesus' washing the disciples' feet must indicate a preparation of them for a similar fate. But this interpretation does not explain fully why Jesus commands the disciples do the same, for the preparation of them seems to be already made by Jesus' act.

140 See Thomas, *Footwashing*, 51-55. E.g. Herodotus, *History*, 6.19; Plutarch, *Pompey* 73.7; *Theseus* 10.1.

Easter scene of Jesus serving a breakfast to his disciples by the Sea of Tiberias provides a setting for *anagnorisis* (21.12-13; cf. Luke 24.30). The reciprocal interaction of hospitality and friendship between the disciples and Jesus seems to be elevated to the relationship of faith shown by their reception of Jesus and God's granting them the authority to become children of God (John 1.11; cf. 14.3ff). Therefore, we would conclude that the theme of guest-friendship constitutes an important element in depicting people's reception of Jesus the stranger from heaven. This is further supported by the fact that in two of the Johannine Epistles showing hospitality to itinerant preachers is expressed with λαμβάνειν (2 John 10: μὴ λαμβάνετε αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν; cf. John 14.3) and its cognate ὑπολαμβάνειν (3 John 8)! This social institution was practised so earnestly in the Johannine communities in welcoming teachers who were strangers to them (3 John 5-8), that the author of the second Epistle had to warn the congregation not to welcome those who come without the teaching acknowledging Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh (2 John 7ff, 10-11).

(iii) *Hybris and Nemesis* The negative side of recognition-friendship is failed recognition in the myth at issue. Rejection of guest-friendship to a divine stranger meant *hybris*, an infringement of the social code of honour towards stranger, which necessarily results in a divine retribution.

Unlike the common usage of its English derivative 'hubris' in the sense of 'presumption, orig[inally] towards the gods; pride, excessive self-confidence' (*OED* VII.459), ὕβρις in its classical Greek usage means essentially 'the serious assault to the honour of another, which is likely to cause shame, and lead to anger and attempts at revenge'. Since it is very often an act of violence which is motivated by one's pleasure in the sense of being superior and deliberately inflicts dishonour and shame upon others, it has a significant social implication. It poses a threat to the society which was built upon various codes of honour for individuals and social groups.¹⁴¹ Although not

141 The quotation is from Fisher, *HYBRIS*, 1. He derives this definition basically from Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (1378b 23-35) and traces the origin of the usage of the term in the juridical practice of ancient Athens and examines its ordinary moral and political nuances from Homer to Aristotle.

all acts of *hybris* against other people are necessarily punished by gods, there are a considerable number of occasions in which acts of *hybris* against a stranger infringing his honour not only created a legitimate desire of revenge, or moral indignation (*nemesis*) and prompted retribution by Zeus *Xenios* (the patron god of strangers) or other gods.¹⁴² For example, in the *Odyssey* the suitors' repeated verbal and physical insult on the old beggar causes a grievous concern among those loyal to the house of Odysseus, for it is a *hybris* violating the code of honour in guest-friendship.¹⁴³ Especially when the stranger was a god or a goddess in mortal disguise, the offence against the honour of the divine stranger meets with divine retribution as in the *Bacchae*.¹⁴⁴

In Euripides' *Bacchae* (the fifth century BCE) Dionysus appears disguised as a mortal and tests Pentheus's fidelity and reappears at the end of the tragedy in his glory to pronounce the fates of the people involved (1330-1343). At the coming of a stranger representing the Dionysian cult and the foreign Bacchantes, Pentheus, new king of Thebes, fears that they will present a danger to the city because of the cult's attraction to its women. After showing disrespect (*hybris*) to that stranger (Dionysus) and his Bacchantes by arresting them, Pentheus learns more about the stranger's characteristics that point to his real identity: the guard's testifying to the gentleness of the 'beast' (436-440), the miracles accompanying the attempt to imprison the stranger's band (443-450), and the earthquake and the thunderbolt through which Dionysus flees from the bondage, leaving the palace of Pentheus in shamble (589-603, 641). Despite all these signals pointing beyond any doubt to the divinity of the stranger, Pentheus errs and fails to recognise the stranger as Dionysus and to show his appropriate reverence to honour him. Ironically, it is only in his insane mind that Pentheus finally recognises the stranger, who is leading him, as a bull, a typical manner of the Dionysian manifestation (920-924), and by that time he is destined to a fate of being torn into pieces by his

142 Fisher, *HYBRIS*, 305. In Aeschylus' *Eumenides* (539-549), for example, it is implied that dishonouring strangers as well as dishonouring parents is an offence to Righteousness ($\Delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\sigma$). In his apologetic presentation of Moses, Philo depicted the God of Israel as God of 'hospitality' (*Mos.* 1.35).

143 See Fisher, *HYBRIS*, 171ff.

144 Sophocles, *Women of Trachis* 279-283.

own mother while he is inspecting a Bacchic rite in woman's clothes (846-861). In this respect, the *Bacchae* is a drama of divine punishment similar to the *Odyssey*, some of Homeric Hymns (Hymn to Dionysus, Hymn to Demeter), and other tragedies.¹⁴⁵

Like these myths of divine punishment, the Fourth Gospel contains the acts of *ὑβρις* against the divine figure, which nevertheless have characteristically Christian traits. Although the term itself is lacking, the mockery of Pilate's soldiers calling Jesus 'the King of the Jews' is an unmistakable example of such an act (John 19.2-3). *Hybris* against the divine figure may be also evident in the unbelieving Jews' attempts to stone Jesus and their request to crucify as well as Pilate's admission to inflict the extreme shame on him by way of crucifixion. Compared to this moral/social contrast of *hybris-nemesis* of the Graeco-Roman world, an extraordinary feature of the Johannine drama becomes apparent. Although Jesus' verdict on the unbelieving Jews is already pronounced (15.22-24), those who refuse to receive Jesus, especially the unbelieving Jews who attempted to stone him and the soldiers of Pilate who mocked him, do not receive any form of physical suffering as an expression of divine *nemesis*. Instead, the *pathos* is totally confined to Jesus who claims to be Judge himself but was condemned to death despite his innocence (19.4). Hence the Johannine divine figure does not deliver a divine retribution as Dionysus avenged Pentheus' *hybris* in the *Bacchae*.¹⁴⁶ Referring to this contrast, Celsum in Origen's *Contra Celsum* (2.34) remarks: 'Why, if not before, does he not at any rate show forth something divine, and deliver himself from this shame (*αἰσχύνῃ*), and take his revenge (*δικαιοῦ*) on those who insult (*τοὺς ὑβρίζοντες*) both him and his Father?' (2.35).¹⁴⁷ It is probable that Celsum had the Fourth Gospel in mind, since the question is mentioned after his reference to the Christian teaching identifying Jesus the Son of God with the divine *Logos* (*Con. Cel.* 2.31). In any case, this lack of Jesus' retribution creates in effect a *peripeteia*, a reversal of action or a falsification of expectation. This paradoxical reversal reveals a profound significance of the Johannine drama of Jesus: the one who is Judge and King is himself judged/punished, receiving the divine punishment in place of those who have

145 Cf. Clay, *The Wrath of Athena*, 237.

146 See Stibbe, *John*, 139-147.

147 Here we follow the translation by H. Chadwick in his *Origen: Contra Celsum* (1965).

lifted him up on the cross.¹⁴⁸ Origen's response to Celsum hits a nail on the head: 'Rather admire...the spirit of him who willingly suffered (*παθόντος*) these things for mankind (*ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων*) and endured them with all forbearing and longsuffering' (2.34). Hence Origen perceives the Johannine understanding of the cross as a representative death of the righteous one for humanity. A fuller discussion is needed to assess Origen's view from within the Fourth Gospel itself, which goes beyond the limits of our current study. Yet it can be said that there lies an answer to the vexing question of the paradox of the Johannine Jesus who, while claiming to be the Son of man, i.e. the Judge of the end time (esp. 5.27f; cf. 12.31), remarks that he does not come to judge/condemn the human world but to save it (12.47; cf. 3.17)—a paradox that while pronouncing the judgement on this world and its ruler (12.31), the Johannine Jesus identified as the eschatological Judge the Son of man is actually the one who receives the capital punishment in place.

2.4 Summary

Thus, the main plot-structure of the Fourth Gospel resembles the *mythos* (plot) of the *Odyssey* to a considerable extent. The homecoming (*νόστος*) of Odysseus is cast into the mould of a god appearing in mortal disguise to test mortals; he reveals herself only to those who have become his *φίλοι* by offering hospitality (*ξενία*) to him, and punishes those who rejected him. Likewise, the homecoming of the Johannine Jesus to his earthly realm is characterised as that of the divine *Logos* incarnate, the acceptance and rejection of whom lead to the similar results as in the *Odyssey*. This affinity would be at least attributable to the fact that both dramatic narratives employ, or at least resemble, the popular (eastern) Mediterranean myth of theoxeny, i.e. that of a god appearing in a guise of a stranger to test humanity in order to reward or punish in accordance with their responses. To go further than this by claiming that the plot-structure of the Fourth Gospel reminds the audience of that of the *Odyssey* may appear farfetched, for there are no direct quotations from or allusions to the latter in the former. But the Johannine plot of rejection and reception of the homecoming hero-king,

¹⁴⁸ So also Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, 144, 147.

integrated with *anagnorisis* and failures of it, is similar to that of the *Odyssey*. Yet, there is no other story than the *Odyssey* that applies both motifs as elaborately, although both the concepts of *anagnorisis* and theoxeny were utilised in the Hebrew Scripture written within the context of the Ancient Near East. In this sense, the Fourth Gospel, though more moderate in length, can certainly be ranked with this Homeric epic still popular among the literate Greeks and Romans in the first century CE.

It has to be stressed, however, that we are not claiming that the homecoming of the Johannine Jesus reflects all the details of its Homeric counterpart. For example, the theme of *νόστος* as applied to Jesus corresponds to the climactic part of the *Odyssey* depicting the incidents in Ithaca, not the first half concerned with Theomachus' search for his lost father and the latter's wanderings and sufferings on his way home from Troy. Accordingly, unlike the *Odyssey*, the evangelist shows no interest in the development or growth of the moral character of the protagonist through sufferings,¹⁴⁹ while the development is confined to believers in recognising Jesus's identity. Unlike the Homeric Odysseus who makes up stories to conceal his real identity in front of his wife as well as her suitors, the Johannine Jesus does not rely on false accounts in order to disguise his identity and origin, but uses instead *παροιμῖαι*, or sapiential metaphors, to communicate the divine mysteries (concerning the end-time judgement and salvation) that are inseparably linked with his own messianic identity. While in Odysseus' case the crucial sign (*σῆμα*), that of his scar on the thigh, is concealed to the suitors and revealed only to his *philoî* and his close kin, in the Johannine Jesus' case the climactic sign of the cross is revealed to all regardless of being disciples or not. Another notable difference is that unlike Odysseus and like Agamemnon, a leader of the expedition against Troy, who at his homecoming is killed by his wife's lover (*Od.* 3.247-312; 11.405-434), the Johannine Jesus at his *νόστος* is delivered to death by his subjects.

A brief comment is needed regarding the relation between the Johannine plot of the homecoming hero-king and the Wisdom tradition. The view that the Johannine

149 Cf. R. Friedrich, 'The *Hybris* of Odysseus', 16-28, who remarks: 'As the epic action progresses, Odysseus, chastened by his sufferings, will overcome the imbalance in his character. The boasting and presumptuous Sacker of Cities, whom we see in the finale of the *Cyclopeia*, will become the just ruler who, extending the will of Zeus, restores the order of justice in Ithaca, while his heroic qualities are made to serve this cause' (27-28).

Logos is entirely dependent on the Jewish Sophia tradition¹⁵⁰ may be too simplistic. We would rather argue that in the Fourth Gospel the motif of the homecoming hero-king, of which the *Odyssey* provides a proto-type, is well integrated with the Wisdom tradition of early Judaism. The author of the Gospel seems to exploit three points of contact between these traditions in describing his main plot. Firstly, the theme of homecoming is prevalent both in Wisdom's visit to her earthly realm and the homecoming/return of Odysseus to his native Ithaca. Even the theme of Jesus' returning to his heavenly home, which is not overtly indicated in the homecoming scheme of the Prologue, would be no less readily explicable in the Jewish Wisdom tradition in which Wisdom returns to her heavenly abode after departing from her people because of their wickedness than in Graeco-Roman and eastern Mediterranean myth of theoxeny in which a god's return to his heavenly realm is presupposed. While the theme of Wisdom is unmistakable, it would be undeniable that the homecoming scheme introduced in the Prologue and developed in the body must have reminded the Graeco-Roman reader/audience of the well-known homecoming story of the *Odyssey*. Secondly, as Nicodemus' ignorance of the earthly matters provides a setting for Jesus' revelation of the heavenly secrets as in apocalyptic literature, so does his *agnoia* of the messianic identity of Jesus lead to Jesus' self-revelation. If our reading of the Nicodemus accounts is valid, his change from *agnoia* to *gnosis* is paralleled to the apocalyptic motif of a seer's change from ignorance to knowledge. Thirdly, the obduracy of the people in their refusal of Wisdom may be taken by the author of the Gospel as being equivalent to the tragic arrogance of the antagonists in the *Odyssey* and Pentheus of the *Bacchae* in their rejection of a divine figure appearing in a guise of a stranger. This seems to be evident in the fact that the Jews' failures to recognise the messianic identity of Jesus is concluded with the latter's hiding himself from them (8.59; 11.54; 12.36-37), which symbolically reflects the apocalyptic theme of Wisdom hiding and departing from the wicked (II.2).

¹⁵⁰ Scott, *Sophia*, 105.

2.5 Christological Implications of the Homecoming of the Johannine Jesus as the LOGOS Incarnate

If our Homeric reading of the Fourth Gospel, or our identification of it as a dramatic narrative of concealed identity concerning a divine figure, is correct, it would have intriguing implications for the three repeatedly-made claims concerning the Johannine Jesus: (i) Jesus is a stranger from heaven; (ii) the Johannine Jesus reveals that he is the revealer; (iii) the Johannine Christology is a naive docetism. We will argue that a Homeric reading of the narrative presentation of the Johannine Jesus would help to situate the Gospel not only in the literary context of late antiquity but also within the socio-religio-cultural context of the Graeco-Roman world of the late first century CE. Such a reading, we believe, would provide a corrective or nuances to some of the claims made on the Johannine Christology.

i. A Stranger from Heaven

Some exegetes would call the Johannine Jesus 'a stranger who takes his leave again' (Bultmann), 'the Stranger *par excellence*' (Meeks), or a *Stranger from Heaven* (de Jonge).¹⁵¹ If that is an appropriate expression of the Johannine description of Jesus, it must not be a figure understood in terms of a demythologised and christianised Gnostic redeemer myth (Bultmann) or as a result of a reciprocal interaction between a Jewish Wisdom tradition and a Gnostic redeemer myth (Meeks).¹⁵² Rather, as we have suggested, Jesus' homecoming as a stranger to be rejected by some and received by others must have reminded the Graeco-Roman audience of the story of *νόστος par excellence*, i.e. Homer's *Odyssey*. It is without doubt that both literary critics and the learned of late antiquity were attuned to certain overtones of Homer's epics, the classics of the day, in a way that a modern reader cannot emulate.¹⁵³ It is probable that such an ability was not limited to a small number of the privileged.

151 Bultmann, *John*, 355; Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 146; and de Jonge, *Jesus: Stranger from Heaven and the Son of God* (1977), respectively.

152 Bultmann, *John*, esp. 355; Meeks, 'The Man from Heaven', 165.

153 Cf. Richardson, 'Recognition Scenes', 220.

The questions asking the identities of the protagonists by τίς and πόθεν (ποῦ), the typical questions asked to strangers for identification in antiquity,¹⁵⁴ abound in both the Fourth Gospel and the *Odyssey*, for both stories are built around the real identities of the protagonists who appear as strangers whose identities are concealed to the characters but are apparent to the audience. This may be the result of the evangelist's main intention to present the identity of Jesus as the divine *Logos* incarnate in a manner similar to the popular myth of theoxeny. If this reading is correct, the emphasis on the heavenly origin of Jesus and his return to heaven has little bearing on the Gnostic emphasis of the heavenly origin of its redeemer.

Furthermore, the parentage, especially the identity of the father, is also an indispensable element of establishing one's identity in the patriarchal culture of antiquity.¹⁵⁵ Therefore, the Johannine emphasis on Jesus' identity as being 'from above' and the Son (of the Father) may not necessarily be the result of an evolutionary process from a low Christology to a high Christology. Rather it may be the Johannine presentation of Jesus is in line with the conventions revealing the identity of a stranger in antiquity.¹⁵⁶

ii. Jesus the Revealer

R. Bultmann, followed recently by J. Ashton, emphasised that the Johannine Jesus is in the main the revealer of himself and that his revelation contains no content (the *Was*) apart from the mere fact (the *Daß*) that he is the Revealer.¹⁵⁷ This claim has to be put into perspective within the plot-structure of revelation-recognition of Graeco-Roman dramatic literature employed extensively in the Gospel. It has become evident that Jesus is the revealer of his own messianic identity expressed in terms of the messianic titles as well as his origin (πόθεν) and parentage (Son of the Father) in revelation-recognition scenes. As regards Bultmann's second claim that the Johannine Jesus reveals no content but that he is the Revealer, we have already offered our criti-

154 Heliodorus, *Aethiopica* 1.8; 2.32; 9.25.

155 The questions asking a stranger's identity with respect to his/her parents are common. See, e.g., Homer, *Od.* 24.298; *Oed. Col.* 221-3, 236; Heliodorus, *Aethiopica* 2.21; 2.23.

156 The view of H. Leroy, *Rätsel*, 58-59, that the πόθεν and ποῦ of the Johannine Jesus is Gnostic seems irrelevant.

157 Bultmann, 'Die Bedeutung', 145; *Theology*, 1.66; Ashton, *Understanding*, 517, 531-536.

que.¹⁵⁸ Jesus is not only the revealer (John 3.13-14) but also the core (1.51) of the revealed divine mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation as developed in Jewish apocalypses, the core on which the eschatological blessings and judgement hinge. Furthermore, the pre-Easter *anagnorisis* scenes of the Gospel show that Jesus' revelation is concerned not only with its *Daß* but also with its *Was*. He reveals his own identity through (self-)revelations and signs, and recognised as the Messiah/the King of Israel, the Saviour of the world, the Holy One of God, the Son of man, etc. (John 1, 4, 6, 9, 11; cf. 10.41-42; 12.42). The *Daß* of revelation is provided by the post-Easter revelation-recognition scenes, which are concerned with proving that the resurrected one is Jesus as the disciples knew him (20.11-18; 21.4-14) and as the one crucified (20.19-29). One of the purposes of the post-Easter recognition scenes could be construed as proving the reality of the death and resurrection of Jesus—an incredible topic for most of the Graeco-Roman audience¹⁵⁹—by means of the popular dramatic plot of *anagnorisis* which serves to prove one's identity beyond doubt.

iii. A Naively Docetic Christology?

E. Käsemann has regarded the Johannine Christology as 'eines naiven Dokerismus'.¹⁶⁰ This was Käsemann's answer to 'Das Problem der göttlichen Herrlichkeit des über die Erde schreitenden Christus in 4. Evangelium', which, according to him, becomes sharper in view of the passage 'Das Wort ward Fleisch' and has yet to be resolved.¹⁶¹ Käsemann has carried the view that the Johannine Jesus is a god striding over the earth, so far as to deny a *theologia crucis* in the Gospel, because the significance of the cross, he thinks, is outshone by the glory of the *Logos*. Against Käsemann, however, G. Bornkamm, M. Hengel and others argued for the non-docetic nature of the Gospel.¹⁶² Schnelle has recently argued that the Johannine Christology

¹⁵⁸ See II.3.

¹⁵⁹ See Riley, *Resurrection*, 7-68.

¹⁶⁰ Käsemann, *Wille*, 62. He follows F.C. Bauer, A. von Harnack, and H. Lietzmann.

¹⁶¹ Käsemann, *Wille*, 26. As he points out, this claim was made by F.C. Bauer, L. Lütgert, Hirsch, and others. The depiction of a god wandering on earth might be more fitting for Kalasiris' (rather speculative) interpretation of the *Iliad* 13.71-72 in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* III.13, in which a god in the human shape is depicted as gliding through through the circumambient air.

¹⁶² Bornkamm, 'Towards the Interpretation', 79-98, esp. 86-89; Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, 68-72.

has an anti-docetic tendency in reaction to a docetic Christology.¹⁶³ What then has led many exegetes to understand the Fourth Gospel against docetism, either positively or negatively? *An answer, we would think, lies in the fact that the narrative presentation of the Johannine Jesus shows affinity to the well-known belief of a god appearing as stranger (pace Käsemann and contra Bornkamm [88]), while at the same time Jesus' true humanity with mortality is emphasised (pace Bornkamm, Schnelle, and Hengel) over against that belief in its Graeco-Roman form.*

M. Stibbe has drawn attention to the similarities between the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel and the self-description of Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae*.¹⁶⁴ In the opening of the play Dionysus declares: 'I am Dionysus, the son of Zeus, come back to Thebes, this land where I was born...And here I stand, a god incognito, disguised as man, beside the stream of Dirce and the waters of Ismenus' (*Bacchae* 1-2, 4-6). The purpose of his coming, Dionysus continues to explain, is to punish Pentheus, the new king of Thebes, who has despised him, and to prove to him and the people of Thebes that he is god indeed (*Bacchae* 43-48). Of particular importance among the similarities Stibbe observes is that in both prologues is the pattern of a divine figure revealing himself as a human being and recognised and/or unrecognised by humans. Yet the motif of a god incognito appearing to his subjects in human disguise is not confined to the Dionysian myth but was widely known and utilised as a popular motif for epics, tragedies, novels and so on.¹⁶⁵

If our contention is valid that the overall plot-structure of the Fourth Gospel is analogous to that of the homecoming of Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey* and shows some striking resemblance to the myth of a god appearing as a stranger to test mortals, then the depiction of the Johannine Jesus' humanity can be best understood in contrast to them. In so doing, the distinctiveness of the Johannine heavenly hero becomes clearer. Gods manifesting themselves in mortal disguises are at least ambiguous and can be considered to be 'docetic' without any reference to their birth or death. It is noteworthy that Philo of Alexandria makes positive use of the Greek formula of theoxeny in anal-

163 Schnelle, *Antidoketische Christologie*, esp. 250-258.

164 Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, 135-137.

165 See A.P. Burnett, 'Pentheus and Dionysus', 24-25 n8. E.g. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8.626-724.

ogy to the revelation of God on earth. In discussing the manner of the revelation of God, Philo alludes to the *locus classicus* of theoxeny, i.e. *Od.* 17.485-487, and, despite his skepticism about the truth of that legend, acknowledges its value in explicating the revelation of the God of Israel in the Hellenistic context (*De somniis* 1.233). Regarding the manner of God's manifestation, Philo seems to take pains in differentiating it from the pagan formulation as expressed in Euripides' *Bacchae* 54; regarding his own epiphany in human disguise, Dionysus says, 'I have changed my form and taken the likeness of a man (*μορφὴν τ' ἐμὴν μετέβαλον εἰς ἀνδρὸς φύσιν*)' (cf. 6; 1324-25).¹⁶⁶ Philo, perhaps being aware of such a belief, characterises the manner of God's revelation as 'giving Himself the likeness of angels, not altering His own nature, for He is unchangeable' (*οὐ μεταβάλλοντα τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φύσιν—ἄτρεπτος γάρ*) (*De somniis* 1.232). His apologetic stance to the pagan myth is evident. Philo explains God's unchangeability in his taking the likeness of angels, on the basis of the belief that angels themselves have the image of God himself (1.233).¹⁶⁷

By contrast, the Johannine formula *ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο* (John 1.14) is unique and can be construed as having a self-defining or legitimating purport against that popular pagan formula of a god appearing in mortal disguise.¹⁶⁸ Unlike the gods of the Graeco-Roman pantheon whose characteristics and activities are somewhat limited, being confined to certain realms or forces of the cosmic phenomena,¹⁶⁹ the universal authority of the Johannine *Logos* in his participation in the creation of *πάντα* is stressed.¹⁷⁰ Unlike the former who are regarded as deathless or immortals (*ἀθάνατοι*) in contrast to mortals (*θάνατοι*) and change forms (*φύσεις*) when taking up human forms, the Johannine divine *Logos* 'has become flesh' and dies on the cross. Further-

166 Cf. Phil 2.6, 7, where *μορφὴ* is used in expressing Jesus' divinity as well as humanity.

167 It is interesting that, just as the Johannine hymn of the *Logos* precedes the formula comparable to the pagan belief of gods in disguise (John 1.1-11), so Philo's discussion on the chief *λόγος* of God being called *θεός* in interpreting Gen 31.13 precede immediately his handling of the Homeric formula of theoxeny (*Od.* 17.485-487) in explaining the unchangeability of God in his revelation through angels (*De somniis* 1.227-230).

168 A. Grillmeir, *Christ*, 31, points out the difficulty for Greeks to accept the idea that the divine *Logos* has become a mortal flesh. Plutarch records Boëthus' reference to the incarnation of a god, saying that 'It is not enough to incarnate the god (*τὸν θεὸν εἰς σῶμα καθειργύναι θνητὸν*) once every month...' (*De Pythiae Oraculis* 398A); but this incarnation is only for a ritualistic purpose without any lasting effect and thus without birth or death.

169 Cf. Plutarch, *De audiendis poetis* 6.

170 Cf. Acts 14.15.

more, as Hengel points out, the *παραχρή* of the Johannine Jesus (12.27; cf. 11.33), which we have demonstrated is his 'messianic woe' at the end time, shows an acute contrast to the *ἀταραξία* ('impassiveness') ideal of a divine figure in the Graeco-Roman world.¹⁷¹ Hence, the true humanity of Jesus is without doubt demonstrated. It would be that in contrast to Philo who takes pain to maintain the unchangeability of God in his epiphanies, the author of the Fourth Gospel is concerned with the divine epiphany in the real person of Jesus and the divine revelation in and through him.

Because of the employment of the formula of epiphany analogous to the popular epiphanic formulation of the Hellenistic-Roman world, the Johannine Christology, in which the divine *Logos* has 'become' *σάρξ* (ἡΨβ),¹⁷² a mortal human being as Jesus of Nazareth, might have been liable to be misunderstood as that of a 'docetic' humanity assumed by a god for disguising. The twice repeated report in the Johannine Epistles of many false prophets or deceivers who deny Jesus' having come or coming in flesh may be perceived as reflecting such a 'docetic' misunderstanding.¹⁷³

1 John 4.1-2: 'many false prophets (*πολλοὶ ψευδοπροφήται*) have gone out into the world...every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (*πάν πνεῦμα ὃ ὁμολογεῖ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα*) is from God' (cf. 1 John 5.6).

2 John 7: 'many deceivers (*πολλοὶ πλάνοι*) have gone out into the world, those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (*οἱ μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον*)¹⁷⁴ ἐν σαρκί'.

171 Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, 70; *Die johanneische Frage*, 198-199. He replaces the term *theios aner* of the English version with 'göttlichen' in the German version.

172 For the explanation of *σάρξ* as a reference to the 'ungodly', 'mortal' humanness, see Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, 63.

173 Grillmeier, *Christ*, 79, remarks that the false teachers referred to in 1 John 4.2; 5.6 and 2 John 7 are not docetists denying the humanity of Jesus (which cannot be demonstrated), but that these passages speak of 'a matter of a false docetic doctrine in the wider sense'. On the other hand, some deny the view that discerns in 1 John allusions to the denial of the incarnation of Jesus, a docetic tendency. E.g. J. Lieu, *Epistles*, 81-82; Balz, 'Theologie', 53-55.

174 The present participle *ἐρχόμενον* poses a considerable exegetical problem. For some it indicates the second coming of Christ. This possibility might be further strengthened, because the reference to the reward for the toils of the audience in the following verse (2 John 8) evokes a picture of the end-time judgement. So Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, 186 n48. But, since the present participle, albeit in a periphrastic construction, is used for Jesus' first coming at John 1.9, it is not impossible to regard 2 John 7 as referring to the incarnation.

If there is any anti-docetic elements in the Fourth Gospel, it might have been either to avoid the potentially 'docetic' understanding of the humanity which gods were believed to take or to refute such a docetic Christology already developed. Assuming that 1 John (5.6) was written earlier than the Gospel in the Johannine school, U. Schnelle argues that the passages emphasising Jesus' real corporeality were aimed at refuting a docetic Christology.¹⁷⁵ But it is equally possible that the emphasis on the corporeality of Jesus was to avoid possible docetic misunderstandings that might be incurred by the deployment of the plot resembling the popular Graeco-Roman belief of divine epiphany. It would follow that the claim that the Johannine Christology is naively docetic may be overemphasising the 'docetic' element of a god within the theme of theoxeny, to which the Johannine presentation of the revelation of Jesus shows affinity, and that in doing so it fails to note the significance of the unique stress placed by the evangelist on the divine *Logos*' *having become* a human being (John 1.14). Whichever the case, the avoidance of such an expression as Jesus taking a human appearance (*φύσις*) by changing his divine *μορφή* may reflect the author's concern to differentiate the Johannine idea of incarnation from its pagan counterparts.

Writing about a century after the Fourth Gospel, Clement of Alexandria, who is better known for his calling the Gospel 'a spiritual gospel' (Eusebius, *HE* VI.14), would concur with our interpretation of the Fourth Gospel as a drama of concealed identity with recognition scenes concerning the *Logos* incarnate. Clement remarks in his comment on John 1.1 in the *Exhortation to the Greeks*: 'When at the first His coming was proclaimed the message was not disbelieved; nor was He unrecognised (*ἀγνωθεΐς*) when, having assumed the mask of manhood and received fleshly form (*ὅτε τὸ ἀνθρώπου προσωπεῖον ἀναλαβὼν καὶ σαρκὶ ἀναπλασάμενος*), He began to act the drama of salvation for humanity (*τὸ σωτήριον δρᾶμα τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος*)' (X.110.2). By 'the drama of salvation for humanity' Clement would have had the entire Gospel in mind, since soon afterwards he uses the language describing the identity of a stranger when referring to Jesus as the *Logos*: 'Through his teachings and signs He showed *whence he came* and *who he was* (*ὅθεν τε ἦν αὐτὸς καὶ ὅς ἦν*),

175 Schnelle, *Antidoketische Christologie*, esp. 81-83, 249ff.

namely the Word our herald, mediator and Saviour, a spring of life and peace flooding the whole face of the earth, thanks to whom the universe has now become, so to speak, a sea of blessings'. Some may claim that Clement's understanding of the Johannine Christology appears 'naively docetic'. In fact it has been, mistakenly, so suspected because of the Middle-Platonic influence on him.¹⁷⁶ Yet A. Grillmeier emphatically denies the claim of Docetism in Clement of Alexandria and argues for his concern for the unity between the divine *Logos* and the real human nature of Christ.¹⁷⁷ Thus, being in the centre of Greek learning and culture, Clement seems to have been able to perceive the 'dramatic' nature of the presentation of Jesus in the Gospel, whose identity as the divine *Logos* has been recognised in spite of his becoming a human being.

5.6 Conclusions

Although it is probable that the Fourth Gospel can be categorised as tragedy as Hitchcock and Stibbe have done, it also contains elements that cannot quite fit that description. A number of the recognition scenes we have found in the Fourth Gospel may distinguish it from any known tragedies of concealed identity which are generally composed to reach a climax at a single or at most a few *anagnorisis* scenes. With a little more than a few such scenes both negative and positive, Xenophon's *Ephesian Story* comes close to it,¹⁷⁸ but Homer's *Odyssey*, which Aristotle characterises as 'recognition throughout (*ἀναγνωρίσις...διόλου*)' (*Poetics* XXIV.3), presents an even closer parallel. Furthermore, the Fourth Gospel's emplotment of the scenes of *anagnorisis* and failed *anagnorisis* shows a striking resemblance to that of the *Odyssey*. If we follow Aristotle's classification that tragedies are concerned with a series of events that happen within 'a single revolution of the sun, or only slightly to exceed that', the Fourth Gospel is not like a tragedy but more like an epic, which according to Aristotle 'observes no limits in its time of action' (*Poetics* V.8-9). Yet the Fourth Gospel lacks

176 See R. Lamberton, *Homer the Theologian*, 78-80. In fact, Clement elsewhere interprets John 1.14: 'The Logos issuing forth was the cause of creation. Then also he generated himself, when the Word became flesh, that he might be seen (*προελθὼν δὲ ὁ λόγος δημιουργίας αἰτοῦς, ἔπειτα καὶ ἐαντὸν γενεῶ, ὅταν ὁ λόγος σὰρξ γένηται, ἵνα καὶ θεαθῆ*)' (*Strom.* 5.3.16.1-5: GCS 52.336).

177 Grillmeier, *Christ*, 136.

178 Recognition scenes can be found, e.g. in the *Ephesiaca* 5.9.5ff; 5.10.9-12; 5.12.1; 5.12.3ff; 5.13.3.

the grand-scale length of that ancient genre. Rather, as far as its length is concerned, it would look more like an epyllion (albeit without a consistent metric composition), a type of a miniature epic or narrative poetry of a moderate scale, which was, though not an established genre in antiquity, taken up by many prominent poets from the third to the first century BCE and revived in the third century CE after a period of some disinterest.¹⁷⁹ But the length itself cannot be a decisive standard to determine the genre of a work. The similarity between epics and tragedies, albeit their distinction, is undeniable as Aristotle himself acknowledges. And the tragic nature of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* has been recognised from his day to the present. This wide definition of tragedy and drama, not in its strictly generic sense, seems to be prevalent in the first century CE as some of the *Lives* of the notable figures are construed either as a drama or a tragedy. Therefore, it is not illegitimate to call the Fourth Gospel with its dramatic or tragic traits a drama or a tragedy, or even an epic. It must be noted, however, that the style of the Gospel is neither that of an epic or an epyllion composed mainly in a metric construction, nor in a form of tragedy consisting only of dialogues with a chorus and theatrical considerations. Rather the Fourth Gospel is a prose narrative like biography or novel, with the exceptions of the Semitic *parallelisms membrorum* found predominantly in the Prologue¹⁸⁰ and the sayings of Jesus. It is not surprising that the strongly Jewish elements such as apocalyptic as well as *parallelisms membrorum* in the sayings of Jesus are incorporated into the generic framework of *bios*, since collections of the sayings of a person (generally with biographical traits) were an important source in ancient biography writing in general.¹⁸¹ Therefore, the genre of the Fourth Gospel can be located in the *Kreuzung der Gattungen* of late antiquity; the popular emplotment device of *anagnorisis* of the dramatic narratives such as epic, drama and novel is fully applied to the *bios* of Jesus of Nazareth. Such a conflation of some different generic elements was not unknown, for Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* interweaves the motifs of

179 For the genre of epyllion see, e.g., D.F. Bright, *The Miniature Epic*, 3-8; D. Konstan, 'Noetic Epic', 59-78.

180 See e.g. O. Hofius, 'Struktur', 10-11; Miller, *Salvation-History*, 7-8. There is no clear metric pattern detected in the Prologue. So Ibuki, 'Lobhymnus', 154 n 45.

181 For example, Plutarch in his *Life of Alexander* (27, 77) claims at times that his accounts are based on his hero's letters and journals. See Burridge, *What are the Gospels?* 173-175.

Because of the common use of *anagnorisis* from Homer's *Odyssey*, to Graeco-Roman tragedies and novels,¹⁸³ the Hellenistic-Roman readers must have easily recognised this particular kind of emplotment device in the Fourth Gospel. Furthermore, it is not surprising to find recognition scenes analogous to those in Homer's *Odyssey* in particular, since allusions to and echoes of Homeric epics, either conscious or unconscious, are abundant in later epics, dramas and novels. Since some of the revelations of the hero for *anagnorisis* in the *Odyssey* are depicted as coterminous with the divine epiphany, the formerly blind man's recognition of Jesus as the Son of man worthy of belief and worship (John 9.38) may have been readily discernible to the Graeco-Roman readers. Furthermore, late Jewish narrative writings like the *Third Book of Maccabees* and *Joseph and Asenath* are generally considered to belong to the genre of Graeco-Roman novel.¹⁸⁴ Given that the *Third Book of Maccabees* dealing with the issue of theodicy took up a genre of Hellenistic novel,¹⁸⁵ it is not surprising that in the Fourth Gospel the motif of the righteous suffering and vindication of Jesus and his followers (John 12.24-26, 31-32) is well incorporated with the popular literary convention of the Hellenistic dramatic literature. Nor is it surprising that apocalyptic elements are intertwined with this popular Graeco-Roman literary device, in view of the fact that in certain parts of the *Genesis Apocryphon* from Qumran the Graeco-Roman narrative conventions were already incorporated.¹⁸⁶

The Fourth Gospel's deployment of the dramatic plot-structure with *anagnorisis* and *peripeteia*, and its presentation of Jesus over against the popular Graeco-Roman myth of a god in disguise suggest some interesting social implications concerning its (i) implied audience and (ii) author.

182 J.M. Mossman, 'Tragedy and Epic', 83-93.

183 The importance of the plot device of *anagnorisis* is clear as stressed by Aristotle in his *Poetics* XI; XIV.14ff; XVI. For its use in Greek novels and New Comedy see T. Hägg, *The Novel*, 13, 36, and S. Trenkner, *The Greek Novella*, 91-101, respectively.

184 See R.I. Pervo, *Profit*, 119-121; Schürer, *The History*, III.1.537-542; L.M. Wills, 'The Jewish Novellas', 223-238.

185 This work was obviously written in Alexandria, and its date would be sometime between the late second century BCE and the late first century CE. See Schürer, *The History*, III.1.539-540.

186 Cf. Pervo, *Profit*, 119-121.

(i) That the Gospel was written for an oral delivery is implied by its use of the technique of suspense, repeated foreshadowings of what is going to happen—a technique common to Hellenistic-Roman dramatic narratives¹⁸⁷—, the bridge sections—a typical technique of oral type-setting summarising what proceeds and introducing what follows—, and the recapitulations of the main motifs.¹⁸⁸ Although literacy in terms of reading and writing abilities may have been limited to those who belonged to the upper strata of the Roman society and professional slaves (e.g. scribes, accountants, and so on), the Hellenistic-Roman dramatic literature seems to have reached beyond the confine of the ruling class. Arguing for a wider circulation of the novels, T. Hägg conjectures: 'The ability to read, and read easily and for pleasure, in a milieu where true literacy [in its modern sense] was not common, no doubt carries with it the obligation to read aloud to members of the household, to a circle of friends, perhaps even to a wider audience. This would mean that the novel could reach not only below the ruling classes, but also outside the towns and beyond the households of the rich landowners: each village would have had a scribe, in function if not in office'.¹⁸⁹ While epics and dramas in written forms may have been limited in number in circulation, they, either read aloud or acted, must have been accessible by the wider spectrum of the populace. This would suggest the wide-spread familiarity of the main emplotment device of *anagnorisis* of Graeco-Roman dramas. Therefore, the Fourth Gospel's deployment of *anagnorisis* by itself must have appealed to the wider populace of the Roman world.

The author of the Fourth Gospel and his disciples show a mastery of the conventions of Graeco-Roman narrative techniques and an acute awareness of the well-known plot of a homecoming hero (depicted in accord with the myth of a god in mortal disguise), while at the same time they are well informed in the Jewish apocalyptic expectations. Here two traditions of wise men seems to coalesce. On the one hand, the authors of the apocalypses claim themselves to be the wise by writing in the names of the pseudonymous apocalyptic seers who are given wisdom through visions and their

187 Hägg, *Narrative Technique*, 213-287; *The Novel*, 93, 111.

188 For the use of recapitulations in epics and novels, see Hägg, *Narrative Technique*, 327-332.

189 Hägg, *The Novel*, 93. Although Hägg himself acknowledges that this view is a hypothetical one, it is a plausible one. Cf. Plutarch, *Caesar* 2.2 (which records the young Caesar reading aloud his poems and speeches to the pirates who have captured him).

interpretations. On the other hand, in ancient Greek cities, poets (epic writers) and tragedians were regarded as *οἱ σοφοί* and given a didactic role in the community.¹⁹⁰ That this was so in the Roman era, especially among the Stoics, is attested by Strabo, who says that 'My own school [the Stoics] actually said that only the wise man could be a poet. This is why Greek communities give children their first education through poetry, not for simple entertainment of course, but for moral improvement' (*Geography* 1.2.3). Therefore it is likely that, by placing themselves in the tradition of the greatest of the poets, i.e. Homer, the author and the compilers of the Fourth Gospel implicitly claimed in effect their didactic role in their own community of believers and presented the gospel of Jesus in the way conceivable to the wider audience of the Hellenistic Roman world as well.

(ii) Discussing the Fourth Gospel's affinity to the *Bacchae*, Stibbe holds that the author of the Gospel employed 'unconsciously' the plot-structure (*mythos*) of tragedy and that the affinities to the *Bacchae* are an inevitable result.¹⁹¹ As we have argued, however, the Fourth Gospel reflects a mastery of the literary theory and practice of Graeco-Roman poetics of the day in composing the life and work of Jesus with a series of recognition scenes arranged elaborately under the main plot laid out in the Prologue. Moreover, the myth of a god in the guise of a stranger to which his presentation of Jesus is analogous was not necessarily confined to the *Bacchae* alone but was widespread in antiquity, and whose proto-type is the homecoming of Odysseus of Homer's epic. Therefore, the milieu within which the author of the Gospel operates is not one of a limited scale such as Hermeticism, Gnosticism, Philo, and Neo-Platonism, but is one with a much wider prevalence and appeal. The author's employment of this Gospel would indicate his serious engagement with the Hellenistic-Roman culture in order to convey effectively the message of the death and resurrection of Jesus to the non-Jewish as well as Jewish audience. As we have seen, this is an appropriation of the Jewish concept of revelation and epiphany of God in terms similar to Graeco-Roman formulations of gods' epiphanies, along with the dramatic plot-structure of revelation-recognition,

190 See S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy*, 222-223.

191 Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, 137.

the theory and practice of which, though known in the Hebrew Bible, were developed more elaborately in Graeco-Roman literature. This is done without sacrificing the integrity of the former, and at the same time opening it up to the wider world by making it intelligible to the Graeco-Roman audience as well. This is not surprising, since Judaism, either in Palestine or in the Diaspora, had been long under the influence of Hellenism, though remaining distinctive from it in varying degrees.¹⁹² Yet it may not be just enough to speak of the Hellenised nature of Palestinian Judaism from the milieu with which the author of the Fourth Gospel might have had a youthful connection. Nor is it necessary to discuss the Hellenistic character of the Fourth Gospel in terms of Gnosticism. The deployment of the popular Hellenistic motif of *anagnorisis* demands a wider audience from the Hellenistic-Roman world. Therefore, the (implied) audience is not limited to the Jewish Christians with or without a Gnosticising tendency, but it would include a wider spectrum of people from Jews and non-Jews; a Christian Jew with a strong Hellenic upbringing would be well equipped to understand the message of the Gospel accurately. The question as to whether the implied audience is inclusive of non-believers or not has to wait for another investigation.

A rhetorical consideration may help to identify a more specific purpose of the Fourth Gospel. Yet the rhetorical situation of the Gospel as a whole is difficult to detect. T. Okure has found both the deliberative and the demonstrative persuasions in John 4.1-42, and also points to the existence of the forensic persuasion in John 7-10.¹⁹³ As we have found, the forensic situation, as laid out in John 5.19-39, is dominant throughout the Gospel to the extent that the entire Gospel can be read in this light. The multiple witnesses, including Jesus' own self-witness/revelation, all point to the fact that he is the Christ, the Son of God, which is recognised by the believers and rejected by the unbelieving Jews who act as judge. This forensic situation is not confined to those who involved in it directly, but it is transferred to the presence of the reader/audience. By expanding the sphere of the law-court so as to include the audience as jury, the author is urging them to become involved in it as the first disciples did.

¹⁹² So Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, 113-114.

¹⁹³ Okure, *The Johannine Approach*, 101, 266

This forensic situation fits the most overt expression of the purpose of the author's writing of the Fourth Gospel to persuade the audience to continue believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (John 20.31; cf. 1 John 2.26; 5.13).¹⁹⁴ Given that there were a number of self-claimed messiahs in the first-century CE,¹⁹⁵ a forensic persuasion and *anagnorisis*, which are integrally related with each other, are most suited for proving the identity of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah by numerous *σημεῖα* among those (false) messianic claims. Thus we concur with Harvey who draws attention to the lawsuits in the Fourth Gospel and remarks that 'it is possible to understand the Fourth Gospel as a presentation of the claims of Jesus in the form of an extended "trial", to present the case of Jesus to his readers and challenge them....to reach their own verdict'.¹⁹⁶ It is inferred from the employment of such a common literary convention of *anagnorisis* that not only believers but also non-believers would have been challenged to reach such a verdict on the identity of Jesus as depicted in the Fourth Gospel.

194 Cf. Okure, *The Johannine Approach*, 257-258.

195 See R.A. Horsley, *Bandits*, 88-134.

196 Harvey, *Jesus on Trial*, 16-17.

IV. CONCLUSION

Our current investigation started with a purpose to elucidate Jewish apocalyptic traits of the Johannine idea of revelation associated especially with its Son of man sayings (especially in John 12.20ff), with a view to refuting the 'history of religions' approach, represented by Bultmann, that explained the Fourth Gospel in terms of Hellenistic and Gnostic ideas.

We have shown that John 12.20-36 contains apocalyptic themes pertaining to the revealed vision of the end-time judgement and salvation (vindication). Although it lacks an interpreter angel and the common literary pattern of vision—request for interpretation—and interpretation, our pericope shows impressive affinities to the content of the end-time judgement: 1) the vision of judgement is introduced symbolically by the coming of the Greeks 'to see' Jesus, which itself symbolises the beginning of the eschatological gathering of nations; 2) the contents of the judgement are rewards for the righteous and punishment for the Devil; 3) a human-like figure (a reinterpretation of the Danielic son-of-man figure) functions as executor of judgement and/or judge himself; 4) his fate of suffering and vindication is analogous to that of the group of the righteous whom he represents. This interpretation fits in with the intensifying narrative development of the Fourth Gospel culminating in the cross of Jesus, for the narratives of the earthly mission of Jesus are focused on the impending hour of the glorification of the Son of man through the crucifixion.

What are pertinent to the apocalyptic visions of the end time as depicted in Jewish apocalypses is realised in the life, passion and resurrection of Jesus the Nazarean. Although the passion and resurrection narrative does not take the form of apocalypse, John 12.20-36 provides an overall perspective from which to view the significance of the lifting-up and glorification of Jesus the Son of man, whose presentation is coloured not only with the apocalyptic concept of revelation (12.34) but also with ideas of

apocalyptic eschatology. For the author of the Gospel, the visions of the Son of man promised by Jesus (1.51; 6.62) are fulfilled in his cross and resurrection and in their consequences - the mission for the gathering of the new people of God.

Although it does not exhibit itself as a full-blown apocalypse in its generic sense, the Fourth Gospel utilises the basic idea of revelation as contained in apocalyptic literature for the discourse of the divine mysteries to humanity through a heavenly revealer. Although it may not be predominant in the Fourth Gospel, the manner of revelation characteristic of Jewish apocalypses is evident in not insignificant parts of the Gospel such as John 1.51; 3.1-21, 12.20ff. Thus Jewish apocalypses would provide an appropriate background and foreground against which the Fourth Gospel, thus the Johannine Christology and eschatology should be examined. However, the investigation into the Graeco-Roman poetics has led us to the realisation of the pluralistic nature of the religious and literary milieu within which the Fourth Gospel was written. In reaction to Dodd's emphasis on the Hellenistic (= Hermetic) milieu and Bultmann's on the Gnostic milieu, recent Johannine scholarship has stressed the Jewishness of the Fourth Gospel by explaining it in relation to the OT, the Qumran literature, Rabbinic literature, Targum and so on. Indeed, we have insisted on the apocalyptic thrusts of the Johannine concept of revelation, which is closely associated with the Johannine Jesus identified as the Danielic Son of man as interpreted in the contemporary Jewish apocalypses.¹⁹⁷ As we have tried to show in this chapter, however, the apocalyptic concept of revelation associated with the Johannine Son of man is artfully incorporated into the popular, dramatic emplotment device of *anagnorisis* displayed in Graeco-Roman poetics.

Since J.L. Martyn's influential study *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (1968), Johannine scholarship has focused on the Johannine community in conflict with its Jewish counterpart from which it had departed.¹⁹⁸ For Martyn, the milieux of the Fourth Gospel and its earlier Sign Gospel are predominantly Jewish-Christian, and do

197 See Collins, *Daniel*, 81 n65, 84. See esp. 1 Enoch 48.5. Both 4 Ezra 13 and the *Similitude of Enoch* attribute imagery otherwise reserved for God. See III.3.

198 Ashton, *Understanding*, esp. 166-174, who, following in general Martyn's theory of three-step composition of the Gospel, still works in the main on this premise.

not go beyond that limit, which is in line with his reconstruction of the history of the Johannine community.¹⁹⁹ Even when he characterises the Fourth Gospel as a 'drama', especially John 5-7 and 9, Martyn has fallen short of directing attention to the implications of his insight within the Hellenistic-Roman world. Ashton, in spite of his awareness of the recognitions in the Fourth Gospel, operates largely in Martyn's scheme.²⁰⁰ Yet our contention that the theme of theoxeny of a homecoming divine figure with *anagnorisis* scenes popular in Graeco-Roman dramatic genres is applied to the Johannine Jesus would serve to redirect a search for the social setting of the firsthand audience of the Fourth Gospel, although this does not altogether rule out its plausible interaction with the Jewish counterparts.

The use of the dramatic conventions of *anagnorisis* in the Fourth Gospel has important bearing on its provenance as well. Schwartz posed a (rhetorical) question regarding its firsthand audience: 'What had it to do with the Romans when "many of the Jews...were believing in Jesus?"'²⁰¹ Rather than his implied negation, the answer should be strongly affirmative, because of the radical application of the popular Graeco-Roman plot-pattern of revelation-recognition to the events of Jesus. Although this plot-pattern was widely used in Hellenistic-Roman dramatic narratives (of concealed identity), its presentation in vernacular Greek may point to the Greek East of the Roman empire including Asia Minor and northern Egypt (Alexandria in particular). Even if it had been written in Antioch of Syria and/or to its Greek-speaking people, the motif which the Fourth Gospel employs and which it (apologetically) counteracts is not that of a type of Syrian religion but that of the Hellenistic religio-literary heritage.

In conclusion, it looks as though the narrative of the Fourth Gospel is the result of the ingenious integration of the apocalyptic themes of the revelation of the divine mysteries concerning the end time into a form of drama in which the self-revelation of

199 See Martyn, 'Source Criticism', 99-121.

200 Inspired by Cave's *Recognitions* (1988), Ashton, *Understanding*, 549-550 n53, includes an extensive note on the Johannine recognitions, with which we basically agree. Ashton comments that irony is a latecomer in the history of European poetics; he does so with a view to discrediting Duke's and O'Day's studies on the Johannine irony. But he is misguided here, for irony is typical of a story of concealed identity such as the *Odyssey* and many other Greek dramas.

201 E. Schwartz, 'Aporien im vierten Evangelium III'. *Nachrichten der Göttinger Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*. Phil.-hist. Klasse, 1908. 172.

the protagonist and his recognition (*anagnorisis*) by his friends and his rejection by the antagonists play a major role. The Jewish concept of revelation applied to the Johannine Jesus finds a unique partner in the common literary convention of revelation-recognition in dramatic narratives of the Mediterranean world, as they are artfully combined in the Fourth Gospel. Some of the Son of man sayings (e.g. 1.51; 3.13-15; 5.28; 9.38) are used for the revelation of the identity of Jesus, and at least in one occasion (9.38) Jesus' self-revelation of his identity as the Son of man is followed by a dramatic recognition scene. Thus, in the revelations of the Johannine Jesus, the Jewish concept of revelation is very well integrated into the popular motif of epics, dramas and novels of concealed identity — ignorance-revelation-recognition.

ADDENDUM

The Genre of the Fourth Gospel

Since 'a correct understanding of the genre of a [literary] work enables the modern reader to share in the common background of an ancient author and his audience',²⁰² it is important to make a comment, though brief, on the genre(s) of the Fourth Gospel for a more accurate understanding of the Johannine Christology. Burrige provides a reasonable definition of genre: 'genre functions as a flexible set of expectations affecting both author and reader; the proper recognition of genre is absolutely basic to the interpretation and appreciation of written communications'.²⁰³ At the same time, however, it must be borne in mind that in antiquity what Horace called *lex operis* ('the law of the work') was not as fixed as a modern literary critic would like to think. Rather, as D.A. Russell remarks, 'Historically, "genre-theory" is very much more a Renaissance inheritance than an ancient one; when we come to look for it in the critics of antiquity, as of course we must, it appears a much more patchy and incomplete thing than is commonly supposed'.²⁰⁴ When it comes to identifying the genre(s) of the Fourth Gospel, we can reasonably expect a similar situation. In fact, we have noted a multi-generic nature of this Gospel. On the one hand, apocalyptic features are presented in the way in which the revelation of Jesus culminates in the lifting up of the Son of man, while at the same time Jesus' revelation is set in the dramatic plot-structure of revelation-recognition characteristic of Graeco-Roman epic, tragedy and novel. On the other hand, R.A. Burrige proposes that the Fourth Gospel along with the Synoptics belong to the Graeco-Roman genre of *βίος*, or biography, which, as he defines it, 'is a type of writing which occurs naturally among groups of people who have formed around a certain charismatic teacher or leader, seeking to follow after him'.²⁰⁵ There is no denying that in general terms there are undeniable characteristics

202 Burrige, *What Are the Gospels?*, 61.

203 Burrige, *What Are the Gospels?*, 105.

204 Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity*, 148-149.

205 Burrige, *What are the Gospels?*, 81, esp. 220-239. Italics his. Cf. Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 103-104, seems to be more concerned with concepts than generic features when she discusses the genre of the Fourth Gospel in contrast to Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*.

pertaining to the Hellenistic-Roman biography in the Fourth Gospel: the prose narrative of the deeds, dialogues and discourses in the life and death(-resurrection) of the individual Jesus of Nazareth arranged in a chronological framework is certainly characteristic of the genre of *βιοç*.²⁰⁶ Yet Burridge's study does not cover the popular plot-structure of revelation-recognition characteristic of a story of concealed identity in Graeco-Roman poetic genres (epic, tragedy, novel) and thus stops short of providing more specific guidelines to the way in which the Gospel is to be read.²⁰⁷ Our investigation into the Johannine *anagnorisis* scenes has shown that the main plot-structure of the Fourth Gospel contains a strongly tragic tone with a happy ending.²⁰⁸ A biography with tragic traits was not unknown in the first century CE, for it is acknowledged that some of Plutarch's *Lives*, viz. the *Dionysius*, the *Lysander*, the *Antony* and the *Demetrius*, are full of dramatic and tragic motifs.²⁰⁹ In particular, the *Pompey* (79-80) ends with a *pathos* followed by two *anagnorisis* scenes and a *peripeteia*.²¹⁰ The epilogue of his account of 'the tragedy of Crassus' expedition' is deliberately paralleled to the end of the *Bacchae* (*Crassus* 33.1ff). Moreover, the main plot of the Fourth Gospel shows a close affinity to that of the *Odyssey*, although the Johannine version of the homecoming of the protagonist is complex due to its two-level structure concerning the heavenly hero sent by the Father from his heavenly home to his earthly realm and returning to where he was before. In conclusion, the Fourth Gospel is a work of mixed genre, showing the popular plots of Hellenistic-Roman poetics, as well as those of Jewish apocalypses. The characterisation of the genre/s of the Fourth Gospel as such is in parallel with the first extant Greek *novella*, Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe*, which contains elements of epic and drama within a narrative prose form. Both the

206 A. Momigliano, *The Development*, 86, distinguishes between 'the "Plutarchian" (chronologically ordered) type' and 'the "Suetonian" (systematically ordered) type of biography'.

207 Burridge's selection of the criteria determining a genre of a literary work is arbitrary, and his study sheds only general light to the way in which the Gospels are to be read. See F.G. Downing, 'Review: R.A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels?*', *JTS* 49 (1993) 238-240.

208 In this respect, the Fourth Gospel, like the *Odyssey*, would correspond to the *mythos* of summer in N. Frye's categorisation: 'The *mythos* of summer has its favoured plot the romance of the quest, with its perilous journey, the crucial struggle and the exaltation of the hero' (Culler, *Structuralist Poetics*, 222).

209 See Pelling, 'Plutarch's Adaptation', 132 n26, 138; J.M. Mossman, 'Tragedy and Epic', 85 n8, 92.

210 The *pathos* is the death of Pompey, an *anagnorisis* between Philip and another friend of Pompey in his burial, and an *anagnorisis* with a *peripeteia* in a tragic end of Lucius Lentulus who, having recognised Pompey's pyre from the sea, came ashore to pay him a final honour only to be killed.

Fourth Gospel and Chariton's novel use the familiar popular medium of the day, that is, a dramatic spectacle of one kind or another, within the context in which Hellenistic dramas, excerpts from classics, and mime were popular among the wider populace.²¹¹

Since the purposes of writing βίοι vary considerably from work to work—from encomiastic to polemical, from didactic to for entertainment—,²¹² it is difficult to construe the specific intention of the author/s in writing the Fourth Gospel just from the fact that it is a biography of Jesus. It could be at least said generally that like a biography of a philosopher or a sage the Gospel may have been for swaying or even creating a religious or political or philosophical view.²¹³ If we take into account the dramatic elements of the Gospel, the answer may become more focused. Plutarch suggests that the *Sitzen im Leben* of dramas were 'the theatre, the lecture-room, [and] the dinner-party' (*Moralia* 853a). It is evident that the Fourth Gospel as a drama or an epic of a moderate scale was not written for a theatrical performance, nor is it likely that it was read aloud for mere entertainment. Only the didactic function, (perhaps in the context of worship), may have been its probable *Sitz im Leben*. This of course is not to neglect a possibly wider appeal which a dramatic presentation of Jesus' life and work would have had, even to non-believers of the Graeco-Roman world.

The relationship between the genre of bios and apocalyptic eschatology: As we have seen, the Fourth Gospel contains a well-developed apocalyptic eschatology and shows some characteristics of apocalyptic literature by utilising the apocalyptic concept of revelation as of the heavenly mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation, although it cannot be categorised as an apocalypse in its generic sense. On the other hand, the Fourth Gospel may contain various generic elements (e.g. the Farewell Discourse can be compared to a testament literature), but the predominant generic framework can be categorised as a biography of Jesus of Nazareth with characteristics of Graeco-Roman epic/drama (tragedy); there are two main (narratological) expectations operative in the Fourth Gospel: the one is related to the progressive revelations of

211 B.P. Reardon, 'Theme, Structure, and Narrative', 15; Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 226. Cf. Dio, *Euboian Discourse* 20.10.

212 See Burridge, *What Are the Gospels?*, 185-188.

213 See P. Cox, *Biography in Late Antiquity*, esp. 16.

the mysteries concerning the end-time judgement and salvation which evolve around Jesus, the Danielic Son of man (1.51), which reaches a climax at his lifting up/glorification, and the other with Jesus' revelation and its consequences either of recognition-faith or rejection, the process of which culminates in his death and resurrection. The era of the emperor Domitian saw a literary renaissance, which produced not only the well-known works of Tacitus, Quintilian, Pliny and Martial but also three extant Latin epics on martial topics.²¹⁴ If the widely assumed view that the Fourth Gospel was written during his reign (81-96 CE) is correct, it may be considered that the dramatic, epic-like presentation of the Gospel was suited for the literary atmosphere of the day. Nevertheless, biographies of the people who had opposed the régime, which had been a fashion in the Flavio-Trajanic period (esp. under Tiberius and Nero), were hazardous under Domitian as the execution of two such biographers (Arulenus Rusticus and Herennius Senecio) indicates.²¹⁵ It is possible that the Fourth Gospel, which takes pains to avoid equating Jesus with a militaristic revolutionary despite the charge and prosecution of his *maiestas*, was intended to distance the Jesus movement and the community of believers from such a charge from outside and such a misunderstanding from within .

214 Statius' *Thebeid* (c. 79-91 CE), Silius Italicus' *Punica* (in the 90s), and Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautia* (c. 92-93). See P. Toohey, *Reading Epic*, 186-210.

215 Coleman, 'The Emperor Domitian and Literature', 3105-6. See Dio, *RH* 67.13; Tacitus, *Agr.* 2; Pliny, *Ep.* 7.9.15.

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