DIVINE UNION IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

Drinking the Blood of Jesus from the Torah Prohibitions

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Introduction: Dialogical Tension in the Fourth Gospel

Whereas *parable* is the preferred method of instruction in the Synoptic Gospels, in the Fourth Gospel instruction is typically imparted through *dialogue*. In very much the same way that Jesus spoke with Nicodemus (Jn 3:1-21) and with the Samaritan woman (4:1-42) earlier on in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus gently guides his interlocutors in the Eucharistic Discourse (6:25-71) towards the truth (cf. 1:9, 14, 17).[1] It is from their immediate concerns to satisfy their physical hunger that Jesus leads the multitudes towards, or indeed invites them to realize they already have this desire for, heavenly communion. The multitudes whom Jesus addresses are not people of wealth and luxury. They would not have been unaccustomed to the hard life of daily labor. It is fitting that Jesus begins with their immediate, present concern, for food that satisfies the body's needs for the day. However, this very real need to satisfy their physical hunger in order to preserve their own lives is the grounds upon which Jesus invites them to another kind of life, one discerned through faith. Jesus's intent, which he reveals at the outset, is to call upon the faithful instinct within each of them to surpass this present concern: "Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life" (6:27).

Unlike the earlier dialogues in the Fourth Gospel, however, something very different happens at the close of this encounter with Jesus in the Eucharistic Discourse. Recall, when Jesus invites the Samaritan woman to receive the living water, "a spring of water gushing up to eternal

[1] There is no general agreement about where the Eucharistic Discourse begins in the sixth chapter. The setting of discourse, however, is clearly stated: "He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum" (6:59). Therefore, the present study will set as the beginning of the Eucharistic Discourse the verse where the reader is informed that the multitudes have arrived in Capernaum (cf. 6:24-25). Though Bultmann has suggested that the so-called 'eucharistic verses' (6:51b-58) were the later work of an ecclesiastical redactor (Rudolph K. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, trans. George R. Beasley-Murray, Rupert W.N. Hoare, and John K. Riches [Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1971], p. 219), every member of the Johannine literature seminar convened by the Society of New Testament Studies "agreed that these verses are an integral part of the chapter" (Johannes Beutler, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, trans. Michael Tait [Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2017], p. 181; cf. R. Alan Culpepper, ed., *Critical Readings of John 6* [New York, NY: Brill, 1997]). Hence, the present work will refer to this section as the Eucharistic Discourse (6:25-71), rather than the Bread of Life Discourse.

life" (4:14), she responds enthusiastically, demanding: "Lord, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty" (4:15). Much the same response is elicited from the multitudes in Galilee, when Jesus invites them to receive the bread of life: "Lord, give us this bread, always!" (6:34)[2] These promising starts to both dialogues lead to entirely different outcomes. When the dialogue closes with the Samaritan woman, she proceeds to proselytize the entire town (cf. 4:39). By contrast, the multitudes following Jesus in the Eucharistic Discourse by and large abandon him (cf. 6:66-68).[3] At the beginning of the Eucharistic Discourse, multitudes numbering in the thousands were following Jesus and speaking with him. After the discourse has finished, he is left speaking with the Twelve. Why was it that those who had been so firmly convinced of his messianic potential (cf. 6:14-15), now turn away from him? What was it that Jesus said during the Eucharistic Discourse to so offend their sensibilities that the multitudes would turn their backs on the one whom they had hoped would liberate them and bring about the kingdom of God?[4]

Dialogues: Paralleled Trajectories, Diverging Conclusions

Jesus and the Woman in Samaria (4:4-42)

- "**Lord, give me this water**, so that I may never be thirsty!" (4:15)
- Many Samaritans from that city believed in him *because of the woman's testimony* (4:39).

Jesus and the Multitudes in Galilee (6:25-71)

- "**Lord, give us this bread**, always!" (6:34)
- Many disciples turned back and no longer went about with him *because of this [hard teaching]* (6:66).

[2] The close parallels between these two chapters are not merely a literary novelty. Cyprian of Carthage in 253 C.E. wrote an epistle to his fellow bishop, Caecilius of Biltha, wherein he argues "against the practice of using water, rather than wine, in the eucharistic cup" (Margaret M. Daly-Denton, "Water in the Eucharistic Cup: A Feature of the Eucharist in Johannine Trajectories through Early Christianity," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 72 [2007]: p. 356). It has been speculated that a practice of water use in Eucharistic celebrations may have been practiced in parts of the early Church, legitimized in part by recourse to the strong connection between chapters 4 and 6 in the Fourth Gospel (also, cf. Margaret M. Daly-Denton, "Drinking the Water That Jesus Gives: A Feature of the Johannine Eucharist?," in *A Wandering Galilean: Essays in Honour of Seán Freyne*, ed. Zuleika Rodgers [Leiden, NL: Brill, 2009], pp. 345-365).

[3] The only other instance in the narrative where Jesus's followers abandon him wholesale is at his arrest before his trial and crucifixion. Even so, in the account of the arrest in the Fourth Gospel, it is Jesus who commands his followers to abandon him, to allow the arrest (18:11), so the abandonment of Jesus in that case is of a different character.

[4] Recall that earlier in chapter 6, the multitudes were ready to seize Jesus against his will and proclaim him king (cf. 6:14-15).

For many readers of this passage, answering this question appears to be fairly simple: the multitudes abandon Jesus because of his crude and visceral commands. The command to eat his flesh and drink his blood, using the rhetoric and language of cannibalism and vampirism, enshrines a depraved practice as an ideal.[5] His earnest assertion that his flesh is 'true food' and that his blood is 'true drink' leaves disturbingly little room for interpretation (6:55). Moreover, his earnest conviction that their fate on the last day (6:39) is contingent upon fulfilling this command appears to convince the multitudes to forgo the 'opportunity' that he has presented to them. The multitudes left because the language that Jesus was using was too grotesque to contemplate, let alone fulfill. Though there is certainly something to be said for this interpretation, what many readers miss when reading through this passage is that the scandal the Fourth Gospel presents to the reader goes beyond offensive rhetoric and language. Another vital element of the narrative should be accounted for in order to appreciate the reaction of the multitudes, an element that explains why this *particular* group of interlocutors would abandon Jesus so completely.

The Scandal of the Blood of Jesus

The reason that Jesus manages to *convert* an entire group of people after the dialogue with the woman in Samaria (4:39), and *repel* an entire group of people after the dialogue with the multitudes in Galilee (6:66), is actually rather clear, and it has to do with the identity of Jesus's interlocutors. Now, the identity of Jesus's interlocutors in the Eucharistic Discourse is signaled in a number of ways throughout the narrative: the multitudes believe at one point that Jesus is 'the prophet' like Moses (6:14), they refer to Jesus as 'Rabbi' (v. 25), they speak of their ancestors' journey in the wilderness from Egypt to the Promised Land (vv. 41, 52). That the multitudes to

[5] The switch in Jesus's language, from the verb φαγεῖν (to eat), to the more visceral verb τρώγειν (to chew), concretizes the language even further (cf. 6:54, 56, 57, 58).

whom Jesus speaks in the Eucharistic Discourse are *Jewish* is repeatedly stressed throughout the dialogue. Indeed, at the end of the discourse, right before the multitudes abandon him, as though to drive the point home one last time, the Fourth Gospel reads: "He said these things while he was teaching in the *synagogue* at Capernaum" (v. 59).

In case the identity of the interlocutors had yet to be apprehended by the reader, the Fourth Gospel reiterates their Jewish identity one last time at the close of the discourse. When a biblical text makes the very same point repeatedly over the course of an entire discourse, the reader is not meant to discard these narrative cues. The Fourth Gospel's repetition of the multitudes' Jewish identity invites the reader to consider the implications of Jesus's teaching in the Eucharistic Discourse in light of its Jewish audience. And given a Jewish audience for such a discourse, it is more than likely that the multitudes were intimately familiar with what the Torah specified concerning the consumption of blood: "If anyone, of the house of Israel or of the foreigners who reside among them, eats any blood, I will set my face against that person who eats blood, and will cut that person off from the people" (Lev 17:10). The contemporary reader would likely be most familiar with the first injunction of this kind delivered in Torah, at the close of the Flood Narrative (Gen 6:5-9:17). Even before the injunction against murder is delivered to humanity, the reader finds the Divine commanding: "You shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood" (Gen 9:4).[6] In fact, every single time the prohibition against the consumption of blood is delivered in Torah, it is delivered directly from the mouth of God.

[6] "Not even the Ten Commandments have such a far-reaching claim, for they were given exclusively to Israel. The Holiness Code, however, insists that there can be no 'viable human society' unless all humankind lives in accordance with this injunction against the consumption of blood" (Samuel E. Balentine, *Leviticus* [Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2002], pp. 146-147; cf. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22* [New York, NY: Doubleday, 2000], p. 1470). Notice how the universality of this regulation, set as it is in the narrative aftermath of the Flood, is concretized in Leviticus, where the command is explicitly directed towards both Israel and foreigners. For more instances of this repeated prohibition against the consumption of blood articulated throughout Torah, see Appendix A: The Prohibition and Consequences of Blood Consumption in Torah.

The dietary system instituted within Torah never equated blood and flesh: flesh was for food,[7] but blood was never allowed to be consumed under any circumstance.[8] The commandments in Torah are clear, that neither Jew nor Gentile should consume blood.[9] This proscription, reiterated throughout the Torah, cannot in any way be understood as ambiguous, or lacking in emphasis. Though the proscriptions on idolatry may appear more frequently within the Scriptures than do the proscriptions on the consumption of blood, both are some of the most oft repeated commands from the Divine. Violation of this norm can in no way be considered a slight infraction, the penalty of which results in the offender being 'כרת', 'cut off' from the people.[10]

Now, the manner in which one implements this punishment does leave room for some interpretation. In all of the three instances where this punishment is listed in the Torah (Lev 7:27;

[7] With certain notable exceptions from the biblical dietary regulations, nowadays spoken of under the rubric of *kosher* foods. Though the term is commonly employed within Rabbinic Judaism as a way of denominating lawfully consumed food, it should be noted that the word *kosher* only appears once within the Old Testament (Esther 8:5), and without any relevance to food or diet. The word itself, 'כָּשֵׁר', simply means 'fitting' or 'proper.' At least within the biblical context, it was not considered at all necessary to remain ritually clean when eating meat at home: "Whenever you desire you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your towns, according to the blessing that the LORD your God has given you; the unclean and the clean you may eat of it" (Deut 12:15; cf. Deut 12:22; 15:22).

[8] Even apart from the repeated *explicit* prohibitions on the consumption of blood recorded in Torah, horror at the consumption of blood is echoed throughout Scripture, in both narrative and prophetic works. For more passages within Scripture that reflect a revulsion towards blood consumption: 1 Sam 14:32-34; Ezek 33:25; Zech 9:7; Acts 15:20, 29.

[9] This appropriate Jewish concern within the Fourth Gospel's Eucharistic Discourse has generally not been engaged in scholarly circles. For instance, though C.H. Dodd does accept the eucharistic significance of the passage, given the beliefs of early Christians (Charles H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1953], p. 338), his work does not address the Torah-based prohibitions concerning blood consumption that may inform the reception of this teaching, nor does his work address how that could impact the interpretation of this passage. Among prominent Johannine scholars who have commented on this passage, neither Barrett, Beasley-Murray, Bruner, Dodd, nor Moloney incorporate the Torah prohibition on the consumption of blood in their exegesis of the Eucharistic Discourse: cf. Charles K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, 2nd ed. (London, UK: SPCK, 1978); George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, World Biblical Commentary, vol. 36, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999); Frederick D. Bruner, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2012); Dodd, *Fourth Gospel*; Francis J. Moloney, *Signs and Shadows: Reading John 5–12* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996); *The Gospel of John*, Sacra Pagina, vol. 4 (Collegeville, PA: Liturgical Press, 1998).

[10] Hebrew and Aramaic definitions are from: William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1971). It should be noted that the verb 'כרת' is used idiomatically in biblical Hebrew to reference the practice of making a covenant with the Divine, indicating that the violation of this commandment extends beyond simply communal expulsion, towards a covenantal expulsion. The violation cuts across both social and spiritual dimensions.

17:10, 14), the Hebrew verb underlying the consequence is the verb 'כרת', meaning 'to cut off.'[11] The punishment for violating this command, of consciously and intentionally consuming blood, could certainly be understood as a kind of excommunication from the community. Given the precarious situation for Jews living outside of their own communities throughout history, the consequences for violating this prohibition were not of an exclusively spiritual nature. The narrative framing of these punishments is perhaps even more illuminating, placed as they are in the Torah narrative when the Hebrews are purportedly travelling in the wilderness, in a hostile climate. Separation from the community in such a situation would necessarily entail being cut off from those resources required for survival. Without the support of the community in these dire circumstances, survival would have been unlikely.[12]

[11] Though Deuteronomy reiterates the Levitical injunctions against blood consumption, it is perhaps telling that the penalty of כרת for violating the sacred laws is absent in Deuteronomy, though often enforced in P: eating ritual meat while in a state of impurity (Lev 7:20-21), contaminating the sanctuary (Num 19:13, 20; Lev 22:3), non-circumcision (Gen 17:14), eating leavened bread during the Passover (Exod 12:15, 19), failing to observe the Day of Atonement (Lev 23:29), etc. Instead, Deuteronomy describes the fate of those who receive the death penalty for violating the sacred law using a different expression: "So you shall purge the evil from your midst" (cf. Deut 13:5; 17:7, 12; 19:13, 19; 21:9, 21; 22:21-22, 24; 24:7). This action on the part of the people is an extension of the Divine justice permeating the land, removing the miasma of defilement that would ultimately lead to its corruption: "The people themselves must purge the evil from their midst so that the malefactor 'shall never against commit such evil' and 'not act presumptuously again' (cf. Deut 13:12; 17:13)" (Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* [Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1972], p. 242). Tsevat, however, claims that there is a distinction between Deuteronomic and Priestly visions of retribution, arguing that that the כרת penalty was enforced exclusively by the Divine: "About the punishment of *kareth*… [and] the adjudication and the execution of the sentence: they are not the function of human tribunals but of God" (Matitiahu Tsevat, "Studies in the Book of Samuel: Interpretation of I Sam. 2:27-36, The Narrative of *kareth*," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 32 [1961]: pp. 196-197). This is perhaps best illustrated by those instances when the verb כרת is rendered in its active form, when delivered from the mouth of God, "I shall cut off," making the Divine agency unmistakable (cf. Lev 17:10; Ezek 14:8). This claim could be disputed, though, as there are instances where both the Divine is said to 'cut off' the offender, and the community carries out the punishment (cf. Lev 20:1-3).

[12] This concern about blood consumption associated with a diet consisting of meat should be contextualized: the ancient diet did not include as much meat as is typically consumed by the contemporary North American. The consumption of meat may well have been a luxury that was reserved solely for the rare special occasion. Over time, eating meat may have become associated with sanctity: "Except among the wealthy, the eating of meat was a relatively rare event nearly always associated with a celebration, and in early times it is likely that the slaughter of domestic animals was always a religious ceremony, a sacrifice" (Walter J. Houston, "Leviticus," in *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*, eds. James D. G. Dunn and John W. Rogerson (Grand Rapids, MI.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003], p. 115). Indeed, one notes that the verb 'to sacrifice' and 'to slaughter' in biblical Hebrew is the same: זבח. There remain faint traces of traditions in the Torah that attest to all animal slaughter being brought into the realm of the sacred (cf. Lev 17:1-7). Over time the ritual elements that remained in place for slaughtering an animal, such as the pouring out of blood, had to be purposely emptied of sacrificial content (cf. Deut 12:16): "This pouring out of the blood is definitely denied the character of a sacrifice (it is to be like water)" (Gerhard von Rad, *Deuteronomy: A*

The manner in which these punishments have been translated within Jewish communities also sheds light on prevailing attitudes towards blood consumption. Some interpretations of how to punish the person who consumes blood are rendered quite viscerally. For instance, the Greek translation of these passages leaves little to the imagination. In the Septuagint, the verb used in Lev 7:27 and Lev 17:10 to describe the fate of those who violate this norm is 'ἀπόλλυμι,' meaning 'to perish, die, vanish.' Later on in Lev 17:14, the punishment for 'every person who consumes' blood is translated as 'ἐξολεθρευθήσεται,'[13] meaning 'to be utterly destroyed, annihilated, exterminated.' According to this sense of the word, the punishment entails the complete destruction of the violator.[14] Though whichever of these two meanings is intended by the Torah is unclear, it appears as though the Septuagint captured the meaning that had been passed down through tradition. The Jewish repulsion of blood consumption does not diminish over time. Indeed, one sees that within the rabbinic tradition as collected in the Mishnah, the deliberate consumption of blood is listed as one of thirty-six offenses that renders one worthy of death.[15]

Commentary [Philadelphia, PN: The Westminster Press, 1966], p. 93). Note that since Deuteronomy claims that the blood is to be treated 'like water' (כמים), the poured-out blood no longer needs to be covered by dirt in order to avoid blood-guilt (cf. Lev 17:13). This Deuteronomic tradition effectively abrogates the Priestly stricture (or, more precisely, the Holiness Code regulation) that all blood must be reserved for the altar: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you for making atonement for your lives on the altar" (Lev 17:11; cf. 4Q267 col. iv:1). As Tigay points out, the passing away of this regulation made a certain degree of sociological sense: "This rule was practical when all Israelites lived near a sanctuary, as when they lived in the wilderness. Even after they settled in Canaan and scattered across the land, it would remain practical as long as it was legitimate to have sanctuaries throughout the land. But once a single sanctuary was chosen, the requirement would become impractical…" (Jeffery H. Tigay, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy* [Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996], p. 124) The Temple Scroll, however, sides with Leviticus, commanding that: "You must not slaughter any clean ox, sheep, or goat in any of your towns *within a three-day journey of My temple*. Instead you must sacrifice it in My temple, making of it a burnt offering or a peace offering. Then you shall eat and rejoice before Me in the place that I will choose to establish My name" (11QT 52:13-16). A radius of a three-day's journey from the Temple effectively includes most of Israel.

[13] The verb ἐξολεθρευθήσομαι, the future passive of ἐξολεθρεύω, 'to destroy utterly.' Greek definitions are from: Franco Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, eds. Madeleine Goh and Chad Schroeder (Boston, MA: Brill, 2015).

[14] It is clear that the LXX is not 'softening' this proscription as a result of some ostensible Hellenizing influence.

[15] For a list of all thirty-six offenses, go to the Fifth Division (Holy Things) of the Mishnah, section *Keritot* 1:1i (cf. Jacob Neusner, *The Mishnah: A New Translation* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988], p. 836).

With the penalty for violating this injunction weighing on the hearts and minds of every Jew listening to Jesus, their decision to abandon Jesus and return to their everyday lives appears perfectly sensible. Jesus uses language that seems not only contrary to, but in direct violation of, one of the most oft repeated proscriptions in Torah, a proscription whose violation would have severe consequences both spiritually and communally.[16] So, it was not simply the case that Jesus's language and rhetoric were distasteful.[17] Given the scandal of Jesus's words in light of the Torah, the multitudes abandon Jesus out of a desire to remain faithful to the Divine law and/or an unwillingness to endure punishment. Either of these reasons would make perfect sense of their actions. Why then would Jesus, who in this very dialogue claims to be sent from heaven (6:51), so brazenly challenge the Divine law by using the language of blood consumption in this discourse?[18]

[16] To be clear, the practice of contra-scriptural *halakhot* would not have been, in itself, shocking to Jewish ears. I accept as normative the definition provided by Jonathan Klawans: "'contra-scriptural *halakhot*:' Jewish legal rulings that appear to violate the plain sense of the Pentateuch" (Jonathan Klawans, "The Prohibition of Oaths and Contra-scriptural *Halakhot*: A Response to John P. Meier," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 6 [2008], p. 34). Klawans's article contains a fantastic treatment of this phenomenon across New Testament, Rabbinic, and Second Temple Jewish sources (pp. 36-43). Whenever Torah is engaged within Jewish literature, each Jewish group has come up with its own way of either intensifying or softening the regulations found therein. What would have been shocking, or what appears to have been unique in the manner of Jesus's juridical instruction, were Jesus's appeal to his own authority, in the present case as 'Son of Man' (6:27). Jesus's identification with this divine apocalyptic figure will figure prominently throughout the Eucharistic Discourse, and be discussed in chapter 3 of this work.

[17] Pardon the pun!

[18] In terms of the methodology I took in approaching this topic, beginning with the review of early Church exegesis and setting up the problem as starkly as I could, I owe a great deal to Roland van Noppen, whose work (cf. *Drinking the Blood of Jesus: A Theological Rationale from the Jewish Blood Prohibitions* [Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2015]) carefully and thoroughly sets out the problems that, to my mind, must be confronted as a result of a consideration of the Fourth Gospel's Old Testament background. The breadth of his work on this topic is inspiring, and I am tremendously grateful that someone had already tread this territory before, to help guide my studies. Whereas my work will focus more on the eucharistic significance of this tension, van Noppen ultimately argues that the image of "flesh for the life of the world" deployed in this sixth chapter of the Fourth Gospel is a reference to the primordial gift of flesh for the life of the world: "God through Moses gave bread to a perishing wilderness generation (cf. 6:49) but God through Noah gave flesh to the whole world" (p. 317). I find the Old Testament narrative of the wilderness journey a far more persuasive framework for the Eucharistic Discourse: for instance, the explicit mention of the figure of Moses in the Eucharistic Discourse (6:32), the reference to the ancestral journey through the wilderness (6:31), the identification of Jesus with the manna that is sent from heaven (6:32-33), and the 'grumbling' of those who follow Moses mirrored by the 'grumbling' of those who followed Jesus (6:41, 43, 61; cf. Num 11:1; 14:2, 27).

Chapter 1 - The *Silence* of Tradition: Misunderstanding Judaism

The search for answers, on how to reconcile Jesus's command to drink his blood in light of the Torah prohibitions on the consumption of blood, began with the history of exegesis, and how the Christian tradition has typically framed and received the Eucharistic Discourse. As the early Church began interpreting Scripture, reading the text figuratively quickly became its the preferred manner of exegesis, with typological and allegorical techniques used in abundance.[19] The consequences of this technique on the history of Christian exegesis is hard to exaggerate:

> The cultural appropriation of the OT-NT canon by Christian interpreters during half a millennium of patristic creativity represents the most important event in the history of Western Christianity during [its first] five centuries… Late Medieval and Byzantine scholarship only perpetuated the doctrinal legacy of biblical hermeneutics elaborated in ancient Christianity.[20]

Given this early preference for figurative readings of Scripture, how then were the earliest interpreters within the Catholic tradition prepared to confront this apparent tension resulting from Jesus's call to drink his blood, a tension arising in light of Torah?[21] What were the tools deployed by the early Catholic exegetes to aid the reader in approaching this passage of Scripture? Though hardly exhaustive, the present study considers the work of the three prominent Christian thinkers from the early Church, each of whom also composed full length works treating the entirety of the Fourth Gospel. By way of providing a synopsis of the Catholic tradition on the exegesis of this particular passage from the Fourth Gospel, I consider the homiletical works of these three early

[19] For a case study on the distinction in the early Church between allegory and typology (especially within the Western Christian tradition), cf. Pamela Bright, *The Book of Rules of Tyconius: Its Purpose and Inner Logic* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994); Maureen A. Tilley, "Understanding Augustine Misunderstanding Tyconius," Elizabeth A. Livingstone, ed., *Studia Patristica* vol. 27 (1993): pp. 405-408.
[20] Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis*, vol. I (Leiden, NL: Brill Publishers, 2004), pp. 191-192.
[21] The two questions van Noppen posed of these early exegetes were: (1) Has Jesus's language of blood consumption been perceived as problematic in terms of the prohibition on blood consumption? (2) Has Jesus's language of blood consumption been understood to provide a rationale for faith? (van Noppen, *Theological Rationale*, p. 12) I ultimately agree with van Noppen's assessment of the commentary tradition, that neither of these questions are adequately confronted by the early Church interpreters.

exegetes from the Christian tradition: Origen of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, and Augustine of Hippo. How did these eminent thinkers within the Christian tradition confront this passage of Scripture? How did they address this apparent tension within the Scriptures? As will be seen, each of these thinkers responds differently to the question: "Why do vast swathes of Jesus's Jewish interlocutors reject his teaching in the Eucharistic Discourse?"

Origen of Alexandria (c. AD 185 - 253)

Origen, Chrysostom, and Augustine all wrote collections of homilies covering the whole of the Fourth Gospel. The earliest of these tracts, from Origen, is regrettably only accessible today in fragmentary form.[22] However, upon reading his exegesis of this passage, it is clear that he does not specifically confront the issue raised by Jesus's rhetoric concerning the consumption of blood. Instead, he parallels partaking of the flesh and blood of Christ with the celebration of the Passover, which he ultimately allegorically relates to the sustenance that the believer receives from reading the Scriptures.[23] Origen's interpretation may seem rather far afield from the words of Jesus in this passage, but the dichotomy between the sense found in a literal reading versus the sense discerned from a theological reading is a typical feature of Origen's exegetical methodology:

> First, following the rules of Greek literary analysis, Origen argues that the narratives of Scripture are filled with impossibilities and incongruities. These stumbling blocks mean that the letter of the text cannot be followed and that a deeper meaning must be sought. Second, the deeper meaning is to be equated with Origen's theological view… Origen's fundamental distinction is between the letter and the spirit, between the narrative and obvious meaning and the theological meaning toward which it points.[24]

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[22] It appears as though Justin Martyr (AD 100-165) in his *First Apology* (c. 151) provides the earliest recorded instance of these verses from the Fourth Gospel (6:51-58) being interpreted, and the exegesis appears in the context of explaining the sacrament of the Eucharist: Justin Martyr, "The First Apology of Justin," in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, eds. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), p. 185. As should be expected from the title of this particular work, "The First Apology," Justin Martyr was not providing an exegesis on the Fourth Gospel, but a tract in defense of the faith.

[23] cf. Origen Adamantius, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, trans. Ronald E. Heine (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), pp. 276-279.

[24] Origen Adamantius, *An Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer, and Selected Works*, Rowan A. Greer, trans. (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1979), p. 31. Though in the *De Principiis* Origen will claim to follow a three-fold distinction in

Rather fortuitously, Origen has also left the modern world with a series of homilies on the book of Leviticus. Whether merited or not, Leviticus does not have the reputation of being a work of literature brimming with rhetorical eloquence. Origen's work endeavors to aid his congregation in approaching this text with an eye towards its significance in the community of the New Covenant. Ostensibly, this work would have provided Origen with many opportunities to specifically confront the repeated prohibitions on the consumption of blood, and how to reconcile those injunctions in Torah with the words of Jesus in the Eucharistic Discourse. However, given that Origen's work on Leviticus is a series of homilies, rather than a comprehensive commentary, the reader does not find discrete considerations of individual passages, but a rather wide-ranging series of spiritual exhortations geared at reading the text of Leviticus in light of the spiritual context of the New Covenant. Occasionally he will cite verses from the Eucharistic Discourse, but these citations are not intended to address any potential difficulties that would arise from Jesus using blood consumption language in his teaching. Rather, those verses that are quoted from the Eucharistic Discourse function within chains of biblical citations.

This was a fairly typical rhetorical practice of the Church Fathers, of connecting verse after verse from Scripture, each verse slowly illuminating the meaning of the former verse. These scriptural chains were not intended to contextualize each verse, but functioned along the premise that because Scripture speaks with the voice of the Divine, all of Scripture can be placed into conversation with one another. Considerations of genre, source, and historical criticism are not foregrounded: rather, the concern was to explain how each of the succeeding verses flowed from

exegetical methodology (Origen Adamantius, "De Principiis," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers: Fathers of the Third Century*, eds. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, A. Cleveland Coxe, trans. Frederick Crombie, vol. 4 [Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885], pp. 359ff.), most scholars have found it difficult to consistently discern this kind of tripartite exegesis in his work (cf. Maurice Wiles, "Origen as Biblical Scholar," in *Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1970], p. 468; Manlio Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*, trans. John Hughes [Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark, 1994], p. 43).

the former and into the next.[25] Consequently, there is considerable difficulty in explaining Origen's use of any particular verse without both explaining how all the former verses in the chain flowed into that verse, and also how all the latter verses from the chain flowed from it.

Fortunately, in Origen's seventh homily on Leviticus, he brought together two verses from the Fourth Gospel, and provided the reader with a kind of test case for how to understand his methodology: "Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you will not have life in you. For my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink" (6:53, 55). As may well be expected of Origen, the language of "eating" and "drinking" is itself a kind of veil, a literal sense of the passage that must be pierced through in order to appreciate Christ's true meaning. When Christ speaks of his flesh and blood as nourishment, the spiritual sense that the reader should discern is that Christ is *actually* speaking of is his every deed and word, which gives "refreshment to every kind of person."[26] Indeed, Origen understands the clean food of Christ's flesh very broadly, encompassing not only Christ's deeds and words, but also the deeds and words of those who follow him: Peter, Paul, and the apostles as foremost exemplars of clean food, and following them the disciples of the apostles: "any food is made clean for their neighbor in accordance with the number of their merits or the purity of their understanding."[27] Therefore, the good example of one's neighbor is likewise

[25] For instance, in discussing Christ's role as intercessor (Heb 9:24; 7:25) in the context of Leviticus ordinances about drinking (Lev 10:9), Origen points to Christ's claim that he "will not drink again from the fruit of this vine" (Mt 26:29), as an exposition on his own nature as 'the vine' (Jn 15:5), which is followed by a connection to Jesus's saying that "my blood is true drink and my flesh is true food" (Jn 6:55), which explains "the blood of the grape" in which he washes his robes (Gen 49:11): Origen Adamantius, *Origen: Homilies on Leviticus*, trans. Gary W. Barkley (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1990), pp. 134-135. As could well be expected, Origen moves on swiftly afterwards, connecting Gen 49:11 to yet another chain of scriptural quotations.

[26] Origen, *Leviticus*, p. 146.

[27] Origen, *Leviticus*, p. 146. It appears as though Origen may well have believed that the apostles themselves could have reiterated Jesus's words in the Eucharistic Discourse to some degree, as the apostles were those most proximate to Christ, and thus most capable of receiving Christ's deeds and words. After all, both Christ and the apostles are sent by God (6:29), entrusted with a message that brings life to the world (6:33), renouncing their own will in favor of the Divine will (6:38), etc. Origen's rhetorical collapse of Christ and the apostles falls apart, however, when approaching verses that make explicit claims to Christ's salvific content: "All who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day" (6:40). Origen does not go so far as to claim that the apostles are in any way causally associated in Christ's capacity to grant eternal life.

associated with Origen as source of pure food, of nourishment. The words and deeds of a good neighbor:

> furnish the hearers clean food as sheep, which is a clean animal… Every person, as we said, when he speaks to his neighbor and either he does him good or harms him by his words, the animal is made either clean or unclean by him. From these we are taught either to use the clean ones or to abstain from the unclean ones.[28]

In summation: within the context of a homily on Leviticus, which on the whole is a biblical text that displays a tremendous concern with purity, Origen highlights a passage that explicitly mentions the importance of purity: Lev 11:1. In order to explain this verse, Origen then proceeds to cite two verses from the Fourth Gospel, both of which have clear purity implications: John 6:53, 55. Origen's explanation fails to mention anything to do with purity, and instead explores how these passages can together inform our understanding of morality. What the reader should really discern from these two passages is the value of the nourishment humanity draws from exemplarily moral conduct and speech.

It should be kept in mind that the bright line that exists for the modern reader between moral and ritual purity concerns did not exist for Origen.[29] Therefore, it is not entirely accurate to conclude that Origen precludes purity concerns in his analysis of these passages, or even that purity concerns should only be read in light of moral concerns. Rather, for Origen, moral and purity concerns are indistinguishable. As a result, Origen's explanation appears to the modern reader to be quite beside the point, failing to recognize the pivotal cultural concern for purity in Leviticus, a concern that has clear ramifications in both of these passages. The reader may well have desired Origen to address this concern, a concern that legitimately arises from the verses' literal sense: why has the Fourth Gospel depicted Christ using this particular language? Why use language that

[28] Origen, *Leviticus*, p. 147.
[29] For a thorough yet succinct treatment of the differences between ritual and moral purity in *Tanakh*: Jonathan Klawans, "Concepts of Purity in the Bible," in *The Jewish Study Bible*, eds. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 1998-2005.

would have been guaranteed to offend the sensibilities of a Jewish audience?[30] Origen anticipates these objections, warning the reader that to dwell on the literal sense of Scripture is an obstacle to understanding. Dwelling on the literal sense alone, apart from its intended spiritual sense, is to be cut off from the Gospel, "for even in the Gospels it is 'the letter' that 'kills'" (cf. 2 Cor 3:6).[31] By expanding on Paul's concern that his communities not read the text of the Torah literally, Origen likewise exhorts his Christian readers not read the text of the Gospels literally either. Divine legislation, if tied to the literal sense, is worthy neither of obedience nor reverence:

> But if we stand by the letter, and according to that we accept what is seen by the Jews or the multitude as the written law, I would be ashamed to say and to confess that God gave such laws.[32]

This is a fascinating confession on Origen's part. By admitting that the Romans, Athenians, and Lacedemonians have much more elegant and reasonable laws, if we were to be tied solely to the literal sense of a text,[33] then he is tacitly accepting that the literal sense of Jesus's words in this passage is wanting in some way. And if the literal sense of Jesus's words is wanting, then it appears as though Origen legitimizes (albeit implicitly, and only to a degree) the Jewish interlocutors' rejection of Jesus's rhetoric. Even though Origen concedes that there is something objectionable in the literal sense of Jesus's words, nowhere is he explicit about what exactly the problem is. By conceding that the Jews were correct in rejecting the literal sense of Jesus's words, Origen's judgment of the Jewish multitudes fairs far better in the eyes of history than do some of the later thinkers.[34]

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[30] Indeed, this is precisely the concern that I wish to highlight as part of my project of retrieving this Gospel passage within a new, non-antisemitic context.
[31] Origen, *Leviticus*, p. 146.
[32] Origen, *Leviticus*, p. 147.
[33] Origen, *Leviticus*, p. 147.
[34] Just to be clear, Origen never addresses the repeated prohibitions on the consumption of blood in Leviticus. In Origen's homilies on Leviticus, Jesus's blood is consistently tied either to sacrificial imagery or Passover imagery. For instance, Jesus's blood is said to be "sprinkled on the celestial altar which is in heaven, where 'the church of the firstborn is' (Col 1:20)" (cf. Origen, *Leviticus*, p. 34). Yes, 'sprinkling blood' is certainly terminology that would be associated with sacrificial imagery. But nowhere in the Eucharistic Discourse is Jesus's blood spoken of as bring

John Chrysostom (c. AD 347 - 407)

Though Origen's writings on the Fourth Gospel are extant only in fragmentary form, Chrysostom's homilies on the Fourth Gospel have all been preserved in a single work. Of the eighty-eight homilies contained therein, four homilies cover the Eucharistic Discourse.[35] His conclusion as to why Jesus would voice such a provocative and inflammatory command, as to eat his flesh and drink his blood, is because of the stunted spiritual development of the Jews, because of their spiritual sluggishness. For Chrysostom, the desires of the multitudes are plain to see: they resented him because "He did not give them the table which they desired,"[36] and seemed instead intent on drawing them towards 'objectionable' spiritual truths. Now, Chrysostom explicitly casts this exchange between Jesus and the multitudes in polemical terms. He concedes to the reader that Jesus's words were at times goading and provocative,[37] but Chrysostom insists that Jesus's rhetoric was only ever deployed with the intent to instruct.[38]

Chrysostom does not see the crowd's objection to Jesus's teaching arising from any tension with the Torah's proscription on the consumption of blood. Indeed, Chrysostom never brings up

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'sprinkled' on any altar, or on people. No altar is mentioned at all! And the verb 'sprinkle' is not used, either. Rather, Jesus's blood is to be *consumed*. There is no warrant to connect the blood in the Eucharistic Discourse to sacrificial language under this rubric.

[35] Though Chrysostom has traditionally been classed as operating within the Antiochene tradition of exegesis, where it has been classically claimed that exegesis is grounded on the literal sense of the text rather than on allegory (for the distinction between the literal sense and spiritual sense of Scripture more broadly, see: Karl Froehlich, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church* [Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980], p. xxi-xxiii.), the sharp distinctions that have typically been drawn between Alexandrian and Antiochene schools of exegesis have over time become somewhat blurred, if not entirely abandoned (cf. Hieromonk Patapios, "The Alexandrian and the Antiochene Methods of Exegesis: Towards a Reconsideration," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 44, no. 1 [1999]: pp. 187-98; Frances M. Young, "Language and Reference," in *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* [New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1997], pp. 119-216.

[36] John Chrysostom, *Commentary on Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist, Homilies 1-47*, trans. Sister Thomas Aquinas Goggin, The Fathers of the Church Series, vol. 33 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1969), p. 462.

[37] "With good reason at this point someone might inquire in perplexity whether that was a good time for Him to say these words, which were not then constructive or profitable, but rather were even injurious to what had already been built up" (p. 465-466).

[38] "Kindness and gentleness are not helpful on all occasions, but there is a time when the teacher has need of greater severity. When the pupil is lazy and phlegmatic, it is necessary to use a goad to prod such great sluggishness" (Chrysostom, *Homilies*, p. 442).

these prohibitions on the consumption of blood at all.[39] According to Chrysostom, their restlessness was a direct result of their perverse worldliness.[40] Chrysostom further buttresses his claims concerning the 'Jewish' worldliness of the multitudes by pointing to their demand that Jesus perform some sign so as to legitimize his claims. When the multitudes mention the miracle of manna in the wilderness (6:30-31) in relation to this 'test,' Chrysostom interprets this as the crowd demonstrating their disordered attachment to Moses: "[The Jews] did not yet think Him greater than Moses, but still had a higher opinion of the latter."[41] For Chrysostom, the Jewish multitudes were hard of heart, lacking any spiritual discernment, and thoroughly subjugated by their own worldly appetites.[42] It would seem that for the reader to even raise the problematic implications of Jesus's language of blood consumption is to fall into the same spiritual blindness of 'the Jews.'

According to Chrysostom, the lusts of this world had corrupted the capacity of the Jews to discern the divinity of Christ. To be a believer in Christ, one is called upon to understand matters spiritually. Thus, the 'carnal' Jews are unable to apprehend both their error and Christ's divinity.[43] Here, one need not make too strict a distinction between the Antiochene and Alexandrian traditions of exegesis. The sensibilities of both traditions of exegesis converge on this point, that genuine exegesis penetrates to a 'deeper' inward 'spiritual reality.' It appears as though Chrysostom, in

[39] Chrysostom, *Homilies*, p. 466: "The scandal, then, consisted in their [the Jews'] perversity, not in the doubtful meaning of His words."
[40] "[The Jews] sought greedily to eat to satiety, and were altogether given to the things of this world, and did not have a spiritual outlook" (Chrysostom, *Homilies*, p. 449).
[41] Chrysostom, *Homilies*, p. 451.
[42] Admittedly, even amongst Patristic writers Chrysostom is particularly noteworthy for his virulent anti-Semitism. His contention that 'the Jews' have fallen into carnality and 'hardness of heart' is a theme that characterizes much of his work; cf. John Chrysostom, *Discourses Against Judaizing Christians*, trans. Paul W. Harkins, The Fathers of the Church Series, vol. 68 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1999), p. 8: "But what is the source of this hardness [on the part of the Jews]? It comes from gluttony and drunkenness. Who say so? Moses himself. 'Israel ate and was filled and the darling grew fat and frisky.' … Just so the Jewish people were driven by their drunkenness and plumpness to the ultimate evil; they kicked about, they failed to accept the yoke of Christ…"
[43] Chrysostom, *Homilies*, p. 478: "And what is meant by understanding [His words] 'carnally'? It is to look merely at the literal sense and not to penetrate the meaning more deeply. This is indeed 'carnally,' for one ought not to come to a conclusion in this way from what lies before his eyes, but must penetrate beneath all mysteries with inward eyes. This, in truth, is 'spiritually.'"

interpreting this passage, reiterates the interpretative framework of Origen, wherein he posits that Jewish 'literalism' mistakenly ignores the Scripture's 'spiritual' meaning. As a result, the Jews cannot perceive the dawning realization of the 'spiritual Israel,' the Church, being constituted in their midst by the Messiah.

Therefore, when Chrysostom comes to the task of interpreting the command of Christ to drink his blood, Chrysostom employs a typological interpretation in order to align the blood of the eucharistic banquet to a multitude of types from the Old Testament: the blood that was painted upon the lintels and doorframes (Exod 12:7), or the blood that was sprinkled on the altar: "This blood was formerly foreshadowed continually in altars, in sacrifices of the Law."[44] These uses of the blood typologically point to its fulfillment in the message of Jesus Christ and his salvific role: "This blood is the salvation of our souls; by it the soul is cleansed."[45] The sacrificial role that blood played within the Old Testament effected reconciliation with the Divine to some degree. In the New Testament, Christ's blood assumes that role *par excellence*. Therefore, Chrysostom's interpretation ignores any ostensible tension between Christ's command to drink his blood and the Torah prohibitions against the consumption of blood because of these typological considerations, which release readers from any claims that the Torah blood prohibitions may have on them.[46]

[44] Chrysostom, *Homilies*, p. 471. For verses referencing to the sprinkling of blood within a sacrificial context: Exod 24:6, 8; Lev 1:5, 11; 3:2, 8, 13; 5:9; 7:2, 14; 8:19, 24, 30; 9:12, 18; 14:7, 51; 16:14-15, 19; 17:6; Num 19:4; Ezek 43:18; Heb 9:13, 21; 11:28; 12:24; 1 Pet 1:2.

[45] Chrysostom devotes considerable time to describing superlative benefits available to the one who will drink the blood of Christ: "This blood makes the seal of our King bright in us; it produces an inconceivable beauty; it does not permit the nobility of the soul to become corrupt, since it refreshes and nourishes it without ceasing… This Blood, when worthily received, drives away demons and puts them at a distance from us, and even summons to us angels and the Lord of angels. Where they see the Blood of the Lord, demons flee, while angels gather. This blood poured out in abundance, has washed the whole world clean" (p. 469). Though Chrysostom certainly expresses a great deal of devotion to the eucharistic encounter, he fails to address the tension between the Torah prohibition and Jesus's command to drink his blood.

[46] Or, indeed, releases them from hearkening to Moses, full stop.

Augustine of Hippo (AD 354 - 430)

Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* is his most comprehensive account on how to properly conduct an exegesis of Scripture. One of the fundamental principles Augustine advances, which grounds his hermeneutical engagement with Scripture, is that text communicates meaning through two different elements: 'signs' and 'things.'[47] The interpreter, when confronted by a text, must discern between the two. For Augustine, it is a "wretched slavery of the spirit, treating signs as things,"[48] that is, to forgo the spiritual significance *towards which* the text points, in favor of the brittle concreteness of the text *as such*. This kind of slavery, of spiritual blindness, is precisely what Augustine believes is the state of the vast majority of the Jews. Because the Jews believed "that by such a slavery they were pleasing the one God of the universe,"[49] they could not tolerate the Gospel message which was meant to reveal the true significance of the signs under which they labored. The Jews refused to acknowledge that Moses and his law were but instructors, pointing the way to the fulfilment of promises in the Messiah.[50]

Augustine carries this same stance towards the Jews with him in another of his works, the *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, when treating the Eucharistic Discourse. Augustine claims that the Jews are unable to discern the spiritual message underlying Jesus's command to eat his flesh and drink his blood (6:54-56), claiming that the Jews "had weak jaws of the heart; they were deaf

[47] Frederick van Fleteren, "Principles of Augustine's Hermeneutic: An Overview," in *Augustine: Biblical Exegete*, eds. Frederick van Fleteren and Joseph C. Schnaubelt (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2001), pp. 1-22; David Dawson, "Sign Theory, Allegorical Reading, and the Motions of the Soul in *De doctrina christiana*," in *De doctrina christiana: A Classic of Western Culture*, eds. Duane W. H. Arnold and Pamela Bright (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), pp. 123-135.
[48] Aurelius Augustine, *Teaching Christianity: De Doctrina Christiana*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1996), p. 180.
[49] Augustine, *De Doctrina*, p. 180.
[50] The word used by Augustine in this passage, 'pedagogue,' is likely referencing Gal 3:24: "Therefore the law was our *pedagogue* until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith."

with open ears; they saw and stood blind."[51] However, Augustine is at variance with Chrysostom on the origin of this blindness. Whereas Chrysostom claimed that the Jews were unable to receive Christ's words because they had become morally perverse, for Augustine the Jewish aversion arose from their fidelity to an interpretative framework that had been rendered obsolete: "The Father draws to the Son those who believe in the Son for the reason that they think that he has God as his Father."[52] According to Augustine, because the Jews had not yet accepted Christ's divinity, Jesus's Jewish interlocutors lacked the discernment capable of understanding his message, a failure that fundamentally precluded them from any genuine relationship with Jesus. Indeed, the foundation for Augustine's exegesis in this passage rests on the believer recognizing the divinity of the Son. For instance, when explaining this particular verse within the Eucharistic Discourse, that 'they shall all be taught by God' (6:45), Augustine points out that one begins by seeking 'what Christ is':

> The Son spoke, but the Father taught. I, since I am a man, whom do I teach? Whom, brothers, but him who has listened to my word? If I, since I am a man, teach him who listens to my word, the Father, too, teaches that man who listens to his Word. Seek what Christ is and you will find his Word. "In the beginning was the Word." Not, 'in the beginning God *made* the Word,' as "in the beginning God made heaven and earth." See that he is not a creature.[53]

For Augustine, one of the principles for discerning the significance of this passage is the recognition of the Son's divinity.

Augustine also proposes that in order to receive the Eucharistic Discourse in the Fourth Gospel, one should likewise explore its sacramentality. The sacramental nature of the Eucharist is itself differentiated between that which is visible, the apprehension of the sacrament's visible reality, the *sacramentum*, and the "efficacy of the sacrament," the invisible spiritual fulfillment

[51] Aurelius Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John, 11-27*, trans. John W. Rettig (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), p. 259.
[52] Augustine, *Tractates*, p. 263.
[53] Augustine, *Tractates*, p. 266.

brought about within those who consume the sacrament in a spirit of faith, the *virtus sacramenti*.[54] Each individual believer instantiates this sacramental differentiation, a sacramental reality lived out in the Catholic Church as a whole, who likewise *drinks* Christ, is sustained by Christ.[55]

It is by this ingestion, spoken of in the Eucharistic Discourse, that the believer takes on the spirit of Christ and becomes incorporated into the Body of Christ. And just as the body cannot live apart from the vivifying spirit, so the spirit that animates the body is likened by Augustine to the Spirit of Christ that animates the Body of Christ.[56] One's belief is then realized by eating or drinking the sign, thereby consummating, as it were, the spiritual promises that Christ made:

> But as pertains to the efficacy of the sacrament, not as pertains to the visible sacrament: he who eats within, not without; who eats with his heart, not he who crushes with his teeth.[57]

Therefore, it is the discernment of Christ's presence within the Eucharistic encounter that legitimizes Jesus's words. For Augustine, engaging the Eucharistic Discourse is not merely a hermeneutical enterprise. The ritual and liturgical dimension of the believer within the ecclesial community grounds the exegesis of this passage, providing the foundation for this new hermeneutical framework.[58]

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[54] Augustine, *Tractates*, p. 268: "For we, too, today receive visible food; but the sacrament is one thing, the efficacy of the sacrament another." The sustained focus that Augustine brings to this sacramental realization of the Eucharist as a Divine act also works into his critique of Donatist views on sacramentality, in particular, their view that it is the *minister's* sanctity that functionally determines the sanctity of the Eucharist.

[55] On this ecclesial dimension of sacramental efficacy, Augustine relates the distinction between physical and spiritual ingestion to Paul's description of the Hebrews who, while wandering in the wilderness after the Exodus, 'spiritually ate and drank' the food provided to them by God: "And all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ" (1 Cor 10:3-4). Note how Paul does not claim that they drank *of* Christ, but that they drank *from* Christ, the spiritual rock (ἐκ πνευματικῆς πέτρας).

[56] cf. Augustine, *Tractates*, p. 271.

[57] Augustine, *Tractates*, p. 270. It is difficult to read Augustine here as proposing a systematic sacramentality, as he occasionally made claims of the sort: "Why do you make ready your teeth and stomach? Believe, and you have eaten" (p. 249).

[58] Just as the former thinkers, Augustine never raises any concerns about the language of blood consumption, all of which is received figuratively.

Conclusion of Traditional Exegesis

Having examined the way in which three prominent voices from the tradition have spoken on the blood of Christ, some elementary observations can be made. From Origen, it appears as though the blood references in the Fourth Gospel's Eucharistic Discourse have more to do with Passover than anything else, claiming that the Jewish interlocutors were tied to a literalism that fails to appreciate the spiritual sense of Jesus's language. As a result, they were unable to receive Christ's message. From Chrysostom, those who receive the Eucharist are doing so as an expression of faith in the significance of the blood of Christ, which itself is typologically associated with Old Testament uses of blood within its sacrificial context. Going on to argue that having become disordered in their attachment to Moses, Chrysostom claims that the Jewish people were so morally perverse that they willfully turned away from Christ's message. From Augustine, a further distinction was made between the visible sacrament and its efficacy, which is rendered spiritually to the believing participant in the Eucharist. For Augustine, the tension in the Eucharistic Discourse is both a hermeneutical and liturgical one, with the Jewish interlocutors unable to release themselves from their defunct frameworks, and consequently unable to appreciate or recognize God's invitation.

The Testimony of Moses

By the lights of these interpreters, the blood of Christ, as revealed within the New Testament, surpasses the sacrificial use of blood that had operated within the Old Testament economy of covenantal reconciliation.[59] Any concerns that a reader would have from attending to the blood proscriptions in Torah would be characterized as 'Jewish' and 'carnal' receptions of this

[59] For Augustine and Chrysostom in particular on the Mosaic Law as a form of compromise until the fulfillment of the Divine's expectations in the person of Christ: cf. Stephen D. Benin, "Sacrifice as Education in Augustine and Chrysostom," *Church History*, vol. 52 (1983): pp. 7-20.

passage, and consequently ignored. All of the attendant benefits of the sacrifices conducted within the Old Covenant, under the Mosaic Law, and all of the uses of blood within that system, are transferred into the blood of Christ, effecting a transfer of reconciliation within the framework of the New Covenant. In order to make this point, the traditional interpreters have cast the Jewish crowds as irrevocably worldly, their spiritual development stunted by clinging to an obsolete model of covenantal fidelity.[60] These prominent figures from Christian tradition, at least on this point, appear to claim that Christ's demand that the believer drink his blood is impossible for the literal minded Jews to fathom because of their unwillingness to perceive the spiritual intention of his words.[61] However, is it truly wise to ground our exegetical engagement of these Eucharistic verses upon a conviction that 'the Jews' were (are?) spiritually blind? Why this deafening silence in the scholarly literature? Since Jesus has been claiming that his teachings relied on the testimony of Moses (5:46), why is it that he now uses rhetoric and language at variance with that same testimony from Torah?

Within the Fourth Gospel the intimacy between Jesus and his Father is continually reiterated.[62] This surpassing intimacy does not appear to provide much of a context for interpreting Jesus's behavior as rebellious or petulant. However, perhaps Jesus was testing the multitudes, to determine who were his true disciples, in order to see who *truly* had faith in him? Jesus delivers a command that is so exceedingly offensive that only his most devoted disciples would continue

[60] Though the exegesis applies particularly to the passage in John 6, to those Jewish crowds from the region of Galilee, the interpreters generally feel comfortable extrapolating this same 'spiritual blindness' to Jews in general.
[61] The claim that Jewish tradition is devoid or incapable of 'spiritual' interpretations of their holy texts would be laughably absurd if it were not so unconscionably anti-Jewish. Contemporary with the composition of the Fourth Gospel were communities of Jews who labored extensively on the re-contextualization of their ancestral narratives, in the attempt to discern the spiritual reality underlying these ancient documents. Relative to the composition of the Fourth Gospel, this spiritualizing Jewish impulse in biblical interpretation is perhaps most prominently demonstrated in the *Pesharim* tradition of the Dead Sea Scrolls: cf. Shani Berrin, "Qumran Pesharim," in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran*, ed. Matthias Henze (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2005), pp. 110-133.
[62] For instance, see Jn 17, an entire chapter devoted to a prayer Jesus directs towards the Father.

following him. This proposal has promise (at least to the degree that it echoes Chrysostom), but it is far from satisfactory as a solution. If Jesus really were behaving in such a way, who would have successfully passed this test of fidelity? Within Torah, all of the prohibitions on the consumption of blood are delivered directly from the mouth of the Divine.[63] The Divine delivered these laws to the chosen people in order to clarify how it is they were expected to act within this covenantal relationship, as norms for conduct. Though the people who lived within the covenant had all too often failed to fully abide by the covenant's precepts, those precepts were always understood to be the normative manner of displaying one's fidelity within the covenantal community. It would seem as though the only people who would have successfully passed this 'test,' who would have continued following Jesus after the discourse, were those who were either ignorant of these norms, or those who were unfaithful to these norms.

However, given the Fourth Gospel's depiction of Jesus as ardently faithful to the Father, of earnestly speaking and acting through the Divine will (6:38), it would be incoherent for that same Gospel to depict Jesus as desiring to call as disciples only those who were unfaithful to the Divine word. As the Eucharistic Discourse is addressed to Jews in the narrative, while it is at least conceivable (though improbably unlikely) that some small number may have been ignorant of the proscription on blood consumption, it would be inconceivable that everyone in the entire crowd was ignorant of this proscription. Given the scandal that would arise from Jesus's language involving blood consumption, a scandal that arises particularly from Jewish concerns, and/or the multitudes' desire to avoid the punishment entailed in anything to do with blood consumption, it is no surprise that in the narrative presented by the Fourth Gospel it is in *this* episode that so many

[63] For a list of the proscriptions on blood consumption in Torah, see Appendix A: The Prohibition & Consequences of Blood Consumption.

of those who are following Jesus, who were originally convinced of his messianic potential, ultimately abandon him.

A surface reading of this passage, however, gives very few interpretative options, and those options presented by traditional exegesis are all rather unpalatable, as well.[64] How is the reader to discern a palatable interpretation of this passage, where the surface reading is so palpably repellent, a scandal that is apparently written into the narrative itself given the response of the Jewish interlocutors? When Jesus commands the multitudes to eat his flesh (6:51), his words elicit a dispute amongst the Jewish multitudes (6:52), who argue about how to interpret such a command. However, even though Jesus is witness to the conflict and dispute that this command elicits, rather than addressing their worries or mollifying their concerns, Jesus "takes back none of his words, but rather increases the offence."[65] He commands the crowds to "drink my blood" (6:53-56), doing so four times, in as many verses, even though "drinking of blood was looked on as an horrendous thing forbidden by God's law."[66]

Commentators have acknowledged that Jesus's words at the very least *appear* to reference behavior that would be contemptible as a norm. Even if the reader attempts to reconcile the tension in the narrative by casting Jesus's language as symbolic or metaphorical,[67] van Noppen points out that the effect Jesus's words have on the multitudes would seem to conflict with the Fourth Gospel's explicitly stated aim of encouraging faith in Jesus: "These are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God" (20:31).[68] So even if one were to reconcile the tension through a figurative reading, how would this passage function given the

[64] My apologies for maintaining this pun-ridden gustatory meta-framing.
[65] Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, vol. 2, trans. Cecily Hastings (New York, NY: Seabury Press, 1980), p. 61.
[66] Brown, *John I-XII*, p. 284.
[67] Though, it bears repeating that the figurative interpretations presented by the early Church do not address or reconcile the tension.
[68] van Noppen, *Theological Rationale*, p. 82.

Fourth Gospel's stated aims? Would not this episode in the life of Jesus demonstrate the precise *opposite* of this intention to encourage faith in Jesus? After all, at the end of the Eucharistic Discourse, the reader is told that "because of this [hard teaching] many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him" (6:66).

Jesus's earnest use of visceral language is not the only problem the reader faces when attempting to discern a palatable interpretation for this passage.[69] Jesus compounds the offense of these statements by tying their fulfilment to one's salvation (6:53, 56-59), as well as one's eschatological destiny (6:54). The manner in which greater and greater weight is invested in these commands over the course of the dialogue, with less and less room for metaphorical reception, makes the prospect of trying to 'write them off' more and more difficult. Yet how is the reader to make sense of Jesus's words in the Eucharistic Discourse given this tension in the narrative?

The Function of the Blood

In order to arrive at a theological rationale for this "difficult teaching" (6:60), in order to receive the command to eat Jesus's flesh and drink his blood, one should begin by exploring the function of these words within the Eucharistic Discourse. When Jesus commands the multitudes (and by extension, us) to drink his blood, there are two interconnected questions that must be addressed: (1) How can one legitimize the language in Jesus's command to drink his blood given the Torah's proscription on blood consumption? (2) Does Jesus's command to drink his blood provide a reason for believing in him, or legitimize his claims to divinity? At least from a survey of the commentators within the Christian tradition, neither of these concerns have been satisfactorily addressed. Though it is common enough for scholars to note that the proscription on

[69] Not only speaking in terms of 'chewing/gnawing' his flesh (from the verb τρώγω, in Jn 6:54-58 [4x]), but also reiterating his earnestness about what he is claiming throughout his discourse (for instance, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, Jn 6:43; or, ἡ σάρξ μου ἀληθής ἐστι βρῶσις, καὶ τὸ αἷμά μου ἀληθής ἐστι πόσις, Jn 6:55).

the consumption of blood would certainly have caused offense to the Jewish multitudes,[70] as of yet it does not appear as though the legitimacy of Jesus's command to drink his blood is questioned on the basis of the Torah's proscription on blood consumption. To put it bluntly, before anything else can be resolved, the commentator of this passage is confronted with language that obviously violates an extremely important Torah principle, and the Fourth Gospel presents its fulfillment as a condition for eternal life.

Within the Eucharistic Discourse, Jesus's command to drink his blood is elicited by the crowd's dispute about eating his flesh (6:52-53). The command to drink his blood, then, appears as part of the Fourth Gospel's program of making the passage more visceral, and indeed, a more objectionable addition to his discourse is hard to imagine. To what end did the Fourth Gospel add this command as part of the dialogue, a teaching that would certainly have offended the crowds? What purpose is served by this addition to the discourse? Indeed, why is the trajectory of this dialogue towards increased offense? Could not the dialogue have done well enough without this peculiarly offensive content? Given the exceedingly objectionable nature of the command to drink Jesus's blood, the command to eat his flesh did not, of itself, fully convey the point the Fourth Gospel intended to make.

As improbable as it may seem, it appears as though the command to drink Jesus's blood was added in the Fourth Gospel in order to *clarify*. After all, blood has a unique role in the Old Testament, and is not treated in the same manner as flesh.[71] Blood alone represents the life of a

[70] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel of John I-XII* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1966), p. 284; Bultmann, *John*, p. 235, n. 7; Scott M. Lewis, "The Gospel according to John," in *New Collegeville Bible Commentary: New Testament*, ed. Daniel Durken (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), p. 330; Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1995), p. 334, n. 131.

[71] It should be kept in mind that the proscription on the consumption of blood would not have been considered a relic from the past, an injunction that had long since been put out of mind. Blood consumption prohibitions are well sourced in Second Temple Jewish literature; see Appendix B: The Consumption of Blood in Second Temple Jewish Literature. Indeed, *Jubilees* classes the consumption of blood as the sin that warrants the destruction of the Gentiles at any time by divine wrath, a claim that is used rhetorically throughout the text to mandate that Jews maintain a strict separation

being, and on that ground alone is its consumption prohibited.[72] If Jesus is a figure in continuity with the Old Testament, if Jesus is not intending to overthrow and abolish the Old Testament, if Jesus is not testing the loyalty of his disciples, what does the Fourth Gospel intend by having Jesus voice such a provocative command? In order to begin answering this question, the manner in which the Fourth Gospel uses the Old Testament to frame and contextualize the Eucharistic Discourse should be explored.

from Gentiles at all times (cf. Todd R. Hanneken, "The Sin of the Gentiles: The Prohibition of eating Blood in the Book of *Jubilees*," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 46 [2015]: pp. 1-27).

[72] Gen 9:3-4; Lev 7:26-27; 17:13; esp. Deut 12:21-25, where this distinction in treatment between flesh and blood is reiterated numerous times in the span of a few verses.

Chapter 2 - The *Text* of the Fourth Gospel: Into the Wilderness

Intertextuality in the Fourth Gospel: A Unique Idiom

Each of the four Gospels has its own unique manner of using the Old Testament.[75] The focus of this study will be on the Fourth Gospel's particular manner of formulating intertextual references, and in the process highlight its extensive use of wilderness and prophetic imagery. The Fourth Gospel's distinctive method of intertextuality is not only a difference in the *manner* of communicating the Christian message. This unique idiom also communicates its own *understanding* of that message. Though certainly still within the stream of Christian tradition, the distinctiveness of the Fourth Gospel's literary achievement, and the originality of its message, should be classed alongside Paul of Tarsus. [76]

Table 1: Lexical Frequency List for the Gospels

	Fourth Gospel	*Matthew*	*Mark*	*Luke*
believe	98	11	14	9
world	78	8	3	3
love	57	17	9	18
know	141	44	33	53
truly[73]	50	31	14	6
life	36	7	4	5
truth	55	6	6	8
witness	47	4	6	5
ask	28	4	3	15
light[74]	23	7	1	7
father	136	63	18	56
glory	42	11	4	22
remain	40	3	2	7

[73] The Fourth Gospel uses the word 'truly,' ἀμήν, more than do the Synoptics, but not by an exceptionally large margin. What makes the Fourth Gospel's use of the word ἀμήν notable is that even though ἀμήν is used in much the same way as it is in the Synoptics ("ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν"), in the Fourth Gospel ἀμήν only ever appears as a word-pair: "*Truly*, *truly*, I say to you all…" Both biblical (Num 5:22; Ps 41:13; 72:19; 89:52; Neh 8:6; Tob 8:8 [GII recension, Codex Sinaiticus]) and extra-biblical (1QS col. i:20; ii:10, 18; 4Q286 frag. 7 col. i:7; col. ii:1; 4Q287 col. i:1; 4Q289 frag. 1:2; frag. 2:4; 4Q504 col. vii:2 [?]; col vii:9 [?]; 4Q511 frag. 63 col. iv:2) sources attest to this practice of word-pairing ἀμήν. Admittedly, some of the purported instances of word-pairing אמן from the Dead Sea Scrolls are conjectural. Because the word-pairing of אמן in the Dead Sea Scrolls is commonly associated with liturgical texts, some of the text fragments that cut off with only a single אמן could well have been instances of word-pairing: "In the scrolls, the bifold 'Amen, Amen' is indicative of communal prayers" (Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg, and Edward M. Cook, trans., *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* [New York, NY: HarperOne, 2005], p. 207). Interestingly in the Septuagint, the word-paired אמן is sometimes not transliterated, but is intead translated as: 'γένοιτο, γένοιτο,' as in, 'may it be so, may it be so!' (cf. LXX Num 5:22; Ps 40:14; 71:19; 88:53; 105:48; Jdt 13:20).

[74] The word 'light,' φῶς, disappears after Jn 12:46, signaling the end of Jesus's public ministry.

[75] cf. Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), pp. 13-14.

[76] This present work will limit itself to examining the literary connections that can be fruitfully discerned between the Fourth Gospel and its Old Testament intertextual referents. Discussions concerning the origins of the Fourth Gospel, or the community from whence it sprung, will be bracketed, not only for the sake of brevity, but in order to focus the

This difference is not simply on the level of which stories are told by the Synoptics or the Fourth Gospel. Rather, there is a difference in the *way* the story of Jesus is told, related within a uniquely Johannine idiom. By way of illustration, if the Synoptic Gospels highlight the kingdom of God, and if Paul's epistles highlight the life of the Church, the Fourth Gospel highlights the new and eternal life that people now share with Jesus: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).[77]

The beginning of the Fourth Gospel contains an episode where Philip goes out to meet Nathanael, to tell him of Jesus, and the way he introduces Jesus is telling: "We have found the one about whom Moses wrote in the law, and also the prophets: Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth" (John 1:45). Philip makes a rather bold claim, that the figure attested to by both Moses and the prophets has now been revealed, is now present amongst the people of Israel. Yet, he does not provide any citations, he does not quote any texts. Why is it that he would both make the claim that Moses attests to Jesus, but then not quote Torah in supporting this claim? This reluctance on

discussion on the Fourth Gospel as a final work of literature. The present work's argument does not rely on conjectural reconstructions of community identity, nor does it posit any particular origin for the writing of the Fourth Gospel, apart from its composition in the aftermath of the Second Temple Period, and its indebtedness to apocalyptic (claims which will be supported in subsequent chapters). This search for the origin of the Johannine community has been a notably difficult academic enterprise and the scholarly inquiries into this question can seem alternatively enigmatic, baffling, or inconclusive. Though von Harnack perhaps said it best when he concluded that "moreover, the origin of the Johannine writings is, from the standpoint of a history of literature and dogma, the most marvelous enigma which the early history of Christianity presents" (Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 1, 2nd edition, trans. Neil Buchanan, [London, UK: Williams & Norgate, 1897], pp. 96-7), noteworthy ventures into this field include the work of Raymond Brown, though more recently the contributions of James Charlesworth have been very promising. For more on the community of the Fourth Gospel, cf. Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1979); James H. Charlesworth, "Part One: Origin, Evolution, and Settings of the Gospel of John" in *Jesus as Mirrored in John: The Genius of the New Testament* (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2019), pp. 19-127. For a fantastic review of scholarship on the Johannine community, willing to entertain some doubts about the future of this particular field of study, see: Robert Kysar, "The Whence and Whither of the Johannine Community," in *Life in Abundance: Studies of John's Gospel in Tribute to Raymond E. Brown*, ed. John R. Donahue (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005), pp. 65-90 (which also includes a response by Hans-Josef Klauck, O.F.M.).

[77] The writer of the Fourth Gospel will later explicitly state this as the purpose of this work: "But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing *you may have life* in his name" (20:31).

Philip's part to explicitly cite passages from the Old Testament is likewise found in the evangelist's own style of writing.

One of the most distinguishing features of the Fourth Gospel is how reluctant the evangelist is to explicitly cite the Old Testament, rarely using the phrase "as it is written."[78] Of the four canonical Gospels, the Fourth Gospel is the least likely to make these sorts of explicit references, preferring instead to make connections to the Old Testament through literary allusions. The narrative within the Fourth Gospel becomes a kind of literary echo, resonant with the imagery and moral framing of its Old Testament background. Indeed, this literary preference is mirrored in Philip's own response to Nathanael's incredulity. Rather than citing any passage from the Old Testament to assuage Nathanael's concerns, Philip tells Nathanael to "Come and see" (1:46). Just as Philip invites Nathanael to witness the life of Jesus, such that the life of Jesus is the testimony of Moses, so it is to the narrative itself that the reader is brought, and it is the narrative itself that continually reiterates the claim that Moses testifies about Jesus:

> "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life. Rather, it is they that testify on my behalf, yet you refuse to come to me to have life… If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?" (5:39-40a, 46-47)

[78] Though there is obviously disagreement about precisely how many references to the Old Testament are made by the Gospels, Hays's assertion gives us a rough estimate, or at the very least a sense of the proportion of the difference: according to Hays, Matthew makes 124 references to the Old Testament; Mark, 70; Luke, 109; and least of all, John, with 27 (Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, p. 283). Now, Menken notes 17 marked citations to the Old Testament (cf. Maarten J. J. Menken, "Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John," in *New Testament Writers and the Old Testament* [London, UK: SPCK, 2002], p. 30). Hays cites 27 Old Testament references in the Fourth Gospel from C.K. Barrett, who himself cites an appendix of Westcott and Hort's edition of the New Testament (cf. Charles K. Barrett, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," *Journal of Theological Studies* 48, 191/192 [July/October 1947], p. 155; Brooke F. Westcott and Fenton J.A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (London, UK: Macmillan, 1914), p. 605), where only 21 verses in the Fourth Gospel are listed as referencing the Old Testament. Menken's 17 marked citations are a better gauge of the difference between the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel on explicitly citing the Old Testament. The Fourth Gospel has a great deal more *implicit* references to the Old Testament saturating the narrative that Westcott and Hort have failed to note (cf. Andreas J. Köstenberger, "John," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. Gregory K. Beale and Donald A. Carson [Grand Rapids, MI: BakerAcademic, 2007], pp. 419-420.).

This recalls a rather thorny exegetical issue having to do with an early verse from the Fourth Gospel, namely: "For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (1:17). Whereas a number of commentators have interpreted this early verse from the Fourth Gospel as a disjunctive, as though it were conveying the notion that the 'grace and truth' of Christ now 'surpasses' the law of Moses,[79] the narrative of the Fourth Gospel reveals to the reader that the sense of this verse is conjunctive. That is, that the law that came through Moses is not only in continuity with the grace and truth of Christ, but indeed that the law of Moses testifies to the grace and truth of Jesus Christ.

One particular instance in the Fourth Gospel perfectly illustrates: (1) its reluctance to explicitly reference passages from the Old Testament, (2) its inclination to find Moses testifying to Jesus, and (3) its wilderness framework:

> Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life (3:14).

This single verse in the Fourth Gospel contains no explicit citation of an Old Testament passage. Neither is this verse saturated with exactly the same Greek words or structure from its referent passage in Numbers (Num 21:7-9). The only linguistic markers tying these two passages together is the name 'Moses' (Μωϋσῆς) and the word 'serpent' (ὄφιν). The episode in the wilderness journey where Moses places a bronze serpent upon a pole, so that everyone who was bitten by a serpent could look upon it and live (ζάω, Num 21:9), is paralleled in the Fourth Gospel with the exhortation that belief in Jesus bestows life (ἔχω ζωὴν αἰώνιον, 3:15). The Fourth Gospel's allusions to the Old Testament are not

Table 2: Brown's Outline of the Fourth Gospel

i 1-18	The Prologue
i 19 - xii 50	The Book of Signs
xiii 1 - xx 31	The Book of Glory
xxi 1-25	The Epilogue

[79] Indeed, Bultmann explicitly refers to Jn 1:17 as an *antithesis*; cf. Bultmann, *John*, p. 79, n. 1.

typically made at the level of explicit citations. Rather, the Fourth Gospel's allusions function at the level of imagery, promising continuity with the traditional stories of the people's ancestors.[80]

Beyond imagery, the idiomatic and thematic preferences of the Fourth Gospel, revealed in contrasts between 'light' and 'darkness,' 'truth' and 'lies,' even our stance towards the 'world,' all these are experienced at the level of word choice.[81] This distinctiveness in language is noteworthy. That the Fourth Gospel's composition postdates both the Pauline and Synoptic corpora, yet makes use of such a unique idiom, is remarkable. Why not adopt the manner and style of these well-established traditions when communicating the Christian message? Would not adopting these reputable styles have lent the work an air of legitimacy? Apparently this was not a concern for the writer of the Fourth Gospel. Appreciating the intent behind this distinctive idiom is one of the most important elements to keep in mind when approaching the Fourth Gospel.

The Proclamation of John: "Behold, the *Lamb* of God!"

One of the more prominent instances of the Fourth Gospel's distinctive idiom comes through the voice of John the Baptist, and it is a proclamation about the nature of Jesus that has commonly been associated with Passover imagery: "Here is the Lamb of God" (1:29, 36). John

[80] The manner in which I have characterized the Old Testament intertextual references in the Fourth Gospel is particularly relevant to the first section of the Fourth Gospel, classically referred to as the Book of Signs (1:19-12:50). This section designation, as proposed in the work of Raymond Brown in his commentary on the Fourth Gospel (*John I-XII*, p. cxxxviii), is a conscious rejection of Bultmann's *Semeia* Source theory (cf. Brown, *John I-XII*, p. xxxi-xxxii). Though a consensus has been developed concerning the first portion of the Fourth Gospel, within Johannine scholarship there continues to be dispute about how to characterize the remaining chapters of the Fourth Gospel. For instance, whereas Brown preferred to refer to the remaining chapters as the Book of Glory (13-20), with an epilogue (21), C.H. Dodd preferred to speak of the Book of the Passion (13-21), which included two resurrection accounts (20-21) (Dodd, *Fourth Gospel*, p. 289). In any case, however one divides the overall structure of the Fourth Gospel, the explicit references to the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel can be neatly divided between language that speaks of Scripture "as it is *written*" during Jesus's public ministry (2:17; 6:31, 45; 8:17; 10:34; 12:14), and Scripture "as it is *fulfilled*" after Jesus has withdrawn from public ministry (12:38; 13:18; 15:25; 19:24, 36). This change in language, which appears to be deliberate, may well indicate a shift in how Old Testament intertextuality functions from one part of the Fourth Gospel to the next. The present study will focus on the first portion of the Fourth Gospel, and leave analysis of intertextuality in the later portion of the Fourth Gospel for other studies.

[81] Tabulating the lexical frequency was done through Bibleworks 9 software: *Bibleworks 9 Software for Biblical Exegesis & Research* (Norfolk, VA: Bibleworks, 2011).

the Baptist proclaims Jesus as the Lamb of God, and it is this Lamb of God who will "take away the sin of the world" (1:29). This is an especially important moment in the narrative, because outside of the Prologue (1:1-18) this is the very first title given to Jesus. This act of *witnessing* that John the Baptist performs (1:7, 8, 15, 19, 32, 34) is intimately tied to his audience: "For this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel" (1:31). The text of the Fourth Gospel makes explicit the intended audience for this testimony: Israel. Given that the intended audience is Israel, what then is the sense of referring to Jesus as the 'Lamb of God,' or so the argument goes, if not to make a connection to the Passover lamb?

This ostensible reference to the Paschal lamb, however, is fraught with considerable difficulties. First, the Paschal lamb does not "take upon itself" the sins of others, bearing them.[82] No part of the Passover ritual describes the transfusion of sins from the people to the Paschal lamb. Further to that point, not only does the Paschal lamb not bear sins, it does not take sins away. The people are not described as being forgiven for any general sin as a result of fulfilling the ritual.[83] More to the point, it is not the Paschal lamb that effects anything at all. Rather, it is the *blood* of the Paschal lamb that is used during Passover, placed upon the doorposts to serve as protection from the wrath of the tenth plague (any ostensible transfer of sins is unmentioned, cf. Exodus 12:13, 23). Indeed, one could conceivably go even further, pointing out that it is not even the blood

[82] Recall, the Greek in the Fourth Gospel describes the action of the Lamb of God as ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου.
[83] Mary Coloe will argue that the *lamb of God* is a reference to the lamb offered during the Tamid service (Mary L. Coloe, "'Behold the Lamb of God': John 1:29 and the Tamid Service," in *Rediscovering John: Essays on the Fourth Gospel in honour of Fréderic Manns*, ed. Lesław D. Chrupcała [Milano, IT: Edizioni Terra Santa, 2013], pp. 337-350). Making connections to the Tamid service in the Gospels is not entirely foreign to New Testament scholarship. For instance, in the work of Denis Hamm, he argues that the Tamid service plays an integral role in the rhetorical effect of both Luke and Acts, the most compelling parallel being the departure of Jesus at the end of Luke (Lk 24:50-53), which in itself contains five distinct parallels to the depiction of high priest Simeon II in Sirach 50:20-23 during the Tamid service: (1) the priest with raised hands (Lk 24:50a || Sir 50:20a), (2) a blessing of those gathered (Lk 24:50b || Sir 50:20b, 21b), (3) the congregants' prostration (Lk 24:52a, προσκυνήσαντες || Sir 50:21a, προσκυνήσει), (4) the praise of God (Lk 24:53 || Sir 50:22), and (5) the congregants' joyful response (Lk 24:52b || Sir 50:23) (cf. Dennis Hamm, "The Tamid Service in Luke-Acts: The Cultic Background behind Luke's Theology of Worship," in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 65, no. 2 [April 2003]: pp. 215-231). Coloe's argument, however, does lean heavily into Mishnaic paradigms, which ultimately goes beyond the scope of this present work.

per se which effects this protection, but it is the Divine's reaction to the sight of the blood. The Divine, on witnessing the blood, alternatively *shelters*[84] the people or *passes by*[85] the door to keep 'the destroyer' from striking their houses.[86] Though the blood of the Passover lamb is a *sine qua non*, in either case it is the Divine who protects the people, not the blood. Regardless, neither of these scenarios has anything to do with the transfer or forgiveness of sins, and now we are even further removed from the image evoked at the beginning of the Fourth Gospel.

Though the Lamb of God, as described in John the Baptist's proclamation, is entirely at odds with the described function of the Passover lamb from Torah, that is not the only problem with this ostensible intertextual connection. This sort of direct reference to the Old Testament, of explicitly citing an Old Testament passage, is not the Fourth Gospel's typical manner of engaging with Scripture intertextually. Though the Fourth Gospel does certainly include some direct citations to the Old Testament,[87] it does so with far less regularity than do the Synoptics. Rather, the Fourth Gospel's particular mode of engaging with the Scriptures is characterized "not through direct quotation of texts but through allusions and echoes."[88] Because this intertextual engagement throughout the Fourth Gospel functions generally through *context* rather than citation, the question the reader asks should be: how is this reference to the Lamb of God framed in the Fourth Gospel?

The Witness of John: Wilderness Framework

To begin answering this question one should start by exploring the manner in which the narrative in the Fourth Gospel introduces Jesus's entrance into the world. Though the language

[84] *σκεπάσω* ὑμᾶς (Exodus 12:13).
[85] *παρελεύσεται* κύριος τὴν θύραν (Exodus 12:23).
[86] Though two distinct Greek verbs are used in verses 12:13 and 12:23, obviously the same Hebrew verb underlies them: פסח, thence the derivation of 'paschal.'
[87] Menken uses the term 'marked quotations' for those verses in the Fourth Gospel containing explicit citations of the Old Testament (cf. Menken, "Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John," pp. 29-45).
[88] Richard Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, p. 343.

used in this section is typically invoked as an instance of 'Temple' imagery,[89] it could more accurately be described as 'Tabernacle' imagery.[90] The Fourth Gospel describes Jesus's entrance into the world using a verb which shares a root with the word 'tent': καὶ ἐ*σκήν*ωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν (1:14).[91] Here the Fourth Gospel describes Jesus as '*tabernacling* amongst us,' using the same root shared with the Greek term for the Tabernacle. In point of fact, the intertextual connection is even stronger in the Fourth Gospel. The Tabernacle is referred to in the Hebrew as the אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד, literally the 'tent of meeting.' However, the Greek translation for the Tabernacle is ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ *μαρτυρίου* (Exodus 27:21; 28:43; 29:4; 29:10*2, 11, 30, 32, 42, 44; etc.), literally 'the tent of *witness*.' Given the Fourth Gospel's strong focus on *witnessing* throughout,[92] the connection to the Tabernacle during the wilderness journey is even more apparent.[93] This framing preference for wilderness imagery in the Fourth Gospel is cemented just a few short verses later in situating the ministry of John the Baptist. Though the Fourth Gospel never specifies precisely where John is baptizing,[94]

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[89] The Fourth Gospel has a great deal more Temple imagery interwoven within its narrative than do any of the Synoptics: Jonathan A. Draper, "Temple, Tabernacle, and Mystical Experience in John," *Neotestamentica* 31 2 (1997): pp. 263-288; Eyal Regev, "The Gospel of John: Temple and Christology," in *The Temple in Early Christianity: Experiencing the Sacred* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019), pp. 197-221; Stephen T. Um, *The Theme of Temple Christology in John's Gospel* (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2006).

[90] Comparatively speaking, New Testament scholarship has not devoted much attention at all to the Tabernacle in the Fourth Gospel (or indeed, the Tabernacle in any part of the New Testament), but a good resource to begin with would be: Craig R. Koester, *The Dwelling of God: The Tabernacle in the Old Testament, Intertestamental Jewish Literature, and the New Testament* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1989), pp. 100-115.

[91] Compare ἐ*σκήν*ωσεν (Jn 1:14) to וְשָׁכַנְתִּי (Exo 29:45), wherein we are told that "I will dwell among the Israelites, and I will be their God." The verb וְשָׁכַנְתִּי shares a root with מִשְׁכָּן, 'tabernacle': cf. Jacob J. Enz, "The Book of Exodus as a Literary Type for the Gospel of John," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 76, no. 3 (September 1957), pp. 211-212.

[92] Already μαρτυρέω cognates are used thrice in 1:7-8, and are again deployed following 1:14 in 1:15: Ιωάννης *μαρτυρεῖ* περὶ αὐτοῦ. In the Synoptics, 'witnessing' cognates are used four times in Matthew, six times in Mark, and five times in Luke. In John, 'witnessing' cognates are used a total of 47 times, nearly three times as many as are found in the entire Pauline corpus, and more than three times as many as found in the Synoptics (cf. Table 1: Lexical Frequency List for the Gospels). The only other books that use a comparable number of 'witnessing' cognates in Greek: Exodus (53 times), Leviticus (46 times), Numbers (74 times), and Psalms (33 times), and most of these uses are references to the Tabernacle: the tent of witnessing!

[93] The Greek ἡ σκηνή is not only used for the Hebrew אֹהֶל; it appears as those though ἡ σκηνή is also used to translate the Hebrew מִשְׁכָּן when the meaning of 'Tabernacle' is being referenced (cf. Exodus 38:21; LXX Exodus 37:19; 2 Sam 7:6). As one might expect, this becomes a bit more complicated in the Psalms. The Hebrew אֹהֶל (Ps 15:1) and מִשְׁכָּן (Ps 26:8) continue to be used to refer to the Tabernacle, but there appears to be a preference for rendering these using the Greek τὸ σκήνωμα (cf. LXX Pss 14:1; 25:8).

[94] Indeed, the title 'the Baptizer' for John does not appear in the Fourth Gospel as it does in the Synoptics. In the Synoptic Gospels, John is regularly identified as 'the Baptist,' Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτιστής / βαπτίζων: Mt 3:1; 11:11-12;

the Fourth Gospel relates that John said: "I am the voice of one crying out *in the wilderness*" (1:23a). Here it is no longer a matter of allusion. The Fourth Gospel explicitly frames John's ministry within a wilderness context.

Beyond the Fourth Gospel's repeated wilderness framing in this passage, the linguistic evidence makes the connection to the Passover lamb even more difficult: though John proclaims Jesus as ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ in the Fourth Gospel, Scripture never refers to the Paschal Lamb as an ἀμνός. Rather, the Greek word used for the Paschal Lamb is πρόβατον.[95] The only time the word ἀμνός is used in Exodus is towards the end of the book, and it is used not in reference to the Passover meal, but to the daily offering, and is connected with the ordination and ritual obligations of priests, not with the transfer or forgiveness of sins (cf. Exodus 29:38-41).[96]

The only two times that the word ἀμνός is used in the entire Fourth Gospel are the two times that John the Baptist proclaims Jesus as the Lamb of God. It is not as though the Fourth Gospel uses the word ἀμνός rather than πρόβατον. Rather, the Fourth Gospel uses the exceedingly common word πρόβατον throughout, yet never once is it in reference to Jesus.[97] The very first title that Jesus receives outside of the Prologue, the very first time Jesus is labeled by one of the characters in the narrative, Jesus is not called πρόβατον τοῦ θεοῦ, but ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ. As C.H.

14:2, 8; 16:14; 17:13; Mk 1:4 (disputed); 6:24-25; 8:28; Lk 7:20, 28, 33; 9:19. Not once in the Fourth Gospel is John identified as 'the Baptist.' In the Fourth Gospel, the only one who is identified as ὁ βαπτίζων is Jesus, who will baptize with the Holy Spirit: οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ βαπτίζων ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ (Jn 1:33).

[95] The Greek word πρόβατον commonly corresponds to the Hebrew word שֶׂה: cf. Exodus 12:3*2, 4*2, 5. Occasionally, though, the word πρόβατον is also used to translate צֹאן: cf. Exodus 12:21, 32.

[96] This prescription concerning the daily offerings is also found in Num 28:3-8. The practice is articulated elsewhere in Scripture, wherein the lamb of the daily offering was sacrificed in the morning, and the daily offering of cereal was performed in the evening (2 Kgs 16:15). To illustrate how common and well known the practice of daily offering was: the word used for the evening cereal offering, מִנְחָה, came to be used as a reference for the time of day (1 Kgs 18:29, 36; cf. Dan 9:21). Rabbinic Judaism has continued this practice of using *Mincha* to refer to the time of day, though *Mincha* has come to refer to the afternoon, rather than evening, prayers. All of these are services and ordinances performed quite apart from the Passover regulations.

[97] The Fourth Gospel uses the word τὰ πρόβατα when Jesus is in the Temple area, during the cleansing of the Temple in 2:14-15; the Sheep Gate (προβατικῇ) in 5:2; fifteen uses of the word πρόβατον in John 10:1-27, during the discourse on the shepherd (ὁ ποιμὴν) and the sheepfold (τὴν αὐλὴν τῶν προβάτων); and finally twice when Peter is told to care for τὰ πρόβατά μου, 'my sheep' (21:16-17).

Dodd classically understates on this point: "the Paschal reference therefore does not leap to the eye."[98]

The Prophetic Referent: The Lamb of God Bears Sins

Not only does the Passover lamb not take sins upon itself (which is what the Fourth Gospel claims this ἀμνός will do), but the Fourth Gospel frames this passage in such a way as to take the reader beyond the Passover and into the wilderness, both through the use of Tabernacle imagery in connection to Jesus, and explicitly stating that John's proclamation takes place in the wilderness. Furthermore, the Tabernacle is connected to John the Baptist himself. As ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ *μαρτυρίου* is echoed in John's function of *witnessing* to Christ, the Tabernacle imagery is arguably connected with the figure of John, as well.[99] This singular focus on witnessing to Christ is made explicit in John's own proclamation in the Fourth Gospel. While in the Synoptic Gospels John claims that he comes proclaiming a baptism of repentance (Mt 3:2, 11; Mk 1:4; Lk 3:3), in the Fourth Gospel the sole reason John gives for baptizing is "that [Jesus] might be made known to Israel" (1:31).

The ministry of John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel is described in a manner quite distinct from that found in the Synoptics, and defaulting to the Synoptic paradigm really does leave the reader quite far afield. Just to provide a single example of the danger of conflating the Synoptic and Johannine paradigms, here Köstenberger attempts to explain John's proclamation in the Fourth Gospel by way of the Synoptics: "How are God's people to prepare the way for his return? While, again, not explicitly stated [in the Fourth Gospel], the probable answer is 'by way of repentance'…

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[98] Dodd, *Fourth Gospel*, p. 231. Even the sin offering that was eventually added to the Passover ritual was not an ἀμνός, but an ἔριφος, a 'young goat' (cf. Ezek 45:23: שְׂעִיר עִזִּים) or a χίμαρον ἐξ αἰγῶν, a 'male goat from among goats' (cf. Num 28:22: שְׂעִיר).

[99] Later on in the Fourth Gospel, John's *witnessing* is highlighted by Jesus himself. In John 5:31-33, Jesus disavowed any testimony that he may provide concerning himself. Though a number of witnesses to Jesus are mentioned, the very first one that Jesus invoked is John: "You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth" (5:33). Testifying about Jesus, who is full of grace and truth (cf. 1:14), is what constitutes testifying to the truth.

This is borne out clearly by the Baptist's own message: 'Bear fruit in keeping with repentance' (Matt. 3:8)."[100] Köstenberger's conclusion is unwarranted from the text of the Fourth Gospel. Nowhere does John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel claim that people should repent. In fact, this Synoptic explanation is even more tenuous given that neither the verb μετανοέω,[101] nor the word μετάνοια,[102] both common words in the Synoptics, appear even *once* in the Fourth Gospel. Repenting is something that the human agent does. In the Fourth Gospel, it is the divine agency of Jesus, the Lamb of God, that is stressed.

The more likely reference being made by John the Baptist's proclamation of Jesus as the Lamb of God is to ὁ ἀμνὸς from Isaiah 53:7. Not only is the word ἀμνός actually used,[103] but the figure being described is said to bear the people's sins,[104] echoing John's claim that the Lamb of God would bear sin.[105] That this passage from Isaiah would have made sense as a reference to Jesus within the Christian context, and been readily recognized as such, is further reinforced by its intertextual reference to the same passage from Isaiah in Acts 8:32, demonstrating that this particular intertextual reference was employed across multiple traditions in the early Church.[106] The connection between Jesus and the figure in Isaiah 53 would have been understood. As to the universal dimension of John's proclamation, that this figure would take away the sin τοῦ κόσμου, the passage continues making the connection explicit between the universality of his mission, and the bearing of sins: "We *all* (πάντες) like sheep have gone astray: humanity wandered about its

[100] Köstenberger, "John," p. 426.
[101] cf. Mt 3:2; 4:17; 11:20-21; 12:41; Mk 1:15; 6:12; Lk 10:13; 11:32; 13:3, 5; 15:10, 10; 16:30; 17:3-4.
[102] cf. Mt 3:8, 11; Mk 1:4; Lk 3:3, 8; 5:32; 15:7 24:47.
[103] "Like a *sheep* before its shearers," ὡς *ἀμνὸς* ἐναντίον τοῦ κείροντος αὐτὸν (Isa 53:7).
[104] οὗτος τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν φέρει (Isa 53:4).
[105] The verb used in John 1:29, αἴρω, occurs in both 1 Sam 15:25 (καὶ νῦν *ἆρον* δὴ τὸ ἁμάρτημά μου) and 1 Sam 25:28 (*ἆρον* δὴ τὸ ἀνόμημα τῆς δούλης σου), with the sense of removing or lifting one's sin or iniquity.
[106] For further Christian intertextual references to this broader passage from Isaiah, see Matt 8:17 referencing Isaiah 53:4, and Hebrews 9:28 referencing Isaiah 53:12.

own way, so the Lord handed him over to our sins" (Isaiah 53:6).[107] The intertextual reference to Isaiah 53 not only provides a correspondence in word choice (ἀμνός), but also corresponds in both form (bearing sins) and function (universal mission) with the Lamb of God of the Fourth Gospel. The Passover lamb, on the other hand, fits none of these criteria.

Though less concrete than the intertextual references pointed out above, there are two other elements in the text that Hays would classify as 'echoes' that provide further prophetic context to this passage in the Fourth Gospel. The claim John the Baptist makes that he "saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him" (1:32) recalls the servant passages in Isaiah. The servant claims that "the spirit of the Lord God is upon me" (Isaiah 41:1). Furthermore, there is a variant reading of John 1:34, where instead of "this is the Son of God," the text reads "this is the chosen one of God."[108] This reference to the chosen one of God would make yet another intertextual reference to one of the servant passages in Isaiah: "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my *chosen*, in whom my soul delights; I have put my *spirit* upon him…" (Isaiah 42:1) Given that the Fourth Gospel quotes Isaiah 40:3 only a few verses earlier, in John 1:23 ("I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness…"), these connections to Isaiah appear sound. Moreover, one of the few marked quotations in the Fourth Gospel is a verse out of one of the Servant Songs (12:38, cf. Isaiah 53:1), so the writer of the Fourth Gospel recognized an intertextual connection between Jesus and the servant from the prophetic work of Isaiah.

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[107] Translation mine: πάντες ὡς πρόβατα ἐπλανήθημεν: ἄνθρωπος τῇ ὁδῷ αὐτοῦ ἐπλανήθη καὶ κύριος παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἡμῶν (Isa 53:6).

[108] This variant shows up in a number of manuscripts, including א*, and is quoted by Saint Ambrose himself: ὁ ἐκλεκτὸς τοῦ θεοῦ. Sometimes there is a conflated reading of "chosen son of God." Some scholars have argued that this is a classic case of *lectio difficilior*: the argument goes that the reading ἐκλεκτός is the more likely one because while it is easy to understand why someone would change ἐκλεκτός to υἱός, perhaps in an attempt to avert any adoptionist sense in the text, switching from υἱός to ἐκλεκτός is less understandable. cf. Philip W. Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008), p. 259; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 4th rev. ed. (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1994), p. 172.

However, the case cannot be made that the messianic expectation in the Fourth Gospel is in any way univocal. Though messianic expectations are explicitly articulated throughout the Fourth Gospel, the manner in which these expectations are conveyed within the narrative can vary dramatically: the incarnated Word from the prologue, the Lamb of God from the proclamation of John the Baptist, the Messiah from Andrew's message to his brother Peter, Philip's claim about the testimony of Moses and the prophets, etc. A more proximate framing of this messianic expectation for the Eucharistic Discourse occurs after the multitudes experience the miraculous feeding (6:1-13). At the close of the meal, they come to believe that Jesus is the 'prophet who is to come into the world' (6:14). Jesus does not receive this realization on their part with approval. Rather, he immediately withdraws from the crowds so they do not seize him and force him to be king (cf. 6:15)! So the question, then, is how the Fourth Gospel specifically frames the Eucharistic Discourse, and what are the expectations that the reader brings to that passage?

The Proclamation of Jesus: "I am the bread of life."

One of the most distinctive narrative elements in Fourth Gospel is its Eucharistic Discourse. Whereas the Synoptics situate the Eucharistic encounter at the outset of the Passion narrative (Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:15-20), the Fourth Gospel places this Eucharistic discourse at the very heart of Jesus's ministry (6:22-71), at the center of what is classically called the Book of Signs (1:19 – 12:50). The Synoptic framing of the Crucifixion with the Eucharistic encounter is made explicit in Luke: "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer…" (Lk 22:15) Both Matthew and Mark also include a note of finality in this Eucharistic encounter: "I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God" (Mk 14:25; Mt 26:29; cf. Lk 22:16). With the references to Jesus's blood being 'poured out,' (Mt 26:28; Mk 14:24), the link to the Passion is only further

reinforced.[109] In fact, Paul states explicitly that the Passion and Crucifixion of Jesus is at the heart of the Eucharistic encounter: "As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's *death* until he comes" (1 Cor 11:26).

There are some misconceptions that could arise from this intimate connection being made between the Eucharist and the death of Jesus. For instance, to univocally present the Eucharist as a memorial of Jesus's death presents certain problems that the Fourth Gospel appears to address. Is the Eucharistic encounter so tied to the death of Jesus that it has no bearing on his life, on his ministry? If, as Paul states, the sacrificial dimension of it is so important, the element of Jesus's *death*, are we speaking now of a Eucharistic encounter that has no relation to Jesus's daily *life*? Does meaning or significance of Jesus's death eclipse any fruit that may be drawn from his life? Moreover, if the symbolism of the Eucharist is so attached to the Passover ritual, then should Eucharist likewise only be celebrated once a year, just as Passover is only celebrated once a year? On reading the Eucharistic Discourse, the reader could well be forgiven for having the sense that the Fourth Gospel attempts to address many of these concerns.

In the Fourth Gospel, the Eucharistic encounter is tied to Jesus's ministry, his daily life, and *not* to his death. The Eucharist is not treated as a sacrifice, as an image of Jesus's death, but as an image of Jesus's *life*: "I am the bread of life" (6:48). And rather than linking the Eucharist to the Passover meal, the Fourth Gospel frames the Eucharistic encounter with the story of the Hebrews being fed manna in the wilderness. The manna was *daily* delivered to the children of Israel, to sustain them in the wilderness.[110] The Fourth Gospel, then, refrains from tying this

[109] Arguably the spilling of blood is only concretely stated in the Fourth Gospel: "One of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out" (19:34).
[110] Just to be clear, there is a tradition claiming that every sixth day the people would gather two days' worth of manna, so as not to break the Sabbath; cf. Exodus 16:22ff.

Eucharistic encounter to a ritual that was performed annually, but to a meal that was eaten with greater frequency.

The Witness of Jesus: Wilderness Framework

It is noteworthy that just as John the Baptist's proclamation of Jesus as 'Lamb of God' is preceded by Temple imagery, so it is also the case that the Eucharistic Discourse is preceded by passages priming the reader to pick up on Temple imagery associated with Jesus. In the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman, the Fourth Gospel envisions Jesus as the true Temple (4:10-14) where true worship finds its home (4:20-24).[111] The person of Jesus fulfills the expectation of a New Temple in the eschatological age, since it is Jesus himself who is the true presence of the Divine. The living water that flows out of the Temple in Ezekiel's vision, bestowing life to all it encounters (Ezek 47:8-10), is freely given in one's encounter with Jesus.[112] With this framework in place, with its confluence of both Spirit and Temple imagery, partaking of Christ's flesh and blood takes on the further significance of making us into 'co-Temples' with the Divine, which is a framework that finds its first explicit expression in Paul's epistles: "Do you not know that you are God's Temple, and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" (1 Cor 3:16)

It is, perhaps, harder to make the case for the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman explicitly hearkening to Tabernacle imagery, as some of the expected linguistic echoes are not found in this passage (4:1-42).[113] After all, the rare verb σκηνόω, 'to tabernacle,' from Jn 1:14

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[111] The preoccupation with formulating a new Temple setting for true divine worship can be recognized in other early Jewish texts: this new Temple rhetoric is likewise found in the Dead Sea Scrolls, where the Qumran community, in its own literature, is sometimes envisioned as a new Temple, the new residence of the Divine: cf. Otto Betz, "The True Temple according to the Qumran Texts and the Teaching of Jesus," in *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), pp. 91-100.

[112] There are arguably many more possible references being made here: Zech 13:1 and Jer 2:13 have been suggested. Likewise, the concern for water allows for another echo to the wilderness tradition, when the people cried out for water in the wilderness, whereupon the Divine, through Moses, provided life-giving water to the multitudes (Num 20:2-13).

[113] Every contemporary commentator, from Bultmann to Brown, has insisted upon the close connection between chapters 4 and 6 of the Fourth Gospel, with many going so far as to speculate that the original order of the Fourth

is not echoed in this later passage. However, one of the most important words from John 1:14 is repeatedly found in this section through 'truth' cognates: "The hour is coming, and is now here, when the *true* worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and *truth*, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and *truth*" (4:23-24). Jesus, who is full of grace and truth (1:14), is portrayed as the truest place of worship, the true Tabernacle, the true presence of the Divine. As Jesus is rather more ambulatory than the Temple structure, the Tabernacle imagery makes sense of Jesus as a moving presence of the Divine. In any case, Jesus explicitly states that the entire paradigm of the Divine presence being predicated on any particular locale is faulty: "The hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem" (4:21). Worship, then, is not bound to a particular place, but to a particular *person*, a new Tabernacle.

There are, however, more proximate framing devices that the Fourth Gospel employs to draw out the wilderness context. The chapter in which the Eucharistic Discourse is located begins with two narratives that are also found in the Synoptics: the feeding of the multitudes (Mt 14:13-21; 15:32-39; Mk 6:30-44; Mk 8:1-10; Lk 9:10-17) and the walking on water (Mt 14:22-33; Mk 6:45-52).[114] Following these parallels to the Synoptic account is the Fourth Gospel's Eucharistic Discourse (6:22-71). Within this section are significant echoes to the life of Moses during the wilderness journey, perhaps most notably: just as those who followed Moses were recalcitrant and hard-hearted, 'grumbling' against Moses's authority in the wilderness, so now the multitudes

Gospel's chapters had been altered at some point: "Many scholars who do not otherwise favor rearrangement, for example Wikenhauser, will at least support a reversal of order between chs. v and vi in order to obtain better geographical sequence" (Brown, *John I-XII*, p. xxvi; cf. Schnackenburg, *John 5-12*, pp. 5-7; Bultmann, *John*, p. 209: "The present order of chs. 5 and 6 cannot be the original one… So the original order must have been chs 4, 6, 5, 7.").

[114] Interestingly, the feeding of the multitudes and the walking on water pericopes are told in precisely the same order, and directly follow one another, in two of the Synoptics, Matthew and Mark, as well as in the Fourth Gospel. In Mark, the feeding of the multitude (Mk 6:30-44) is directly followed by the walking on water pericope (Mk 6:45-52), as is the case in both Matthew (Mt 14:13-21, followed by Mt 14:22-33) and the Fourth Gospel (Jn 6:1-15, followed by 6:16-21).

following Jesus are portrayed in much the same light, as the crowds 'grumble' against Jesus throughout the discourse (6:41, 43, 61).

The exceedingly uncommon verb γογγύζω, 'grumble, mutter, or complain,' is used three times in this single section of the Fourth Gospel, echoing the grumbling of those who followed Moses in in the wilderness, from the narratives in Numbers 11 and 14. In those passages from Numbers, the people are not merely grumbling against the authority of Moses, but against the Lord: "How long shall this wicked congregation grumble (γογγύζουσιν) against me? I have heard the grumbling (τὴν γόγγυσιν) of the Israelites, which they grumble (ἐγόγγυσαν) against me" (Num 14:26). The people's unwillingness to accept the authority of Moses and the Lord, their unwillingness to accede to the sources of life in their wilderness journey, leads to their death (Num 14:35). This echo of the grumbling crowds from Numbers makes the reader immediately aware of the stakes: just as the lives of those who followed Moses ended in death because of their unwillingness to accept the divine authority, so now the unwillingness to accept the authority of Jesus will end in death. The rhetorical effect is clear: if only the people had accepted the authority of Moses, they would have lived. Correspondingly, this passage from the Fourth Gospel is intended to lead the reader to accept the authority of Jesus, so as to share in Jesus's promise of eternal life.[115]

Many commentators on this passage, however, fail to account for the narrative framework this Old Testament reference provides. Rather than attending to this narrative parallel between Moses and Jesus, the commentator will instead focus on the contrast between the manna and the Eucharist: "The 'fathers' [ancestors] have not partaken of the Christian eucharist and so died (cf.

[115] This intention on the part of the Fourth Gospel will be made explicit later on: "These are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name" (20:31).

6:49). But whoever eats the Christian eucharist will therefore live forever..."[116] According to this view, the people in Numbers died because they were eating manna, which of itself could not lead to eternal life, whereas the Eucharist can. There is agreement that the passage does make reference to the wilderness framework, and that it does reference the manna that was consumed by those who followed Moses, but only insofar as the manna itself was an insufficient substance to provide eternal life.

This interpretation, however, ignores the typical manner in which the Fourth Gospel uses the Old Testament. The Fourth Gospel's use of the Old Testament is not one of contrast and rejection, but of legitimacy and continuity. Jesus nowhere claims that the manna was bad, or worthless, or that the ancestors were wrong to have eaten the manna. Jesus's rhetoric does not involve the denigration of manna, as though insulting manna would somehow illustrate just how much more effective the Eucharist is. The argument Jesus makes is: just as those who followed Moses in the wilderness survived so long as they received and ate the Divine's gift of manna, so now the Father has sent bread of life into the world, Jesus, and that only those who eat "this bread will live forever" (6:58). The parallel is made for rhetorical effect, to be sure, but it is not deployed in order to marginalize the consumption of manna. The people's grumbling against the Divine authority, their unwilling to heed the Divine, is what cut them off from that life-giving source in the wilderness, and is precisely what will cut them off from receiving the life offered by Jesus.

Table 3: Brown's Parallels between John 6 and Numbers 11

Johannine Reference	Wilderness Journey Referent
John vi 41, 43, 61	Numbers xi 1, People grumbling
John vi 31	Numbers xi 7-9, Description of the Manna
John vi 51ff.	Numbers xi 33, "Give us flesh that we may eat."
John vi 9, 12	Numbers xi 22, "Shall all the fish of the sea..."

[116] Ernst Haenchen, *John 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of John Chapters 1-6*, Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984), p. 296.

Raymond Brown, for instance, in his commentary on the Eucharistic Discourse in the Fourth Gospel, even when making a brief connection to the narrative in Numbers,[117] consistently references the account in Exodus as the narrative framework for this passage. Even when commenting on those verses in the Eucharistic Discourse that explicitly mention the death of the ancestors *in the wilderness* (6:49, 58), Brown does not mention the Numbers narrative at all![118] Outside of the Gospels, the verb γογγύζω appears in the New Testament twice in a single verse, in: "Do not grumble (γογγύζετε) as some of them grumbled (ἐγόγγυσαν), and suffered death by the destroyer" (1 Cor 10:10). This verse from Paul, using this same unusual verb from the Eucharistic Discourse in the Fourth Gospel, also refers his readers to the exact same narrative: the ancestral wilderness journey, and the death of the ancestors (cf. 1 Cor 10:1-5).[119] It is clear that the path of life is not one of 'grumbling, muttering, or complaining,' and the echo from the wilderness journey is unmistakable.

This rhetorical effect on the part of the Fourth Gospel relies on the narrative being framed within the wilderness context. That the narrative being referenced from the Old Testament is the one found in Numbers is clear because it is only in Numbers that the connection is made between: (1) the eating of manna (Num 11:6), (2) the grumbling against Moses and the Lord (Num 11:1; 14:2, 27), and (3) the death of the ancestors in the wilderness (Num 14:28-35). Though there are

[117] Brown, *John I-XII*, p. 233.

[118] Brown, *John I-XII*, pp. 271, 284. Burroughs is right to claim that this wilderness framework from the Eucharistic Discourse has not received enough sustained treatment in our exegetical tradition: Presian R. Burroughs, "Stop Grumbling and Start Eating," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 28 (2006), p. 75. I was, however, able to find a commentator, Gail O'Day, who does make the connection explicit between the grumbling in Numbers 14 and their subsequent death: "The very ancestors who ate the manna died as a result of their grumbling and unbelief (Num 14:21-23; Deut 1:35)" (cf. Gail R. O'Day, "John," in *Luke-John*, The New Interpreter's Bible, vol. 9 [Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995], p. 605).

[119] In Paul, he makes it clear that it was the Divine's displeasure that resulted in the people's death, not that they were eating something that was in itself insufficient (1 Cor 10:5). If anything, Paul goes out of his way to exalt the sustenance that the people were receiving in the wilderness: "All ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ" (1 Cor 10:3-4).

numerous uses of the verb γογγύζω in Exodus 16, this ostensible intertextual connection can be discounted because it does not fit the framing that the Fourth Gospel provides. After having left Egypt, the people who follow Moses are grumbling about their food (Exod 16:7-12), after which the Lord provides them with manna and quail (Exod 16:13-36). However, recall that Jesus explicitly states that: "Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died" (6:49, cf. 6:58). In the Exodus account, nobody dies during the wilderness journey in connection with the manna, as Jesus's claim would appear to indicate. It is only in Exodus 32 that a group of people die for their sins along the wilderness journey, but this is in connection with the crafting and worshipping of the Golden Calf (Exod 32:7-10, 27-28), and has nothing to do with the eating of manna! Given this lack of clarity, the case should be made for the strong intertextual connection between the Eucharistic Discourse and the narrative of the wilderness journey in Numbers.

The Eucharistic Discourse and the Ancestral Journey through the Wilderness

Hays's seven tests of intertextuality provide an exemplary model for illustrating the intertextual connection between the Eucharistic Discourse and the narrative found in Numbers.[120] The tests he proposes are a series of seven criteria by which one may evaluate the propriety of an intertextual reference. They are proposed both as a kind of safeguard against reading beyond what the text warrants, but also as a way of letting the text speak for itself. How is the reader meant to determine which Old Testament referents can be credibly discerned from the New Testament references in the text? The first criterion proposed is that of *availability*: that is, was the proposed source for the intertextual reference available to the writer and/or intended audience of this

[120] These criteria for evaluating the strength of an *echo* are found under the section heading 'Hearing Echoes: Seven Tests': Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 29-32. Much of what I argue for in this section follows the work of Burroughs, who laid out her own case for reading the intertextual connection between the Numbers narrative and the Eucharistic Discourse here: Burroughs, "Stop Grumbling and Start Eating," p. 91.

document? As a writer, referring to, sourcing, or citing texts that would have been unavailable to one's audience makes little sense as a rhetorical strategy. Likewise, the intertextual reference is less likely to be credible if it can be argued that the writer did not have access to the proposed source.[121] In this case, answering the question of *availability* is actually quite straightforward: there is little doubt about the *availability* of Numbers as an intertextual reference to New Testament writers, given that Numbers is one of the books of the Pentateuch. The biblical narrative of the ancestral journey through the wilderness does not arise from some obscure manuscript, or contested portion of the canon, but from the most foundational portion of Jewish heritage: Torah. This text would have been available to everyone.

However, the reader does not need to take the *availability* of Torah for granted in order to assess the validity of this intertextual connection. Whether or not Numbers was available to the writer of the Fourth Gospel can also be assessed by those passages from the Fourth Gospel that directly reference stories that could only have been found in Numbers. If it can be demonstrated that the Fourth Gospel explicitly references a narrative from Numbers, then its *availability* to the writer of the Fourth Gospel becomes clearer. The clearest instance of this sort of direct reference to a story that is only found in Numbers is the passage where Jesus deploys the pericope of the bronze serpent raised up on a pole by Moses (cf. Numbers 21:5-9), as a way of illustrating his identity and nature as *Son of Man*: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the *Son of Man* be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (John 3:14-15).

[121] I will be using the phrase *intertextual reference* throughout, rather than Hays's preferred term *echo*. My preference for this phrase arises from a desire to be comprehensive. From what I can gather in literary analysis, the phrase *intertextual reference* covers both 'echo' and 'allusion,' the distinction between the two being that an 'echo' is "a metaphor of, and for, alluding" that "does not depend on conscious intention" (John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* [Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981], p. 64), whereas Hays reserves the term 'allusion' to those instances that "depend… on the notion of authorial intention" (Hays, *Echoes in Paul*, p. 29). Since the present study is not meant to adjudicate whether the reference arose from the Fourth Gospel writer's conscious intent or not, the more inclusive term *intertextual reference* will be used.

Here the reader is presented with a passage from the Fourth Gospel that directly references a story that can only be found within the book of Numbers.[122] The question of the book of Number's *availability* to the writer of the Fourth Gospel is not in doubt.

The second test Hays proposes is that of *volume*, and the test appears to be of two parts: first, determine the prominence of the proposed intertextual referent within the Old Testament narrative, and second, determine the prominence of the intertextual reference within the New Testament text. The test of *volume* concerns the narrative's prominence in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The first portion of the test addresses the referent's obscurity or prominence: is the referent too obscure? Does the ostensible intertextual referent not find wide usage, appearing to be rather niche? Or, at the other end of the spectrum, is the passage prominent enough to have reverberated not only throughout the book in which it is contained, but throughout the entire literary structure of the Old Testament? Admittedly, these are the two extremes at either end of a spectrum, so this first test of *volume* will fall between these two. The reasoning being that the more obscure a passage, the less likely the intertextual reference, the more prominent the passage, the more likely the intertextual reference.

The second part of the *volume* test refers to the rhetorical position of the intertextual reference in the New Testament text. Is the reference being made at the conclusion of an argument? Does the reference highlight a particularly important point in the discourse? How integral is this

[122] To be clear, the bronze serpent is mentioned elsewhere in the *Tanakh*. King Hezekiah of Judah is said to have destroyed the bronze serpent: "He broken in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it; it was called Nehushtan" (2 Kings 18:4b). Any ostensible connection between this passage from Kings and the Fourth Gospel is, however, rather tenuous: (1) there is no mention in Kings to the serpent being placed upon a height, which is precisely the trajectory that is being paralleled with the *Son of Man* figure, (2) no mention is made in Kings of the wilderness setting of the bronze serpent's original creation, which is an important narrative frame for the Fourth Gospel, (3) no mention in Kings of the serpent's association with *life-giving*, which again is a parallel that is being made to the *Son of Man* figure, and finally, (4) the passage from the Fourth Gospel speaks of the *Moses's* action, of *Moses* having lifted up the serpent, and not of Hezekiah's destruction of the serpent, nor of the destruction of the serpent at all.

reference to the argument being set forth in the New Testament narrative? The more relevant and integral the reference is to the overall structure of the work, the more likely is the intertextual reference. As to how the *volume* test applies to this particular intertextual reference, given that the dialogical tension between Jesus and his interlocutors in the Eucharistic Discourse relies on the narrative parallel of Moses and the people following him in the wilderness, that Jesus's identity with the manna as the bread from heaven is amply testified throughout the discourse (6:32-33, 35, 38, 48, 50-51), making repeated direct connections to the wilderness journey, and that the rhetorical parallel Jesus makes concerning those who question his authority, that "your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died" (6:49), would have absolutely no sense without the narrative of the people eating the manna during their wilderness journey (Num 11:1-9), yet dying (Num 14:35) because of their disobedience (Num 14:22-23), and grumbling against Moses and the LORD (Num 11:1; 14:2, 25-27, 29, 36; 16:11; 17:6, 20), the test of *volume* for this intertextual connection is rather strong.[123]

The third criterion for intertextual reference is called *recurrence*, which appears at first glance to overlap slightly with the second part of the *volume* test. Whereas the second part of the

[123] *Pace* Balfour, who argues that the 'motif of murmuring' in Psalm 78 is the intertextual referent here in the Fourth Gospel (cf. Glenn Balfour, "The Jewishness of John's Use of the Scriptures in John 6:31 and 7:37-38," *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 [1995]: p. 362). Though Ps 78:24 is certainly the closest Old Testament parallel to the Scripture reference the Jewish interlocutors make when responding to Jesus (Jn 6:31), it must be noted that in the psalm Balfour proposes as an intertextual referent the people are *never* described as grumbling or 'murmuring' against the Divine, but as 'rebelling' (παραπικραίνω; LXX Ps 77:8, 17, 40, 56). Though 'murmuring' (what I have translated as 'grumbling') can function along the same lines as 'rebelling' in some instances, it is telling that in the entire psalm the verb γογγύζω does not appear even once. Yes, Psalm 78 speaks to the tense relationship between the Divine and the people during the wilderness journey, and includes the line about the eating of manna (Ps 78:24), so many of the same thematic elements are present, including the wilderness framework and the reference to the people's disobedience and death. Nevertheless, the absence of γογγύζω in Psalm 78 is something that cannot be overlooked. Furthermore, the most noteworthy absence in Psalm 78, for it to be a genuine intertextual reference in the Eucharistic Discourse: Moses is not mentioned at all. When speaking of the plagues in Egypt and the miracles during the wilderness journey, not once does the psalm mention Moses in connection with any of those events. Instead, the figure mentioned towards the end of the psalm is David, and the tribe of Judah (Ps 78:67-72). The rhetorical effect of the psalm, then, is to contrast the infidelity of the people during the wilderness journey, with the Divine fidelity, the 'chosen' status of the Davidic lineage through Judah (cf. Ps 78:67-70). I would want to see a clearer case being made for Davidic elements in the Eucharistic Discourse for me to begin thinking of Ps 78 as a strong intertextual reference.

volume test analyzes the rhetorical position of the reference in the New Testament work, the *recurrence* test refers to how much stress the intertextual reference receives *throughout* the New Testament work in question. Is the ostensible Old Testament referent used once, and then promptly ignored for the rest of the work? The more atomistic an Old Testament referent, the less *recurrent* its references within the New Testament work, the less likely it is of their being a genuine connection between the two.[124] As for a recurrent theme that echoes across both the Numbers narrative and that of the Fourth Gospel, the *obduracy* of the chosen people certainly qualifies as a recurrent theme, beginning at the very outset of the Gospel: "He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him" (1:11). That the Eucharistic Discourse instantiates this *recurring* theme of the questioning of Jesus's authority throughout the Fourth Gospel,[125] an obduracy that is illustrated most clearly when so many abandon Jesus by the end of the discourse (6:59-66), makes eminent sense of the reference to the wilderness journey in Numbers, where the relationship between Moses and the people is likewise often fraught with tension.[126]

Likewise, the wilderness journey is itself a *recurring* framework within the Fourth Gospel, one which was already established at the outset both with the Tabernacle imagery as it was applied to Jesus, and the context of John the Baptist's preaching occurring in the wilderness. A more proximate wilderness framework for the Eucharistic Discourse occurs at the beginning of chapter six, in the dialogue between Jesus and Philip. The question that Jesus poses to Philip at the very

[124] As an example of distinguishing between the application of *volume* and *recurrence*: John 3:8 and Ecclesiastes 11:5 do share a general argument by analogy, or perhaps even an implied *qal wahomer*: since the human mind is incapable of understanding even as simple a thing as *wind* and how it moves and operates, how much more so would the human mind be confounded by *God* and how he operates? To make the case that the Fourth Gospel is making an intertextual reference to Ecclesiastes, however, is quite the leap. Given that Ecclesiastes is not widely sourced throughout the Old Testament, and generally handles themes at odds with other parts of Scripture, and further that Ecclesiastes does not permeate the remainder of the Fourth Gospel's discourse, this ostensible intertextual reference in the Fourth Gospel does not pass the third criterion of *recurrence*.

[125] Jn 2:18, 20; 6:41-42, 52, 60, 66; 7:15, 35; 8:22; 10:19-20.

[126] A trajectory that ends with both Moses and Jesus dying, and Israel and the Church rising by the narrative's finale (but that is a story for another time).

beginning of the chapter, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?” (6:5) echoes Moses’s own words to the Divine, “Where am I to get meat to give to all this people?” (Num 11:13) Both Moses and Jesus are confronted with multitudes in a setting without resources, and pose questions that address both the drastic needs of the people, and the surpassing scarcity of resources (Num 11:22; Jn 6:7-9). Other repeated references to this passage from Numbers include the people’s grumbling (Num 11:1; 14:2, 25-27, 29, 36; 16:11; 17:6, 20; Jn 6:41, 43, 61), the references to manna and the death of the ancestors (Num 11:7-9; Jn 6:31, 49, 58), and the references to the consumption of meat or flesh (Num 11:13; Jn 6:51). Wilderness imagery is not lacking as cues to the reader for this intertextual reference.

Leading nicely into the fourth test, which is called *thematic coherence*, referring to whether or not the intertextual reference fits into the structure of the New Testament writer’s work. This appears to overlap with the second part of the *volume* test. Is the effect of the intertextual reference consonant with the rest of the New Testament writer’s work? Does the intertextual reference cast light on how the New Testament writer’s discourse functions? The more consonance with the overall themes in the New Testament work, the more likely is the intertextual reference. Both the grumbling of the people against Moses, and the grumbling of the multitudes against Jesus, have to do with questions of legitimacy: are Moses and Jesus legitimate authorities within the community? This fundamental question of legitimate authority lies at the heart of both of these passages, and the intertextual references bring that thematic element together quite clearly.

Indeed, the consequences of failing to accept the legitimacy of divinely ordained authority are also explicitly addressed in both narratives. Later on in Numbers, the Korahite rebellion that forms against the leadership of Moses (Num 16:1-3) is alternatively swallowed up by the earth or consumed in flames (Num 16:31-35). Those who were unable to accept the authority of Moses are

ultimately unable to receive the promise of new life in the Promised Land. Likewise, in the Fourth Gospel, those who are unable to accept the authority of Jesus are ultimately unable to receive the new life he extends: "You have seen [me] and do not trust… Amen, amen, I tell you, the one who trusts has eternal life" (6:36, 47). Both the individual elements within the narrative of the wilderness journey, the tension in the relationship between interlocutors, and its overall trajectory concerning questions of authority and legitimation, complement the Eucharistic Discourse thematically.

The fifth test for an intertextual reference is referred to as the *historical plausibility* test, and asks whether the New Testament writer could have intended the meaning that this intertextual reference produces in the work. Given that human inquiry is always qualified by its own historical consciousness, the reader must determine whether the New Testament writer and the intended audience of the work could have conceivably articulated or argued for this connection. If the theological, sociological, or philosophical position being highlighted by an intertextual reference was only being contended with centuries after the text was written, the likelihood of this being a genuine intertextual reference on the part of the New Testament writer becomes less and less likely. For instance, an intertextual reference is less likely if it relies on the New Testament writer being a post-colonial deconstructionist, given that these categories of meaning only arose centuries after the text's composition. In terms of the *historical plausibility* of this intertextual reference, the interlocutors within the Eucharistic Discourse readily grasp the references to the figure of Moses and the manna that Jesus deploys, and it is certainly credible to believe that a Jewish audience would be familiar with the story of the ancestors' deaths in the wilderness. Furthermore, the ready

usage of the apocalyptic term 'Son of Man' also places the text in dialogue with Second Temple Jewish literature (6:27, 53, 62).[127]

The only problem in my proposal comes at the sixth test for intertextuality, which is called *history of interpretation*. This test presents the reader with an empirical question, and concerns whether other exegetes from history have concluded that there is this same intertextual reference in the New Testament work. Hays is quick to note that even though this test can guard the reader against many arbitrary readings of Scripture, and can do much in the way of eliminating extraneous intertextuality, *history of interpretation* is the least reliable criterion for determining a valid connection between the Old and New Testaments. One of the most problematic pitfalls in this approach to intertextuality is precisely as a result of its historicity, which concerns those Christian exegetes who did not grow up in Jewish settings. These Gentile Christians were less adept at appreciating and noting the strong Jewish theological commitments of the New Testament works they were (ostensibly) interpreting. Rather early on in the history of Christian biblical interpretation, the most prominent exegetes began reading and interpreting New Testament works within the framework of the New Testament canon, rather than interpreting the New Testament works in light of their Jewish contexts. One must keep in mind that New Testament *writers*, those who composed the texts presently contained within the New Testament canon, were not composing their works within the context of a New Testament canon.[128] For the New Testament writers, the

[127] Or, perhaps more accurately, places the text in the *aftermath* of the Second Temple Period, seeing as how the Fourth Gospel was composed after the Temple's destruction. The Fourth Gospel's connection to apocalyptic will be explored in the next chapter. In the meantime, for an extensive treatment of the Fourth Gospel's indebtedness to apocalyptic, a genre of Jewish literature generated from the Second Temple Jewish period: Catrin H. Williams and Christopher Rowland, eds., *John's Gospel and Intimations of Apocalyptic* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013).

[128] Here, I am speaking canonically. The concept of a New Testament *canon* had not occurred to the New Testament writers, even if there were those who considered another's writings to be inspired. Perhaps the most notable example of this kind of intertextual reference across the New Testament canon is to be found in the second epistle of Peter, where the letters of Paul are referred to as though they were sacred scripture: "There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the *other* scriptures" (2 Pet

canonical context for their literary endeavors would be the Old Testament. The connection between the Eucharistic Discourse and the wilderness journey in Numbers only barely passes the *history of interpretation* test. More research would have to be done on pre-critical exegesis to determine the validity of this connection. As for modern interpreters, both Brown and Moloney link the 'grumbling' to the Exodus narrative, rather than to the narrative in Numbers,[129] while O'Day and Beasley-Murray do make the connection to Numbers.[130]

Correcting the Record: The Flesh and Blood of Christ

Just as John the Baptist addresses his proclamation to the people of Israel at the outset of the Fourth Gospel (cf. 1:31), so the Eucharistic Discourse is also delivered to a Jewish audience: "He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum" (6:59). The crowds, when asking Jesus about 'the work of God,' query: "What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat'" (6:30-31). The question that the multitudes direct to Jesus reveals their viewpoint: Moses gave their ancestors manna to eat, so if Jesus wishes to be viewed with the same authority, he should work the same kind of sign. It is at this point that Jesus expands the horizon of their claim, and proceeds to qualify each of their assumptions: (1) It was not Moses who provided the bread from heaven; rather, it was the Father above. (2) It is not that the bread from heaven was *once* given; rather, the

3:16). Likewise, if we accept Marcan priority in the composition of the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew and Luke's use of Mark implies a degree of respect for its claims concerning the life of Jesus.

[129] Moloney, *John*, p. 217; Brown, *John I-XII*, p. 270.

[130] O'Day, *Luke-John*, p. 605; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 93. Hays refers to the final test for the validity of an intertextual connection as the criterion of *satisfaction*. I am uncertain as to how to apply this last criterion other than to claim that the intertextual connections have satisfied the former tests for intertextuality.

true bread from heaven is *being* given at this very moment.[131] And (3) the true bread from heaven is not manna, but the flesh and blood of Jesus, who gives eternal life.[132]

In the Old Testament, divine revelation is often described in terms of water and food, as those elements that sustain human life. Perhaps the most prominent instance of this rhetoric is delivered during the discourse between Moses and the multitudes in the wilderness[133] in Deuteronomy: "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Deut 8:3). This Eucharistic Discourse proceeds from the same conviction, of humans being sustained and nurtured by the Word of God. Just as divine revelation descends from above, so Jesus discloses that he too has "come down from heaven" (6:38), an incarnation of divine revelation, whose authority the people are called upon to trust (6:40). The Old Testament citation that Jesus avails himself in the Eucharistic Discourse to illustrate this reality is from Isaiah: "They shall all be taught by God" (6:45; cf. Isaiah 54:13). In this case there is a degree of dramatic irony in the statement, as the reader is fully aware that the one speaking is himself the Word of God (1:1-18) come into the world, yet Jesus's interlocutors within the narrative are still blind in their grumbling: "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" (6:42) This

Use of the Psalms: Bread from Heaven to Eat

καὶ ἔβρεξεν αὐτοῖς *μαννα* **φαγεῖν** καὶ **ἄρτον οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς**. (Ps 78:24)
καθώς ἐστιν γεγραμμένον· **ἄρτον** ἐκ τοῦ **οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν**. (Jn 6:31)

[131] This particular 'correction' actually works quite well in Hebrew. If the verb 'נתן' (the root for 'to give') is marked as 'נָתַן', it is in the perfect form, which is often rendered as a past indicative: "he gave." But, if the verb is pointed as 'נֹתֵן', the reading is a present participle: "he is giving" (cf. Brown, *John I-XII*, p. 262). Thus, Jesus's argument does not technically even change the wording of the text, given that Hebrew is written as a consonantal alphabet, only the vowel markings.
[132] This biblical citation from the crowds appears to be a quotation from Psalm 78:24: "He rained on them manna *to eat*, and *he gave them bread of heaven*." Mention had already been made above about the connection that Balfour made to Psalm 78 and this passage, and here it appears as though the crowds cite this psalm directly.
[133] Are we noticing a theme here?

grumbling, then, is not elicited from the crowds because Jesus cannot perform the sign. Rather, it is because they question his authority and his claim to come from heaven.

Conclusion

This intractable instinct that many commentators bring to the Eucharistic Discourse, to harmonize this account with the account found in the Institution Narrative from the Synoptic Gospels, can be overplayed. The manner in which Old Testament narratives frame the events of the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel are an integral part of how the passage's rhetoric functions. Just by way of example, observe how the Passover framing of the Institution Narrative functions: the Old Testament framework of the Passover event was one where the lamb was brought *by the people*, and slaughtered *by the people*, in order to protect them from the wrath of the tenth plague. Note that in framing Jesus's crucifixion in this manner, using this Old Testament framework, implies a degree of culpability on humanity's part, as though holding ourselves personally responsible for this tragedy: we were the ones who handed him over. By contrast, the Johannine framing of the Eucharistic Discourse does not highlight the human agency in this interchange. By identifying Jesus repeatedly with the manna, the focus is entirely on the Divine agency: the manna in the wilderness is provided *by God*, and supplied *by God* daily during the wilderness journey in order to sustain the people. In the Fourth Gospel's Eucharistic Discourse, Jesus is not some offering that the people bring to propitiate the Divine, but a gift from the Divine to the people, to give life to the world. Rather than a reliance on any sacrificial or Passover imagery in this passage, the Eucharistic Discourse portrays Jesus as true food from the Divine, and as the one who sustains the multitudes in the wilderness.

The governing image in these passages from the Fourth Gospel is not of Jesus as the Passover lamb whose blood shields us from the wrath of God. Rather, the Fourth Gospel reveals Jesus as

the bread of life, as sustenance in the wilderness, as the one who has come that we may "have life, and have it abundantly" (10:10). Rather than reading the Fourth Gospel in light of the Old Testament, all too often the practice has been to read the Fourth Gospel in light of the Synoptics. Attempting to harmonize the Institution Account in the Synoptics with the Eucharistic Discourse in the Fourth Gospel, trying to reconcile the meal that takes place before Jesus's *crucifixion* with a dialogue that takes place in the middle of Jesus's *life*, are symptoms of a larger problem, of failing to account for the Fourth Gospel's unique idiom. There are points of contact between the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel, to be sure. All of the Gospels arise from the same source, and witness to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Each, however, is speaking with a different voice. The Fourth Gospel takes the reader beyond Passover and into the wilderness, and our duty as a faithful reader is to see where that journey takes us: "Come and see" (1:39).

Chapter 3 - The *Character* of Jesus: The Apocalyptic 'Son of Man'

The unique idiom of the Fourth Gospel's text, revealed in the distinctions with the Synoptic Gospels' accounts, is also mirrored in the unique manner in which the Fourth Gospel speaks of the Eucharistic elements. The Institution Accounts according to both the Synoptic Gospels and Paul of Tarsus signify the eucharistic element with the word σῶμα, 'body.'[134] In the Fourth Gospel, the word used is σάρξ, 'flesh,' and Jesus repeats this use of the word at numerous points throughout the discourse (6:51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56), making it clear that it is the *flesh* of the Son of Man that the faithful must eat.[135] By following the use of this particular word, σάρξ, throughout the Johannine corpus,[136] an altogether novel association begins to appear. The σάρξ that has "come down from heaven" (6:38) in the Eucharistic Discourse echoes the Word that took on σάρξ in the Fourth Gospel's prologue, come down from heaven "and lived among us" (1:14).[137] The use of the word σάρξ in the Eucharistic Discourse, to speak of the one who has taken on σάρξ in order to enter the world from heaven, is language paralleled by the description of the Incarnation. Neither the Incarnation nor the Eucharistic encounter are *metaphorical* descriptions of the presence of God amongst us.[138] The entire arc of Jesus's narrative in the Fourth Gospel is the real, not metaphorical, life of the Incarnated Word made σάρξ. Just as by his Incarnation Jesus has been made truly present to the world, so in the Eucharistic encounter is the presence of the Divine made a reality within

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[134] cf. Mt 26:26; Mk 14:22; Lk 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24.

[135] Though beyond the scope of this paper, the Greek word σάρξ appears to be much closer to the Aramaic word 'בשׂר' than does the Greek word σῶμα. With its attendant Hellenistic associations, the term σῶμα does appear further removed from the Aramaic speech of a 1st century Palestinian. For instance, 'בשׂר' is used in Daniel 7:5 for the second beast: "קוּמִי אֲכֻלִי **בְּשַׂר** שַׂגִּיא:". Elsewhere in Daniel 2:11 and 4:9, respectively, the word is also used to refer to all mortal beings: "דִּי מְדָרְהוֹן עִם־**בִּשְׂרָא** לָא אִיתוֹהִי:"; "וּמִנֵּהּ יִתְּזִין כָּל־**בִּשְׂרָא**:". cf. Joseph Bonsirven, "*Hoc est corpus meum*: Recherches sur l'original Araméen," *Biblica* vol. 29, no. 3 (January 1948): pp. 205-219.

[136] I promise, I am not trying to make this many puns. It really is just happening!

[137] This incarnational sense of the word σάρξ will later appear in the Johannine epistles, when speaking of Christ Jesus who "has come in the flesh" (1 Jn 4:2).

[138] Against Webster, who argues for a metaphorical dynamic within the Eucharistic Discourse: cf. Jane S. Webster, *Ingesting Jesus: Eating and Drinking in the Gospel of John* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), p. 88. For Webster's discussion on Jesus as the Lamb of God, cf. pp. 27-35.

the believer. Yet, how does this didactic encounter between Jesus and the multitudes function within the Eucharistic Discourse?

In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus's teachings are typically imparted through *dialogue*. However, the manner in which people react to Jesus's instruction varies dramatically over the course of the Fourth Gospel. To illustrate this disparity, I have contrasted the dialogue between Jesus and the Woman in Samaria (4:1-42) with that of Jesus and the Multitudes in Galilee (6:25-71). On reading them side by side, one gets the sense that we are following a similar trajectory. There are the same usual steps: engagement, questions, misunderstanding, petition, clarification, and then resolution. Yet, one dialogue ends with an entire town proselytized, and another ends with nearly everyone abandoning Jesus, such that at the end of the Eucharistic Discourse Jesus is left speaking only to the Twelve. So, why is it that in one dialogue Jesus manages to convert an entire group of people, and in another dialogue he repels an entire group of people? How is it that this one teaching of Jesus could at once convince the multitudes to depart, but convince his followers that he is the Holy One of God? How could this teaching inspire such radically different reactions? In order to appreciate such varied reactions to this didactic encounter, we will also need to explore the manner in which the narrative frames this Eucharistic Discourse within apocalyptic presuppositions, before ultimately discerning how this intersects with the fulfillment of Torah.

The Didactic Encounter

After the miraculous feeding (6:1-11), the multitudes are fed to satisfaction (6:12-13). Afterwards, they follow Jesus to Capernaum, seeking him out for more food, though there may well also be messianic expectations motivating their travels (cf. 6:14-15). This polyvalence in motivation may well explain Jesus's cryptic response to the multitudes when they first ask him about when he arrived in Capernaum: "Truly, truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because

you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves" (6:26). In the Fourth Gospel, signs are meant to reveal the nature and character of Jesus. One can see this clearly through yet another instance of narrative connection between the account of Moses in the book of Numbers and Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. The account of Moses raising up the serpent on the pole is echoed by Jesus, who says: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (3:15). However, if we consult the Septuagint, we note that Moses does not place the bronze serpent upon a *pole*, as is written in the Hebrew (נס): rather, Moses places the serpent upon a σημεῖον, a *sign* (Num 22:9). Just as it is the sign that reveals the covenantal love and fidelity of the Divine in the Numbers account, so the signs of the Fourth Gospel are meant to reveal the person Jesus.

Recall that in the Fourth Gospel, John the Baptist's sole aim in his ministry is not to preach repentance, as was the case in the Synoptics. Instead, he claims at the outset: "I came baptizing with water *for this reason*: that he might be revealed to Israel" (1:31). What Jesus is claiming is that their experience of the miraculous feeding stopped at their stomach, and had not yet entered their hearts. What were meant as signs that would lead them to see him for who he truly is, were ignored. Or, if not ignored, at least not followed to their true goal, the person of Jesus. It is no wonder that he implores the multitudes to follow the sign in order to believe in the one whom the Father has sent (6:29).[139] While the reader may initially get the sense that the multitudes are trying

[139] Though dialogues in the Fourth Gospel will occasionally employ *non sequitur* for rhetorical effect, I must admit to sharing some of Bultmann's concerns over Jesus's response to the multitudes in this initial exchange in 6:25-26: "Jesus's reply gives no answer to the question, but accuses the crowd of seeking him out because they experienced the miraculous feeding, and – as is obviously implied – because they hope to experience more such miracles from him" (cf. Bultmann, *John*, p. 217). However, I am reluctant to follow Bultmann's methodology, which involves chopping up the Eucharistic Discourse verse by verse and re-organizing it into an order that 'makes more sense' to me. Re-ordering the discourse in order for it to 'make more sense' to me would only serve to functionally obviate the rhetoric of the text, subverting the text's meaning with my own projection of meaning. Bultmann reorders the Eucharistic Discourse: 6:27, 34-35, 30-33, 47-51a, 41-46, 36-40 (cf. Bultmann, *John*, pp. 220-237). According to Bultmann, the refrain, "I will raise him on the last day," in vv. 39, 40, and 44, the introductory comments in vv. 28-

to 'cleverly' lead the dialogue with Jesus back to getting food, this is precisely not the point being made. The claim that Jesus is making here in the Fourth Gospel is that the sign he performed should have lead them to the truth. What the reader sees, by contrast, is that the sign has instead only convinced the multitudes to ask for more signs. They are performatively *not* hearkening to the person of Jesus. By asking him to perform a sign that they might believe, they demonstrate that they are unable to recognize what the signs are intended to communicate. Rather than criticizing his interlocutors (in this instance), the Fourth Gospel has each of Jesus's responses patiently lead the multitudes deeper and deeper into the mystery of his identity, the truth of who he is.

Drink My Blood (Jn 6:52-56)

52 The Jews then disputed among themselves,
saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to
eat?" 53 So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell
you, unless you eat the flesh of the *Son of Man*
and **drink his blood**, you have no life in you. 54
Those who eat my flesh and **drink my blood**
have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the
last day; 55 for my flesh is true food and **my blood**
is true drink. 56 Those who eat my flesh and
drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.

The dialogue that takes place between Jesus and the multitudes is characterized by the same dynamic of misunderstanding that recurs throughout many of the didactic encounters within the Fourth Gospel: a perceived surface meaning leads to an alternative true meaning.[140] It appears as though nothing Jesus performed or said could prepare the multitudes for the identification that Jesus proceeds to make: that it is he himself who is the bread of life (6:35, 48), who has come down from heaven (6:51a), and who gives life to the entire world (6:51b). This causes a great deal of consternation amongst the listening multitudes, who wonder at how it would be possible for Jesus to give his flesh to eat (6:52). However, rather than proceeding to mollify the crowds, or change his previous wording so as to be more inoffensive or metaphorical, Jesus intensifies his

29, and the explicit references to the Eucharist in vv. 51b-58, are the later work of an *ecclesiastical redactor*, whose work ultimately "stands in contradiction" to the 'original' discourse (Bultmann, *John*, p. 219).

[140] Prominent examples being the dynamic between Jesus and Nicodemus (3:1-21), and Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well (4:1-42).

teaching. No longer limiting his language to the eating of flesh, Jesus expands his command in order to now include the drinking of his blood: "Amen, amen, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and *drink his blood*, you have no life in you" (6:53). Four times, in as many verses, Jesus reiterates the claim that his blood is to be consumed (6:53-56).

After hearing these words from Jesus, the crowds disperse. No longer do the crowds 'dispute' (6:52) amongst themselves about Jesus and his teaching. After commanding the crowds to drink his blood, the crowds 'turn back' (6:66), no longer quarreling amongst themselves, all leaving at that point because of this 'hard teaching' (6:60). It is not the case that Jesus's words simply failed to convince the multitudes. Rather, Jesus words definitively convince the multitudes to abandon him. Jesus then asks the Twelve whether they too want to leave, and Peter's response is that they will not abandon Jesus because: "we have come to know that you are the Holy One of God" (6:69). Given the response of the Twelve, its implicit confession of Christ's divinity, the question becomes: how does this intimation of Christ's divinity enter into the dialogue?

The Apocalyptic Encounter

Notably, the first counsel that Jesus provides to the crowds during the Eucharistic Discourse, the manner in which he foregrounds the discussion, is by making a claim about his identity, a claim that could well be passed over by the casual reader: "Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which *the Son of Man* will give you" (6:27). The character of the Son of Man, its deployment within the narrative, appears to be rather uncontroversial in this discourse. The crowds do not ask Jesus to define what 'the Son of Man' is, they do not ask Jesus to explain its function within his teachings, nor do they ask Jesus to explain his use of this term. Rather, it appears as though the Fourth Gospel deploys a term with clear

apocalyptic heritage, assuming that the reader will appreciate its significance. There are good reasons to believe so.

The question of this passage's apocalyptic dimension has implications on the intended audience, and offers a cues as to its context: that Jesus identifies himself as the 'Son of Man' clearly signals a Jewish audience.[141] The phrase 'Son of Man' would have absolutely no resonance with a Hellenistic audience, for whom the prophecies of Daniel and other more remote and obscure apocalyptic texts would have no authority, nor cultural esteem.[142] The use of 'Son of Man' here in the Fourth Gospel signals the apocalyptic dimension of this passage.[143]

There are some who would argue, however, that since the title 'Son of Man' was not proclaimed by someone other than Jesus as a Messianic title (for instance, in the Pauline literature),

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[141] cf. John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 2nd ed. [New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007], p. vii: "[T]he Fourth Gospel is a profoundly Jewish document that can be only properly understood in the light of the struggles that were endemic in the aftermath of the destruction of the Second Temple." Though the apocalyptic traditions of the Second Temple Period are the literary context for the writing of the Fourth Gospel, the Fourth Gospel itself does not strictly qualify as an apocalyptic text according to the standard definition promulgated by the *Semeia* 14: "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" (John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 3rd ed. [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2016], p. 5). I am not arguing that the Fourth Gospel is itself apocalyptic. However, its indebtedness to the apocalyptic genre has been convincingly argued by many scholars. For more on the Fourth Gospel's connections to apocalyptic within Second Temple Judaism, cf. John Ashton, "Intimations of Apocalyptic" in *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 383-406; Frederick J. Murphy, "The Gospel of John" in *Apocalypticism in the Bible and Its World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), pp. 275-278.

[142] In order to address the apocalyptic implications of the 'Son of Man' in the Fourth Gospel, the argument put forward by Geza Vermes, that the 'Son of Man' is simply a common Aramaic circumlocution for independent personal pronoun 'I' must be refuted. This theory had been abandoned for quite some time, but Vermes valiantly attempted to revive it (Geza Vermes, "Appendix E: The Use of Bar Nash/Bar Nasha in Jewish Aramaic," in *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, Matthew Black, ed., 3rd edition [Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1967], pp. 310-328; cf. Paul Haupt, "The Son of Man = Hic Homo = Ego," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. 40, no. 3/4 [1921]: pp. 183-184). Given the constraints of the paper, I will not be able to address this argument directly, but Vermes's untenable contention has been thoroughly rejected by the academic community (Fitzmyer, Jeremias, and Colpe, to name a few). For a list of references to academic works arguing against the Vermes conjecture, cf. Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Influence of Daniel on the New Testament," in *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, John J. Collins, ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), p. 94, n. 30.

[143] The desire to provide an apocalyptic framework for this passage is against, for instance, those who would 'conjecturally reconstruct' a Hellenistic foundation for the Fourth Gospel, one of the more recent examples being: Dennis R. MacDonald, "Appendix 1: A Conjectural Reconstruction of the Dionysian Gospel," in *The Dionysian Gospel: The Fourth Gospel and Euripides* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017), pp. 173-201. My argument does not rely on any ostensible 'conjectural reconstruction' in order to make my case. Rather, I am pointing to concrete literary parallels of contemporary Jewish apocalyptic themes.

'Son of Man' could not be an apocalyptic title. However, Adela Yarbro Collins makes the case that the title 'Son of Man' would not have been used because "the simple designation 'Messiah' (Christ) would have been sufficient whenever the context of Daniel 7 was not in view. This would explain why the term 'Son of Man' does not occur in Paul and the other epistles" because the audience of Paul's epistles are generally not Jews.[144] Not only does the point Yarbro Collins make explain why 'Son of Man' is not used by Paul in his work, but it also offers more support to the contention that 'Son of Man' signals a Jewish audience. Why use a term like 'Son of Man,' if the intended audience would have absolutely no cultural referent in which that term could have support or rhetorical effect? In order to argue that the 'Son of Man' sayings from the Fourth Gospel make strong apocalyptic intimations in this passage, a trajectory of usage for the phrase 'Son of Man' within the history of Jewish literature.[145] However, in order to narrow the focus, this paper will examine the manner in which this term has been employed within contemporary Jewish apocalyptic, specifically the *Book of Parables*,[146] in order to provide a stream of common usage within the Jewish community.[147]

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[144] Adela Yarbro Collins, "Daniel 7 and the Historical Jesus," in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins*, eds. Harold W. Attridge, John J. Collins, Thomas H. Tobin (Lanham, MD: The College Theology Society, 1990), p. 193.

[145] For instance, tracing the evolution of this term from a Semitic rhetorical flourish within some texts (Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Psalms, Numbers, and Job), wherein 'בן אדם' and 'בן אנוש' simply refer to a human being, and the fragility of the human condition, to its apocalyptic dimension in Daniel 7. As it happens, a robust examination of the evolution of this term across time can be found here: Sabrino Chialà, "The Son of Man: The Evolution of an Expression," in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2007), pp. 153-178.

[146] The *Book of Parables*, an originally independent Enochic text that has been preserved within 1 Enoch 37-71, "can be dated sometime around the turn of the era" (between 1st century BC and 1st century AD); cf. George Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *1 Enoch: The Hermeneia Translation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), pp. 3-5. The English translation of the *Book of Parables* will come from this Hermeneia translation by Nickelsburg. For a selection of texts in 1 Enoch specifically treating the figure of the Son of Man, see: Appendix C: The Son of Man from the Parables of Enoch.

[147] Note, I am not attempting to argue for any direct literary dependence between the *Book of Parables* and the Fourth Gospel. Rather, I am simply pointing to the apocalyptic valence of this term 'Son of Man' within the Jewish tradition in order to support the contention that the intended Jewish audience for this passage is integral to properly interpreting Jesus's command to 'drink my blood.'

The first explicitly apocalyptic use of the figure of the 'Son of Man' occurs in Daniel 7, with the vision of the Ancient of Days on a throne, and the 'One like a Son of Man' approaching the throne (Daniel 7:13). Depending on the recension of the Greek text of Daniel, Daniel 7:14 indicates that the 'Son of Man' is alternately given either *authority*[148] or *dominion*, honor and kingship.[149] *Judgment*, however, remains the purview of the Ancient of Days: "I kept watching until thrones were set, and an *ancient of days* sat… and a court sat in judgment, and books were opened" (Dan 7:9,10).[150] Paralleling the frameworks that the Fourth Gospel and the *Book of Parables* offers for this 'Son of Man' figure is illuminating on a number of fronts. Though the 'Son of Man' figure from the book of Daniel may lack the prerogative to judge, the figure develops across Jewish literature in the Second Temple Period into that of an eschatological judge, finding one of its fulfilments in the figure of Jesus Christ as depicted in the Gospels.[151]

The Fourth Gospel depicts Jesus as invoking the 'Son of Man' figure throughout the narrative (1:51; 3:13,14; 5:27; 6:27,54,63; 8:28; 12:23,34*2; 13:31), indicating that an apocalyptic dimension permeates the entirety of the Gospel. In the following section, the focus will remain on those three references to the 'Son of Man' within the Eucharistic Discourse, only touching upon other references to the 'Son of Man' from within the Fourth Gospel insofar as they illuminate the meaning of 'Son of Man' within the eucharistic encounter.

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[148] καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ *ἐξουσία*, OG.

[149] καὶ αὐτῷ ἐδόθη ἡ *ἀρχὴ*, καὶ ἡ τιμὴ, καὶ ἡ βασιλεία, Θ

[150] ἐθεώρουν ἕως ὅτε θρόνοι ἐτέθησαν, καὶ *παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν* ἐκάθητο… καὶ κριτήριον ἐκάθισε καὶ βίβλοι ἠνεῴχθησαν. The text of the Septuagint is taken from: George R. Lanier and William A. Ross, *Septuaginta: A Reader's Edition*, vols. I-II (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2018). The English translation of the Septuagint, unless otherwise noted, is taken from: Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[151] Notably, however, the *Book of Parables* and the Gospels arrive at different conclusions as to the identity of the Son of Man (Enoch vs. Jesus). This conflation of the Ancient of Days in the book of Daniel, who is seated on a throne (Dan 7:9-10), and the Son of Man figure as articulated in the *Book of Parables*, becomes explicit: "And the Lord of Spirits seated *him* upon the throne of his glory, and the spirit of righteousness was poured upon *him*" (1 Enoch 62:2).

The 'Son of Man' in the Fourth Gospel

The references to the 'Son of Man' within the Fourth Gospel are deployed in order to indicate three distinct but interconnected visions of this messianic figure from the apocalyptic tradition: (1) the 'Son of Man' will provide food, and be a source of life, to those who have faith in him; concomitantly, those who do not 'partake' will not have life; (2) the 'Son of Man' is approved by the Divine, and shares in (or, in some cases, is given) the Divine's role as judge; and (3) the 'Son of Man' is of heavenly origin, and indeed pre-exists Creation.[152] In this section, all three of these features of the 'Son of Man' from the Fourth Gospel will be paralleled with passages from the *Book of Parables* in order to support a common Jewish apocalyptic stream of tradition.[153]

THE EUCHARISTIC 'SON OF MAN'

"Amen amen, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for **the food that endures for eternal life**, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal" (6:26-27).

"Amen amen, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, **you have no life in you**" (6:53).

"Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man **ascending to where he was before**?" (6:61-61)

Within the sixth chapter of the Fourth Gospel, all of the three references to the 'Son of Man' take place within the Eucharistic Discourse. After having

[152] cf. Seyoon Kim, *The 'Son of Man' as the Son of God* (Tübingen, DE: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), p. 2: "In claiming this divine prerogative Jesus classes himself as the Son of Man into the category of the divine… So already in 1927 O. Procksch suggested that here 'the Son of Man' stands for the Son of God." For an instance within the Fourth Gospel, where it appears as though the *Son of Man* and the *Son of God* are collapsed, cf. John 5:25-27. There is, however, excellent scholarship that takes a radically different position, seeing the figure of the Son of Man deployed in such a way as to emphasize Jesus's humanity: "'[T]he Son of Man,' so far from being a title evolved from current apocalyptic thought by the early Church and put onto the lips of Jesus, is among the most important symbols used by Jesus himself to describe his vocation and that of those whom he summoned to be with him" (Charles F.D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1977], p. 22). According to this stream of scholarship, the use of 'Son of Man' within the Gospels did not arise from apocalyptic considerations: "The expression 'one like a son of man,' originally used to tell the suffering righteous Israelites that God would ultimately grant them all authority, may have been used by Jesus and then recast by all four evangelists in a clumsy Greek expression, reflecting an original Aramaic, '*the* Son of *the* Man' (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου)" (Francis J. Moloney, "Constructing Jesus and the Son of Man," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 75, no. 4 [2013]: p. 735). For an extended treatment on the humanity of the Son of Man figure in the Fourth Gospel: cf. Francis Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007).

[153] For a list of all the references to the Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel, see: Appendix D: The *Son of Man* from the Fourth Gospel.

fed the multitudes in the wilderness (6:1-13), Jesus is proclaimed as "the prophet who has come into the world" (6:14), and the crowds attempt to make him their king (6:15). Therefore, their desire to have Jesus as their king arises from their conviction of his status as 'the prophet who has come into the world,' a uniquely Jewish consideration, elicited by their faith in the promises of the Scriptures.[154] Already in the narrative framing we have strong Jewish connection and motivation driving the interaction in this passage.

When Jesus walks across the waters (6:16-21), the multitudes sought after him, and after coming upon him, address the 'rabbi' as to how he arrived there. Jesus does not reply to their explicit question, but rather addresses their underlying motive, the intention behind their presence: "You are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves" (6:26b). And it is at this point that Jesus makes his first reference to being the 'Son of Man': "Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the *Son of Man* will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal" (John 6:27).

With this saying we have the first clear intimations of apocalyptic within the discourse.[155] Here Jesus makes an unambiguous claim about his capacity to save, and what is further, that he is the one who will deliver eternal life in his role as *Son of Man*. He is the one who will provide "the food enduring unto life eternal" (6:27).[156] That salvation is Jesus's alone to extend and provide is made clear when he states that if you do not eat his flesh or drink his blood, you "have no life in

[154] It is noteworthy that this promise of the coming prophet is reiterated throughout this early section of the Fourth Gospel (1:21, 25; 6:14; 7:40, 52), yet not once does the Fourth Gospel ever quote the passage from Deuteronomy from whence this prophetic expectation arose, speaking particularly of the prophet that is to come: "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet" (Deut 18:15). The people in the narrative readily appreciate the significance of this promise, yet the Fourth Gospel does not feel the need to explicitly cite it.

[155] Note, there have already been numerous 'Son of Man' references throughout the Fourth Gospel, already priming the reader to expect this apocalyptic dimension from dialogic encounters with Jesus.

[156] "With the Son of Man they will eat, and they will lie down and rise up forever and ever" (1 Enoch 62:14).

you" (6:53).[157] Given the interplay between judgment and salvation, the abundance of life and its absence, and the role Jesus plays in this regard, this passage serves to highlight Jesus's role as an eschatological judge, which is itself a feature characteristic of the *Son of Man* from the Book of Parables.[158] Further, Jesus's salvific function, and role as eschatological judge is as a result of the Divine having 'sealed' him (6:27), a similar dynamic described in the *Book of Parables*:

> In that hour the Son of Man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits. Even before the sun and the constellations were created, before the stars of heaven were made, his name was named before the Lord of Spirits. He will be a staff for the righteous, that they may lean on him and not fall; He will be the light of the nations, and he will be a hope for those who grieve in their hearts. All who dwell on the earth will fall down and worship before him, and they will glorify and bless and sing hymns to the name of the Lord of Spirits. For this (reason) the Son of Man was chosen and hidden in his presence, before the world was created and forever. And the wisdom of the Lord of Spirits has revealed him to the holy and the righteous; for he has preserved the lot of the righteous… For in his name they are saved, and he is the vindicator of their lives (1 Enoch 48:2-7).

This role in which the Fourth Gospel casts Jesus in the Eucharistic Discourse is not incidental, but integral to the whole trajectory of Jesus's mission. Earlier in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is given "*authority* to execute judgment" by the Father precisely because of his identity as *Son of Man* (5:27).[159] Beginning with the Old Greek recension of Daniel, wherein the one like the Son of Man had *authority* given to him (Dan 7:14),[160] paralleled with the enthronement of the *Son of Man* described within the *Book of Parables*, concomitantly investing him with the authority of the eschatological judge, the reader witnesses the full development of this Son of Man figure across the Jewish apocalyptic tradition.[161]

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[157] "And the righteous and the chosen will be saved on that day; and the faces of the sinners and the unrighteous they will henceforth not see" (1 Enoch 62:13).

[158] "And the Lord of Spirits seated him upon the throne of his glory, and the spirit of righteousness was poured upon him, and the word of his mouth will slay all the sinners and all the unrighteous will perish from his presence" (1 Enoch 62:2).

[159] καὶ *ἐξουσίαν* ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κρίσιν ποιεῖν ὅτι *υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου* ἐστίν, 'and he has given him *authority* to execute judgment, because he is the *Son of Man*' (John 5:27).

[160] καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ *ἐξουσία*, 'and he gave *authority* to him' (Dan 7:14).

[161] "And they had great joy, and they blessed and glorified and exalted, because the name of that Son of Man had been revealed to them. And he sat on the throne of his glory, and *the whole judgment was given to the Son of Man*… For

As for the last reference to the 'Son of Man' in the Eucharistic Discourse, it is elicited when Jesus responds to the complaints of the multitudes at the close of the dialogue. After having heard his instruction, the multitudes, amongst themselves, ultimately conclude that this is a 'hard teaching' (6:60), asking each other incredulously who could possibly accept it. So Jesus responds: "What if you were to see the *Son of Man* ascending to where he was before?" (6:62) Jesus's question reveals certain attributes about the *Son of Man* that appear earlier in the Fourth Gospel: "No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven: the *Son of Man*" (3:13). Both of these verses describe the *Son of Man* as one who ascends,[162] and both likewise indicate that heaven is also the origin of the *Son of Man*, where "he was before." The ascension and heavenly origin of the Fourth Gospel's *Son of* Man are notable features shared by the *Son of Man* from the *Book of Parables* (cf. 1 Enoch 48:3).[163]

That the Fourth Gospel's *Son of Man* is so closely tied to the bread of life, which itself also *descends* from heaven (6:32-33, 41-42, 51-52, 58), serves to further highlight the *Son of Man*'s heavenly origin, a characteristic of the 'Son of Man' that is also paralleled within the *Book of Parables*.[164] That the *Book of Parables* so closely relates the *Son of Man* with the Divine is also a feature shared by the Fourth Gospel, where the life-giving agency of the Father and the Son are routinely collapsed throughout the narrative (5:21, 24; 6:57; 17:2). Jesus's divinity is further supported in the Eucharistic Discourse by one of the more prominent instances of Johannine irony, when Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah: "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught

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that Son of Man has appeared, and he has sat down on the throne of his glory. And the word of that Son of Man will go forth and will prevail in the presence of the Lord of Spirits." (1 Enoch 69:26-27,29).

[162] ἀναβαίνω is the Greek verb underlying both verses.

[163] An argument could also be made that these two verses from the Fourth Gospel (3:13; 6:60) also point to Jesus's pre-existence, though admittedly that may well take a bit more work.

[164] "And after this, while he was living, his name was *lifted up into the presence of that Son of Man* and into the presence of the Lord of Spirits from among those who dwell on the earth" (1 Enoch 70:1).

by God'" (6:45a; cf. Isa 54:13).[165] At the very moment that Jesus is imparting instruction, at the very moment he is revealing his teachings to the people, in quoting this passage of Scripture the Fourth Gospel has depicted Jesus as performatively enacting this verse's content, thus further reinforcing his divine identity. Even the association of food or eating highlighted in this passage from the Fourth Gospel is a feature paralleled by the *Son of Man* from the *Book of Parables*.[166]

The casual manner in which Jesus references himself as the 'Son of Man,' and the lack of engagement on the part of his interlocutors to inquire into the use of this term, seems to indicate a ready familiarity on their part. For the Fourth Gospel to have used the term *Son of Man* with such relative ease across all the numerous contexts in which it is deployed, there must have been some parallel documentation of this term used in a similar manner within other communities:

> This conclusion [that the 'Son of Man' is pre-Christian] is supported by the way in which Jesus, in the Gospels, generally treats the Son of Man as a known quantity, never bothering to explain the term, and the way in which certain of this figure's characteristics, such as his identity with the Messiah or his prerogative of judging, are taken for granted. With apologies to Voltaire, we may say that if the Enochic Son of Man had not existed, it would have been necessary to invent him to explain the Son of Man sayings in the Gospels.[167]

The belief in a second divinity was not a universally held opinion amongst Jews of this time period, but that it was held by some number of Jews is palpably the case. That is, the use of the 'Son of Man' within the Gospels, along with the evidence from the *Book of Parables*, indicates that the concept of a second divinity was a viewpoint held within Second Temple Judaism before the advent of Jesus, and places the Fourth Gospel squarely within this Jewish apocalyptic stream

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[165] Though this concept that the chosen people would be taught by the Divine without mediation will appear in other parts of the prophetic literature (see Jer 31:33-34, for instance), the Greek in this verse from the Fourth Gospel is much closer to what is found in the Septuagint of Isaiah. That the Fourth Gospel follows the Greek recension of Isaiah is particularly clear in this case, as the Hebrew of Isaiah claims that they will all be taught by 'יהוה', which the Septuagint rather peculiarly does not render as κύριος, but as θεός (cf. LXX Isa 54:13, Jn 6:45a).

[166] 1 Enoch 62:14; 69:24. To be clear, the Fourth Gospel has clearly provided a novel presentation of this theme.

[167] Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2000), p. 530.

of thought, or at the very least indebted to this Jewish apocalyptic framework in order for its language and rhetoric to have had any impact.[168]

Another element of the Son of Man that should not be neglected, in that it is deployed even within the Eucharistic Discourse, is that of his celestial origin and destiny (cf. 6:62). Early on the Fourth Gospel, the 'Son of Man' is spoken of as being *lifted up*: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (3:14-15). Though there is a clear intertextual reference to the passage in Numbers where Moses places the bronze serpent on the pole (Num 21:6-9), Hays detects a further intertextual reference in this passage from the Fourth Gospel to the book of Isaiah. When the Fourth Gospel refers to the Son of Man 'being lifted up' (ὑψωθῆναι) in this passage, one may well have expected that the passage from Numbers would likewise have used the same language to speak of the bronze serpent, of it having been 'lifted up' by Moses. What one sees instead is that nowhere in the Numbers narrative is the bronze serpent said to be 'lifted up' by Moses, at all. Instead, Moses is said to 'make stand' (ἵστημι) the bronze serpent upon the pole. Whence, then, this language of ascension in the Fourth Gospel? Hays has suggested that the Fourth Gospel's use of the Greek verb ὕψωθῆναι is being deployed in order to reference the Suffering Servant from

[168] Again, I would reiterate that I am not claiming direct dependence on Enochic literature. The apocalyptic traditions had a great deal of diversity in expression, and to speak of a monolithic movement with a singular genealogical trajectory would be misleading: "It should be obvious that it is a gross over-simplification to speak of 'the apocalyptic movement.' At the least, we must allow for several movements, at different times, not necessarily connected with each other genetically" (John J. Collins, "Genre, Ideology, and Social Movements in Jewish Apocalypticism," in *Seers, Sybils and Sages in Hellenistic-Roman Judaism* [New York, NY: Brill, 1997], p. 37). The case, however, has been made for some degree of direct dependence. James Charlesworth suggests that there may well be interaction between Enochic and Johannine literature: "Given the intermittent polemical nature of *1 Enoch* and of the Fourth Gospel, I am convinced that it is fruitful to ponder to what extent the Enoch traditions have given rise to some expressions and thought in John" (James H. Charlesworth, "Did the Fourth Evangelist Know the Enoch Tradition?", in *Jesus as Mirrored in John* [New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2019], p. 299).

Isaiah: "Behold, my servant will understand, and will be lifted up (ὑψωθήσεται) and will be glorified exceedingly" (Isa 52:13 LXX).[169]

Though this lexical connection to Isaiah may appear to be somewhat tenuous, based on the connection to just a single verb, it should be kept in mind that talk of ascension associated with the figure of the Son of Man is peppered throughout the Fourth Gospel. Indeed, the verse in the Fourth Gospel directly prior to this parallel to Moses and the bronze serpent speaks of the ascension of the Son of Man: "No one has *ascended* into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man" (3:13). Both the Son of Man[170] and Jesus[171] are depicted as being 'lifted up' within the Fourth Gospel.[172] Likewise, within the Eucharistic Discourse, the Son of Man is said to "*ascend* to where he was before" (6:62; cf. 20:17). So Hays's suggestion of an intertextual connection to the Suffering Servant from Isaiah who is 'raised up' is not without merit, as it taps into a running theme throughout the Fourth Gospel.

I would like to suggest another connection that is being made by use of the verb ἀναβαίνω, 'to ascend,' and that is a potential connection to the Temple. It should be noted that the Fourth Gospel employs the standard Semitic idiom of referring to travel to Jerusalem as a kind of 'ascent': "Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus *went up* to Jerusalem" (2:13; cf. 5:1; 7:8*2; 10*2; 11:55; 12:20). However, ascent is a matter of degree, of proximity to the Temple, and indeed the Fourth Gospel also refers to travel even within Jerusalem as an *ascent* if one goes to the Temple area: "About midway through the festival, Jesus *went up* to the Temple and began teaching" (7:14). Just as Jewish multitudes would ascend to the city of Jerusalem, the city of the Temple, the place

[169] Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, p. 284.
[170] "When you have *lifted up* the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am" (8:28).
[171] "When I am *lifted up* from the earth, I will draw all people to myself" (12:32).
[172] On the identity of Jesus with the Son of Man and the Messiah, notice how the Fourth Gospel has Jesus's interlocutors immediately link all three of these within a single response, even though Jesus at that point was speaking explicitly about himself (cf. 12:32): "The crowd answered him, 'We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?'" (12:34)

of Divine residence, so the Fourth Gospel depicts Jesus, as the Son of Man, on a trajectory that will ultimately be fulfilled with his ascent and return to heaven, the *true* place of Divine residence. Apocalyptic literature is full of references to a celestial Temple,[173] so this parallel between the people's pilgrimage to Jerusalem as an *ascent* to the Temple, and Jesus's journey through life culminating in his *ascent* to heaven would be picked up by the reader. As though making this point for me, the Fourth Gospel makes this explicit: "No one has *ascended* into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man" (3:13).

This trajectory of 'descent and return' is eerily echoed in some apocalyptic literature, for instance, in reference to the place of Wisdom among the people of Israel: "Wisdom could not find a place in which she could dwell; but a place was found for her in the heavens. Then Wisdom went out to dwell with the children of the people, but she found no dwelling place. So Wisdom returned to her place and she settled permanently among the angels" (1 Enoch 42:1-2). That Wisdom would find its proper place among the people of Israel is not foreign to the Jewish tradition.[174] However, the novelty in the Fourth Gospel is that such a Divine figure would come as a person.[175]

[173] Compare descriptions of the outer sanctuary of the Temple (1 Kgs 6:14) and the Holy of Holies (1 Kgs 6:19), with the same division, of two houses in the heavens, in the vision of Enoch (1 Enoch 14:10ff.): cf. Martha Himmelfarb, "The Heavenly Temple, the Fate of Souls after Death, and Cosmology," in *The Apocalypse: A Brief History* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 75-95. For more celestial visions of Temples, see also: Ezek 40:1ff.; Testament of Levi 3:4; 18:5ff.; Rev 11:1ff.

[174] "Then the Creator of all things gave me [Wisdom] a command, and my Creator chose the place for my tent (τὴν *σκηνήν* μου; cf. Jn 1:14, where the Word is described as *ἐσκήνωσεν*, 'tabernacling,' among us). He said, 'Make your dwelling in Jacob, and in Israel receive your inheritance'" (Sirach 24:8). For an even stronger connection between Johannine conceptions of Jesus and the Wisdom tradition exemplified in this passage, note that "the book of the covenant of the Most High God, the law that Moses commanded us" testifies to Wisdom (Sir 24:23), in much the same way that the law of Moses is said to testify to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel.

[175] Though, notice how Jesus's trajectory of descent and ascent, his Incarnation, rejection, and subsequent exaltation to the heavens, is paralleled in Wisdom's search for a dwelling in 1 Enoch, and subsequent return to the celestial realm 'among the angels' (1 Enoch 42:2).

The Sovereignty of the Messiah

From the text, it would appear as though Jesus understood the phrase 'Son of Man' to refer to a being to whom power had been delegated by the Divine, a belief that would have been supported by the words of Daniel 7 concerning the 'One Like a Son of Man' who would receive authority from the Divine, and this belief in the divinity of the *Son of Man* is paralleled in the *Book of Parables*. It should be clear that the presence of 'Son of Man' passages within the Synoptic Gospels, and the Fourth Gospel, along with the *Book of Parables*, does not in itself provide any evidence for literary dependence between these discrete traditions. However, their shared interpretation of this figure of the 'Son of Man,' across numerous dimensions, does provide an apocalyptic framework for receiving these texts.

What appears to be the case, then, is that the person of Jesus, and his nature as Christ and Son of Man, was received within a context that already had a rather well-developed 'Christology,' so to speak. Now some would prefer not to speak of 'Christology' within the Gospels, or would at least qualify its application when reading the Gospels, "because systematic, philosophical reflection on the nature of Christ had not yet begun in the movement carried on by the followers of Jesus."[176] This contention should, however, be qualified: Christology, a sustained reflection on the messianic fulfillment of prophecy, and the nature of this messianic fulfillment, has long pre-dated both the arrival of Jesus and the birth of the Church. To put it bluntly, the Jewish people did not need Christians in order to begin reflecting on a messianic figure. Though it is certainly the case that the Christological controversies centering on the person of Jesus took place centuries after the composition of the Gospels, this present work proceeds from an almost opposite conviction about the nature of Christology. The operating claim within this work, then, is that the

[176] Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), p. 44.

life, teaching, and nature of Jesus as articulated in the Gospels are not to be received merely as *grounds* for Christological reflection, but also as the *fulfillment* of Christological reflection within a particular stream of the Jewish apocalyptic tradition.[177]

Despite the laudable desire to restrain applying anachronistic terminology from later centuries to this text of the Fourth Gospel, it is clear that from reading the broader categories of apocalyptic literature within Second Temple Judaism that one cannot help but see such Christological categories nascent within both the Gospels and extra-biblical texts. That the idea of a Messiah preceded the life of Jesus, and that the Fourth Gospel perceives in this Jesus of Nazareth the fulfillment of the messianic expectations within this shared Jewish apocalyptic tradition. Jesus, then, is not a figure who *provokes* these messianic interpretations, but the one who is claimed to have *fulfilled* this stream of Christology, this stream of pre-Christian reflections on the Divine Messiah.[178] To confine the discourse on Christology to an exclusively Christian phenomenon would be tantamount to obscuring an important dimension of the Jewish religious tradition.

The strong parallels to be made between Jesus's sovereignty within the Eucharistic Discourse from the Fourth Gospel, along with those same claims to sovereignty being proclaimed of the *Son of Man* in Daniel 7:13-14, along with the passages from contemporary apocalyptic literature such as those found in the *Book of Parables*, together provide strong evidence that the *Son of Man* was understood to be a messianic title by both the writer of the Fourth Gospel, and the Fourth Gospel's intended audience. Throughout the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is proclaimed as the *Son*

[177] cf. Daniel Boyarin, "Sovereignty of the Son of Man: Reading Mark 2," in *The Interface of Orality and Writing: Speaking, Seeing, Writing in the Shaping of New Genres*, eds. Robert B. Coote, Annette Weissenrieder (Tübingen, DE: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), pp. 353-355.

[178] cf. Morna Dorothy Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark: A Study of the Background of the Term 'Son of Man' and its use in St. Mark's Gospel* (London, UK: SPCK, 1967), p. 113: "It is, indeed, only as Messiah – i.e. as one who is leader and representative of his nation – that the one like a Son of Man in Daniel can be interpreted as an individual. Thus, when Enoch, retaining the Danielic context, regards the Son of Man as an individual, he concludes that he is none other than the Elect and Anointed One. Later references in the gospel suggest that Jesus, too, had Daniel 7 in mind, and that the Son of Man, if he is an individual, must therefore also be the Messiah."

of Man,[179] convincingly depicted as fulfilling this pre-Christian tradition of the role of the Messiah. Within the apocalyptic tradition, the *Son of Man* was not merely a designation for some human prophet or liberator. Rather, the *Son of Man* was understood to be an incarnated second divinity who would bring salvation to all the world, and it is this figure whom the intended readers interact with on approaching the eucharistic encounter from the Fourth Gospel.

[179] In the Fourth Gospel, the designation 'Son of Man' exalts the person of Jesus in an overwhelming variety of ways: as Jacob's ladder (1:51); as one who has descended from, and will ascend to heaven (3:13; 6:62); as the wilderness serpent who brings healing, and be raised up (3:14); as one authorized to judge at the resurrection (5:27); as enduring food (6:27); as lifted up (8:28); as receiving worship (9:35, 38); as one to be glorified (12:23; 13:31); the Christ (12:34). There is a great deal more to discuss about how the 'Son of Man' functions within the Fourth Gospel, so this work is deliberately focusing on those instances wherein the Son of Man coincides with the Eucharistic Discourse.

Conclusion: The Eucharistic Encounter in the Fourth Gospel

The broader implications of the Eucharistic Discourse, itself is a significant turning point in the Fourth Gospel, can only be received and understood because of its Jewish context and audience, highlighted through the Fourth Gospel's indebtedness to the apocalyptic framework. As the dialogue progresses, the vocabulary Jesus uses moves further and further away from the metaphorical language of: 'whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty' (6:35), to the visceral language of: 'unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you' (6:53). As though to eliminate any doubt in his interlocutors' minds, Jesus insists that his flesh is 'true food,' and that likewise that his blood is 'true drink' (6:55). The close parallel between the Fourth Gospel's depiction of Jesus with the phrase 'my flesh, for the life of the world,'[180] and the Pauline eucharistic formula 'my body, for you,'[181] can obscure one obvious distinction: in the Fourth Gospel, the very purpose of the flesh of the Son of Man is that it brings *life*, not that it is being handed over to death 'on behalf of' another.[182] The language that Jesus uses in the Eucharistic Discourse to describe the food that he brings changes, from Jesus alternatively claiming that 'I am the bread of life' (6:35, 38, 41) to: '*This* is the bread that comes down from heaven' (6:50, 51, 58), much as Jesus himself has come down from heaven (6:38), from where he was 'before' (6:62).

[180] Jn 6:51: "*ἡ σάρξ μού* ἐστιν ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς."
[181] 1 Cor 11:24: "Τοῦτό *μού* ἐστιν *τὸ σῶμα* τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν."
[182] This actually boils down to what can appear to be a rather nuanced distinction in the prepositional use of ὑπέρ in these two verses. The Pauline sense indicates that ὑπέρ is being used with a sacrificial meaning, with the sense of his body being given 'on behalf of' the other (1 Cor 11:24), much the same way ὑπέρ is used in other parts of Pauline literature. For instance, when Paul rhetorically asks: "εἰ ὁ θεὸς *ὑπὲρ* ἡμῶν, τίς *καθ'* ἡμῶν" (Rom 8:31), the use of ὑπέρ is being contrasted with the preposition κατά, 'on behalf of' contrasted with 'against,' which gets us the translation: "If God [acts] on our behalf, who is against us?" Paul follows this rhetorical question by pointing out how God has acted on our behalf (cf. Rom 8:32). This use of ὑπέρ in Paul should be distinguished from the Johannine use of ὑπέρ in the Eucharistic Discourse. In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus does not claim to give his flesh 'on behalf of' the life of the world (cf. 6:51). The Eucharistic Discourse makes it clear that Jesus is not *giving* his flesh away to someone else 'on behalf of' the life of humanity, in some kind of sacrificial dynamic. Rather, it is that his flesh and blood, in this Eucharistic encounter, is the very thing that *gives* life to the world (cf. 6:27, 33, 35, 48).

That the encounter with Jesus in the Fourth Gospel involves the sharing of Divine life is not reserved to the Eucharistic Discourse, but is an intentional and programmatic theme running throughout the Fourth Gospel. The flesh of Jesus, paralleled with the image of the mana sustaining the Hebrews in the wilderness, is offered as the life of the world, as the food of eternal life. What makes this passage so unique is that the language moves away from the metaphorical. It is no longer his 'life' that Jesus gives in order to preserve the life of the world, but more concretely and viscerally it is his 'flesh.' But Jesus goes further by also including his blood under the same rubric, as what bestows life to the one who drinks it.

Notice how in the Synoptics and Paul, the eucharistic wine signifies 'the blood of the covenant.'[183] This identification is important, because the blood offered in sacrifice was used to *seal* the covenant according to the Old Testament paradigm.[184] But in the Fourth Gospel's Eucharistic Discourse, no mention of covenant is made whatsoever. Indeed, in the Eucharistic Discourse, it is not the *covenant* that is sealed, but the *Son of Man*, and it is not *we* who seal him, but the *Father* in heaven: "Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his *seal*" (6:27). The framework is no longer of *our* sacrifice sealing a covenant with the Divine, but of the Divine sealing his own offering to us. This is clearly the case, as the Fourth Gospel ties together both the eschatological dimension and the life-giving nature of the eucharistic encounter. In the flesh and blood of the *Son of Man*, one receives eternal life. In the Fourth Gospel, this is explicitly tied to a pledge of security on the eschatological horizon, as well: "The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting, and I will raise that one on the last day" (6:54).

[183] Mk 14:24; Mt 26:28; Lk 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25.
[184] Though, to be sure, this connection between the shedding of blood and the sealing of a covenant is echoed in New Testament texts, as well (cf. Heb 9:18-22).

The eucharistic verses in this passage are elevated within this apocalyptic tradition in order to bring about a truly universal turn. The Messianic banquet is 'the bread of God, the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to *the world*" (6:33). Not exclusively extended to the people of Israel, but to all of humanity. It is the sustenance that will nourish all of humanity in our pilgrimage through the wilderness. Fulfilling us to the fullest, so that we are never hungering, nor thirsting, again (6:35), into a fullness of life wherein death has no place, 'so that one may eat of it and not die' (6:50b). This nourishment from above allows the faithful into genuine communion with the Divine (6:56), both in this life and in the life to come, in the resurrection (6:39, 54). Jesus offers himself in these elements to give life to the world (6:51), becoming the bread and drink that brings salvation. Though other food may sustain you physically, no other food can obtain for one eternal life (6:53). However, 'whoever eats of this bread,' the flesh and blood of the Word, the one through whom all things were made, who enlightens all of humanity (1:3, 9), 'will live forever' (6:51, 58). And to the one who approaches him, Jesus affirms and promises: "anyone who accompanies me I will never drive away" (6:37).[185] Yet, how does this life that Jesus imparts on the believer function within this eucharistic framework of consuming the blood of Jesus?

Reconciling the eucharistic encounter with the Torah prohibition on the consumption of blood begins by understanding the *intent* of the Torah laws on purity of substance. The text of Scripture makes clear that within the metaphysical framework of the Old Testament, "the life of every creature is its blood" (Lev 17:14).[186] If the life of every creature is its blood, then by drinking the blood of another one is commingling one's life essence with that of another. By drinking the

[185] The sense of the verb ἔρχομαι, of 'accompanying' rather than 'approaching,' makes sense of the peripatetic nature of following Jesus, with the image of the disciples accompanying Jesus on his journeys. The image of Jesus guiding the disciples works particularly well as a visual echo of the pillar of light that accompanied and guided the Hebrews in the wilderness (Num 14:14), who were fed and sustained solely through the grace of the Divine.
[186] Deut 12:23.

blood of an animal, the person is effectively corrupting his or her essence, made as it is in the image of God, with that of an animal. This intermingling of life would have struck Jews as particularly offensive, because as is readily apparent after reading the juridical section of the Torah, there are numerous and varied laws that proscribe the Jewish people from intermingling across a number of dimensions.[187]

For instance, across the zoological dimension, Jews are prohibited from intermingling species of animals, breeding one *kind* with another.[188] In the agricultural dimension, Torah prohibits sowing a field with two distinct *kinds* of seeds,[189] nor are Jews allowed to plow a field with two different *kinds* of animals.[190] This prohibition on intermingling extends even to how one should dress, as Torah prohibits the Jew from wearing clothes woven of two different *kinds* of fabric.[191] Given the numerous prohibitions on intermingling throughout Torah, the consumption of blood can be properly understood as the most offensive violation of this general principle.[192] If

[187] *Intermingling* as a concept in Jewish purity is attested to not only from these biblical sources, but is a continuing source of reflection in Jewish communities in the Second Temple Period, and features prominently in the writings of the Dead Sea Scrolls: "These are some of our pronouncements concerning the Law of God; specifically, some of the pronouncements concerning works of the Law which we have determined … and all of them concern defiling mixtures" (4Q394 frag. 3 col i:1-2; cf. 4Q396 frag. 1-2 col. iv:76-77a [against interbreeding animals], 77b-78a [against wearing a garment of mixed fabric], 78b [against sowing a field with two kinds of plants], 79-81 [against mixing the holy 'seed' of Israel with foreign wives]). Indeed, when the Divine is casting a spirit of confusion upon the people, the language of 'mixing' is invoked to signify the chaos (cf. Ps Sol 8:14, κεράννυμι). That *intermingling* is cast in a negative light is no great surprise, since 'holiness' is often cast in converse terms, as a kind of *separation* (cf. David A. deSilva, "Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, eds. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker [Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003], pp. 420-431). For a more extended treatment on the manner in which purity regulations were received during the Second Temple Period: Hannah K. Harrington, "Interpreting Leviticus in the Second Temple Period: Struggling with Ambiguity," in *Reading Leviticus: A Conversation with Mary Douglas*, ed. John F.A. Sawyer (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp. 214-229.

[188] Lev 19:19.

[189] Lev 19:19; Deut 22:9.

[190] Deut 22:10.

[191] Lev 19:19; Deut 22:11.

[192] Another promising interpretation of the prohibition on consuming meat with blood notes that the offense may well have been elicited by the unnatural mixture of life (blood) and death (flesh) in the very same substance that one consumes: "You must not consume the *life* with the *flesh*" (Deut 12:23b). For instance, when we bring the taboo on intermingling to the law against cooking a kid in its mother's milk (Exod 23:19), we note the unnatural mixture of "cooking the dead kid in the very milk that was its life and sustenance… The dead animal and the blood do not go together, just as the dead kid and the milk do not" (Calum M. Carmichael, *The Laws of Deuteronomy* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974], pp. 152-153). This intermingling taboo, against the mixing of different kinds, extends

these other instances of intermingling are prohibited, and they only affect external, worldly matters, how one dresses, or how one plows a field, then certainly an act that violates the integrity of the self, intermingling one's life with the life of an animal, would be that much more of a violation.

The Union with the Divine

However, that the consumption of blood intermingles the essence and life of two beings is the very reason Jesus commands the multitudes to drink his blood. Within the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is depicted as having eternal life, indeed of *being* eternal life.[193] The language and rhetoric that Jesus uses in this instance, of exhorting the multitudes to eat his flesh and drink his blood, makes perfect sense within this framework. With the metaphysical framework of the Old Testament, in order for the Eucharistic encounter to fully unite humanity with the Divine, the multitudes must drink the blood of Jesus, the blood wherein his life can be shared. By doing so, the life of the Divine in Jesus is intermingled with their own humanity, granting them life eternal.[194] With this understanding in mind, Jesus's claims of his life being imparted through the consumption of his flesh and blood make far more sense. When the Fourth Gospel has Jesus proclaim that without eating his flesh and drinking his blood "you have no life in yourselves" (v. 53):

> Jesus assumes the simple equation of blood with life, and 'life in yourselves' expresses in frank terms the logical result of the ingestion of that which represents life, i.e. blood. Flesh without blood is void of life; for the flesh-bread of the Son of Man to

beyond the features of one's daily life, and even offers an explanation as to the horror felt from the sin of the celestial beings having intercourse with humans (cf. Gen 6:1-5). In 1 Enoch the angelic beings are addressed by the Divine: "You were holy ones and spirits, *living forever*," yet they had intercourse with human beings, "who *die and perish*" (1 Enoch 15:4), thus another unnatural mixture of kinds.

[193] Jn 1:1-4, 14; 4:14; 6:27; cf. Augustine, *Tractates*, p. 267: "For Christ himself is the true God and life everlasting."

[194] Though van Noppen casts this tension rather starkly, it is eloquently expressed nonetheless: "Jesus' requirement that his followers eat his flesh *with the blood* embodies the 'spirit and truth' of the blood prohibition: in the Word, לא־תאכל דם 'became' (ἐγένετο, 1:14, 17). The prohibition, in Moses, is a withholding of life; in Christ it is its grant" (van Noppen, p. 330).

> communicate life, it must do so by virtue of its life/blood. Hence, blood is added to flesh as a prerequisite to having life in oneself.[195]

In commanding the multitudes to drink his blood, Jesus is not violating the Torah, but fulfilling its intent: "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy" (Lev 19:2; cf. 1 Peter 1:15-16).[196] The whole of Torah is to sanctify a people for God, to make of us a holy people, just as the Lord our God is holy. And in order to be holy just as the Lord our God is holy, intermingling our life with Jesus's, Divine Union, is precisely what brings us into this eternal life. Intermingling one's life essence with Jesus is the *sine qua non* for one's eternal salvation.[197]

Concluding Comments

Even though Jesus makes it abundantly clear that eating his flesh and drinking his blood are a necessary condition for eternal life (6:53-54), it should not be surprising that in the Fourth Gospel there is no record of this ever having happened, nor should it give us cause to question the salvation of his disciples, given that at many times throughout the Gospel Jesus assures them of their place with him (14:1-3). If the disciples did not physically consume the flesh and blood of

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[195] van Noppen, *Theological Rationale*, p. 324.

[196] Credit for this argument goes to Steven Bridge, who laid out its main structure in this section of his short introduction to Gospel literature: cf. Steven L. Bridge, "Jesus' Teachings: The Bread of Life Discourse," in *Getting the Gospels: Understanding the New Testament Accounts of Jesus' Life*, chpt. 6 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004).

[197] Though I agree with Pitre, insofar as the reason Jesus uses this language of blood consumption has to do with the identification of *life* with the blood, I would want to qualify one aspect of Pitre's argument from Leviticus: "In the passage from Leviticus above, notice that the reason given for abstaining from animal blood is that 'the life is in the blood,' and the blood is given by God 'to make atonement for your souls'" (cf. Brandt Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist: Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper* [New York, NY: Image, 2015], pp. 109). The passage Pitre references reads: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you for making atonement for your lives on the altar; for, as life, it is the blood that makes atonement" (Lev 17:10). This passage from Leviticus refers to the Holiness Code regulation that required all slaughtered animals be brought to the altar to have their blood drained. When shrines were allowed throughout the land, local altars could be used to satisfy this requirement. However, with the centralization of the cult in Jerusalem this practice was abrogated, likely because of the difficulties involved in implementing such a regulation across an entire nation with just a single Temple. Despite the persistence of ritual elements in the slaughter of animals (the draining of blood), later texts will purposely empty these practices of sacrificial content, such that blood no longer needed to be reserved for the altar, but could be poured out on any ground, "like water" (cf. Deut 12:16). In this present study, I have highlighted the non-sacrificial elements in the framing of the Eucharistic Discourse, specifically, the Old Testament narrative framework of the journey through the wilderness wherein the ancestors were fed manna by the Divine. I do not see sacrificial regulations as readily explanatory in that particular setting.

Jesus, how is it that they came to communion with him? At the outset of the Eucharistic Discourse, Jesus identifies himself with the bread in order to illustrate this eucharistic reality (6:32-35). What the Fourth Gospel speaks of through the flesh and blood of Christ in eucharistic language is performatively enacted and made explicit in the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus's flesh and blood represented in the bread and wine of the Eucharist:

> While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many (Mk 14:22-24).[198]

The celebration of the Eucharist, of giving thanks for the saving mystery of Christ in their lives, has been a Christian tradition since the earliest times of the Church.[199] However, the Fourth Gospel expands the Synoptic narrative framework of an intimate meal between Jesus and the Twelve, to encompass the entirety of the world. The Fourth Gospel makes clear that it is those who have faith in Jesus (6:47) and discern his divinity (6:67-69), who can receive this eucharistic encounter. In the Fourth Gospel, the Eucharist is not framed as a meal shared amongst apostles, but as a life-giving blessing bestowed upon all of humanity.

Refusing to hearken to the genuine and legitimate concerns of the Jewish interlocutors in the Fourth Gospel has not only denied the voice of Judaism a space for dialogue with the Catholic Church, but it appears to have obscured an amazing opportunity to recover a more authentic manner of being-in-the-world.[200] The history of using the Scriptures to silence and censure Jewish interlocutors is well documented, as is the history of interpreting the Fourth Gospel to advance anti-Jewish claims.[201] This practice of excising the anti-Jewish underpinnings of our theology is

[198] For parallels in the Synoptic Gospels, and in a Pauline epistle: cf. Lk 22:19-20; Mt 26:26-28; 1 Cor 11:22-26.
[199] As evidenced by the Institution Narrative within 1 Corinthians, demonstrating that even before the gospels had been written, the Eucharist was a part of Christian life (cf. Acts 2:42).
[200] Apologies: I have spent too much time around phenomenologists!
[201] For an absolutely fantastic book, covering a number of a viewpoints on the potential for anti-Judaism in the Fourth Gospel, while also putting these ideas in dialogue with one another, see: Reimund Bieringer, Didier Pollefeyt,

not simply an intellectual exercise, but is an integral part of what we as a Church are called to do and be in *Nostra aetate*: "Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is thus so great, this sacred synod wants to foster and recommend mutual understanding and respect, which is the fruit, above all, of biblical and theological studies, as well as of fraternal dialogues."[202] How can we engage in fraternal dialogue if we obfuscate the genuine concerns of our dialogue partners?

The tension in the Eucharistic Discourse, then, is not between those who have a disordered attachment to Moses and those who have receive Christ's Gospel of grace, as though the testimony of Moses were in opposition to Christ and his Gospel. Rather, receiving Jesus's teaching from the Eucharistic Discourse is only possible for those who have already discerned the divine origin of the Son of Man, of Jesus Christ. Discerning the true nature of the Christ is principally what the signs of the Fourth Gospel are intended to reveal. Indeed, the communal dimension to this divine recognition is inscribed within the Fourth Gospel itself, where Jesus's glory is only witnessed by those who believe (2:11; cf. 11:40). The Fourth Gospel, in its own prologue, frames the incarnation of the Word and the revelation of Christ as a communal witness to Jesus's glory and divinity: "*we* have seen his glory" (cf. 1:14). The teaching imparted through the Fourth Gospel, and in the Eucharistic Discourse in particular, of Christ's life-giving reality in the eucharistic encounter, could only be received by the one who already *believes*: "But these are written so that you may come to *believe* that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that *through believing* you may have *life* in his name" (20:31).

It is this discernment of Christ's divinity and origin, then, that distinguishes the person who receives this teaching from the one who would reject it. Jesus's words definitively convince the

Frederique Vandecasteele-Vanneuville, eds., *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001).

[202] Pope Paul VI, *Nostra aetate: Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions* (Vatican City, ROMA: October 28, 1965), n. 4.

multitudes to abandon him because they do not discern his divinity. Why would someone accept teaching with this language and rhetoric, when it would only make sense if the one teaching were divine? It is at the conclusion of the discourse, when Jesus asks the Twelve whether they too want to leave, that Peter's response confirms their belief in his divinity: "We have come to know that you are the Holy One of God" (6:69). By their own words, the reader can see that the only reason the Twelve are able to accept and receive this teaching is because they discern his divinity.

The apocalyptic dimension of the Eucharistic Discourse, evinced by the *Son of Man* imagery in the passage that is tied to Jesus's teaching about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, makes it clear that this author is operating within a framework of continuity with a tradition of Jewish thought that would not have functioned by violating Torah. Jesus's challenging command to 'drink my blood,' when understood in light of the intent of the Old Testament proscriptions on the consumption of blood, makes it clear that far from violating Torah, Jesus fulfills the end of the Torah. No longer should our exegesis of this passage rely on anti-Semitic portrayals of Jews as 'carnal,' or 'clinging' to an outdated Mosaic Law. The law that came through Moses (1:17a), in fact, is not what would hold someone back from appreciating the eucharistic significance of these verses, but is precisely that which would lead one to understand them as such (1:17b). Suppressing this deliberate tension in the narrative misses one of the strongest foundations for eucharistic theology, grounded as it is in continuity with Old Testament.

Appendix A: The Prohibition and Consequences of Blood Consumption in Torah

Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and just as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. Only, **you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood** (Gen 9:3-4).[203]

It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations, in all your settlements: **you must not eat** any fat or **any blood** (Lev 3:17).

You must not eat any blood whatever, either of bird or of animal, in any of your settlements. Any one of you who eats any blood shall be cut off from your kin (Lev 7:26-27).

If anyone, of the house of Israel or of the aliens who reside among them, **eats any blood**, I will set my face against that person **who eats blood**, and will cut that person off from the people (Lev 17:10).

Therefore I have said to the people of Israel: **No person among you shall eat blood, nor shall any alien who resides among you eat blood**. And anyone of the people of Israel, or of the aliens who reside among them, who hunts down an animal or bird that may be eaten **shall pour out its blood** and cover it with earth. For the life of every creature**—its blood is its life**; therefore I have said to the people of Israel: **You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood; whoever eats it [blood]** shall be cut off (Lev 17:12-14).

You shall not feast upon the blood (Lev 19:26a).[204]

Yet whenever you desire you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your towns, according to the blessing that the Lord your God has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it… **The blood**, however, **you must not eat**; you shall pour it out on the ground like water (Deut 12:15-16a).

Only be sure that you **do not eat the blood, for the blood is the life**, and **you shall not eat the life with the meat. Do not eat it [blood]**; you shall pour it out on the ground like water. **Do not eat it [blood]**, so that all may go well with you and your children after you, because you do what is right in the sight of the Lord (Deut 12:23-25).

Its blood [of the consecrated meat], however, **you must not eat**; you shall pour it out on the ground like water (Deut 15:23).

[203] cf. 1QapGen col. xi:17.

[204] The text here appears in the Septuagint, rather peculiarly, as: "You shall not feast upon the mountains (ἐπὶ τῶν ὀρέων)."

Appendix B: The Consumption of Blood in Second Temple Literature

Those who lived long ago in your holy land, you hated for their detestable practices, their works of sorcery and unholy rites, their merciless slaughter of children, and their sacrificial **feasting on human flesh and blood** (Wis 12:3-5).

"**But flesh with the spirit – with the blood – you shall not eat**, for the life of every mortal creature is in the blood, lest your blood be required for your lives…" Noah and his sons swore that **they would not eat any blood that was in any flesh**. He made a covenant in this month before the Lord God forever throughout all generations of the earth… This testimony has been written concerning you so that you may observe it for all time, **lest you at any time eat any blood of animals or birds** during all the days of the earth. **The one who has eaten the blood of a wild animal, livestock, or birds** throughout all the days of the earth – he and his descendants will be eliminated from the earth. Command the children of Israel **not to eat any blood**, so that their names and descendants may be before the Lord our God for all time. There is no limit of days regarding this law because it is forever. They shall observe it throughout history so that they may continue supplicating themselves with blood before the altar every day… From the day of Noah's death his sons corrupted it [Shavuot] **and were eating blood** until the days of Abraham… For this reason they will be in error with regard to the first of the month, the season, the Sabbath, and festivals.[205] **They will eat all the blood with all kinds of meat** (Jubilees 6:7, 10, 12-14a, 19, 38b).[206]

For everyone who sheds human blood and **eats the blood of any mortal creature** will all be destroyed from the earth. **No one who eats** or sheds **blood on the earth will be spared**. None of his descendants or posterity living beneath heaven will be spared because they will go to Sheol and descend to the place of judgment. They will all be taken by an abominable death into the deep darkness… **Do not be one who eats meat with the blood**. **Be sure that no one shall consume blood** in your presence… **Do not eat the life together with the flesh** so that your blood, that is, your life, may not be required from any human who sheds it upon the earth (Jubilees 7:28-29, 31a, 32).

In this jubilee the sons of Noah began to fight against each other, take captives, kill one another, shed human blood upon the earth, **eat blood**… (Jubilees 11:2a)

Do not consume any blood of wild animals, livestock, or any bird which flies in the sky… **You shall not therefore consume blood**, for the blood is the life. **Do not consume any blood** (Jubilees 21:6, 18).

And they began to sin against the birds and beasts and creeping things and the fish, and to devour one another's flesh. **And they drank the blood** (1 Enoch 7:5).

[205] Changing the calendar is considered a grave sin in Jubilees. Indeed, changing the calendar is classed alongside consumption of blood in its degree of sinfulness.

[206] In Jubilees, the Festival of Weeks, otherwise known as Shavuot, is described as having been celebrated in heaven since the dawn of creation (cf. Jubilees 6:18).

Woe to you, stiff-necked and hard of heart, who do evil and **consume blood** (1 Enoch 98:11).

However, **he entirely forbade us the use of blood for food**, and esteemed it to contain the soul and spirit (Josephus, *Antiquities* 3.260).[207]

When, therefore, they had slain many ten thousands of the Philistines, they fell upon spoiling the camp of the Philistines, but not till late in the evening. They also took a great deal of prey and cattle, and killed them, **and ate them with their blood**. This was told to the king by the scribes, that the multitude were sinning against God as they sacrificed, and were **eating before the blood was well washed away**, and the flesh was made clean. Then did Saul give order that a great stone should be rolled into the midst of them, and he made proclamation that they should kill their sacrifices upon it, **and not feed upon the flesh with the blood, for that was not acceptable to God** (Josephus, *Antiquities* 6.120-121).[208]

What is the meaning of the words, "**Flesh in the blood of the life you shall not eat**"? ... Very properly does (Scripture) say that the blood is the soul of flesh. And in the flesh are sense-perception and passion but not mind or reflection. Moreover, (the expression) "in the blood of the life" indicates that soul is one thing, and blood another, so that the substance of the soul is truly and infallibly spirit. The spirit, however, does not occupy any place by itself alone without the blood but is carried along and mixed together with the blood (Philo, *Questiones et solutiones in Genesin* 2.59).[209]

They devise novel kinds of pleasure and prepare meat unfit for the altar by strangling and throttling the animals, and entomb in the carcase [*sic*] the blood which is the essence of the soul and should be allowed to run freely away. For they should be fully contented with enjoying the flesh only **and not lay hold on what is akin to the soul**; and therefore elsewhere **he legislates on the subject of blood that no one should put either it** or the fat **to his mouth. Blood is prohibited** for the reason which I have mentioned that it is the essence of the soul (Philo, *De specialibus legibus* 4.122-123).[210]

If he has eaten any of the [holy] food and **become guilty by consuming blood** ... he shall not be named in their genealogy (4Q266 frag. 5 col. ii:12-14).[211]

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[207] Flavius Josephus, "The Antiquities of the Jews," in *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged*, trans. William Whiston (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987), p. 96.
[208] Josephus, "Antiquities," p. 161.
[209] Philo Judaeus, *Philo: Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus*, trans. Ralph Marcus, vol. 1 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp. 145-146.
[210] Philo Judaeus, *Philo*, trans. F. H. Colson, vol. 8 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), p. 85 (cf. Wise, et al., *DSS*, p. 309: *The Words of Levi*, Mt. Athos MS: "No blood or flesh must appear on you, for the blood is the soul of the flesh.").
[211] cf. Damascus Document, 4Q267 col. iii:6.

Appendix C: The *Son of Man* from the Parables of Enoch

cf. Nicklesburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012).

The Head of Days and the *Son of Man*, 1 Enoch 46:1-5

46:1 There I saw one who had a head of days,[212] and his head was like white wool. And with him was another, whose face was *like the appearance of a man*;[213] and his face was full of graciousness like one of the holy angels. **2** And I asked the angel of peace, who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, about that *son of man*, who he was and whence he was (and) why he went with the Head of Days. **3** And he answered me and said to me, "This is the *son of man* who has righteousness, and righteousness dwells with him. and all the treasuries of what is hidden he will reveal; For the Lord of Spirits has chosen him, and his lot has prevailed through truth in the presence of the Lord of Spirits forever. **4** And this *son of man* whom you have seen, he will raise the kings and the mighty from their couches, and the strong from their thrones. He will loosen the reins of the strong, and he will crush the teeth of the sinners. **5** He will overturn the kings from their thrones and their kingdoms, because they do not exalt him or praise him, or humbly acknowledge whence the kingdom was given to them.

The *Son of Man* is Named, 1 Enoch 48:1-7

48:1 In that place I saw the spring of righteousness, and it was inexhaustible, and many springs of wisdom surrounded it; And all the thirsty drank from them and were filled with wisdom; and their dwelling places were with the righteous and the holy and the chosen. **2** And in that hour that *son of man* was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, and his name, before the Head of Days. **3** Even before the sun and the constellations were created, before the stars of heaven were made, his name was named before the Lord of Spirits. **4** He will be a staff for the righteous, that they may lean on him and not fall; He will be the light of the nations, and he will be a hope for those who grieve in their hearts. **5** All who dwell on the earth will fall down and worship before him, and they will glorify and bless and sing hymns to the name of the Lord of Spirits. **6** For this (reason) he was chosen and hidden in his presence, before the world was created and forever. **7** And the wisdom of the Lord of Spirits has revealed him to the holy and the righteous; for he has preserved the lot of the righteous. For they have hated and despised this age of unrighteousness; Indeed, all its deeds and its ways they have hated in the name of the Lord of Spirits. For in his name they are saved, and he is the vindicator of their lives.

The *Son of Man* Presides Over the Great Judgment, 1 Enoch 62:1-14

62:1 And thus the Lord commanded the kings and the mighty and the exalted and those who possess the land, and he said, "Open your eyes and lift up your horns, if you are able to recognize the *Chosen One*." **2** And the Lord of Spirits [seated *him*] upon the throne of his glory, and the spirit of righteousness was poured upon *him*. And the word of his mouth will slay all the sinners, and all the unrighteous will perish from his presence. **3** And there will stand up on that day all the kings and the mighty and the exalted and those who possess the land. And they will see and recognize that *he* sits on the throne of his glory; and righteousness is judged in his presence, and no lying word is spoken in his presence. **4** And pain will come upon them as (upon) a woman in labor, when the child enters the mouth of the womb, and she has difficulty in giving birth. **5** And one group of them

[212] In the Enochic text, 'head of days' has replaced the term 'ancient of days' (cf. Dan 7:9, 13).
[213] A reference to the 'one like a son of man' from Daniel (cf. Dan 7:13).

will look at the other; and they will be terrified and will cast down their faces, and pain will seize them when they see that *Son of Man* sitting on the throne of his glory. [6] And the kings and the mighty and all who possess the land will bless and glorify and exalt him who rules over all, who was hidden. [7] For from the beginning the *Son of Man* was hidden, and the Most High preserved him in the presence of his might, and he revealed him to the chosen. [8] And the congregation of the chosen and holy will be sown; and all the chosen will stand in his presence on that day. [9] And all the kings and the mighty and the exalted and those who rule the land will fall on their faces in his presence; and they will worship and set their hope on that *Son of Man*, and they will supplicate and petition for mercy from him. … [13] And the righteous and the chosen will be saved on that day; and the faces of the sinners and the unrighteous they will henceforth not see. [14] And the Lord of Spirits will abide over them, and with that *Son of Man* they will eat, and they will lie down and rise up forever and ever.

The Rulers of this World are Punished, 1 Enoch 63:10-11

[63:10] Now they will say to themselves, "Our lives are full of ill-gotten wealth, but it does not prevent us from descending into the flame of the torment of Sheol." [11] And after that their faces will be filled with darkness and shame in the presence of that *Son of Man*; and from his presence they will be driven, and a sword will abide before him in their midst.

The Name of the *Son of Man* is Revealed, 1 Enoch 69:26-27, 29

[69:26] And they had great joy, and they blessed and glorified and exalted, because the name of that *Son of Man* had been revealed to them. [27] And he sat on the throne of his glory, and the whole judgment was given to the *Son of Man*, and he will make sinners vanish and perish from the face of the earth. … [29] And from then on there will be nothing that is corruptible; for that *Son of Man* has appeared. And he has sat down on the throne of his glory, and all evil will vanish from his presence. And the word of that *Son of Man* will go forth and will prevail in the presence of the Lord of Spirits.

Appendix D: The *Son of Man* from the Fourth Gospel

1:51 "Amen, amen, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the *Son of Man*."

3:11 "Amen, amen, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. **12** If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? **13** No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the *Son of Man*. **14** And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the *Son of Man* be lifted up, **15** that whoever believes in him may have eternal life."

5:25 "Amen, amen, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. **26** For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; **27** and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the *Son of Man*."

6:26 "Amen, amen, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. **27** Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the *Son of Man* will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal."

6:52 "Amen, amen, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the *Son of Man* and drink his blood, you have no life in you."

6:61 But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? **62** Then what if you were to see the *Son of Man* ascending to where he was before?"

8:28 So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the *Son of Man*, then you will realize that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me. **29** And the one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to him."

9:35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the *Son of Man*?" **36** He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." **37** Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." **38** He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him.

12:23 Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the *Son of Man* to be glorified. **24** Amen, amen, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

12:31 "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. **32** And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." **33** He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. **34** The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the *Son of Man* must be lifted up? Who is this *Son of Man*?"

13:31 "Now the *Son of Man* has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. **32** If God has been glorified in *him*, God will also glorify *him* in himself and will glorify *him* at once."

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