REWRITING TORAH IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL: WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION IN THE PROLOGUE

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STATEMENT:

Thie research was submitted in partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of Master of Research by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

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DECLARATIONS

DECLARATION 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended. The word count of the main text of the thesis, not including footnotes and references, is 29,859.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to study some of the ways in which the Gospel of John uses the Jewish Scriptures, particularly the Law of Moses (Torah), in its presentation of Jesus. In addition to drawing attention to the testimony of Scripture (5:39) and to what Moses wrote about Jesus (5:45), the Gospel employs many scriptural quotations as well as allusions, motifs and symbols drawn from the Torah in its narrative about Jesus. This aim of this dissertation, therefore, is to analyse the function of these 'Torah' elements in the Johannine narrative and to explore how they contribute to our understanding of the reception of the Jewish Scriptures in the Gospel of John in relation to its Christological concerns.

Based on recent research on Second Temple Jewish literature, this study will argue in particular that the Gospel of John and certain Rewritten Scripture compositions share many hermeneutical strategies and exegetical techniques. The books of *Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon* and *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (*LAB*), it is proposed, provide valuable parallels to the Fourth Gospel in respect of its wide-ranging scriptural interpretation.

The second half of the dissertation focuses on the various strategies and techniques of scriptural interpretation that are attested in the Johannine Prologue. In John 1:1–18, the Fourth Evangelist employs the symbols of *Logos* and light, drawn primarily from Genesis 1 as well as Jewish Wisdom traditions, to characterize Jesus as a pre-existent and divine figure. In addition, the evocation of Exodus traditions in the Prologue's references to Jesus as the embodiment of God's glory (1:14) are designed to persuade the audience that Jesus Christ, the *Logos* incarnate, is the unique revelation of God in the world.

This study therefore attends to the exegetical methods and rhetorical impact of the

interpretation of the Jewish scriptures that are identifiable in the Gospel of John, particularly in its opening Prologue. Like many Rewritten Scripture texts, the literary devices of expansion, omission, and embellishment in the Prologue's engagement with Scripture provide significant hints for tracing the exegetical motivations and rhetorical purposes that lie behind the composition of the Johannine narrative. We therefore explore how John prepares his 'we' community (1:14) for the fulfilment of God's promises and to demonstrate how the testimony of Scripture aligns with the inclusion of believers as the children of God (1:12).

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible Series
BDAG	W. Bauer, W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich and F.W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: UCP, 2000).*
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
ICC	*International Critical Commentary*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
NETS	*The New English Translation of the Septuagint*
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OTP	*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 2, edited by James H. Charlesworth (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2011)
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*
SBL	Society of Biblical Society
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Aim Of The Study

The role of the Law in the Fourth Gospel (FG) has been the subject of extensive scholarly attention.[1] John,[2] already in the Prologue, enigmatically juxtaposes the law of Moses with the grace and truth associated with Jesus (1:17). As the story unfolds, John declares - through various characters - that the law of Moses was written about Jesus (1:45; 5:46–47) and that 'the Law' is fulfilled in his life and mission (15:25). Even though the scriptural quotation of John 15:25 is not drawn from any Pentateuchal passage (but rather Psalm 35:19 or 69:4), it seems that passages and images from the Law, that is, in their capacity as belonging to Scripture, are interpreted in the FG as foreshadowing Jesus (15:24–25).[3] Thus the rejection of Jesus by his people constitutes a fulfillment and confirmation of Israel's law (cf. 18:31–32).

Very few studies of John's Gospel have, however, examined the author's interpretative methods, literary techniques and hermeneutical strategies in relation to his 'use' of Torah symbols or motifs.[4] Thus, the aim of this dissertation is to offer a fresh examination of the role of the Torah in the FG by placing its Johannine function(s) within the context of late

[1] C.H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953); William Loader, 'Jesus and the Law in John', in *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, edited by G. van Belle, J.G. van der Watt, and P Maritz (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 135–54.

[2] In this study, I will use John or the Fourth Evangelist interchangeably to denote the author(s) of the Fourth Gospel without assuming any particular identity.

[3] Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 354.

[4] I use the Hebrew name Torah to represent the Pentateuch, or the five books of Moses as a whole, to differentiate it from any Mosaic commandment in term of 'the Law'(νόμος) in the FG.

Second Temple Jewish literature. In its capacity as the authoritative collection of Scriptures in the first century CE, one may ask: how is Torah, with reference to its scriptural citations, allusion, symbols and motifs, interpreted by John for Christological purpose? What is the message that the author of FG seeks to convey by using different modes of reference to Torah in his presentation of Jesus? In order to address these questions, the present study will focus on John's exegetical techniques and literary/hermeneutical strategies by enquiring whether they bear any relation to the methods of scriptural interpretation encountered in examples of Jewish 'Rewritten Scripture' (RS) texts stemming from the late Second Temple period. In particular, attention will be paid to the Prologue of the Gospel of John, widely understood to be saturated in scriptural allusions and echoes,[5] in order to investigate the 'Jewishness' of its scriptural appropriation in light of its 'rewriting' exegetical patterns and rhetorical aims.

2. Previous Scholarship

With regard to the study of the Law in the Gospel of John, Severino Pancaro's *The Law in the Fourth Gospel* is probably the most comprehensive study to date.[6] In this work, he deals with the conflicts between Jesus and the Jews in term of Mosaic commandments, such as the sabbath question, the charge of blasphemy, and the charge of false teaching. However, his overarching thesis, that is, regarding divergent Jewish and early Christian points of view about the Law, seems to overlook the Jewish context of the scriptural interpretation promoted by the narrator, or communicated through the figure of Jesus.[7]

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[5] Elizabeth Harris, *Prologue and Gospel: The Theology of the Fourth Evangelist* (London: T&T Clark, 2004) and Ruth Sheridan suggests that John's Prologue should be viewed as an 'Exegetical Narrative'. Details will be discussed in chapter 4.

[6] Severino Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel: The Torah and the Gospel, Moses and Jesus, Judaism and Christianity according to John* (Leiden: Brill, 1975).

[7] Raymond E. Brown, 'Review: The Law in the Fourth Gospel', *CBQ* 39 (1977), 287–89.

In recent decades, it has become generally accepted that first-century CE Judaism constitutes the central interpretative matrix for the Johannine presentation of Jesus. A wide range of studies have thus situated the FG within an ancient Jewish milieu.[8] In this regard, we focus our review of previous scholarship on three specific areas of investigation.

First, the use and interpretation of Jewish Scripture in the FG have been subjected to close scrutiny for a long time.[9] Some scholars focus on the redactional and theological functions of John's explicit quotations,[10] whereas others are more interested in the rhetorical effect of Scripture and on the role it plays in the characterization of Jesus within John's narrative.[11] Also as the FG is well-known for its symbolic language and imagery, many of its scriptural symbols are expressed in a metaphorical way.[12] Scriptural imagery and symbolism as used in the FG, often deeply embedded below the surface of the narrative, have also long been studied as an interpretative key to unlock this gospel's presentation of Jesus.[13]

Although there are relatively fewer explicit quotations from the Pentateuch in John,[14] that is, in comparison with the Psalms and Isaiah, Richard Hays argues that allusions, images, and

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[8] Helpful reviews can be found in: Tom Thatcher, 'John and the Jews: Recent Research and Future Questions', in *John and Judaism: A Contested Relationship in Context*, edited by R. Alan Culpepper and Paul Anderson (Atlanta: SBL, 2017), 3–38; and Jutta Leonhardt-Balzer, 'The Johannine Literature and Contemporary Jewish Literature', in *The Oxford Handbook of Johannine Studies*, edited by Judith M. Lieu and Martinus C. De Boer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 155–170.

[9] An informative review of the use of Scripture in the FG can be found in Alicia Myers, 'An Introduction to Perspective on John's Use of Scripture, in *Abiding Words*, edited by Alicia D. Myers and Bruce G. Schuchard (Atlanta: SBL, 2015), 1–20.

[10] M.J.J. Menken, *Old Testament Quotations in the Fourth Gospel: Studies in Textual Form* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996) and Bruce S. Schuchard, *Scripture Within Scripture: The Interrelationship of Form and Function in the Explicit Old Testament Citations in the Gospel of John* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

[11] Alicia Myers, *Characterizing Jesus: A Rhetorical Analysis on the Fourth Gospel's Use of Scripture in Its Presentation of Jesus* (London: T&T Clark, 2014).

[12] T.F. Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel* (London: SCM Press, 1963), 86–94.

[13] Craig Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995); Jörg Frey, J. van der Watt and Ruben Zimmermann (eds.), *Imagery in the Gospel of John* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

[14] Of the 15 explicit quotations in the FG, only one debatable quotation is from Exodus, namely in John 19:36 ('none of his bones shall be broken'). See further Catrin Williams, 'Composite Quotations in the Gospel of John', in *Composite Citations in Antiquity: New Testament Uses*, edited by Sean A Adams and Seth M. Ehorn (London: T&T Clark, 2018), 94–127.

figures from Torah form a symbolic matrix that is tightly interwoven into John's Jesus narrative.[15] For example, in the Prologue (Jn 1:1–18), metaphorical light, tabernacle, and the law from Torah traditions form a cluster of symbols to introduce the narrative proper. Hence, the relationship and function of these Torah symbols in relation to the presentation of Jesus within the gospel will be focused upon in this dissertation.[16]

In addition, Catrin Williams argues that John's engagement with Scripture sheds light on his Jewish hermeneutical operations and practices, such as his use of Jewish exegetical methods and devices, as well as his reception of the authoritative writings of Judaism.[17] She concludes that the literary techniques of catchword association (or *gezerah shavah*) and composite citations convincingly attest the exegetical patterns that John shares with other Second Temple Jewish literature.[18] Building on these scholarly approaches, the present study will explore the FE's interpretative aims and exegetical motivations in his presentation of a distinctively Johannine Christology, as well as the rhetorical impact of the text to John's audience.

Secondly, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has greatly enhanced the understanding of the socio-cultural and historical context of the New Testament writings, including the Gospel of John.[19] In particular, the interpretation of the Jewish Scriptures attested in texts from the Qumran community provides significant insights into the ways in which Scripture is cited

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[15] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 354.

[16] Ruben Zimmermann, 'Metaphoric Networks as Hermeneutical Keys in the Gospel of John: Using the Example of the Mission Imagery', in *Repetitions and Variations in the Fourth Gospel: Style, Text, Interpretation*, edited by G. Van Belle, M. Labahn, & P. Maritz (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 381–402.

[17] Catrin H. Williams, 'John, Judaism, and "Searching the Scriptures"', in *John and Judaism: A Contested Relationship in Context*, edited by R. Alan Culpepper and Paul N Anderson (Atlanta: SBL, 2017), 77–100.

[18] Williams, 'Searching for Scriptures', 99–100.

[19] Scholars generally agree that both the FG and the Dead Sea Scrolls, broadly speaking, share the same Second Temple Jewish background in their usage of language and worldview. See further Richard Bauckham, 'The Qumran Community and the Gospel of John', in *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 125–36.

and interpreted within the Gospel of John. For example, by taking John 6:31–58 as a test case, Stephen Witmer concludes that there are certain similarities between the FG and the Qumran *Pesharim* in terms of their structure, content and exegetical methods.[20] However, they basically belong to two different genres: a *Pesher* is a running commentary on a scriptural text, whereas the FG is a narrative centered on the life and teaching of Jesus. In that respect, in order to compare with the FG, a narrative text type with implicit scriptural usage seems to be more appropriate than the *Pesharim.*

The third development to be noted at this juncture is recent comparative work on 'Rewritten Bible / Scripture' and the New Testament texts in their writing strategies and exegetical methods.[21] Rewritten Bible / Scripture refers to 'any representation of an authoritative scriptural text that implicitly incorporates interpretative elements, large of small, in the retelling itself'.[22] In the past, scholars have tended to define this term, based on its distinctive formative features, as a literary genre within the Jewish literature.[23] However, recent scholars view Rewritten Bible / Scripture as 'a general umbrella term describing the particular kind of intertextual activity' between the earlier scriptural text and the latter rewritten text.[24]

Many scholars agree that Rewritten Scripture (RS) is fundamentally interpretative in nature.[25]

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[20] Stephen E. Witmer, 'Approaches to Scripture in the Fourth Gospel and the Qumran *Pesharim*', *NovT* 48 (2006), 313–328.

[21] Susan Docherty, 'Exegetical Methods in the New Testament and Rewritten Bible: A Comparative Analysis', in *Ancient Readers and Their Scriptures: Engaging the Hebrew Bible in Early Judaism and Christianity*, edited by Garrick V. Allen and John Anthony Dunne (Leiden: Brill, 2018) 91–108; and Garrick V. Allen, 'Rewriting and the Gospels', *JSNT* 41 (2018), 58–69.

[22] George J. Brooke, 'Rewritten Bible', in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scroll*, edited by L.H. Schiffman and J.C. VanderKam (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 777–81.

[23] Geza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 1973) and Philip S. Alexander, 'Retelling the Bible' in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture*, edited by D.A. Carson and H.G.M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 99–121.

[24] G.J. Brooke, 'Rewritten Bible', 780.

[25] Vermes states, 'in order to anticipate questions, and to solve problems in advance, the *midrashist* (of Rewritten Bible) inserts haggadic development into the biblical narrative – an exegetical process which is probably as ancient as scriptural interpretation itself' (*Scripture and Tradition*, 95).

George Nickelsburg even describes RS as an exegetical strategy and includes a number of compositions that expand upon particular episodes (e.g., *Life of Adam and Eve*) or that have tangential relationship to their alleged sources (e.g., *Epistle of Jeremiah*).[26] This emphasis on exegetical similarities opens the door to include other Jewish traditions for investigation and comparison. Some New Testament scholars, therefore, suggest that the sustained exegetical reflection on the Jewish Scriptures in the NT writings constitutes a perpetuation of the exegetical sensibilities that stand behind the production of Rewritten Scripture.[27]

To understand the methods of scriptural interpretation attested in the FG, we select three late Second Temple Jewish RS texts, namely the *Book of Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon,* and *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (*LAB*) for comparison.[28] In addition to their exegetical methods, we pay attention to their common literary techniques to convey the respective authors' messages and their possible exegetical motivations. For instance, the fulfillment formula - an important literary device used in the second half of John's narrative (12:38–19:36) - is also widely used by Pseudo-Philo (e.g., *L.A.B*. 58:1) to emphasize the relevance of earlier Scripture for contemporary generations. Hence, recent scholarship on RS's scriptural interpretation has the potential to provide valuable insights for the study of the FG.[29]

3. Methodology

[26] George Nickelsburg, 'The Bible Rewritten and Expanded', in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, Vol 2, edited by Michael E. Stone (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984), 89–156.
[27] Garrick V. Allen, 'Rewriting and the Gospels', *JSNT* 41 (2018), 58–69, and Susan Docherty, 'New Testament Scriptural Interpretation in Its Early Jewish Context', *NovT* 57 (2015), 1–19.
[28] Apart from Josephus' *Antiquities*, we have selected the three typical examples of Rewritten Bible proposed by Philip Alexander. See idem 'Retelling the Bible', in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture*, edited by D.A. Carson and H.G.M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 99–121.
[29] For examples, see Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), Daniel Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts: Strategies for Extending the Scriptures Among the Dead Sea Scroll* (London: T&T Clark, 2007).

This dissertation is governed by three main methodological considerations. First, this study endeavours to engage in a close reading of the FG's final form of text. In our study of the Johannine Prologue (Jn 1:1–18), we pay attention to the narrative structure and inter-relationship of the scriptural symbols, rather than focusing on different layers in its compositional history.[30] We assume that the Prologue is a coherent theological unit that serves as an introduction to the Gospel narrative.

Secondly, narrative and rhetoric criticisms are tightly connected to each other in the study of the FG. Ruth Sheridan even claims that 'narratives are intrinsically rhetorical: they seek to persuade readers to accept a particular ideological position'.[31] Judith Lieu, in her influential article 'Narrative Analysis and Scripture in John', also notes that Scripture is used in the FG to reinforce Jesus' omniscience in a manner that is discernable to the narrator and the Gospel audience rather than to the characters within the story.[32] Hence, how Scriptures function in Johannine characterization and in the gospel's intended rhetorical impact to its audience / readers are our primary focus.

To explore the reasons for the extensive appeal to earlier Jewish scriptural materials, many scholars point to the author's intention to provide authority and legitimacy for the new interpretative work.[33] Christopher Stanley, in his study of Pauline quotation, also insists upon

[30] The different proposals about the compositional history of the FG and the Prologue can be found in Raymond Brown, *Introduction to the Gospel of John*, edited by Francis J. Moloney (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 40–89, and Martinus C. de Boer, 'The Original Prologue to the Gospel of John', *NTS* 61 (2015), 448–67.
[31] Ruth Sheridan, *Retelling Scripture: The Jews and the Scriptural Citation in John 1:19–12:15* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 52.
[32] Judith Lieu, 'Narrative Analysis and Scripture in John', in *The Old Testament in the New Testament: Essays in Honor of J. L. North*, edited by Steve Moyise (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 144–63.
[33] For example, see Benjamin Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 152–9, and William Tooman, 'Scriptural Reuse in Ancient Jewish Literature', in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, edited by David Allen and Steve Smith (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 23–39.

the rhetorical significance of scriptural citations.[34] The choice of whether to use a citation, paraphrase or allusion and the degree of an audience's reception of such modes of scriptural reference all determine the rhetorical effectiveness of the citation of Scripture. Stanley, thus, demonstrates how the Jewish Scriptures can be used to create a sense of solidarity between the author and his audience and also to convince them of the truthfulness of the message.[35] Stanley's finding forms the basis of our study about John's writing strategies and rhetorical impact to his audience.

Thirdly, John and at least some of his audience members were not only familiar with the scriptural sources, but also with various contemporary scriptural interpretations, including other Second Temple Jewish writings. To sketch a profile of early readers of the Gospel, Craig Koester identifies a diverse spectrum of Johannine readers, including some Gentile Greeks, some Samaritans and those believers who were familiar with Jewish Scriptures and traditions.[36] Particularly, in her study of FG's use of Psalms, Margaret Daly-Denton demonstrates that 'the reception of the quotation as part of the later work will therefore depend on factors far more complex than the reader's mere awareness of the original source'.[37] Thus, the present study will focus on the early reception of the Gospel to those 'nucleus of the community of Christians of Jewish background'.[38]

Outline of this Study

[34] Christopher Stanley, 'The Rhetoric of Quotations: An Essay on Method', in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals,* edited by C.A. Evans and J. A. Sanders (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 44–58.
[35] Stanley, 'The Rhetoric of Quotations', 54–56.
[36] Craig R. Koester, 'The Spectrum of Johannine Readers', in *What Is John?: Readers and Readings of the Fourth Gospel*, edited by Fernando F. Segovia (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 5–19.
[37] Margaret Daly-Denton, *David in the Fourth Gospel: The Johannine Reception of the Psalms* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 1–2.
[38] Koester, 'Spectrum', 9.

In chapter 2, it is important to set out the key evidence for John's engagement with the Jewish Scriptures, including the Torah (understood as the five books of Moses), before analyzing how John's use of rewriting techniques contributes to the narrative's various modes of engagement with 'Scripture'. Hence, we will discuss the status of Torah in the late Second Temple period and we will also review John's use of the terms 'Scripture' and 'Law' in his narrative. We will explore how these two term help to 'bear witness to Jesus' Christological identity' and also to 'fulfill his worldly mission'.[39] Then, in order to examine these significant functions attributed to the Jewish Scriptures, we argue that John uses an unusual term, 'lamb of God', with imagery drawn from the Book of Exodus and the prophecies of Isaiah, to bookend the life of Jesus from the beginning (1:36) to the end of his narrative (19:36–37). In doing so, the typological meaning of the sacrifice of the Passover lamb / Jesus becomes significant for the believers to understand their own identities.

Then, in chapter 3, we will discuss what is meant by the term 'Rewritten Scripture' and review the scholarly debate about the significance of this 'genre' in Second Temple Jewish literature. As we mentioned earlier, the interpretative nature of RS shares many similar exegetical patterns to the NT writings, though they may have different hermeneutical focus. Thus, we attempt to find parallels between the writing strategies and exegetical techniques of the FG and proto-typical examples of RS, including *Jubilees*, *Genesis Apocryphon* and *LAB*. The purpose of this part if investigation is to explore how these kinds of writing styles and techniques help to establish their respective textual authority and to underlie the significance of their respective modes of scriptural interpretation.

[39] Andreas Obermann, *Die christologische Erfüllung der Schrift im Johannesevangelium* (Tübingen:Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 78–89 and 325–50; see also Ruth Sheridan, *Retelling Scripture: the Jews and the Scriptural Citation in John 1:19–12:15* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 28..

In chapter 4 and 5, we will focus on the scriptural reuse, even rewriting, in the Johannine Prologue. The beginning passage of the FG (Jn 1:1–18) is distinctively saturated with scriptural allusions and symbols, primarily drawn from the Books of Genesis and Exodus. As a whole, these scriptural (and Jewish traditions) reuses interweave with the Johannine *Logos* narrative seamlessly to introduce the major themes of the Fourth Gospel.

According to William Tooman, scriptural reuse is a common phenomenon in the Second Temple Jewish literature, including various forms of rewriting, typology, analogical reasoning, conflation (or amalgamation) and assimilation, harmonization, and referential exegesis.[40] For example, the *Temple Scroll* (*11QT*) from the Qumran corpus famously amalgamates and coordinates laws from various legal passages of the Jewish Scriptures. In the same way, the *Book of Tobit* offers a 'rich matrix of allusions and narrative mimicry, crafted as a complex engagement with (at least) the patriarchal stories, the poems of Deuteronomy (chapters 31–2) and the book of Job'.[41] Can the Johannine Prologue, therefore, also be seen as an amalgamation of narrative with scriptural allusions and echoes?

Ruth Sheridan insightfully proposes in this regard that the Prologue should be considered as an 'exegetical narrative'.[42] Like several RS texts, John crafts many references and allusions to the first creation account (drawn from Genesis 1) and also to the Sinai revelation event (drawn from Exodus 33–34) into his portrayal of the *Logos*-light narrative. Through a detailed exegesis of this passage, we argue that John deliberatively evokes these scriptural narratives in his *Logos* narrative, and that he does so by highlighting the eschatological event of the *Logos*' incarnation, not only to confirm the divine identity of Jesus but also to shape

[40] Tooman, 'Scriptural Reuse', 24.
[41] Tooman, 'Scriptural Reuse', 29.
[42] Ruth Sheridan, 'John's Prologue as Exegetical Narrative', in *The Gospel of John as Genre Mosaic*, edited by Kasper Bro Larsen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 171–90.

the expectation of the believers role as the children of God.

Finally, chapter 6 provides a summary of our findings and outlines two areas for further study. In conclusion, this study attempts to contribute to the understanding of the Jewish matrix of the Fourth Gospel, both in terms of its exegetical practices and literary strategies, with particular reference to the Johannine Prologue. In addition, by drawing from parallels in RS's interpretative practices and rhetorical intentions, this dissertation seeks to shed some further light on the Jewish context of the Fourth Gospel.

Chapter 2

Torah in the Fourth Gospel

1. Introduction

In his article entitled 'Jesus and the Law in John', William Loader emphasizes the various roles that the Mosaic Law (Torah) plays in the Fourth Gospel. It was the gift of God through his agent Moses (Jn 1:17), and it tells the stories of Israel (e.g. Moses and the serpent in 3:14). Sometimes the Law (νόμος) refers to the whole of Scripture (e.g. 10:34), while functionally, both 'the Law' and 'Scripture' bear witness to the Johannine Jesus (5:39, 46). Loader adds that 'what could once be attributed to Torah – life, light, water, nourishment – is attributed [by John] to the Son of God… Torah, once God's gift for Israel's good, is now redefined into the role of witness to the Son'.[1]

Loader therefore rightly observes the significant connection between the Scripture, the Torah and the life of Jesus in the FG.[2] In this chapter, we further explore how these three terms are related, in particular how the Torah and Scripture play the witnessing role to Jesus and its impact. First, based on evidence drawn from some Second Temple Jewish texts, we assess certain historical factors that contribute to the authoritative status of Torah in a first-century Jewish context. Secondly, we review some distinctive features in the FG's use of the terms 'Scripture' and 'Law', particularly focusing on their two primary functions, namely 'bearing witness' to the life and identity of Jesus as a 'fulfillment of Scriptures'. Third, in order to demonstrate the close relationship, in John's design, between Jesus and Scripture, we

[1] William Loader, 'Jesus and the Law in John', in *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel,* edited by G. Van Belle, J.G. van der Watt, and P. Maritz (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 135–54, here 150.
[2] Loader, 'Jesus and the Law', 149.

conclude this chapter by highlighting how the image the 'Lamb of God', drawn from the Law and the Prophets, is woven into the fabric of Jesus' narrative – not only at the beginning, but also at the end. In doing so, the purpose of Jesus' crucifixion is re-defined as the fulfillment of the divine plan, so that a new people of God can be formed.

2. Torah in the Late Second Temple Period

According to James Sanders, the earliest known Hebrew or Aramaic use of the term Torah (תּוֹרָה) to refer to the Pentateuch or the five books of Moses is to be dated to the fifth century BCE, that is, in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra 7:6; Neh. 8:1).[3] Ezra and the priests are said to have gathered the people of Israel and read 'from the book, the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading' (Neh. 8:1–8). In this way, the interpretation of the Torah became the practice of 'a written code of law interpreted and applied by religious authorities'.[4] The interpretation and the teaching of Torah by religious elites, thus, shaped the authority status of Torah to the Jewish people and this process became a significant development in Second Temple Judaism.

In the Septuagint (LXX), from the third century BCE onwards, the Greek word for 'law' (νόμος) occurs more than 400 times. In almost 190 instances it stands for the Torah's 'instruction, regulation, or code of law'.[5] Furthermore, in the prologue of the Wisdom of Ben Sira (second century BCE) the term 'law' refers exclusively to the Pentateuch, when it is listed together with 'the Prophets and the other books of our ancestors'.[6] Also, Ben Sira

[3] J.A. Sanders, *Torah and Canon* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1999), 2. In the Pentateuch, the word 'Torah' denotes guidance / teaching (Exod. 35:34; Lev. 10:11) and commandment or stipulation (Deut. 4:44).
[4] J.J. Collins, 'The Transformation of the Torah in Second Temple Judaism', *JSJ* 43 (2012), 455–74.
[5] Moises Silva, 'νόμος' (*nomos*), in *New Dictionary of New Testament and Exegesis* Vol.3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014) 403–20.
[6] Sanders, *Torah and Canon*, 2.

encourages people to study and to revere the Law of God (Sir. 38:34–39:8). Therefore, during the later Second Temple period, the semantic range of the term 'the law' includes the whole Pentateuch, the Scripture in general, as well as 'the Mosaic law' whose observance is a key expression of Jewish piety.[7]

N.T. Wright claims, in this regard, that Torah is one of the key symbols, alongside the temple, the land and ethnic identity, that anchors the first-century Jewish worldview in everyday life.[8] The Torah was understood as the covenant 'charter' of Israel in its role as the covenantal people of God.[9] Thus, for the Jewish community, the authority of the Torah was established in and through the long process of interpretation, teaching and practices.

Recent decades' studies of the Dead Sea Scrolls inform us, however, that the phenomenon of a fixed textual Jewish canon did not yet exist in the first century CE, neither in the form of a fixed list of books nor as a fixed collection of individual books.[10] The multiple versions of the book of Jeremiah (4QJer^{a} and 4QJer^{b}) that were discovered in the same cave highlight the acceptance of textual plurality during this period, particularly as attested among the scrolls of the Qumran community. Also, the inclusion or exclusion of certain books from among the authoritative Jewish Scriptures is not yet fixed. For example, a total of fourteen or fifteen copies of the Book of *Jubilees* (one fragment is too small to be determined) was deposited in different caves by the Qumran community. If the number of copies reflects the level of authority afforded to *Jubilees*, only copies of the Psalms, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Genesis and Exodus exceed *Jubilees* in number. In addition, like other authoritative Scriptures, certain verses and passages of *Jubilees* are cited and rewritten in other documents of the community

[7] Silva, 'νόμος', 407.
[8] N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992) 224.
[9] Wright, *New Testament*, 227.
[10] Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 59.

(e.g., *Pseudo-Jubilees* A-C).[11] Based on the reasons of the number of copies and the attempt to rewrite, it can be claimed that *Jubilees* served as a book with an authoritative status for the community of Qumran.

Similarly, in the New Testament writings, certain non-canonical Jewish texts are quoted or alluded to as authoritative interpretation of Torah. For example, Jude 14 cites 1 Enoch 1:9 explicitly for the prophecy of judgement, whereas the Testament of Moses (probably second century BCE) is evoked in Jude 9 to depict false teachers. George Brooke therefore concludes that Torah, in the New Testament, can be conceptualized as more than the Pentateuch in a strict sense.[12] Torah and some of its interpretations, namely 'Rewritten Torah' (such as *1 Enoch* and the *Testament of Moses*), are both treated as authoritative and normative in the early Christian community.[13]

Even in the FG, many scriptural references, in terms of quotation or allusions, and various symbols, imagery and motifs are drawn from Torah and Jewish traditions to help shaping its presentation of Jesus' identity. For instances, numerous Torah symbols of what Pancaro calls the 'transfer of symbols for the law to Jesus',[14] specifically the metaphors of bread, water, light and life, can be found in the subsequent chapters of the Gospel. By associating the Torah in particular (and the Scripture in general) with Jesus in various ways, John's Christological conviction can be conveyed rhetorically. To persuade his audience, John highlights two roles

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[11] James VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2nd ed. 2010), 58.

[12] George Brooke, 'Torah, Rewritten Torah and the Letter of Jude', in *The Torah In the New Testament*, edited by Michael Tait and Peter Oakes (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 180–93, here 189.

[13] Drawing on the work of Johann Maier, George Brooke notes that Judaism in the Persian and Hellenistic periods 'was not a uniform unit but rather a conglomerate of different social, political, and religious tendencies, more or less organized as groups, all of them with their own concept of "Torah" and authority, presupposition, of course, a common basis' (cf. J. Maier, 'Early Jewish Biblical Interpretation in the Qumran Literature', in *Hebrew Bible / Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*, Vol. 1 (Gőttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 112).

[14] Severino Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel: The Torah and the Gospel, Moses and Jesus. Judaism and Christianity According to John* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 452–87.

of Scripture (Torah) in his Gospel, namely 'bearing witness' to Jesus that his life and mission in the world is a 'fulfillment of Scripture'. For the rest of this chapter, we will focus on how John achieves this in his narrative.

3. 'Scripture' and 'Law' in the Fourth Gospel

3.1 Appeals to 'Scripture'

In the FG, both Jesus and the narrator appeal to 'the Scripture' as key witness for Jesus' identity as Messiah and the Son of God (see 5:39; 13:18; 19:36–37). The noun 'Scripture' (γραφή) occurs twelve times in the FG, nine of which are found in relation to scriptural quotations or allusions (7:38, 42; 10:35; 13:18; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37). The other three occurrences (2:22; 5:39; 20:9) denote 'Scripture' as the object of believing, searching and understanding in relation to the identity of Jesus. Since the FG makes complex and subtle use of the term 'Scripture' (γραφή), in this section we focus particularly on the relationship between Scripture and Jesus and on the function of 'Scripture' in relation to the portrayal of Johannine Jesus.

Since the employment of the term γραφή is tightly connected to Jesus in the FG, three different kinds of usage of this word can be identified. First, the narrator intentionally associates the term γραφή within the life and ministry of Jesus (2:22; 7:38; 17:12; 20:9). Secondly, Jesus highlights the authoritative status of Scripture, and thus indicates that it cannot be broken (singular γραφή in 10:35); he also accentuates its role as bearing witness to himself (plural γραφαὶ in 5:39 or singular in 20:9). Third, the use of the singular γραφή in John can refer to a particular scriptural text that is fulfilled in Jesus as the Messiah (see the quotations in 13:18; 19:24, 28, 36, 37 or paraphrastic allusion in 7:42).

With regard to the linking of Scripture to the life of Jesus, scholars often use the language of 'typology' to describe the hermeneutical outlook employed by the FE.[15] Menken suggests that typology represents the chief function of the Old Testament history in the FG. He understands 'types' to be persons, events and institutions that 'prefigure' Jesus and to which Jesus 'corresponds …and at the same time surpasses'.[16] For example, considering the temple as the prefiguration of Jesus, in John 2:22, the disciples remembered that Jesus had spoken about his death and resurrection, the text continues: 'they believed the scripture (γραφή) and the word that Jesus has spoken'. Since the temple is considered as the symbolic type of Jesus' body, Jesus' scriptural citation (Jn 2:17: 'the zeal for your house will consume me'; cf. Psalm 69:9) foreshadows his death and resurrection (2:19 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up').[17]

In addition, Francis Moloney suggests that the connective καί in 2:22 is to be interpreted epexegetically and is used to explain the word of Jesus as 'Scripture'.[18] Consequently, not only the scriptural quotation in 2:17, but also the word of Jesus are perceived to be authoritative. For the FE, the concept of Scripture has therefore been integrated into the words of Jesus in the disciples' post-resurrection remembrance of those words.[19] Moreover, by interweaving Scripture and the memory of Jesus' words, this episode (Jn 2:13–22)

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[15] M.J.J Menken, 'Observations on the Significance of the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel', in *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, edited by Gilbert van Belle, J.G. van der Watt, P.J. Maritz (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 155–75; Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 281–355.

[16] Menken, "Observation on the Significance of the OT', 157.

[17] The Scripture drawn from Psalm 69:9 (LXX 68:10) is not just 'remembered' but re-interpreted through the modification of the aorist verbal form of κατέφαγέν in LXX ('consumed') to the future form καταφάγεταί (will consume) in the FG. See further Marianne Meye Thompson, *John: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 72.

[18] Moloney, The Gospel of John: The End of Scripture, 63 *Interpretation,* Oct 2009, 356–66, here 363.

[19] Menken mentions that the notion of remembrance implies (post-Easter) understanding in the FG. See Menken, 'What Authority Does the Fourth Evangelist Claim for His Book?', in his, *Studies in John's Gospel and Epistles* (Leuven: Peeters, 2015) 73–90.

prepares the audience for the understanding of the role of Jesus as the new temple by later mapping the scriptural fulfilment to his crucifixion and resurrection ('consume' and 'raise up') at the end of the gospel narrative. Therefore, in the early part of his Gospel, John's citation of Psalm already highlights the two functions of Scripture here: first, bears witness to the ministry of Jesus, namely his cleansing of the temple, and second, to foretells his death on the cross as a fulfillment of Scripture.

Throughout the gospel narrative, but especially with reference to Jesus' death and resurrection, the FE emphasizes the importance of faith to understand the fulfilment of Scripture. For instance, in John 20:6–8, Peter and the Beloved Disciple run to the empty tomb and only find the linen cloths lying there. The Beloved Disciple is described as follows: 'he saw and believed', but the same does not apply to Peter. The strange explanation (γάρ) given in 20:9 is that 'as yet they did not know the Scripture that he must rise from the dead'. The description of the response of the Beloved Disciples ('he saw and he believed') thus stands in contrast with those who see but still do not understand the significance of Jesus' resurrection as a fulfillment of Scripture (the third person plural ᾔδεισαν may, in this regard, refer contextually to Peter and Mary Magdalene).[20] As the ideal disciple, the Beloved Disciple's understanding includes the memory of Jesus' previous words - about his death and resurrection (2:15–22; 12:23–24). Thus, for the FE, the transition to belief (or not) depends on whether the disciples can know/ understand the word of Jesus and its fulfillment in Scripture.[21] The authority of the spoken word of Jesus, therefore, should be perceived by the audience as being of equal status to the Jewish Scriptures.

[20] Moloney suggests that the word 'Scripture' in John 20:9 refers specifically to the Johannine text, which was not yet complete when the disciples were in the empty tomb ('The End of Scripture', 263). However, there is no textual evidence to support this view. Rather, as Marianne Thompson maintains, it is more likely that the earlier citations from Psalms and Zechariah (Jn 19:36–37) exemplify the point that 'the Scripture' at least anticipated the resurrection of Jesus but is not yet known to the disciples. See Thompson, *John,* 413.

[21] Later in 20:29, it definitely encourages those who have not seen the resurrected Jesus but still believe the testimony of followers.

In addition, many scholars observe a marked shift between the introductory formula to the scriptural quotations in the first half to the second half of the Gospel narrative. In this regard, Andreas Obermann offers a valuable analysis of the theological significance of the quotation formulas and their wider rhetorical function within the text.[22] He demonstrates that John uses two distinctive quotation formulas, namely 'what is written' or its variations (e.g. ἐστιν γεγραμμένον) in John 1:19–12:15, but then consistently uses the phrase 'so that the Scripture might be fulfilled / it was to fulfil' (e.g. ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ) in John 12:38–19:36. The formula in the first half of the Gospel represents the witnessing function of Scripture to Jesus' identity, whereas the 'fulfilment' formula in the second half demonstrates how Scripture is explicitly fulfilled in and through the suffering and death of Jesus.[23] The last word of Jesus on the cross (19:30), 'It is finished' (τετέλεσται) has an even deeper meaning, namely that Jesus' work is fulfilled and Scripture is now brought to its completion.[24] Obermann thus draws the conclusion that John is a 'theologian of Scripture' (*Schrifttheologe*) and that his 'indebtedness to Scripture is fundamental to his narrative portrayal of Jesus and his understanding of Jesus' identity and theological significance'.[25]

3.2 Appeals to the 'Law'

The law of Moses is tightly connected to the concept of Scripture in the Fourth Gospel. The term 'law' (νόμος) appears twelve times (1:17, 45; 7:19, 23, 49, 51; 8:17; 10:34; 12:34;

[22] Andreas Obermann, *Die christologische Erfüllung der Schrift im Johannesevangelium* (Tübingen:Mohr Siebeck, 1996).
[23] Obermann, *Die christologische Erfüllung,* 78–89 and 325–50; see also Sheridan, *Retelling Scripture: the Jews and the Scriptural Citations in John 1:19–12:15* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 28.
[24] Obermann, *Die christologische Erfüllung,* 355–56; see also Francis Moloney, 'The Gospel of John as Scripture', *CBQ* 67 (2005), 454–68.
[25] Sheridan, *Retelling Scripture*, 30.

15:35; 18:31; 19:7).[26] Both 'Scripture' and 'the Law' are sometimes regarded as synonymous with each other (5:39, 45; 10:34–35), whereas on many occasions 'the law' is depicted as an instrument used by different characters for their own purposes. Hence, 'the Jews' use it as a weapon to accuse and judge Jesus (19:7), while Jesus and the narrator use it to bear witness to Jesus' identity. These divergent perspectives on 'the law' (νόμος) often clash, particularly in serious confrontations between Jesus and 'the Jews' within the Johannine plot.[27]

At the beginning of the Gospel, nevertheless, the narrator has already indicated that the Torah, as a gift from God, is given through Moses (1:17), while later Philip also announces that Jesus is the one about whom Moses in the Torah and the Prophets have written (1:45). The Torah, as the writing of Moses, is to bear witness to the life and work of Jesus (1:45; 5:46). In this respect, 'the law' – understood as Torah - plays the same role as Scripture (5:39).

John 7–8 in particular has a high concentration of occurrences of the term 'law' (νόμος) and this, as noted above, because of fierce arguments between Jesus and 'the Jews' about the status and interpretation of the Law of Moses. In a controversy about the identity of Jesus, the law is used in its strictly juridical sense as a reference to a particular Mosaic law.[28] When 'the Jews' accuse Jesus of healing on the Sabbath, Jesus justifies his action by referring to another law of Moses (circumcision in 7:23). In addition, 'the Jews' are questioned by Jesus if they, seeking to kill Jesus, are the ones breaking the Mosaic law (7:19; cf. Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17).

[26] The reference to the Law in John 8:5 is not considered because this section (7:53–8:11) is not found in the earliest manuscripts.
[27] Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel, 9–125*.
[28] In this dissertation, we use the capital letter 'Law' to refer to the whole set of Jewish rules and regulations, and the lower case 'law' to refer to a particular Mosaic commandment. Additionally, we use the term 'Torah' to denote the whole five books of Moses (the Pentateuch).

In three instances, references to the law with the possessive pronoun 'your law' (τῷ νόμῳ τῷ ὑμετέρῳ in Jn 8:17; 10:34) and 'their law' (τῷ νόμῳ αὐτῶν in 15:25) are used in Jesus' direct speech. First, in a conversation about the origin of Jesus, the conflict between 'the Jews' and Jesus is highlighted, in that they should understand Jesus' true identity based on the basis of the testimony of the Law (8:17). When Jesus argues with 'the Jews' regarding his claim to be the light of the world (8:12), he acknowledges that the law (Deut. 19:15) requires two witnesses for the true testimony to be valid (8:17). Then, Jesus provides two superior divine witnesses, namely the Father and himself (8:18). Andrew Lincoln, moreover, regards the self-claim of Jesus, 'I am the one (ἐγώ εἰμι) that witnesses about myself', as an allusion to Isaiah 43:10 LXX: the 'two witnesses, Yahweh and Israel, the servant, who has just been portrayed as a light to the nations (Isa. 42:6). Through his claims here to be both the light of the world and the one who bears witness, Jesus can also be seen as taking on the role envisaged for the servant in God's lawsuit with the world'.[29] However, 'the Jews', judging according to the flesh (8:15), fail to recognize the messianic identity of Jesus and therefore are presented as not knowing the Father (8:19).

Secondly, after debating Jesus' shepherd parable (10:1–30), 'the Jews' attempt to stone Jesus and accuse him of blasphemy. Although Jesus responds by saying, 'is it not written in your law?' (10:34), the passage he cites is Psalm 82:6 ('you are gods') which he uses to argue for the legitimacy of his identity as the Son of God. Implicitly, the declaration in the next verse (Ps. 82:7), that the children of the Most High 'shall die like mortals', refers in all likelihood to later interpretative tradition about the rebellious Israelites at Sinai, drawn from the Book of Exodus.[30] Therefore, the FE not only here defends the identity of Jesus as the 'son of God'

[29] Andrew Lincoln, *The Gospel According to Saint John* (London, NY: Continuum, 2005), 267.
[30] Lincoln, *John*, 307, and Thompson, *John*, 235–36.

(singular in Jn 3:16), but also makes use of the retelling of Sinai story in Psalm by identifying Jesus' opponents as the rebellious 'sons of God' (Ps. 82:6–7).

Marianne Thompson argues that a contrast is established here in Jn 10:34 between Jesus and the 'Israelites'. The 'children of God', identified as the Israelites of the Exodus story, are still subject to death, but Jesus, the Son of God, can give eternal life to those who believe in him (cf. 1:12). 'Jesus claims this unique prerogative precisely as the Son who can free Abraham's descendants, who ate manna and received the law at Sinai', and yet who still died.[31] Jesus then explains that 'the Scripture cannot be annulled' (10:35), because the attempt of the *Ioudaioi* to stone Jesus (10:31) demonstrates that 'the Jews' are as rebellious as their ancient ancestors. Therefore, one must understand the reference to Torah/ Scripture in a specific manner in John 10:34, one 'which is guided in the Johannine story by the narrator and by the words of its hero, Jesus'.[32] To the FE, Torah, as part of Scripture, not only tells the rebellious story of Israel in ancient times, but it also retells a similar story of the unbelieving Jews in Jesus' time.

Similar to how direct scriptural quotations are used in the second half of the gospel (12:38–19:37), John also employs the verb 'fulfill' (πληρόω) to describe the word of the law (15:25). Here, Jesus cites words, 'they hated me without a cause' either from Ps. 35:19 (LXX 34:19) or from Ps. 69:4 (LXX 68:5) to depict the hatred of the world towards him and his people. The groundless hostility faced by Jesus authenticates his work and life as a fulfillment of the authoritative Scriptures.[33] Moreover, the rejection of this world will be testified by a witness,

[31] Thompson, *John*, 236.
[32] Michael Labahn, 'Scripture Talks Because Jesus Talks: The Narrative Rhetoric of Persuading and Creativity in John's Use of Scripture', in *The Fourth Gospel in the First Century Media Culture*, edited by A. Le Donne and T. Thatcher (London: T&T Clark, 2013), 133–54.
[33] Susanne Luther, 'The Authentication of the Narrative: The Function of the Scripture Quotation in John 19', in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels Vol.4 The Gospel of John*, edited by Thomas Hatina (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 155–66.

the *Paraclete* or the Spirit of Truth later sent from the Father (15:26). In that case, the Deuteronomic requirement of two witnesses (Deut. 17:6), that are the *Paraclete* and the disciples (15:27), to testify to the works and words of Jesus will be satisfied.

The other five occurrences of the word νόμος in the Gospel of John are found on the lips of different characters other than Jesus: the Pharisees (7:49); Nicodemus (7:51); the crowd (12:34); Pilate (18:31); and 'the Jews' (19:7). Each occurrence of the word helps to shape the character of each figure in the narrative. First of all, the preaching of Jesus causes the division of the crowd during the Feast of Tabernacle (7:43). The Pharisees insist that the crowd is deceived by Jesus and they regard those who believe in Jesus as ignorant of the Law ('they do not know Law' 7:49). Then, Nicodemus, as a sympathizer, appeals to the law (7:51) so that the Pharisees should give Jesus a proper hearing before making a judgement. Ironically, Jesus earlier commands: 'Do not judge by appearance, but judge with right judgement' (7:24). In reality, the narrator implies that it is the Jewish leaders who do not follow the law in their judgement towards Jesus.

Third, when Jesus tells the crowd of what kind of death he will face, the crowd responses that the law as the scriptural proof for the view that the Christ will remain forever (12:34). Jesus' foretelling of his death on the cross ('lift-up' in 12:32) makes it difficult for the crowd to accept his messianic identity, because God promises, as written in Scriptures, that the kingship to David and his descendant will last forever (2 Sam 7:12–13; Ps 89:3–4, 36–7; Ezek. 37:25).

Fourth, during the dialogue between Pilate and the Jews, both parties agree that the Jewish law is applicable to the Jewish people (18:28–32). Pilate says to them, 'Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law' (18:31). The Jews respond, '…according to that law he

ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God' (19:7), yet only the Roman authorities can legally issue a death sentence (19:10). The Jewish charge against Jesus probably stems from Deuteronomy 13:1–6, with regard to a false prophet for 'whose activities the death penalty is laid down',[34] but the real catalyst behind Pilate's decision is politically motivated as reflected by the repeated references to Jesus' identity as 'King of the Jews' (19:12, 14–15).

In the Gospel narrative, John presents that various characters fail to understand Jesus' true identity and this, ultimately, leads to his death. The Jews and the Pharisees use the law as an excuse to accuse Jesus, whereas the crowd is confused by the words of Jesus. In addition, the different understanding of Torah constitutes the major cause of the conflict between Jesus and the Jews. As a result, all these factors prepare the way for the scene of trial and crucifixion, which contains the highest concentration of scriptural quotations in the FG pointing to the climactic fulfillment of Scripture (19:17–37).

4. The Testimony of the Torah

At the beginning of the Johannine narrative, Philip introduces Jesus to Nathanael by saying, 'we have found him about whom Moses in the Law [Torah] and also the Prophets wrote' (1:45). Later, when Jesus argues with 'the Jews' regarding his activity of healing on the Sabbath, he tells them, 'If you believe Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me' (5:46). To the FE, the Mosaic Law performs a significant role in bearing witness to Jesus' identity. Following the insight of Obermann, we argue that the FE uses, not only the introductory formula, but also some symbols and imagery drawn from the Torah to perform

[34] George Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC Vol. 36 (Dallas: Word, 1987) 338.

the two primary roles of Scripture, namely 'bearing witness' to Jesus and 'the fulfillment of Scripture' in his earthly mission. Taking the 'lamb of God' as an example, we explore how the FE uses scriptural imagery, drawn from both Torah and the prophets, to confirm the messianic identity of Jesus from the beginning to the end of his Jesus narrative,[35] so that his lamb-like sacrifice prepares the self-understanding of the believers as being the new people of God.

4.1 The Lamb of God as the Initial Testimony

From the beginning of the Gospel, Scriptures, including the Torah and the Prophets, are firmly established as the primary source for some characters in the Johannine narrative to testify the messianic identity of Jesus (1:45). For example, at the beginning of the gospel narrative, John the Baptist replies to those asking him about his identity by declaring, 'I am the voice of one crying out in wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord"'. (1:23). After denying his identity as Messiah, Elijah, or the prophet (like Moses), John cites a modified citation of Isaiah 40:3 in order to explain who 'the Lord' is.[36] Hence, on the first day, the words of prophet Isaiah, in the lips of John, are used to clarify the role of John the Baptist as a subordinate to the Lord.

The next day, when John sees Jesus coming towards him, he declares, 'Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world' (1:29). There are many scholarly proposals about the meaning of this Johannine metaphor 'lamb of God'. Ruben Zimmermann considers that the most likely candidates are the Passover (paschal) lamb and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah

[35] According to Raymond Brown, *inclusio* (or bookending) is one of the notable literary characteristics of Johannine style. See R.E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), cxxxv; cf. Richard Bauckham, Jesus and the Eyewitnesses (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 127–29.
[36] Thompson, *John*, 45.

53.[37] The Passover lamb is depicted as an unblemished sacrificial offering to God (Exod. 12:1–11), whereas the Suffering Servant is portrayed as bearing the sin of many and is led as a lamb to the slaughter (Isa. 53:4–12).

To discuss the imagery of the FG, Jesper Tang Nielson has used 'conceptual blending theory' in order to argue that the lamb of God declared by John integrates the semantic value of both 'scriptural' lambs, that is, the Passover lamb drawn from Exodus 12:3 and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53:7.[38] This newly created Johannine term 'lamb of God' is also evoked at various points of the FG in order to activate elements from both scriptural metaphors and this in order to show that Jesus is performing the dual function of sacrifice and of taking away the sin of the world.[39] In this case, Jesus' mission to save the world (3:17), and of giving his own life (6:35, 51) is to be accomplished through the way that this sacrificial animal / person is prefigured in Scripture.

In addition, John testifies: 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove and it remained on him…He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit' (Jn 1:32–33). This permanent relationship between Jesus and the Spirit evokes 'the Isaiah's messianic prophecy that the one who will judge with equity and not by appearance speaks of the Spirit of the Lord resting upon him (Isa. 11:2–5)'.[40]

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[37] Other less likely choices include the Aqedah of Genesis 22, the Tamid of daily sacrifice (Exod. 29:38; Num. 28:3), and the lamb of apocalyptic literature (cf. Rev. 5:6). See Ruben Zimmermann, 'Jesus – the Lamb of God (John 1:29 and 1:36): Metaphorical Christology in the Fourth Gospel', in *The Opening of John's Narrative (John 1:19–2:22)*, edited by R. Alan Culpepper and Jörg Frey (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 79–96.

[38] Jesper Tang Nielsen, 'The Lamb of God: The Cognitive Structure of a Johannine Metaphor', in *Imagery in the Gospel of John*, edited by Jörg Frey, Jan G. van der Watt, and Ruben Zimmermann (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 217–56. Lincoln, *John,* 113, also agrees that a combined imagery of two scriptural passages is at work here.

[39] Nielsen insists that Jesus 'is neither the Suffering Servant nor the Passover lamb, but the lamb of God', the meaning of which is then elucidated in terms of both these conceptual backgrounds over the course of the Gospel narrative. See further Nielsen, 'Lamb', 255–56, and also Gerry Wheaton, *The Role of Jewish Feasts in John's Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 89.

[40] Lincoln, *John* 114.

Furthermore, to conclude his own testimony, John repeats his personal experience (ἑώρακα) and offers testimony (μεμαρτύρηκα) to this Son of God / the Chosen One (1:34, cf. Isa. 42:1).[41]

Therefore, at the beginning of the gospel narrative, the messianic identity of Jesus is set out by John the Baptist: he is the Lord, the Lamb of God, the Servant of God in whom dwells the Spirit. In particular, the 'Lamb of God' imagery, accompanied with the recurring motifs of 'seeing' and 'witnessing', serves the theological purpose of foretelling Jesus' salvific mission from the beginning, and also throughout the Gospel narrative. The declaration made by John, namely that Jesus is the Passover lamb (drawn from Torah) and the Suffering Servant (drawn from prophet Isaiah) serves as bearing the earliest witness to the messianic identity of Jesus.

4.2 Unbroken Bone as the Concluding Testimony

The FE provides several keys for understanding Jesus' death, including the repeatedly highlighted motif that it occurs in order to fulfil Scripture. Rekha Chennattu, in her study of the Johannine use of Scripture, finds – like many other Johannine scholars - a high concentration of 'fulfillment' language in the crucifixion scene (ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ Jn19:24; πάντα τετέλεσται 19:28a; τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή 19:28b; τετέλεσται 19:30).[42] Particularly, at the climactic end of the crucifixion scene (19:36–37), the FE employs a double scriptural quotations:

'These things occurred so that the Scripture *might be fulfilled* (ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ), "None of

[41] NA 28 supports the widely attested reading 'Son of God', but some scholars still favor the textual reading of 'the Chosen One' as the earlier of the two. See Brown, *John*, 57.
[42] Rekha M. Chennattu, 'Scripture', in *How John Works*, 171–85.

his bones shall be broken". And again another passage of Scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced"'.

The verbs attested in this passage form a cluster of expressions of scriptural fulfilment: πληρωθῇ (v. 24), τελέω (v. 28a), τελειόω (v. 28b), τελέω (v. 30), πληρόω (v. 36). The scriptural allusions include the following: the soldiers cast lots to divide the clothes of a righteous sufferer (Ps. 22:18), and they gave Jesus vinegar to drink to quench his thirst (Ps. 69:21). At the climactic end of Jesus' life, the FE also juxtaposes two scriptural references, one drawn from the Torah (Jn 19:36) and one from the prophet Zechariah (Jn 19:37). As a result they highlight that 'every minute detail of Jesus' death is performed in order to fulfill or bring to perfection (τελειόω) what is foretold about the Messiah in the Scripture'.[43]

Furthermore, the Passover motif overshadows the whole passion narrative. In order to present the timing of Jesus' trial and crucifixion, the narrator reminds the readers that it is the day of preparation (19:14).[44] This is why the Jews do not want the bodies of the dead men left on the cross during the Sabbath. So they request Pilate to break the bones of the crucified men's legs so that their bodies can be removed (19:31). As the soldiers find that Jesus is already death, one of them pierces his side instead of breaking his leg bone (19:33–34). Because of this, the FE is able to recall the allusion to the Passover lamb from Exodus 12:46 (or Num. 9:12), 'you shall not break any of its bones' (and the story's recapitulation in Ps. 34:20). Thus, the imagery of the sacrifice of the Passover lamb is well established in the crucifixion scene.

[43] Chennattu, 'Scripture', 180.
[44] Passover lambs are slaughtered on Nisan 14, that is the Preparation Day of Passover. See Thompson, *John* 388 n.70.

On the other hand, Pilate declares Jesus' innocence three times (18:38; 19:4, 6). To these declarations, it may revoke the requirement of the paschal lamb that it should be without blemish (Exod. 12:5). Also it may correspond to the innocence of the Suffering Servant (Isa. 53:9). More importantly, the modification to the quotation in John 19:36 ('None of his bone shall be broken') through the inclusion of a future passive verbal form, 'shall be broken' (συντριβήσεται), means that it most closely resembles to the Psalm 34:20 (LXX 33:21: 'not one of them [the bones] shall be broken'). In this way, the FE evokes God's promise to protect the righteous in the Psalm,[45] similar to how Isaiah depicts the Suffering Servant (Isa. 53:11 'And the Lord… to justify a righteous one who is well subject to many, and he himself shall bear their sins'). Thus, the imagery of the 'lamb of God' as a cluster of 'Passover lamb' and 'Suffering Servant' symbols reappear again at the end of Jesus' narrative in the FG.

The second part of the composite quotations in John 19:37, 'The will look on the one whom they have pierced', is taken from Zechariah 12:10. The passage is about the mourning of the death of the shepherd, and God promises that on that day, 'a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity' (Zech. 13:1).[46] To fulfill this prophetic promise, the FE emphasizes that witnesses to the crucifixion look upon Jesus as his side is pierced. Before Jesus' death, the narrator indicates that one person (the Beloved Disciple, Jn 19:26) 'saw' the crucifixion and has 'borne witness' and states that 'his testimony is true' (19:35). Because of this disciple's seeing, the testimony about the messianic identity of Jesus is also true.

Therefore, significant characters, namely John the Baptist and the Beloved Disciple, perform the role as eyewitness to the life and the earthly mission of Jesus. In connection with the

[45] Thompson, *John*, 404.
[46] Lincoln, *John*, 482.

writings of Moses and the Prophets, their testimonies, in both John 1 and John 19, function to bookend the life of Jesus in order to draw out key facets of Jesus' Christological identity as a paschal lamb-like servant.

More than that, the symbol of the Passover lamb in the account of Jesus' death must be read in the light of John 6:26–66, the Bread of Life discourse. Also in Passover time, Jesus promises himself as the bread from heaven (6:41) and those who eat his flesh and drink his blood will have eternal life (6:54). Passover lamb and unleavened bread are two necessary components of Passover meal before the deliverance of the Israelites from the slavery Egypt (Exod. 12:18). The Hebrew households are commanded to slaughter the lamb, to sprinkle its blood on the doorposts of their homes, and then share its flesh in meal. To evoke this significant event to the Israelites, Jesus is depicted as both the lamb and the bread, in his death on cross, to provide the salvation to the believers (by taking away their sin). Thus, the 'lamb of God' as a symbol drawn from both Torah and Prophets not only demonstrates that the death of Jesus is tantamount to the fulfilment of the Scripture, but also rhetorically brings out the message that this Passover 'lamb and bread' is necessary and significant for the salvation of the new people of God.[47]

5. Conclusion

Scholars generally agree that the Torah was authoritative for Jewish communities at the turn of the common era. Although there was no fixed list of canonical books this time, the books of Moses and the Prophets were considered authoritative and therefore widely interpreted in the late Second Temple period.

[47] Discussion of the symbolic meaning of paschal meal can be found in Gerry Wheaton, *Role of Jewish Feasts*, 111–22.

This same state of affairs is reflected in the FG, where 'Scripture', including Torah and Prophets, are deemed to be authoritative written texts but that they must be understood in messianic terms as bearing witness to Jesus. Like the witnessing function of John the Baptist, the Mosaic Law also performs a witnessing role in the life and work of the Johannine Jesus. In the first half of the Gospel (John 1–12), Jesus' opponents use the laws to accuse him (e.g., healing on Sabbath and blasphemy in John 5), whereas Jesus also defends himself by citing the laws of Moses (circumcision on Sabbath and two witnesses to his work in John 7–8). In the second half (John 13–21), Torah is used to authenticate the identity of Jesus (e.g., Son of God in John 10) and to demonstrate the fulfillment of the divine plan for Jesus (his death and resurrection in John 19–20).

The FE consequently reads the Scriptures as 'a web of Christological signifiers'.[48] He uses the term 'Lamb of God', through the testimonies of John the Baptist and the Beloved Disciple, to set out and bear witness to the mission and destiny of Jesus. Drawn from symbols of Exodus and Isaiah, this imagery characterizes Jesus as a lamblike servant, which features prominently at both ends of the gospel narrative. To the believing audience, Jesus' death becomes the significant event for the self-understanding as becoming the new people of God. All these scriptural symbols, imagery and the Johannine Jesus form as integral parts to the theological and literary design of the Fourth Gospel.

[48] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 354.

Chapter 3

Rewritten Scripture

1. Introduction

The use of earlier texts as sources for the composition of a new text was a literary convention practised widely among the ancient authors. The various forms of creative reworking attested in the Epic of Gilgamesh is a typical example of the compositional techniques found in the ancient literary world.[1] In the Graeco-Roman era, creative imitation (Gk: *mimēsis*) constituted a significant part of a scribe's literary education.[2] Second Temple Jewish literature is not an exception in this respect.

Since Geza Vermes coined the term 'Rewritten Bible' to classify a certain type of Jewish writings,[3] more and more texts from the late Second Temple period have been added by scholars for inclusion in this category.[4] Due to the lack of a fixed canon in the Second Temple period, some scholars prefer to name this type of texts as 'Rewritten Scripture' (RS).[5] More importantly, recent scholars have become more alert to the purpose and function of this

[1] Andrew R. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 54.
[2] Vergil's *Aeneid* (29–19 BCE) is the classical example of creative imitation, in this case of Homer's *Illiad*. See Damien Nelis, *Vergil's Aeneid and the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius*, ARCA 39 (Leeds: Francis Carins, 2001).
[3] Geza Vermes originally identified four works from the late Second Temple period as representative examples of Rewritten Bible: Josephus' *Antiquitie*s, *Jubilees*, Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* and the Genesis Apocryphon. See further Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 1961).
[4] Since the publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholars have added the *Temple Scroll* (11Q10) and *Reworked Pentateuch* (4Q364–367) to the list of Rewritten Bible texts. See further George Brooke, 'Rewritten Bible', in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, edited by Lawrence H Schiffman & James C. VanderKam (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 777–81.
[5] Sidnie White Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 6; and Molly Zahn, 'Rewritten Scripture', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, edited by Timothy Lim and John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 323–34.

kind of rewriting of scriptural texts. Molly Zahn, for example, understands Rewritten Scripture to be a new composition that explicitly or implicitly interprets the Jewish Scriptures, and whose textual strategy is to enhance the authority of the new 'rewritten' text.[6] Therefore we adopt this new understanding of RS as a working definition for the present study of the Johannine scriptural interpretation in relation to its exegetical purpose.

With regard to the incorporation of scriptural interpretation into a new composition, we argue that some rewriting strategies and exegetical methods attested in Rewritten Scripture are shared by John's Gospel in its use of Torah. In a similar way, the Fourth Evangelist is attempting to establish his Gospel as the authoritative interpretation of the Torah. The goal is not to replace or to supplement, but to establish a superior status for its own text in its retelling and interpretation of the Torah narratives.

In this chapter, we will firstly review scholarly debates concerning Rewritten Scripture (RS), from the suggestion of its distinctive features to the suggestion of likely function of texts belonging to this genre. In view of Carol Newsom's proposal that genre study should use proto-typical examples for the purpose of comparison,[7] we propose to use the narrative texts of *Jubilees*, *Genesis Apocryphon* and Pseudo-Philo's *LAB* as proto-typical RS to be compared with the FG. With particular reference to writing strategies, literary techniques and exegetical methods, we will explore how John adopts similar ways to Rewritten Scripture in his use of Torah narratives to enhance the interpretative authority of his gospel. We will then, draw some conclusions on the basis of this comparative investigation.

[6] Zahn, 'Rewritten Scripture', 331–2.
[7] Carol A. Newsom, 'Spying Out the Land: A Report from Genology', in *Rhetoric and Hermeneutics* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 55–66.

2. Genre Features of Rewritten Scripture

Geza Vermes, in his 1961 work *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, uses the term 'Rewritten Bible' (RB) to describe the insertion of 'haggadic development into the biblical narrative'.[8] The word 'rewritten' implies the existence of a prior text which is then revised or recast in a new form. 'The purpose', notes Vermes, 'is to explain or interpret the original text for a new (presumably later) audience'.[9] By expansion, omission, addition, rearrangement and other types of changes, a new composition is produced.

Philip Alexander later attempted to define 'Rewritten Bible' specifically as a literary genre with reference to its distinctive features. By employing four primary texts- *Jubilees*, *the Genesis Apocryphon*, Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* and Josephus' *Antiquities* chapters 1–11- Alexander proposes a list of nine common traits:[10]

1. RB texts are narratives, which follow a sequential, chronological order.
2. They are … freestanding compositions, which replicate the form of biblical books on which they are based.
3. These texts are not intended to replace or supersede the Hebrew Bible.
4. RB texts cover a substantial portion of the Hebrew Bible.
5. RB texts follow the Hebrew Bible sequentially, in proper order, but they are highly selective in what they represent.
6. The intention of the texts is to produce an interpretative reading of Scripture.
7. The narrative from the text means, in effect, that they can impose only a single interpretation on the original.
8. The limitation of the narrative form also precludes making clear the exegetical reasoning behind.
9. RB texts make use of non-biblical traditions and draw on non-biblical sources.

[8] Geza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, 95.
[9] Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture*, 3.
[10] Philip Alexander, 'Retelling the Old Testament', in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honor of Barnabas Lindars,* edited by D.A. Carson and H.G.M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 99–121.

Recent scholars have, however, questioned Alexander's proposal as based on a circular argument. All these traits, it is argued, are drawn from pre-selected texts and then used to determine the genre's characteristics.[11] For example, the emphasis on narrative features means that Alexander excludes legal texts, such as the *Temple Scroll*, which some scholars regard as belonging to the RS type. Furthermore, Susan Docherty asks what should be done if a text only fulfils some of the nine features identified by Alexander? She, for example, argues that *Joseph and Aseneth*, a late Second Temple Jewish text, reflects eight of the nine traits (with the exception of no. 4), so can this Jewish work also be classified as a RS?[12]

Some scholars, therefore, opt to define RS texts from the perspective of their function. Daniel Harrington describes how RB texts 'take as their literary framework the flow of the biblical text itself and apparently have as their major purpose the clarification and actualization of the biblical story'.[13] In addition to Alexander's four selected books, Harrington expands the list to include the *Testament of Moses*, *Temple Scroll*, *1 Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and some of Philo's writings, to name just a few. 'What holds all of them together is the efforts to actualize a religious tradition and make it meaningful within a new situation'.[14] Instead of defining RS as a literary genre, Harrington recognizes it as a literary technique, process or activity that is expressed in various genres within a broad range of scriptural interpretative writings. However, one may question the analytical value of such a definition when the net is cast so widely.

[11] Jonathan G. Campbell, 'Rewritten Bible: A Terminological Reassessment', in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques?,* edited by József Zsengellér (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 49–82.
[12] Susan Docherty, '*Joseph and Aseneth*: Rewritten Bible or Narrative Expansion?', *JSJ* 35 (2004), 27–48.
[13] Daniel Harrington, 'The Bible Rewritten (Narratives)', in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, edited by Robert A. Kraft and George W.E. Nickelsburg (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 239–55.
[14] Harrington, 'The Bible Rewritten', 239.

On the other hand, the discovery of the Qumran texts has prompted scholars to conclude that 'Rewritten Bible' is an anachronistic term and that it should be replaced by the designation 'Rewritten Scripture'.[15] The lack of a fixed canonical list of books, as well as the plurality of textual forms, in the late Second Temple period confirm that 'Scripture' is a more appropriate term to denote the status of what were regarded as authoritative writings. Moreover, evidence shows that even some of the non-canonical books, such as *Jubilees*, were regarded as authoritative by the Qumran community and consequently subjected to rewriting (*Pseudo-Jubilees*). Hence, Rewritten Scripture is a more appropriate designation for this category of Second Temple Jewish literature.

In considering the relationship between the RS and the Jewish Scriptures, George Brooke focuses specially on the role of authority in the whole process. He thinks that RS compositions seem both to confer and receive authority from the Scripture texts which are being written. By seeking to elucidate, re-present, or rewrite, 'such compositions confer authority on the scriptural texts by showing that they are worth updating and interpreting, even if that is only done on an implicit level, and they also themselves receive authority from the scriptural text they seek to represent insofar as they themselves are part of the ongoing voice or function of the texts they rewrite'.[16] Thus, to the author of RS, the scriptural voice can be heard by the new audience in a meaningful way.

Daniel Falk also describes RS as a writing strategy of 'creative imitation' that seeks to extend the scriptural authority of the antecedent text.[17] He summarizes the main strategies of

[15] Molly Zahn, 'Talking about Rewritten Texts: Some Reflections on Terminology', in *Changes in Scripture: Rewriting and Interpreting Authoritative Traditions in the Second Temple Period*, edited by Hanne von Weissenberg, Juha Pakkala and Marko Martilla (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 93–120; see also Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture*, 6.

[16] George G. Brooke, 'Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible, and Pesher', in his *Reading the Dead Sea Scrolls: Essays in Method* (Atlanta: SBL, 2013), 123.

[17] Daniel K. Falk, *Parabiblical Texts: Strategies for Extending the Scriptures in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London:

extending Scripture through RS texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls as follows: 1. 'thematic association' (collating passages with a common theme); 2. 'harmonization' (smoothing and filling gaps of perceived contradiction); 3. 'linking' (invoking another passage by theme or catchword for analogy); 4. 'rearrangement' (presenting passages in orderly sequence or to resolve difficulties); 5. 'introduction of new material' (interpolating or adding supplementary material).[18] All these literary devices are helpful for analysing the texts of the RS and also to determine whether John is using similar skills in ascribing scriptural authority in his gospel.

3. The Genre Function of Rewritten Scripture

Recently scholars pay more attention to the functional nuances of RS. For example, Molly Zahn places the texts into two categories: revision and reuse of Scripture. Revision occurs in 'a work in the course of the production of a new copy of that work', whereas reuse is 'a new work of textual material drawn from an existing source, in a more or less modified form but such that the connection to a specific source text is recognizable'.[19] When this differentiation is taken into account, all typical RS compositions (*Jubilees*, *Genesis Apocryphon*, *Jewish Antiquities*, and Pseudo-Philo's *LAB*) belong to the reuse type, as their intention is not merely to prepare a new copy (like LXX Jeremiah), but to develop a new composition which offers different interpretations of the base text. This reuse type of RS opens the door to the present study of the scriptural interpretation embedded in the Johannine narrative, particularly concerning its claim of authority.

T&T Clark, 2007), 16.

[18] Falk, *Parabiblical Texts*, 23.

[19] Molly Z. Zahn, *Genres of Rewriting in Second Temple Judaism: Scribal Composition and Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 38.

Moreover, many scholars agree that the purpose of RS texts is not to replace their scriptural antecedent. Theoretically, it is a self-destructive strategy to gain authority for one's text and at the same time undermine the authority that a text attempts to assert for itself. Thus, according to Anders Klostergaard Petersen, the RS texts 'do not attempt to replace their scriptural antecedents, but strive to make the authority and content of their scriptural predecessors present in new contexts as a form of applied hermeneutics'.[20] The aim is to re-engineer the scriptural authority into a new context.

In addition, Hindy Najman, in her influential study *Seconding Sinai*, finds that authority in late Second Temple texts is inextricably linked to Moses and his writings (Torah). Given that the authoritative sacred writings were not yet a closed collection in the late Second Temple period, the goal of rewriting texts, such as *Jubilees* and the *Temple Scroll*, is not to replace but rather to supplement the Torah in terms of conferring authority. By taking Deuteronomy as a pioneering work that rewrites material from Exodus to Numbers, Najman suggests that:

'…although some sacred written traditions were recognized as authoritative Torah from the very beginning of the Second Temple period, canonization did not occur until later. In such a climate, it was entirely possible to aspire, not to replace, but rather to accompany traditions already regarded as authoritative, and thus to provide those traditions with their proper interpretive context'.[21]

However, Molly Zahn contends that the wide spectrum of RS texts requires a more nuanced assessment of the variety of their writing strategies. For instance, the aim of the scriptural rewriting of the *Temple Scroll* 'is not merely to resolve exegetical difficulties and reorganize biblical law, but also as a support for the scroll's claim to represent divine revelation'.[22]

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[20] Anders Klostergaard Petersen, 'Textual Fidelity, Elaboration, Supersession or Encroachment?', in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years*, 14.
[21] Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 43–50.
[22] Zahn, 'Rewritten Scripture', 330.

Either to replace or to supplement their predecessor were the main options available to the author of the rewritten text. For example, the *Genesis Apocryphon* and the *LAB* of Pseudo-Philo do not demonstrate much attempt at claiming a higher authority for themselves, while *Jubilees* shows an exceptional attempt at doing so in relation to its antecedent Torah text.[23] In this respect, the writing strategies and exegetical techniques attested in RS texts can be examined with the aim of assessing the author's intention, particularly in the rhetorical aim of claiming authority for that text. Since the FG is thoroughly steeped in scriptural interpretation in many episodes, we argue that an investigation of Johannine exegetical techniques and hermeneutical strategies can shed light on the Johannine author's exegetical motivation and rhetorical intention.

4. Writing Strategies of Rewritten Scripture

Recent scholars generally accept that the writings produced by the early Christians should be placed within the wider framework of early Jewish literature and their scriptural interpretation. Valuable insights can be gained by putting both the New Testament writings and the Second Temple Jewish literature, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, side by side for the purpose of comparison.[24] In particular, common exegetical methods and interpretative patterns demonstrate the shared roots of their Jewish scriptural traditions. However, Susan Docherty comments that, so far, there is a lack of systematic investigation on the comparison of exegetical methods applied to the Jewish Scriptures in the New Testament (such as the Gospels) with reference to the Rewritten Scripture.[25] Thus, in the rest of this chapter, we

[23] Petersen, 'Textual Fidelity', 33.
[24] Serge Ruzer, *Mapping the New Testament: Early Christian Writings as a Witness for Jewish Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 2007); and George Brooke, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament* (London: SPCK, 2005).
[25] Susan Docherty, 'Exegetical Methods in the New Testament and Rewritten Bible: A Comparative Analysis', in *Ancient Readers and Their Scriptures: Engaging the Hebrew Bible in Early Judaism and Christianity*, edited by G.V. Allen and J.A. Dunne (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 91–108, here 91. Petersen, 'Textual Fidelity', 16, also suggests the inclusion of New Testament texts in the study of Rewriting Scripture.

attempt to fill this lacuna by comparing the Gospel of John and the RS in terms of their shared scriptural interpretative strategies.

Relative to the Synoptic Gospels, John uses fewer explicit scriptural quotations in his gospel narrative.[26] Most of his scriptural evocations are embedded – sometimes deeply - in his narrative, especially in his use of events, images, and figures from the Jewish Torah. However, as emphasized in the previous chapter of this study, John's Gospel undoubtedly engages at a particularly deep level with the Jewish Scriptures. Based on our examination of RS, one may therefore ask: in what way does John claim authority in his engagement with and participation in the strategy of Torah retelling or rewriting?[27] In other words, with which type of RS is John most closely aligned in his (authority-conferring) writing strategy? We will explore these questions by investigating two of John's interpretative strategies and literary / exegetical techniques, namely the focus on 'heavenly revelation' and 'emphasis on writing / written document' (writing strategies), together with 'direct speech' and the strategy of 'Scripture interpreting Scripture' (literary / exegetical techniques).

4.1 Heavenly Revelation

In the first chapter of the *Book of Jubilees*, Moses is situated on Mount Sinai. The author describes how Moses receives his revelation. The rest of the book (*Jub*. 2–50) records the content of this revelation, which is dictated to Moses by the angel of the presence. This angel

[26] There is no consensus on the number of explicit scriptural quotations in the Fourth Gospel. Scholars' counts range from 13 to 17. See further Johannes Beutler, 'The Use of Scripture in the Gospel of John', in *Exploring The Gospel of John*, edited by R. Alan Culpepper and C Clifton Black (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 147–62..

[27] Maarten J.J. Menken examines the claim to authority in the FG, but he does not present John's writing strategy as aligned with Second Temple Jewish scriptural rewriting techniques. See Menken, 'What Authority Does the Fourth Evangelist Claim For His book?', in *Studies in John's Gospel and Epistles: Collected Essays* (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 73–90.

recalls the primaeval history, the history of the patriarchs, and the sojourn of the Israelite people in Egypt until the exodus and the arrival of the Israelites at Mount Sinai. The material basically follows the sequential order of Genesis 1 up to Exodus 19.

The use and interpretation of the scriptural material in *Jubilees* demonstrates that its author acknowledges the existence and authority of the Books of Genesis and Exodus, as he refers to the first law in order to distinguish it from the revelation to Moses recorded in *Jubilees* (6:22; 30:12).[28] However, it is the angel of presence, not Moses, who is presented as the mediator of divine words. 'And He (The Lord) said to the angel of the presence, "Write for Moses from the first creation until my sanctuary is built in their midst forever and ever"' (1:27). Hence, the content of *Jubilees* is itself presented as a product of divine revelation.

More than that, Jubilees repeatedly claims that it reproduces material that had been written on the 'heavenly tablet' long before the Sinai event.[29] For example, it presents a calendar which is allegedly as old as the creation of the world. Compliance with this calendar, the observance of the feasts by the ancient patriarchs provides the authoritative examples for the later Israelites to follow.

'Therefore, it is ordained and written in the heavenly tablets that they should observe the feast of Shebuot in this month, once per year … And all of this feast was celebrated in heaven from the day of creation until the days of Noah, twenty-six jubilees and five weeks of years' (*Jub*. 6:17–18).

[28] This translation of Jubilees is drawn from O.S. Wintermute, in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* Vol.2, edited by James H. Charlesworth (2nd edition, Peabody: Hendrickson, 2011), 35–142.
[29] Hindy Najman, 'Interpretation as Primordial Writing: *Jubilees* and its Authority Conferring Strategies', *JSJ* 15 (1999), 379–410.

This, according to Jubilees, was the first and only authentic calendar, and 'all the vicissitudes of human history are to be understood in terms of faithful adherence to or rejection of that calendar'.[30]

Biblical heroes such as Noah, Abraham, and Jacob are thus presented as observing the feasts of this calendar long before the Law was given on Mount Sinai. In this manner, the authority ascribed to the Mosaic Torah is now conferred upon *Jubilees* because the Sinaitic Law repeats what has long ago been written on the heavenly tablets and practised by the patriarchs. To a certain extent, this Sinaitic Law is not regarded as sufficient, and so the revelation of the heavenly tablets, as presented in *Jubilees*, is needed in order to provide the correct interpretation of Torah.[31]

John's Gospel also begins its account with words drawn from the beginning of the Book of Genesis (ἐν ἀρχῇ in 1:1, and φῶς in 1:5) and Exodus (ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως 1:17) in the Prologue (1:1–18). Like the angel of the Presence in Jubilees, the mediator of divine revelation in the Johannine Prologue is a heavenly figure - the *Logos* - who was with God before creation (1:1–2). Juxtaposed with the law given by Moses, the grace and truth is said to come through Jesus, the *Logos* incarnate (1:17). The Fourth Evangelist insists that Jesus is the only begotten, and God (or Son), who makes God known (1:18 ἐξηγήσατο) in this world. Thus, the FE also suggests that the *Logos,* a heavenly revelation bearer, existed long before the Law was given through Moses (Exodus 34). This unique pre-existent Logos, who also is involved in creation and undergoes incarnation, is the only way for God to reveal himself to the world (1:18; 5:19).

[30] Najman, 'Authority Conferring Strategies', 390.
[31] The author of *Jubilees* vehemently protests against any calendar which is not exclusively built on the 364-day solar calendar (cf. 6:35–38).

Within the Johannine narrative, figures from Israel's past are also portrayed as confirming the divine and heavenly identity of Jesus, the *Logos* incarnate. For example, the promise to Nathanael that he will 'see the heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man' (Jn 1:51) alludes to the dream of Jacob (Gen. 28:12). In the Torah version of the account, Jacob only sees the ascending and descending of the angels on a ladder, whereas according to John, Nathanael is promised to see 'the greater things' (1:50), that is 'the Son of Man' revealing the glory of God in his work and death on cross.[32] This revelation can only be truly seen by the disciples when the Logos becomes flesh, as already foretold in the Prologue.

A similar example can be found in the statement, 'Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day; he saw it and was glad' (8:56). When Jesus claims that he can give eternal life (8:51), the Jews do not believe that he is greater than their mortal ancestor, Abraham, or the prophets. The issue here is how God is known and that God is made known through the revelation that take place in Jesus' life. It is Jesus' unique relationship with God that enables him to say, 'It is my Father who glorifies me…I know him' (8:54–55). For the audience of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus' declaration, 'before Abraham was, I am' (8:58), demonstrates his pre-existent divine identity and this must be understood in light of the Prologue, that is, the divine *Logos* who is with God before creation and who reveals God in the world.[33]

From among the Dead Sea Scrolls, the *Temple Scroll* (11QT) also claims a special interpretative authority associated with the Torah by the divine revelation to Moses. In this

[32] Marianne M. Thompson, *John: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015), 54.
[33] According to Thompson, Jesus speaks various 'I am' sayings in formulations and imagery aligning himself with God's self-revelation as creator and sovereign in Isaiah. See 'Excursus 5: The 'I AM" Sayings of John', in *John: A Commentary*, 156–60.

text, God speaks directly to Moses in the first person to explain the laws.[34] In functional terms, since the rewritten text presents an alternative version of laws, the divine revelation to which it lays claim authenticates its superior status as providing the true meaning or correct interpretation of the Torah.[35]

On the other hand, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, a first-century BCE Aramaic fragment found in Qumran Cave 1, primarily rewrites the narratives of two patriarchs, Noah and Abram, drawing from Genesis 5–15 with the addition of some extra-biblical materials.[36] This book emphasizes the notion of divine revelation in dreams and visions communicated to the ancient figures of Enoch, Noah and Abram.[37] These dreams and visions reveal the mystery of knowledge (the calendar, astronomy etc), as well as the divine will of God (e.g., flood judgement to the inhabitants of the earth). For instance, Abram dreams of a cedar and a palm, which warns him and foretells that Sarai will be taken by Pharaoh because of her beauty (col. 19).[38] Then, through this divine revelation, the obedience and the piety of Abram is highlighted. However, there is no hint here of any claim to textual authority relative to the Mosaic Torah.

4.2 Emphasis on Writing and Written Document

Because of the low literacy rate in the ancient world, scribal writing and written document collection only belonged to those elites and authorities in a society. Najman suggests in this respect that *Jubilees* has an extraordinary interest in the act of writing, while its emphasis on

[34] Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (4th edition, London: Penguin Books, 1995), 190–219.
[35] Zahn, 'Rewritten Scripture', 331.
[36] Daniel Falk, 'The Genesis Apocryphon', in *The Parabiblical Texts*, 26–106.
[37] Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts*, 77.
[38] Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 453.

the sacred writing serves as an authority-conferring strategy.[39] For instance, when Noah divides the earth among his three sons, it is stated: 'and they stretched out their hands and took the document (or book)[40] from the bosom of Noah, their father' (*Jub*. 8:11). This is an addition to the Noah narrative which Genesis does not mention. For the author of *Jubilees*, certain special knowledge written on the documents, including the cultic laws and practices, can pass down to the selective descendants to observe.[41]

For *Jubilees*, the notions of writing and book are significant not only because it records history or the words of God, but because it also has the function of helping biblical heroes to follow the law of God and to resist temptation. For example, Joseph does not fornicate with a woman who has a husband because he remembers the death penalty which has been ordained in heaven: 'And the sin is written concerning him in the eternal books always before the Lord' (39:7).

According to *Jubilees*, long before Moses ascended Mount Sinai, the correct calendar and historical tradition inscribed upon the heavenly tablets were transmitted in written form by the patriarchs. Jubilees recalls the dream revelation of Jacob in Bethel: 'he is commanded to write it down when he wakes up' (32:25–26). More importantly, Jacob 'gave all his books and his fathers' books to Levi, his son, so that he might preserve them and renew them for his sons until this day' (45:15). Therefore, the authoritative teachings of *Jubilees* is authenticated by those words and deeds of patriarchs who learnt from the ancient written legacies.

[39] Hindy Najman, 'Authority Conferring Strategies', 381.
[40] Najman prefers the rendering 'book' rather than 'document', drawing from James VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text* (Leuven: Peeters, 1989). The translation here is drawn from Wintermute, in *OTP, 72*.
[41] *Jubilees* attributes five areas of special knowledge to Noah that is transmitted through books: Priestly laws about sacrifice and blood, laws about the produce of fruit trees, the sins of the Watchers, the division of land among Noah's sons, and demons and healing. See Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts*, 77.

Compared with the patriarchs, Moses is only one of the bookish heroes who is charged with the transmission of divine writings.[42]

In what ways, therefore, are such features of relevance to the study of John's Gospel? In the previous chapter of this study, it was noted that John frequently uses the phrase 'it is written' (γεγραμμένον) to denote the authoritative character of the Jewish Scriptures. In some other places, John is also fascinated with the notion of 'writing' (γράφω) in association with some authoritative figures, particularly with reference to Jesus:

1:45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him about whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote…' (ὃν ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ οἱ προφῆται).

5:46 Jesus said, 'If you believe Moses …for he wrote about me' (ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν).

19:19–22 Pilate wrote the title on the cross: the King of the Jews. It was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. The chief priests of the Jews complain about the writing, but Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written' (ἔγραψεν….. γεγραμμένον….. γεγραμμένον…γράφε…. ὃ γέγραφα, γέγραφα).

20:30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book (γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ).[43]

21:25 But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written (τὰ γραφόμενα βιβλία).

To associate with certain authoritative characters, John uses various forms of the verb γράφω with reference to Jesus. Philip declares that Moses and the prophets have already written

[42] Najman, 'Authority Conferring Strategies', 388.

[43] βιβλίον means papyrus, scroll or book. In the LXX, this word is used for the prophetic writings (Dan. 9:2) or the book of the Law, i.e. Torah (Deut. 28:61; Josh. 1:8 and 2 Chron. 17:9). It occurs 34 times in the New Testament (with two thirds of the occurrences found in the Book of Revelation). Many times this word is understood as denoting Scripture: Torah as a whole (Mk. 12:26; Gal. 3:10), or the Book of Isaiah (Lk. 3:4; 4:17). See Moisés Silva, *New Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis* (2nd ed., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 510–13.

about Jesus (1:45) whilst, ironically, Pilate also has provided written testimony about Jesus' identity by means of the inscription of the cross: King of the Jews (19:19). The title on the cross is thus a written form that has authority and influence; even when chief priests request to change the wording, Pilate, a person with the highest power in the city, 'cannot be compelled to change it'.[44]

In the last two cases noted above (20:31 and 21:24), John connects together both the written Scripture and his written 'book' (gospel). They both appear in the double endings[45] or extended epilogue of the Gospel to conclude the story of Jesus. The chief concern of the author is that, through his 'book', the faith of the audience can be affirmed or strengthened (20:31 'so that you may believe' is the only second person verbal form in the whole Gospel to address the audience). This book is not merely a collection of 'past' stories about Jesus, but also a proclamation that addresses the present situation of the audience.[46] Hence, the audience should treat this book and its 'writtenness' (of signs and many things about Jesus) as equally authoritative to Scripture, which, by the time that Jesus has departed, is still relevant and significant in their lives.

The authors of *Jubilees*, the *Temple Scroll* and the Fourth Gospel therefore use the phrase 'what Moses wrote' as a leverage to enhance the significance and authority of their respective writings. In many cases, their writings are also presented as superior in the sense that they offer the true meaning or better understanding of the Torah. For example, the adherence to a 364-day solar calendar is definitely preferable because those following the lunar calendar will

[44] Michael Labahn, 'Scripture Talks Because Jesus Talks', in *The Fourth Gospel in First-Century Media Culture*, edited by Anthony Le Donne and Tom Thatcher (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 133–54, here 137.
[45] Michael Labahn interprets this as John's claim that his gospel is a book within the Scripture. See idem, 'Scripture Talks Because Jesus Talks', 138 n.12.
[46] Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John* (SP4, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 542.

commit sin by offering sacrifice during the wrong festival or Passover day.[47] John also compares Jesus with some Torah symbols in order to proclaim Jesus' superiority. For example, the people of Israel still died after eating the manna, whereas those who eat the living bread, that is, Jesus, will not die (Jn 6:49–50). Those who drink the living water provided by Jesus will never thirst again (Jn 4:14; 7:37–38). Therefore, the FG participates in a type of RS by its writing strategies which claims to offer a better and more authoritative interpretation of Torah.

5. Literary and Exegetical Techniques

5.1 Direct Speech

Dialogues or monologues are common literary techniques in the narratives of Second Temple Jewish literature. The books of Judith, Susanna, Tobit, for example, are all replete with conversations, as well as prayers, discourses, testaments and lamentations to heighten the vividness and dramatic effect of the texts in question. This literary feature is similarly adopted in Rewritten Scripture compositions: *Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon*, Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* and Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities* (*LAB*).[48]

Susan Docherty notes in this respect that direct speech is not merely a literary device but a key exegetical technique used by these authors. Taking *LAB* as an example, Israel's leaders are constantly depicted as offering prayers, singing hymns and making death bed testaments (Moses in 12:8–9; 19:2–5; Joshua in 21:2–6; Phinehas in 46:4; 47:1–2; David in 59:4; 60:2–

[47] Najman uses Jubilees 49:7–9 to illustrate this point (see eadem, 'Authority Conferring Strategies', 393–94).
[48] The Biblical Antiquities, or Latin title *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (*LAB*) is a lengthy retelling of the scriptural narratives from the time of Adam to the death of Saul. Many scholars regard it as originally composed in Hebrew or Aramaic during the first century CE. See further Daniel Harrington, 'Pseudo-Philo', in *OTP* Vol.2, 299; Frederick Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo: Rewriting the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 6.

3).[49] One of the distinctive features of these direct speeches is to (re)allocate scriptural words to the lips of new speakers. The retold words mostly serve to highlight the theological concerns of the author and to make connections between different parts of Scripture. By drawing such analogies, Saul can pronounce the same words as Jeremiah: 'For I do not understand what you are saying, because I am young' (*LAB* 56:6; cf. Jer. 1:6), to remind the audience / reader of the recurring pattern of human behaviour and divine response.[50]

Apart from the rhetorical impact of direct speech, Frederick Murphy considers this device as having the capacity to enhance the authority of the author's particular interpretation of Israel's history. Since God is the source of these scriptural words, they are assumed to be absolutely true and reliable. 'Through them [speeches and prayers], the characters reflect on situations and apply general principles, draw conclusions, and express attitudes the narrator wishes to encourage or discourage'.[51]

As far as Rewritten Scripture is concerned, the author of *Genesis Apocryphon* also uses words that are highly reminiscent of the poetry of the Song of Songs to describe the beauty of Sarai as praised by Egyptian princes before the Pharaoh (col. 20:2–7; cf. Song 1:8, 15; 4:1–5; 5:9; 6:1, 5–7; 7:1–7).[52] The author of *Jubilees* does not hold back from adding lengthy - and post-Mosaic - sacrificial and festival materials from the Book of Leviticus into the speech of God to command Noah to follow when he is leaving the ark (*Jub*. 6; cf. Gen. 8:20–9:17; Lev. 17:10–12; 23:24). For this author, the halakhic requirements and the covenant with Noah are inseparable and should be universally applied, even before the Sinai revelation.

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[49] Susan Docherty, 'Why So Much Talk? Direct Speech as a Literary and Exegetical Device in Rewritten Bible with Special Reference to Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*', *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 82 (2016), 52–75.
[50] Docherty, 'Why So Much Talk?', 66.
[51] Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 20–21.
[52] Docherty, 'Why So Much Talk?', 66.

Docherty suggests, moreover, that in many New Testament passages, such as the testimony of Stephen (Acts 7) and the sermon of Hebrews (Heb. 4:4, cf. Gen. 2:2; see also Heb. 11:5, cf. Gen. 5:24), Scripture is integrated into direct speeches to address their authors' theological concerns through scriptural interpretation. Indeed, some of the scriptural quotations in the Gospel of John are placed on the lips of characters within the gospel narrative -- John the Baptist (Jn 1:23; cf. Isa 40:3) and several times in the case of Jesus (Jn 6:45; cf. Isa. 54:13; Jn 10:34; cf. Ps. 82:6; Jn 13:18; cf. Ps. 41:9; Jn 15:25; cf. Ps. 35:19 or 69:4). For example, after Jesus debates with 'the Jews' regarding his identity, 'The Father and I are one' (10:30), and quotes the scriptural words, 'I said, you are gods' (Ps. 82:6), Jesus or the narrator is said to remark that 'the Scripture cannot be broken' (10:35). Scriptural quotation and exposition in direct speech not only authenticates the fulfilment of prophecy, but also legitimizes the testimony of Jesus as true and authoritative.[53]

5.2 Interpreting Scripture by Scripture

Another literary and exegetical device used by many authors of Rewritten Scripture is to read backwards or to provide flashbacks: that is, they mention earlier scriptural events which may or may not have been narrated in their appropriate setting.[54] Many linguistic and thematic parallels cause the RS authors to think that it is legitimate to put different scriptural episodes together for their mutual interpretation. For example, both the authors of Jubilees and *LAB* think that the throwing of infants / Moses into River Nile (water) and the dying of Egyptian soldiers in the Red Sea are somewhat related. They place both of these incidents from Exodus

[53] Susan Luther, 'The Authentication of the Narrative', in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospel Vol. 4 The Gospel of John*, edited by Thomas R, Hatina (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 162.
[54] Fisk, *Do You Not Remember? Scripture, Story and Exegesis in the Rewritten Bible of Pseudo-Philo* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 18.

together in their writings in order to demonstrate the work of God to save his people and punish their enemies.

'And all of the people whom he brought out to pursue after Israel the Lord our God threw into the middle of the sea into the depths of the abyss beneath the children of Israel. *Just as the men of Egypt cast their sons into the river he avenged one million. And one thousand strong and ardent men perished on account of one infant whom they threw into the midst of the river from the sons of your people*' (*Jub*. 48:14).

'And the spirit of God came upon Miriam one night, and she saw a dream and told it to her parents in the morning, "…Behold *he (Moses) who will be born from you will be cast forth into the water; likewise through him the water will be dried up. And I will work signs through him and save my people*, and he will exercise leadership always"' (*LAB* 9:10).

Another remarkable example can be found in *LAB* 40, which narrates how Jephthah returns from victory over Ammon and women come out to greet him with song and dance (this is restricted to his daughter, according to Judges 11:34). Even though Jephthah is full of grief because of his vow to offer his only daughter, Seila, as a sacrifice to God, she insists that her father should honour the vow and then draws an analogy to Isaac's willingness to be sacrificed. She explains, 'Or do you not remember what happened in the days of our fathers when the father placed the son as a holocaust, and he did not refuse him but gladly gave consent to him …?' (*LAB* 40:2; cf. Gen 22). In this case, the earlier text (the sacrifice of Isaac) acts as an exegetical commentary that provides the reason behind the latter narrative (the obedience of Seila).

Both the authors of *Jubilees* and *Genesis Apocryphon* are also eager to search for scriptural support and to insert such support into their narratives. Both authors, for instance, integrate the Levitical laws into Noah's narrative. In Genesis 9:20–27, Noah begins to plant a vineyard and he drinks from the wine and becomes drunk. His sleep in nakedness is supposed to be a tragic ending leading to the curse to his son, Ham, in the narrative. However, both *Jubilees* 7

and *Genesis Apocryphon* (*1QapGen* 12–15) expand and transform the text to highlight Noah's observance of the scriptural law governing the produce of fruit trees (Lev. 19:23–25) and piously keeping a festival with his family.[55] Thus, it seems that the authors' interest in this episode is primarily in 'renovating Noah's character, showing him piously observing a festival'.[56] The shift of focus from a tragic ending of the narrative to an obedient character highlights the theological preference of the RS authors.

Furthermore, 'Scripture interpreting Scripture' appears in the FG in a different format. In analysing the composite citations in the Gospel of John, Catrin Williams finds that the author often conflates various scriptural references, that is 'scriptural passages have been woven into the quotation as a substitution for, or addition to, words cited from the primary source text'.[57] For example, the statement in John 6:31, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat' (ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν) is composed of the words 'the bread from heaven' (ἄρτους ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, Exod. 16:4), and 'to eat' (φαγεῖν, 16:15) combined with words from the Psalm text, 'and heaven's bread he gave them' (καὶ ἄρτον οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς, Ps. 77:24 LXX). After the miracle of feeding the five thousand (6:1–15), Jesus draws an analogy between himself and the story of manna from Exodus 16. The murmuring of the Jews (Jn 6:41, 43) recalls the complaint of the Israelites due to a lack of food in the wilderness (Exod. 16:2; 17:3). However, the Fourth Evangelist adds elements from the retelling of the story in Psalm 77:24 (LXX) to denote the origin of bread, that is, both manna and Jesus are from heaven and both are given by God. As Williams argues, this implicit fusion of scriptural texts

[55] Falk points out that *1QapGen* is very fragmentary here but seems closely to corresponding to *Jubilees*. Their close literary relationship suggests that either *Jubilees* is a source for *Genesis Apocryphon* or a common source to both. See further Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts*, 71–77.
[56] Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts*, 77.
[57] Catrin H. Williams, 'Composite Citations in the Gospel of John', in *Composite Citations in Antiquity Vol. 2 New Testament Uses*, edited by Sean A. Adams and Seth M. Ehorn (London: T&T Clark, 2018), 94–123.

supports and 'sharpens the Johannine Christological focus', namely that Jesus is the Sent One from heaven.[58]

Another example of a composite scriptural citation can be found in John 19:36: 'None of his bone shall be broken' (ὀστοῦν οὐ συντριβήσεται αὐτοῦ). The elements come from LXX Exodus 12:10, 46 ('you shall break no bone; καὶ ὀστοῦν οὐ συντρίψετε ἀπ᾽ αὐτοῦ'), Numbers 9:12 ('they shall not break; καὶ ὀστοῦν οὐ συντρίψουσιν ἀπ᾽ αὐτοῦ'), and Psalm 33:21 ('not one of them will be crushed; ἓν ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐ συντριβήσεται'). Williams points out that, in John 19:36, the future passive verbal form 'break' (συντριβήσεται), different from the active verbal form in the Pentateuchal passages (συντρίψετε or συντρίψουσιν), makes Psalm 33 the interpretative key to the citation in John's passion narrative. 'It describes how the righteous ones will remain intact even after death as a sign of how God can offer them deliverance'.[59] The catchwords 'broken bone' drawn from Psalm 33 provides another layer of meaning to the presentation of the death of Jesus, 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and from them all he will rescue them. The Lord will guard all their *bones*; not one of them *will be crushed*' (NETS Ps. 33:20–21). The fusion of this verb into the Torah narrative not only undergirds the identity of Jesus as a suffering righteous one, but also highlights the fulfilment of God's promise of protection. Thus the conflated composite citations in the FG provide a multi-layered interpretation of the identity and significance of the Johannine Jesus.

This kind of 'analogical exegesis' or catchword association in the FG is primarily intended to serve John's Christological purposes.[60] By inserting a distance scriptural text (or words) into

[58] Williams, 'Composite Citations', 99.
[59] Williams, 'Composite Citations', 117.
[60] Williams, 'Composite Citations', 125–126.

another scriptural passage, the exegetical effect is that it immediately discloses the theological concern of the author.[61]

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have reviewed a particular kind of Jewish literature focused on scriptural interpretation literature in the Second Temple period, namely Rewritten Scripture. Jewish Rewritten texts can be placed along a wide spectrum, from *revision* (close adherence to a recognizable base text) to *reuse* (a new composition which contains a substantial addition, omission, re-arrangement, or interpretation).[62] Proto-typical examples of Rewritten Scripture belong to the 'new composition' end of the spectrum. Some of them utilize non-scriptural materials to add or expand their base texts with the intention of creating a new composition. Some of them claim authority similar to or even higher than the base text, such as what one encounters in *Jubilees* and *Temple Scroll*, while others show no hint of making such an attempt, such as *Genesis Apocryphon* and *LAB*.

The expansion of the list of Rewritten Scripture texts in recent scholarship helps to broaden but also deepen the investigation to this text-type in Second Temple Jewish literature. However, it is still debatable whether one can define this genre by its distinctive literary features. Therefore, some scholars have suggested that examining the compositional aims and function of texts belonging to this genre can expand the scope of study through the inclusion of other texts, including the New Testament writings.[63]

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[61] Catchword association as a Jewish exegetical technique will be further discussed in the analysis of the Johannine Prologue in the next chapter.
[62] Zahn, *Genre of Rewriting*, 28–55.
[63] Petersen, 'Textual Fidelity', 16; and Docherty, 'Exegetical Methods in the New Testament and the Rewritten Bible'.

Here we suggest that the Gospel of John, in respect to its writing strategies and exegetical techniques, shares many parallels to the RS writing, especially in its explicit and implicit use of Torah narratives in its presentation of Jesus. To enhance the authority of their compositions, *Jubilees*, the *Temple Scroll* and the FG all appeal to heaven-derived revelation. Moreover, *Jubilees* and the FG are both fascinated with the concepts of writing and of written book. In *Jubilees*, authority is conferred in the transmission of divine revelation through the written documents (or book) passed down from the patriarchs for a better or true interpretation of Torah. Similarly, John's frequent reference to *writtenness* in the gospel narrative and his twofold description of his writing as a 'book' at the end of his Gospel (20:30 and 21:25) both have the effect, like *Jubilees*, of claiming for itself a superior authoritative status, especially in the context of competing interpretations of Torah.

With regard to literary and exegetical methods, John also shares certain scriptural interpretative techniques with the texts of Rewritten Scripture. The use of direct speeches in various forms is widespread in late Second Temple period literature, but the juxtaposition of two different scriptural passages (because of verbal or thematic parallels) for mutual interpretation is an exegetical practice it shares with the RS texts. In this respect, the composite citation techniques attested in John's Gospel demonstrate that it shares with Rewritten Scripture the approach of interpreting Scripture by means of Scripture.

Chapter 4

Rewriting Torah In Prologue: A New Creation Story

1. Introduction

The Prologue of the Fourth Gospel (1:1–18) is distinctive among the openings of the canonical gospels, both in term of style and theological content. As far as its engagement with the Jewish scriptures is concerned, this short passage is rich in scriptural interpretation and saturated with a variety of scriptural allusions, themes, and motifs. Many scholarly interpretations of the Prologue therefore, seek to trace the origin – especially the scriptural origin - of its key terms, such as various Jewish traditions relating to God's word (*Logos*).[1] Attempts have also been made to investigate the genre or literary style of the Prologue, such as the proposal that it derives from an early Christian hymn (with later additions) or forms a *Targumic* exposition of a range of scriptural text(s).[2] Some recent scholars adopt a narrative approach to investigating the compositional strategy and the function of the Prologue.[3] However, only a few attempts have been made at investigating the scriptural interpretative strategies together with the rhetorical purpose of the Prologue. The purpose of this and the next chapter attempt to contribute the study in these two areas..

[1] Craig A. Evans, *Word and Glory: On the Exegetical and Theological Background of John's Prologue* (London: T&T Clark, 1993), 77–99; John Ashton, 'The Transformation of Wisdom: A Study of the Prologue of John's Gospel', *NTS* 32 (1985), 161–86.

[2] R.E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 3; Daniel Boyarin, 'The Gospel of the *Memra*: Jewish Binitarianism and the Prologue to John', *HTR* 94 (2001), 243–84; Peder Borgen, 'Logos was the True Light: Contributions to the Interpretation of the Prologue of John', *NovT* 14 (1972), 115–30.

[3] For example, Derek Tovey, 'Narrative Strategies in the Prologue and the Metaphor of *ὁ λόγος* in John's Gospel', *Pacifica* 15 (2002), 140–41; Peter M Philips, *The Prologue of the Fourth Gospel: A Sequential Reading* (London: T&T Clark, 2006).

In her discussion of issues relating to the likely genre of the Prologue, Ruth Sheridan proposes that the beginning of John's Gospel can be described as an 'exegetical narrative'. This is because it incorporates so many scriptural allusions, and does so seamlessly, into its introduction of the Gospel narrative.[4] As an exegetical narrative, Sheridan finds that the Prologue coherently holds two tales together, namely the biblical exegetical tale and the proclamation of Jesus' tale.[5] Since Sheridan only offers a brief analysis of the Prologue through the lens of 'exegetical narrative',[6] this and the following chapter will seek to examine the relevance of this designation for the Prologue, focusing in particular on its connections with known Jewish rewriting techniques. We propose that the Prologue's rewriting strategies and exegetical techniques, which share with some ancient Jewish narrative texts, shape the distinctive Christology that the Fourth Gospel presents. In order to highlight their common exegetical patterns in this form of writing, certain Rewritten Scripture texts from the late Second Temple period are selected for comparison with the Johannine Prologue.[7]

2. Rewritten Scripture and John's Prologue as 'Exegetical Narrative'

From the perspective of a narrative incorporating implicit scriptural exegesis, many cases of Rewritten Scripture (RS) can in fact be categorized as providing significant examples of what

[4] See Ruth Sheridan, 'John's Prologue as Exegetical Narrative', in *The Gospel of John as Genre Mosaic*, edited by Kasper Bro Larsen (Gőttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 171–90. Sheridan's use of the term 'exegetical narrative' is drawn from Joshua Levinson's study of *haggadic* midrashim: 'Dialogical Reading in the Rabbinic Exegetical Narrative', *Poetic Today* 25 (2004), 497–528..

[5] Sheridan, 'John's Prologue', 173.

[6] Also Sheridan's primary focus is the retelling of the Exodus story in the second half of the Prologue (vv.12–18). See eadem "John's Prologue', 183–88.

[7] In this chapter, we use the examples of two typical narrative RS for comparison, namely the *Book of Jubilees* and *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. See Philip Alexander, 'Retelling the Old Testament' in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture*, edited by D.A. Caron and H.G.M Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 99–121.

can be described as pre-rabbinic forms of 'exegetical narrative'.[8] In this regard, John's Prologue can also be viewed as a form of 'exegetical narrative' containing both scriptural exegesis and a story focusing on a symbolic character: '*Logos*'. In order to demonstrate the relevance of the comparison between the Prologue and the RS, we will first explain what is meant by the term 'Exegetical Narrative'.

2.1 What is Exegetical Narrative?

When Geza Vermes first coined the term 'Rewritten Bible' in his 1961 book *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, he, interestingly, counted a particularly wide range of Jewish scriptural interpretative works as belonging to the same category, including a number of Second Temple Jewish texts, the Palestinian *Targumim*, as well as medieval *midrashic* texts such as 'The Book of the Upright' (*Sefer ha-Yashar*).[9] Subsequently, however, scholars have differentiated clearly between compositions belonging to Rewritten Bible / Scripture from the Second Temple period, on the one hand, and later rabbinic literature, on the other.[10] According to Steven Fraade, the major difference between them relates to whether the Jewish text in question contains formal terminological markers to differentiate between the scriptural words and their accompanying explication.[11] In RS, interpretation is fully embedded into the retelling of the scriptural narrative, whereas rabbinic texts explicitly cite scriptural components (words or phrases) as *lemmas* and then subjects those components to exegetical discussion. Nevertheless, both RS and rabbinic texts do share many similar traits and

[8] Levinson, 'Dialogical Reading', 500, acknowledges in this regard that 'there is no doubt that the greatest cultural debt of the rabbinic exegetical narrative is to the postbiblical genre of the rewritten Bible'.
[9] Geza Vermes, 'The Genesis of the Concept of "Rewritten Bible", in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes*, edited by József Zsengellér (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 3–9.
[10] Steven D. Fraade, 'Rewritten Bible and Rabbinic Midrash as Commentary', in *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash*, edited by Carol Bakhos (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 59–72. Note that we use the terms 'Rewritten Bible' and 'Rewritten Scripture' synonymously in this dissertation.
[11] Fraade, 'Rewritten Bible', 60.

features. For examples, the use of 'expansive paraphrase, filling in scriptural gaps, contractive paraphrase, removing discomforting sections, and harmonizing seemingly discordant verses' are all shared by both RS and rabbinic midrash.[12]

In some studies of rabbinic literature, scholars accept that the narrative elements in rabbinic *midrash* are derived from scriptural exegesis, although these elements could have been transferred from their original contexts and then reused in the haggadic stories narrated by the sages. For example, James Kugel demonstrates that many scriptural motifs found in the *midrashic* narratives parallel those found in Qumran documents as well as in other Second Temple literature, which probably points to common interpretative traditions.[13] Some of the scriptural exegesis attested in Second Temple Jewish texts can also be found in New Testament writings, particularly in the gospels.[14] When one also takes into account the various exegetical works of Philo or Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*, it becomes clear that scriptural expositional narrative is prevalent during the late Second Temple period and beyond.[15]

In this respect, Joshua Levinson has proposed a Jewish literary form which he calls 'exegetical narrative', that is, a narrative composition that simultaneously *represents* and *interprets* its biblical counterpart. Levinson explains as follows: 'as a hermeneutical reading of biblical story presented in narrative form, its defining characteristic lies precisely in this synergy of narrative and exegesis'.[16] This represents a kind of dialogical method of scriptural

[12] Fraade, 'Rewritten Bible', 62.
[13] James Kugel, *In Potiphar's House: The Interpretive Life of Biblical Texts* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).
[14] Serge Ruzer suggests many such examples in his study of the Gospel of Matthew. See his *Mapping the New Testament: Early Christian Writings as a Witness for Jewish Biblical Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).
[15] Serge Ruzer, 'Did New Testament Authors Aspire to Make Their Compositions Part of Scripture? The Case of the Johannine Prologue', in *Oriental Studies and Interfaith Dialogue*, edited by Máté Hidvégi (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2018), 347–61.
[16] Levinson, 'Dialogical Reading', 498.

interpretation: 'as exegesis, it creates new meanings from the biblical verses, and as narrative it represents those meanings by means of the biblical world'.[17] Regarding the exegetical dimension, the new narrative clarifies or fills the gaps of the scriptural texts (biblical world). At the same time, the familiar scriptural texts give authority to the newly created narrative texts. By placing both texts side by side, an exegetical narrative requires the reader to interact with both the scriptural world and the new narrative world.

2.2 The Johannine Prologue as Exegetical Narratives

Joshua Levinson primarily uses *Genesis Rabbah*, a rabbinic *midrash*, as an example to elaborate his theory. Rabbinic *midrashim* are considered as Jewish scriptural commentaries, both exegetical and homiletical, focusing on the legal (*halakhic*) or narrative (*haggadic*) aspects of the Jewish Scriptures. Nevertheless, the earliest *midrashic* collections date from the middle to the late third century CE and are therefore at least two centuries later than the New Testament writings, even though they may share some interpretative traditions.[18]

From a diachronic perspective, Levinson proposes that the post-biblical genre of Rewritten Bible is the most likely root of rabbinic exegetical narrative, specifically the haggadic midrashim.[19] He suggests two major differences between rabbinic *midrash* and Rewritten Bible. First, unlike rabbinic *midrash*, Rewritten Bible does not distinguish on the discursive level between the old and new texts, between a verse and its rewriting. Therefore, there is no tension between the narrative and its exegetical dimensions.[20] With the intention of

[17] Levinson, 'Dialogical Reading', 498.
[18] Steven D. Fraade, 'Rabbinic Midrash and Ancient Jewish Biblical Interpretation', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, edited by Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert and Martin S. Jaffee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 99–120.
[19] Levinson, 'Dialogical Reading', 500.
[20] Levinson suggests that another difference between rabbinic *midrash* and Rewritten Bible is their preference for overt and covert citations. See his 'Dialogical Reading', 500.

composing an independent scriptural narrative, *Jubilees* and the *Genesis Apocryphon* both belong to this kind of literary creation.

Second, many, if not all, post-biblical rewritten works 'anchor their authority in revelation', whereas 'the authority of the rabbinic text is anchored in what can be called the dignity of exegesis'.[21] As we discussed in the previous chapter, the *Book of Jubilees* traces the authority of revelation to the pre-existent heavenly tablet dictated by the Angel of the Presence and given to Moses on Mount Sinai (*Jub.* 1:26–28).

Almost contemporaneous with the late Second Temple period, the Johannine Prologue also possesses both of the features outlined above. First, the narrator of the Prologue incorporates verbal scriptural allusions as well as motifs, such as 'the beginning', 'light', and 'life' from the first creation account (Gen. 1:1–5), into its narrative about the *Logos*. Without clear differentiation from Scripture, all of these scriptural evocations set the stage and become part of the story of the '*Logos*' and 'true light' coming into the world (1:9–11). Thus, the readers are encouraged to interact and interpret these two stories 'in conversation' with each other. As a result, a dialogical reading 'is at work in a comparable way in John's Prologue'.[22]

Second, the narrator makes a strong claim to definitive revelation in his Prologue. It opens by emphasizing the role of the pre-existent *Logos* in creation (Jn 1:3). Providing an alternative story of creation, the Prologue presents a new, pre-existent character, the *Logos*, who was God and already with God before creation. In addition, the conflict between light and

[21] In relation to Rewritten Bible, Levinson notes that in the *Temple Scroll* the first person 'I' is used as the direct speech of God to give commandments. However, the authority of the rabbinic texts stems from the lemmatized, explicit exegetical commentary. See Levinson 'Dialogical Reading', 501; also George J. Brooke, 'Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible and Pesher', *DSD* 17 (2010), 361–86.

[22] Sheridan suggests that the dialogical reading of the Prologue requires the reader to identify an interchange between the plots of two different stories: the creation account in Genesis 1 and the *Logos* story. See Sheridan, 'John's Prologue', 181–83.

darkness (1:10–11) and the incarnation of the *Logos* into the world (1:14) reveals the glory of God and makes God known to his people (1:18).

In line with the two central features of Rewritten Scripture highlighted by Levinson, namely that implicit exegesis is found within the narrative and the emphasis on the authority of revelation, it can be argued that John's Prologue resembles Rewritten Scripture, more closely than rabbinic *midrash*. If this is the case, Rewritten Scripture and the Johannine Prologue share exegetical patterns that shed light on their writing strategies and rhetorical purposes and provide the basis for the comparative analysis undertaken in this dissertation.

3. A Narrative About the *Logos* (1:1–5)

Most scholars agree that the first five verses of the Prologue form a coherent literary unit regarding the origin of the *Logos*, and this because of their staircase or stepped parallel structure and the marked distinction from the section that follows about John the Baptist (vv.6–8).[23] To depict the origin of the divine *Logos*, the first five verses of the Prologue offer an interpretation of the first creation account from Genesis 1. However, we argue that, by evoking elements from the creation story, what John in fact offers in this literary unit is a new narrative of *Logos* designed to encourage its audience to engage in a dialogical reading, one analogous to what is encountered in Rewritten Scripture.

3.1 The Origin of the *Logos* (1:1–2)

[23] Staircase or stepped parallelism contains a catchword at the end of the first line that will recur at the beginning of the second line (Logos – Logos – God – God in v.1, and life – life – darkness – darkness in vv. 4–5). See Martinus C. De Boer 'The Original Prologue to the Gospel of John', *NTS* 61 (2015), 448–67. Also see John F. McHugh, *John 1–4,* ICC (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 5–20.

V. 1a Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

V. 1b καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν,

V. 1c καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.

V. 2 οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

Concerning the opening phase, 'in the beginning' (ἐν ἀρχῇ), C.K. Barrett comments as follows: '[That] John's opening verse is intended to recall the opening verse of Genesis is certain'.[24] Indeed, John's use of this phase not only reminds the audience of the creation account, but also makes his Gospel begin 'in the same way as the first book of Torah, and of the entire Bible'.[25] A strong echo of the opening words of Genesis is therefore designed to enable the audience to recall the earlier scriptural text as they seek to interpret the new narrative.

Nevertheless, instead of focusing on God's creation, the narrator rewrites the text of Genesis by offering an alternative version of the story focusing on another character, the Logos.26 John uses an imperfect 'verb-to-be' (ἦν) four times in vv. 1–2 to describe this Logos: he existed in the beginning, was with God, and was God. Hence, in v.1 this imperfect form of εἰμί conveys the notions of existence, relationship, and predication.[27] Compared with the aorist verbal form ἐγένετο ('came into being, became') in verses 3, 6, 14, John depicts the

[24] C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to Saint John* (London: SPCK, 1978), 45 n.2.
[25] Maarten J.J. Menken, 'Genesis in John's Gospel and 1 John', in *Genesis in the New Testament,* edited by Maarten J.J. Menken and Steve Moyise (London: T&T Clark, 2012), 83–98.
[26] According to BDAG, the Greek word *logos* denotes: 1. a communication whereby the minds finds expression, word; 2. Computation, reckoning; 3. The independent personified expression of God, the *Logos*. See Bauer et al, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 598–602.
[27] Brown, *John*,4. See also Marianne M. Thompson, *John: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 28, n.6.

pre-creation state of *Logos* and also his relationship with God in vv.1–2.[28] In its literary context, the existence of the *Logos* is placed 'outside the limits of time and place, neither of which existed *en arche*'.[29] Painter also remarks in this regard that John 'makes a leap beyond the allusions upon which it is built, with the timeless (existence) ἦν for the λόγος'.[30]

Within the framework of an exegetical narrative, implicit exegesis and narrative are therefore seamlessly interwoven together in the Prologue. As a narrative, this *Logos* is described as pre-existent, distinct from God, but also as possessing the same identity as God.[31] Moreover, the demonstrative pronoun 'this man' (οὗτος) in verse 2 'looks backward to the masculine *logos* and points forwards to the human figure, Jesus' (1:14, 17).[32] By implication, the divine identity of this man indicates that 'the deeds and words of Jesus (in the whole gospel) are the deeds and words of God'.[33]

The character *Logos*, moreover, would not be completely unknown to a scripturally literate audience. The creation account in Genesis 1 establishes the creative power of *God's word*: when he speaks, things come into being (LXX Gen 1:3). Also, this creation narrative is subjected to a number of interpretations elsewhere in the Jewish Scriptures. Both the Psalmist and the Prophets retell the creation story by referring to the powerful word of God in an independent and personified manner. For example, Psalm 33:6 states: 'by the word of the Lord (LXX 32:6 τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ κυρίου) the heavens were made, and all their hosts by the

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[28] Without reference to time and space before creation, John F. McHugh translates v.1b as 'The Word was very close to God' (*John 1–4*, 9–10).
[29] Moloney, *The Gospel of John* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 35.
[30] John Painter, 'The Prologue as an Hermeneutical Key to Reading the Fourth Gospel', in *Studies in the Gospel of John and Its Christology*, edited by Joseph Verheyden, Geert Van Dyen, Michael Labahn and Reimund Bieringer (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 37–59.
[31] Richard Bauckham, 'Monotheism and Christology in the Gospel of John', in his *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple: Narrative, History and Theology in the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 239–52.
[32] Francis J. Moloney, *John*, 35.
[33] Barrett, *John*, 156.

breath of his mouth'. Similarly, in Isaiah 55:11 it is declared: '… so shall my word (τὸ ῥῆμά μου) that goes out from my mouth, it shall not return to me empty…'.[34] These scriptural (secondary) texts are alluding to the first creation account in Genesis (primary text) and thus provide the exegetical groundwork for John's composition of his *Logos* narrative.

More importantly, the same prepositional phrase 'in the beginning' (ἐν ἀρχῇ) in Proverbs 8:23 and Genesis 1:1 provide a connection between the Logos and the personified Wisdom for the narrator to interpret his new creation story (LXX Prov. 8:23: πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσέν με ἐν ἀρχῇ). In Jewish exegetical tradition, *gezerah shawah*, or an analogy with the aid of a catchword, is one of the most characteristic techniques for linking a scriptural text to another text based on their shared vocabulary. The two texts are often concerned with the same subject, but not necessarily so.[35] Believing that the words of God must be consistent and coherent, it is considered legitimate for 'the analogous scriptural passages sharing the same words or phrases to be interpreted in relation to each other'.[36]

In a broader sense, many examples of Rewritten Scripture, because of shared vocabularies, link up thematically with another biblical episode, in accordance with the compositional aims of their retelling of scriptural narratives.[37] Typically, in this regard, Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (LAB)* integrates secondary biblical episodes into the primary narrative in order to carry out a form of biblical exegesis.[38]

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[34] In Hebrew Scripture, both verses are using same word דָּבָר, whereas the LXX translator uses different Greek words (ὁ λόγος, τὸ ῥῆμά) to express the same meaning.

[35] David Instone-Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 CE* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 18.

[36] John's use of *gezerah shawah,* as an exegetical technique in his Gospel, is analysed by Catrin H. Williams, 'John, Judaism, and Searching the Scripture', in *John and Judaism: A Contested Relationship in Context,* edited by R. Alan Culpepper and Paul N. Anderson (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 77–100.

[37] On the scriptural roots of inner-biblical exegesis, see Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

[38] Bruce N. Fisk, 'One Good Story Deserves Another: The Hermeneutics of Invoking Secondary Biblical Episodes in the Narratives of Pseudo-Philo and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs', in *The Interpretation*

For example, the text describes how Moses' face was transfigured when he came down from Mt. Sinai. '…the light of his face surpassed the splendor of the sun and the moon…And when he came down to the sons of Israel, they saw him but did not recognize him. But when he spoke, then they recognized him. And this was *like what happened in Egypt when Joseph recognized his brother but they did not recognize him*' (*LAB* 12.1). In Exodus 32, there is nothing about Moses' transfigured face, nor of him being unrecognizable to the people. Intertextually, Pseudo-Philo links the lack of recognition of Moses to the lack of recognition of Joseph by his brothers (Gen. 42). According to Bruce Fisk, Pseudo-Philo transfers the moral sinfulness of Joseph's brothers by implicitly applying the phrase 'did not recognize' to the Israelites because of their worship of the golden calf. Taking the example of Joseph's brothers, Pseudo-Philo expounds the teaching that physical sight can be 'blinded by their sinfulness'.[39]

In the same way, the Prologue narrator employs this exegetical practice of merging primary (Gen. 1) and secondary scriptural texts (Ps. 33 and Prov. 8), as well as other contemporary Jewish traditions, into the new narrative. Apart from the emphasis on pre-existence, some other aspects of the stories of Wisdom, such as closeness to God and participation in his creation work (Prov. 8:30; Sir 24:9; cf. Jn 1:3) as well as his sending from Heaven into the world (Sir 24:4, 8; Jn 1:5, 11), have also been transferred into this *Logos* narrative.

As Jörg Frey points out, the Wisdom of Solomon[40] is a striking example of the conflation of

of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity: Studies in Language and Tradition, edited by Craig A. Evans (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 217–38.

[39] Fisk, 'One Good Story', 229.

[40] *Wisdom of Solomon* is a Jewish wisdom text written in Greek probably during the second half of the first century BCE or the beginning of the first century CE. See Sharon H. Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends: Community and Christology in the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 40–42.

God's wisdom and God's word, particular 'in the prayer of Wis 9:1–2, [where] they are mentioned in a clear parallelism as mediators of the creation:[41] "Lord of mercy, who has made the universe by your word (ἐν λόγῳ σου), and by your wisdom (τῇ σοφίᾳ σου)…"' Frey further comments that, in addition to creation, other aspects of Wisdom, such as her connection with life (Wis 8:13; LXX Ps. 118:25, 107) and light (Baruch 4:2; LXX Ps. 118:105; cf. Jn 1:5, 9), and her being sent to humankind, to human hearts (Wis 9:10; cf. Jn 1:10–11) or even 'tabernacling' among individuals in Zion (Sir 24:8) are, then, transferred to the *Logos*.[42]

Regarding the Johannine shaping of the characterization of the *Logos*, some scholars draw attention to the contribution made by another Jewish tradition: the Aramaic scriptural translations (*Targumim*).[43] The *Targumic* tradition developed a practice of narrating God's presence among his people in terms of God's word (*Memra*; מימרא). For instance, *Targum Neofiti Genesis* 1:1 states: 'From the beginning with wisdom, *the Memra* of the Lord created and perfected the heaven and the earth'.[44] Thus, John McHugh agrees and quotes Robert Hayward that 'the most satisfactory meaning seems to be that which interprets *Memra* as "neither an hypostasis, nor a simple replacement for the Name YHWH, but an exegetical term representing a theology of the name "*HYH*"'.[45]

Daniel Boyarin also suggests that *Memra* works as more than a simple circumlocution for the

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[41] Jörg Frey, 'Between Torah and Stoa', in *The Prologue of the Gospel of John*, edited by Jan van der Watt, R. Alan Culpepper, and Udo Schnelle (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 189–234, here 212.
[42] Frey, 'Between Torah and Stoa', 213.
[43] The *Targumim* origin behind the *Logos* can be found in Brown, *John*, 1.32–34; McHugh, *John 1–4*, 91–96; and Evans, *Word and Glory*, 100–44.
[44] Martin McNamara's translation, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis, Translated, with Apparatus and Notes* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 67. According to Frey, the *Neofiti* manuscript from the Vatican Library is considered an earlier date one than other existing Palestinian *Targums*. See his 'Between Torah and Stoa', 216.
[45] McHugh *John 1–4*, 8, and Robert Hayward, *Divine Name and Presence: The Memra* (Oxford: Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, 1981), xii.

name of God.[46] The term denotes God's immanent presence in creation. The *Memra* appears as an agent who at once is distinct and yet inseparable from God. Broadly speaking, the significance of *Memra* is that it enables people within Jewish tradition to affirm God's real presence in the world in a form that is continuous with but not identical to God's transcendent self.[47]

Regarding the presence of the mediator between God and the creature, the author of the *Book of Jubilees* puts the angel of the presence, the highest order angel, to perform a function of disclosing God's revelation to Moses. In *Jub.* 1, the Lord commands the angel of presence to dictate to Moses the contents of the heavenly tablets (1:27–29). In addition, accompanied by other angels of presence, he saves Israel from the Egyptians (48:13–19) and even makes a covenant with Israel at Sinai (50:2).

According to James VanderKam, this name, the angel of the presence, is probably the result of scriptural exegesis, coming from Isaiah 63:9, with the Exodus background that the angel of God was going before the camp of Israel (Exod. 14:19).[48] On a few occasions, the angel claims for himself what originally in the Torah are the words and deeds of the Lord (e.g. *Jub*. 6:19; Exod. 24:8; and *Jub*. 6:22; Lev. 23:15–21 and Num. 28:26–31; cf. Acts 7:38). By doing so, the transcendent God is being removed from almost all immediate contact with the world, though he does not completely disappear according to *Jubilees*. Therefore, Hindy Najman rightly comments that '*Jubilees* here conceives the authority of Mosaic Torah as deriving from its origin in an angelic intermediary, whose authority results in turn from his elevated status and from his acting at God's command'.[49] Through the words and deeds of this

[46] Boyarin, 'The Gospel of the *Memra*', 243–84.
[47] Boyarin, 'The Gospel of the Memra', 255.
[48] James VanderKam, 'The Angel of the Presence in the Book of Jubilees', in *DSD* 7, 3 (2000), 378–93.
[49] Hindy Najman, 'Angels at Sinai: Exegesis, Theology and Interpretive Authority', in *DSD* 7 (2000), 313–333.

mediator, new authority is established for the interpretation of the Torah.

In the Johannine Prologue, the *Logos* is probably the result of exegesis based on the scriptural and later Jewish wisdom traditions. He is portrayed as performing the intermediatory role of acting as a heavenly agent of God. He gets involved in the creation work (1:3); he comes to enlighten the world (1:9) and reveals the glory of God (1:14). Basically he possesses the same authority as the one who sent him (5:23; 12:44).[50] Compared with the angel of presence in *Jubilees*, the *Logos* is even superior because he is uncreated (1:1).[51] Serge Ruzer points out that the narrator's overarching strategy is 'to establish an intrinsic link between God's word / light revealed at creation (in Torah) and the revelation given at the end of times through the Messiah, the bearer – or in John's phraseology the (final) embodiment – of that word-light (1:14–18)'.[52] Like the Book of *Jubilees*, this intrinsic link between Mosaic Torah and the new revelation in term of a significant mediator helps to establish the authority of the new book and its interpretation of Scripture.

3.2 Development of the *Logos* Narrative (1:3–5)

What hermeneutical strategy enables the exegete to add new elements into their narrative while still claiming to be interpreting, even rewriting, Scripture? Levinson suggests that in an exegetical narrative, by its very nature, two different voices in a single utterance shape 'an active understanding of the biblical text, its combination of the exegetical and narrative modes creates negotiated readings that result from the meeting and mixing of two different

[50] Peder Borgen, 'God's Agent in the Fourth Gospel', in *The Interpretation of John*, edited by John Ashton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 83–95.
[51] *Jubilees* 2:2 states that on the first day of creation, God creates heaven and earth and all serving spirits, including the angel of presence.
[52] Serge Ruzer, 'Did New Testament Authors Aspire to Make Their Compositions Part of Scripture?', 347–61.

cultural formations'.[53] His insight is also applicable to the development of the *Logos* narrative at the beginning of John's Prologue (1:3–5). In this particular section, both the Genesis voice and the Johannine voice can be heard in combination with each other.

V. 3a πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο

V. 3b καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν.

V. 3c ὃ γέγονεν

V. 4a ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν,

V. 4b καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων·

V.5a καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει,

V.5b καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν.

The noun 'all things' (πάντα) in verse 3a is commonly used in the NT to represent the whole created world,[54] while the prepositional phrase 'through him' (δι' αὐτοῦ) points to the subject of the preceding verse, the *Logos*.[55] In this same verse, John shifts to use an aorist verbal form well-known from scriptural narrative: 'came into being' or 'became' (MT הִיה; LXX ἐγένετο) denotes the beginning of time in creation. For instance, on the first day of creation, 'God said, "Let there be light", and there was light' (LXX Gen 1:3 καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς). In the first creation account (LXX Gen 1:1–2:3), the verbal form ἐγένετο appears twenty times in

[53] Levinson, 'Dialogical Reading', 503, draws from Michel Foucault's theoretical insight that the cultural authority of the exegete gives the authority to the interpretation of a familiar text and at the same time an innovation and revision.
[54] Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 1:10 and Revelation 4:11. See McHugh, *John 1–4*, 11.
[55] McHugh, *John 1–4*, 12, comments that διά + genitive noun is John's favourite term to denote God's agent who executes the divine plan, such as John the Baptist (1:7) and Moses (1:17).

total to express how God's creative work is done each day.

This frequently used verb would serve as a reminder to John's audience that the primary scriptural text is still the creation account from the Book of Genesis. However, what would be new to the audience is the claim that all things came into being 'through the *Logos*', and nothing in creation has taken place without this mediating figure.

If John were focusing exclusively on the scriptural creation account, the dative pronoun ἐν αὐτῷ would refer to the living creatures in Genesis 1. Then the translation of vv. 3c–4a[56] should be: 'what came into being, there was life in it'.[57] Nevertheless, the depiction of natural life in the creation account of Genesis 1 is not consistent with the description in v. 4b, namely, that the light can enlighten human beings. Within the framework of an exegetical narrative, new elements can be introduced through scriptural exegesis that convey new meaning. In this case, the masculine dative pronoun refers to the preceding pronoun οὗτος in v.2, that is the *Logos*: 'what came into being in him was life'. The translation, 'life in him', provides the double meaning of both his participation in creation and also his coming mission – to give (eternal) life.[58] This becomes an increasingly prominent theme as the Gospel narrative unfolds (cf. 3:16, 36; 14:6).

Another nominative noun, 'light', is introduced in v. 4b. In the scriptural creation account, light is the first creative act of God accomplished on the first day (Gen. 1:3–5). Then on the fourth day, God places light in the expanse of heavens to separate between light and darkness (Gen. 1:14–18). The Psalmist, moreover, juxtaposes life and light in his praise of God (Ps.

[56] Older manuscripts place v. 3c at the beginning of v. 4a. Textual reasons for this can be found in B.M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd edition (Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 167–68.
[57] Life here is understood as the natural life described in Genesis 1. See McHugh, *John 1–4*, 14.
[58] McHugh, *John 1–4*, 15.

36:9: 'For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light').[59] However, by using the genitive case for 'human beings' (τῶν ἀνθρώπων) to modify 'light' (v. 4b), John attempts to convey the notion that this light is not just the natural one described in the creation account, but also a metaphorical entity to denote enlightenment. This is only clearly expressed with its reappearance in v. 9.[60]

The use of the present tense φαίνει in v. 5a suggests that this light continues to shine in the darkness. Ridderbos proposes in this regard that the statement 'refers to the light that came when Christ entered the world and that now shines'.[61] He comes to this conclusion for two reasons, namely the fact that the present tense excludes an event rooted in the past, while the rejection of the light / Logos in v. 5b only takes place during Jesus' life.[62] In contrast to the same verbal form of φαίνει used in 1 John 2:8, the preposition ἐν in the Prologue indicates that when the light shines, the darkness remains.[63] Hence, the mission of light / Logos is implicitly affirmed.

In the Genesis creation account, darkness and formless void are two constituent elements of the initial chaos (1:2). What God accomplished is to create light and separate it from darkness (1:5). In the Prologue, a dramatic element is added, that is, the conflict between the light and the darkness, with the additional clarification that darkness cannot κατέλαβεν the light (Jn 1:5).[64] According to BDAG, the aorist form κατέλαβεν can have several meanings: 1. To

[59] Other rabbinic and Hellenistic uses of these two terms life and light can be found in Barrett, *John*, 157.
[60] Later in the Gospel, John uses the expression 'the light of the world' to describe Jesus (Jn 8:12; 9:5 and 12:46). See McHugh, *John 1–4*, 16.
[61] Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John: A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, ET 1997), 39.
[62] Ridderbos, *John*, 39.
[63] 1 John 2:8 states: '…the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shinning' (without any preposition). See McHugh, *John*, 19.
[64] In the Jewish Scripture, the metaphor of darkness is used to mean: 1. Realm of terror, gloom, and death (Job 15:22–23, 17:12–13; Pss 88:12, 91:6 etc), or 2. A lack of knowledge of God or the way to God (Job 5:14; Pss 18:28, 82:5; Eccl 2:13–14). See Thompson, *John*, 29.

make something one's own, 2. To gain control of someone through pursuit, catch up with, seize, 3. To come upon someone, with implication of surprise, catch, and 4. To process information, understand, grasp.[65]

In the context of v. 5, the most likely meaning is either 2. 'to gain control of someone through pursuit / to seize' (cf. NRSV: 'overcome') or 4. 'to understand' (cf. KJV: 'comprehended'). Raymond Brown opts for 'overcome' and suggests that the reference to sin in Genesis 3 provides the background to the claim that darkness attempts to overcome the light.[66] However, Brown does not explain why here, in v. 5, John suddenly shifts from the first creation account (life and light in Genesis 1) to the second creation narrative (the sin of humankind in Genesis 3). Hence, Marianne Thompson prefers the meaning 'understand', based on two similar words in the Prologue to show the attitude of the world: v. 11 'accept' (παρέλαβον) and v. 12 'receive' (ἔλαβον). This conveys the claim that the darkness does not receive or comprehend the light.[67]

In addition, later in v. 8, John declares that the Baptist is not the light, which implies that the light is referring to another person. Also, in vv. 9–10, after the section about John the Baptist, John returns again to the light and describes how the world does '*not know'* this true light. Therefore, within the first section of John's Prologue (vv. 1–5), John is not bound by the creation narrative from Genesis 1. Rather, a new development is introduced, that is, the negative response of the darkness to the shining of the light, which is subtly presented in conjunction with or as part of the interpretation of the scriptural creation narrative.

[65] Bauer et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament,* 519.
[66] Brown, *John*, 7–8.
[67] Thompson, *John*, 30, and Ridderbos, *John* 40, also supports this view.

Furthermore, in addition to evoking the primary text of Genesis 1, John crafts his narrative of *Logos* / light by, once again, adopting some familiar features from Wisdom traditions. In particular:

1. Both the *Logos* (Jn 1:3) and the Wisdom are involved in the work of creation: 'for wisdom, the fashioner of all things' (*Wisdom* 7:22).
2. Both are described as the source of life (Jn 1:4): 'For whoever finds me finds life' (Prov. 8:35)
3. The light is shining among humankind (Jn 1:4–5): 'For she is a reflection of eternal light' (*Wisdom* 7:26).
4. Darkness did not comprehend the light (Jn 1:5): '…Compared with the light she is found to be superior, for it is succeeded by the night, but against wisdom, evil does not prevail' (*Wisdom* 7:29–30).
5. Like the word of God in creation, Wisdom comes from the mouth of God: 'I came forth from the mouth of the Most High…I encamped in the heights, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.' (*Sir*. 24:3–4).

All these texts provide the elements required for John's *Logos* narrative, such as Wisdom as the mediating agent in creation, as life and light giver on behalf of God, as well as the emphasis on the opposition to darkness. Given, moreover, the identification of Wisdom as the word coming forth from the mouth of God (*Sir.* 24:3), as well as the poetic parallel usage between the word and wisdom (*Wisdom* 9:1–2), it is conceivable for the narrator to have 'an amazing leap of theological imagination' to transform the feminine Lady Wisdom into his masculine *Logos* / light.[68]

[68] John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 503.

In examples of Rewritten Scripture, furthermore, the incorporation of another scriptural passage into the rewriting of a scriptural text is a common literary practice and is used to enhance the dramatic effect as well as its theological import. For instance, in his rewriting of the Israelites crossing of the Red Sea (*LAB* 10:5), Pseudo-Philo appropriates elements from Psalm 106:9 ('He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry') and Psalm 18:15 ('Then the channels of the sea were seen, and the foundation of the world were laid bare'). This expansion of the Exodus episode is not only a dramatic embellishment, but also a reinforcement of the need to trust the covenantal promise of God.[69] Similarly, the addition of Wisdom features in the *Logos* narrative encourages the audience to engage in a dialogical reading, that is, an active understanding of how the *Logos* / light, in accordance with Scripture, comes into the world as a divine life-giver and yet faces opposition.[70] At this point, the narrator introduces a human character to continue his narrative about the coming of the light in the world.

4. John the Witness (1:6–8)

Scholars find it difficult to account for the sudden shift in subject matter in vv. 6–8.[71] However, by repeating some of the key words from the preceding section (vv. 1–5), namely ἐγένετο, οὗτος, and τὸ φῶς, the so-called John the Baptist section (vv. 6–8) is a continuation of the *Logos* narrative by introducing a new character.[72] The purpose of the coming of the

[69] Bruce Fisk, *Do You Remember? Scripture, Story and Exegesis in the Rewritten Bible of Pseudo-Philo* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 191–263.
[70] Levinson, 'Dialogical Reading', 503.
[71] To address this problem, Raymond Brown suggests that these few verses are a later addition, whereas Martinus De Boer regards v.6 as the original opening of the Gospel. See Brown, *John*, 1:22, and Martinus de Boer, 'The Original Prologue', 448–67.
[72] Tom Thatcher, 'The Riddle of the Baptist and the Genesis of the Prologue: John 1:1–18 in Oral / Aural Media Culture', in The Fourth Gospel in First-Century Media Culture, edited by Anthony Le Donne and Tom Thatcher (London: T&T Clark, 2013), 29–48.

John the Baptist is clearly stated in vv. 7–8: to bear witness to the light. The unfolding speech and acts of John in the Gospel narrative proves the validity of this purpose statement.[73] What significance can be attached to this kind of personal testimony when embedded in an exegetical narrative? What is the rhetorical impact by placing John as the witness within scriptural interpretation?

V.6 Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος, ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ, ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἰωάννης

V.7 οὗτος ἦλθεν εἰς μαρτυρίαν ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός, ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσιν δι' αὐτοῦ.

V.8 οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖνος τὸ φῶς, ἀλλ' ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός.

Without any conjunction, John uses the verbal form ἐγένετο ('there was / became') to introduce a new character, namely John (the Baptist).[74] The evangelist emphasizes that this John is a human witness to the *Logos* in his capacity as the one sent by God. In the whole gospel, only two other figures, Jesus and the Paraclete, are described as sent by God. Hence this John plays a decisive part in the divine plan as witness to the light (Jn 1:7).

Verse 7 emphasizes that this 'sent one' comes to play the role εἰς μαρτυρίαν (to witness). Two ἵνα clauses are used to explain the details of this witnessing activity, one of which is to

[73] Ruben Zimmermann quotes Catrin Williams' comment that it is 'commonplace to claim that his character portrait in the Fourth Gospel is almost totally restricted to that of a witness'. See Zimmermann, 'John (the Baptist) as a Character in the Fourth Gospel: The Narrative Strategy of a Witness Disappearing', in *The Prologue of the Gospel of John*, 99–115, and Catrin H. Williams, 'John (the Baptist): The Witness on the Threshold', in *Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Approaches to Seventy Figures in John*, edited by Steven A. Hunt, D. Francois Tolmie, and Ruben Zimmermann (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 46–60.

[74] It is common in the LXX to introduce a new character by using the phrase 'there was a man' (ἐγένετο ἀνὴρ), as, for example, in Judges 13:2; 17:1. John 1:5 here is a slight variant, but echo is still there. See McHugh, *John 1–4*, 22.

express purpose, to bear witness about the light, and the other one is to convey result, that all might believe through him (δι' αὐτοῦ). In the Prologue, this prepositional phrase appears three times to denote the mediatory function of God's agents to complete his work (the *Logos*, John and Moses in vv. 3, 7, 17).

The theme of bearing witness or testimony is not confined to the Prologue but continues throughout the Gospel. Apart from John the Baptist (1:19–37, 3:22–36, 5:33–36, 10:40–42), Moses and the Scripture (5:39, 46), the Father (5:32, 8:18), the Spirit (15:26), and the disciples are all playing this role to bear witness to Jesus, the incarnate *Logos*. Hence, John the Baptist becomes the first and foremost representative of this role in the whole gospel.

In addition, to argue that the sections about John the Baptist are not interruptions to the Prologue, Mona Hooker considers that both vv. 6–8 and v. 15 are situated, to some degree, in chiastic form. They form turning points for two important sections in the Prologue. One is that the Logos, eternally with God and the agent of creation (Jn 1:2–3), is the bearer of life and light (1:4), which shines in the darkness (1:5, 9). Whereas another one is that the Logos becomes flesh and his glory is seen, with fullness of grace and truth (1:14), and he has made God known (1:18).[75] Both sections refer to significant scriptural stories of the Jewish people: the creation account (Gen. 1) and the Sinai revelation event (Exod. 33–34). Revoking the narratives drawn from Torah, the role of John the Baptist in these two sections is to demonstrate that the life and mission of this incarnate *Logos* is authenticated by the scriptural truth.[76]

What, then, is the rhetorical impact of placing the testimony of John the Baptist into the

[75] Mona Hooker, 'John the Baptist and the Johannine Prologue', *NTS* 16 (1970), 354–58.
[76] Hooker, 'John the Baptist', 357.

Prologue's interpretation of Torah narratives? To convince the audience, Levinson notes that, in 'exegetical narrative', narrative elements and exegetical elements are mutual supporting, though they are two different methods of persuasion, based upon divergent, if not opposing, presuppositions of authority.[77] To make the exegesis persuasive, the voices or works of certain authoritative figures to the readers/ audience can be used in the narrative writing. For example, the testimony or speech of important or authoritative persons are literary devices that are frequently attested in Rewritten Scripture texts.

Thus, the title or the opening of the *Book of Jubilees* states: 'This is the Account of the Division of Days of the Law and the Testimony for the Annual Observance according to their weeks of years and their Jubilees throughout all the years of the World…'. The expression 'according to the Torah and to the Testimony' appears not only in the title-sentence but again in *Jubilees* 1:4–5, 1:26, 29 and many later verses. James Kugel observes that such references to 'the Torah and the Testimony' are based on a verse in the book of Isaiah, where God says, 'Bind up the testimony (*te'udah*; תְּעוּדָה); seal the teaching (Torah; תּוֹרָה) among my disciples' (Isa 8:16).[78] Hence, Isaiah provides the ground for the author of *Jubilees* to highlight the important guidance of both the teaching from Torah and his writing of different testimonies.

For the author of *Jubilees*, the reference to the Torah ('teaching' in modern translation) in Isaiah 8:16 is understood to denote the authoritative five books of Moses. Under the interpretative lens of Isaiah, there is another authority coming from the testimony, that is the works and deeds of the patriarchs, as the witness bearer to the Torah. In other words, the author of *Jubilees* asserts that his rewriting of Torah (from Genesis to the middle of Exodus)

[77] Levinson, 'Dialogical Reading', 498.
[78] James L. Kugel, *A Walk Through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of its Creation* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 3.

is constituted of two equally authoritative works: Torah and the testimony of the patriarchs. These two works are mutually interpretative. Thus, for instance, *Jubilees* 6:32–38 states that God, after the flood, warns Noah to command the children of Israel to guard the years in the numbers of 364 days. God even foretells that in the future, 'there will be those who will examine the moon diligently because it will corrupt the (appointed) time… Therefore, I shall command you and I shall *bear witness* to you so that you may *bear witness* to them…' In this manner, the warning to Noah becomes the authoritative voice used by the narrator to interpret the commands of God, even if this interpretation may be in conflict with other contemporary interpretation.

In a similar way, the Prologue narrator reminds audience that John the Baptist is not the light (Jn 1:8), but he is an authoritative witness to the light (the same clause is repeated twice in vv.7–8). Being a significant figure for the audience, the Baptist's support for the identification of the light / the *Logos* is considered trustworthy, just like the author of *Jubilees* to use Noah to legitimate his interpretation of Torah. As the narrative progress within the Prologue, more details about how the *Logos* comes into the human world (v.14) and the relationship between this *Logos* and the Baptist (v.15) will be disclosed.

5. Conclusion

The Johannine Prologue is distinctive in term of its design and theological content. Building on the recent insights by Joshua Levinson and Ruth Sheridan, this chapter has proposed that the Prologue can be categorised as an exegetical narrative, and that the interaction between scriptural exegesis and the narrator's telling of a new story about the *Logos* shapes the process of dialogical reading. Rewritten Scripture, as one (pre-rabbinic) form of exegetical narrative, provides many parallels and analogues for understanding the Prologue's

interpretative strategy.

In addition, the language and imagery of the creation account in Genesis 1 is particularly dominant in the first part of the Prologue (vv. 1–5). The exegetical process in relation to the first creation account is designed to help the Prologue's audience to understand the contours and claims of this new *Logos* narrative: he existed before creation, he was with God, and he is God (1:1). The narrator also employs familiar exegetical devices, such as catchword association and the techniques of scripture interpreting scripture, to enrich this new creation story.

Last, but not the least, John the Baptist is introduced as a new character to initiate a historical moment that is more contemporaneous with that of the audience. His primary role is to bear witness to the light, which indirectly authenticates the exegetical results of the new creation story (vv.1–5). Rhetorically, the authoritative past is brought into the audience's present.

Chapter 5

Rewriting Torah In the Prologue: The Revelation on Sinai Recalled

1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, we emphasized that scriptural interpretation plays a significant role in John's composition of the Prologue. We outlined the contours and function of 'exegetical narrative' with reference to Rewritten Scripture and also sought to trace some of the Jewish exegetical methods attested in the first section of the Prologue: it contains a rewriting of the creation narrative (Jn 1:1–5) and establishes a connection with the witnessing role of John the Baptist (Jn 1:6–8).

This chapter focuses on the remaining part of the Prologue (Jn 1:9–18), where, once again, we aim to explore how scriptural interpretation has been interwoven into the continuation of the *Logos* narrative. Attention will also be given to the ways in which the second half of the Prologue prepares the audience for an eschatological understanding of their own identity. Then, we attempt to demonstrate that John's interpretation of the story of the Sinai events (Exod. 33–34), particularly its emphasis on the 'seeing of the divine glory', is designed to shape the envisaged audience's perception of Jesus' significance as the enfleshed *Logos*, and how they, through belief, can participate in the eschatological divine family as 'the children of God'.

2. The Light's Coming Into the World (Jn 1:9–13)

Light, of course, first appears in the Prologue in verses 4–5: '…and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it'.

According to Alan Culpepper, the terms 'Logos, life and light' form a powerful symbolic cluster that is not restricted to verses 4–5 of the Prologue but dominates the symbolic system of the entire gospel.[1] The symbol of light drives forward the development of the story in verses 9–13, in that - light is described as entering into the human world and as generating two kinds of human responses: those who do not recognize the *Logos* and fail to receive him (vv. 9–11), and those who receive and believe in him (v. 12). By examining the application of this cluster of symbols - namely 'the world', 'his own' and heavenly 'birth right'- in this particular section, it can be shown that the audience is being equipped with the special knowledge required in order to understand the major conflict between Jesus and the world that will be given prominence in the main body of the Gospel. The audience, furthermore, when equipped with this knowledge as well as the required eschatological prophetic lens, is encouraged to identify themselves with the title 'children of God'.

2.1 The World Does Not Know Him (1:9–11)

v. 9 Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον, ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον.
v. 10 ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν, καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω.
v. 11 εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον.

It is very likely that the true light in verse 9 refers to *the Logos*, as already implied in verse 4.[2] McHugh opts, in this respect, for the following translation of the verse: 'it was the true light, that enlightens every one, (during his) coming into the world'.[3] In the main body of the

[1] R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1987), 190.
[2] John McHugh, *John*, 28, translates this clause as follows: 'The Word was the true light', though the subject 'the word' is implied by the imperfect verbal form of εἰμί in v. 9.
[3] The periphrastic structure is less likely in v. 9 because the imperfect verbal form ἦν is too far from the participial form 'coming' (ἐρχόμενον), being separated by a relative clause. See further McHugh, *John*, 33–34. Ridderbos also supports the adverbial meaning of the participial usage here. See further Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John: A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, ET: 1997), 43, n.80.

gospel narrative, the metaphor of light is further elaborated when the narrator declares that 'the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil' (3:19). Later, Jesus himself proclaims: 'I come as light into the world, so that everyone who believe in me should not remain in the darkness' (12:46). Hence, although Jesus' name has not yet appeared here in the Prologue, his mission - as light to enlighten people - is already disclosed in the Gospel's opening section.

Through three repeated references in verse 10, 'the world' becomes the focal point of the narrator's statement.[4] According to *BDAG*, the word κόσμος can have a range of meanings: adornment, ordering arrangement, order, the orderly universe, the sum total of all beings, or humanity in general.[5] Since the narrator is talking about the negative response to the coming of the Logos-light (symbolic cluster), the worldly humankind is likely to be the intended meaning.

In what remains of verse 10, the narrator reminds the audience of the earlier references to creation by changing the subject from 'all things' (πάντα v. 3) to 'the world' (v. 10), which was created through him (δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο). However, ironically, it is stated that the world does not recognize the one who created them. Ridderbos explains, in this regard, that the aorist form ἔγνω indicates that 'knowing is not just intellectual but refers to total relatedness… Accordingly, not to know the Word is to reject a relationship with him'.[6]

The negative response of the world towards its creator would not be an unknown concept to a first-century Jewish audience. As the prophets had already proclaimed to the Israelites long

[4] To avoid confusion with reference to John the Baptist, we use the term 'narrator' to refer the author of the Johannine Prologue.
[5] *BDAG*, 561–*63.*
[6] Ridderbos, *Gospel of John*, 44.

ago: 'the ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know (LXX: ἔγνω); my people do not understand' (Isa. 1:3). Furthermore, '… they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know me (LXX: ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν), says the LORD' (Jer. 9:3). By transferring this message from the Lord to the *Logos*-light as its referent, the narrator reconfirms the identity of the *Logos* as God (1:1).

A special relationship between God and his people Israel is frequently referred to in the Jewish Scriptures (e.g., Exod. 3:10; Isa. 43:1–7; 45:11–13; 64:8). In the late Second Temple period, as Masanobu Endo observes, the lordship of God as the creator of Israel is often viewed in an eschatological context, by which the restoration of God's people is expected (4 Ezra 6:55–59; 8:45; 2 Bar. 14:15–19).[7] As 4 Ezra indicates that Israel was created for the world as the first-born, the only begotten of God, then they should be restored from foreign hands and possess their inheritance with the world in the end time (6:58–59).

With this background in mind, the narrator highlights the prophetic fulfilment of the unfaithful response of his own people towards the coming of the *Logos*-light, the creator (1:5, 10, 11). The restoration of God's people can only be realized through faith in the *Logos* of God (1:12). This interpretation of the scriptural message in the *Logos* narrative provides the audience with a preview of the hostile experiences that Jesus receives in the rest of the gospel account, including from the authorities (7:26), the crowds (7:27), the Jews (8:52), and from the world directing its hatred at the disciples (15:18).

In verse 11 of the Prologue, the narrator fine-tunes the referent of Jesus' opponents to denote his own things/place (τὰ ἴδια) and his own people (οἱ ἴδιοι). The *Logos*-light came to his own

[7] Masanbu Endo, *Creation and Christology: A Study on the Johannine Prologue in the Light of Early Jewish Creation Accounts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 220.

place but his people did not receive him. Israel seems to be the likely candidate behind the narrator's reference in this verse.[8] Brown goes further by suggesting that verse 11 contains an allusion, conversely, to Exodus 19:5, where Israel is the given referent: 'if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the people'.[9] The covenantal relationship between God and Israel, his people, has been crafted into the Logos narrative to depict how Jesus is rejected by his own people.

Some interpreters, nevertheless, point to the similar negative response received by Wisdom, the agent of God, in Second Temple Jewish literature. For example,

> 'Then the Creator of all things gave me a command, and my Creator pitched my tent (τὴν σκηνήν). He said, "Encamp in Jacob, and in Israel receive your inheritance"' (*Sir*. 24:8)[10].
>
> 'Wisdom could not find a place in which she could dwell; but a place was found in the heavens. Then wisdom went out to dwell with the children of 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).[11]

The *Logos*-light, like the experience of Wisdom, is sent to his own people and finds no dwelling place. However, the *Logos*-light does not return to heaven empty-handed, as is depicted of Wisdom in *1 Enoch*. What the Prologue's narrator highlights in verses 10–11 is the response of the world and his own people (one does not recognize while the other receive) by alluding to the prophetic scriptures, so that an eschatological change is expected. If the 'own people' of the *Logos*-light has rejected him, a change of 'people' is implied.

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[8] It is a common theme in the Prophetic books that the Israelite people have repeatedly rejected God (e.g., Jer. 7:28; 32:23; Hos. 9:17).

[9] Raymond Brown, *John*, 10. Andrew Lincoln notes additional scriptural references: Exod. 6:8; Lev. 14:34 and Deut. 4:20–1, 9:26, 29. See further Andrew Lincoln, *The Gospel According to St. John* (London: Continuum, 2005), 102.

[10] McHugh, *John 1–4*, 42.

[11] Ben Witherington III, *John's Wisdom: A Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 51.

The prophet Hosea insistently refers to God's people as 'sons of Israel', while also placing the privilege and status of sonship in the balance of God's judgement (cf. Hos. 1:8–11; 3:4–4:6). 'Yet, while unfaithfulness endangers Israel's sonship, Israel's restoration is envisioned as the restoration of the children of God'.[12] The Prologue narrator, reading the prophetic words eschatologically, envisions a new way to re-establish the relationship that God will restore his people and reclaims their status as children of God (vv. 12–13 and 14).

It is not uncommon to find this kind of eschatological reading of prophetic words in the Second Temple period. For example, many authors of the Qumran *pesharim* writings interpret their contemporary situations as the fulfillment of the words of the prophets of old.[13] As far as the narrative compositions are concerned, we also find this eschatological reading of prophetic scripture in Rewritten Scripture, such as in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 23, Pseudo-Philo rewrites Joshua's renewal of the covenant with the Israelites before his death (Josh. 24). By quoting a long speech of the Lord, Joshua concludes as follows:

> 'But also at the end the lot of each one of you will be life eternal, for you and your seed, and I will take your souls and store them in peace until the time allotted the world be complete. And I *will restore you to your fathers and your fathers to you*, and they will know through you that I have not chosen you in vain.' These are the words that the Lord spoke to me this night (23:11–13).[14]

Harrington places a margin in his translation of 23:13 to include a reference to Malachi 3:24: 'He (Elijah) *will turn the hearts of parents (fathers) to their children and the hearts to their parents (fathers)* so that I will not come and strike the land with a curse' (NRSV Mal. 4:6,

[12] Christopher M. Blumhofer, *The Gospel of John and the Future of Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 64.
[13] Shani Berrin, 'Qumran *Pesharim*', in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran*, edited by Matthias Henze (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 110–33.
[14] D.J. Harrington's translation of Pseudo-Philo in *OTP*, 297–377, here 333.

MT and LXX Mal. 3:24). God promises, at the day of the Lord, to send Elijah to restore the people's hearts to their fathers (patriarchs) and to the covenant that God established with them (Mal. 4:4–6; MT and LXX Mal. 3:22–24).

Pseudo-Philo calls, in Joshua's speech, for the renewed faithfulness of the Israelites to the Lord. By the end of time (the day of the Lord), when their lives will be eternal, the Israelites will be reunited with their ancient patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses, with whom God established a covenant.[15] More than that, the restoration (resurrection?) of fathers and the reunion of families are both testimonies that God's will to choose this people has not been in vain. Through his eschatological reading of the prophetic promise, Pseudo-Philo shapes the eschatological expectation of his audience by reasserting 'the apocalyptic significance of the fathers and their central role in the consummation of the divine plan in Isarel'.[16] Hence, the ancient promise is still valid in present time.

Israel's unique relationship with God is also highlighted by the narrator of the Johannine Prologue. Through an allusion to prophetic words, the rejection of his own people becomes eschatological fulfilment in Jesus' ministry in the world. However, different from other early Jewish literature, this relationship between God (Jesus) and his people, as presented in the Prologue, is fulfilled only by distinguishing between Israel's unfaithful response to the creator (vv.10–11) with the new creation of the children of God (vv.12–13), and this is accomplished through the realization of faith in the *Logos* of God.[17]

2.2 Eschatological Community: The Children Of God (1:12–13)

[15] Bruce Norman Fisk, *Do You Remember? Scripture, Story and Exegesis in the Rewritten Bible of Pseudo-Philo* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 309.
[16] Fish, *Do You Remember?*, 313.
[17] Endo, *Creation and Christology*, 221.

v. 12 ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ,
v. 13 οἳ οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκὸς οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρὸς ἀλλ' ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν.

In contrast to the unbelieving response outlined in verses 10–11, the adversative conjunction δὲ and the nominative ὅσοι in verse 12 point to all those who have received the *Logos*-light (αὐτόν). The narrator further explains that, to those who believe his name (ὄνομα αὐτοῦ), he (*Logos*-light implied) gives them the right to become children of God. As the term 'son (υἱός) of God' is reserved exclusively for Jesus in the Fourth Gospel (cf. 3:16), the term 'children of God' (τέκνα θεοῦ) denotes a privilege (right or authority) offered to those people who believe the name of the *Logos*. This designation for God's people occurs again in John's Gospel when Caiaphas unintentionally prophesies that the Messiah will die for the nation and will gather together 'the dispersed children of God' (11:52).[18] Brown comments that the dispersed children of God includes the Gentiles destined to believe in Jesus, and it can be argued that the description of the gathering of the dispersed (Jews) in association with God's fatherhood in Jeremiah 31:8–11 that lies behind the narrator's expression.[19]

To a scripturally informed audience, the notion of a relationship between a divine father and human son represents a significance development in comparison with the Jewish concept of God as Father.[20] For example, in a reiteration of the Lord's commandments, Moses tells the Israelites, 'you are children of the LORD your God…' (Deut. 14:1 LXX: υἱοί ἐστε κυρίου

[18] The term 'children of God' appears more frequently in 1 John (3:1, 2, 10; 5:2). See further Lincoln, *The Gospel*, 102.
[19] Brown, *John*, 440 n.52.
[20] McHugh, *John 1–4*, 46. Detailed discussion of the topic of 'God as Father' can be found in Marianne Meye Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 57–100.

τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῶν).

However, Endo convincingly suggests that the Jewish prophetic tradition appeals in lamentation to God's relationship with his sons, whereas the LXX sometimes changes the translation from υἱοί to τέκνα, in which God's love is contrasted with the people's unfaithfulness.[21] For example, '…out of Egypt I called my child (τὰ τέκνα), but the more I called them, the more they went from me" (Hos. 11:1); and 'I thought how I would set you among my children (τέκνα) and give you a pleasant land, the most beautiful heritage of all the nations. And I thought you would call to me, "My Father",… so you have been faithless to me, O house of Israel, says the Lord' (Jer. 3:19–20; also Isa. 63:8–10).

Likewise, the promise to become 'children of God' in John 1:12 should be understood in line with the prophetic eschatological way that is totally different from the ethnic origins of Israel.[22] What is new in the Prologue (v. 12) is that this exclusive right is only given to those who accept him and believe in his name, the *Logos*-light. In order to acquire this transformative change of identity, the narrator draws support, in all likelihood, from Isaiah 43:6–7:

> '…bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth,
> everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.'

Further, this privilege cannot be replicated by humankind through physical means. In verse 13 of the Prologue, the narrator uses three clauses to intensify the claim that it is impossible for humans to receive this right or privilege through physical birth. First, they are born not of

[21] Endo, *Creation and Christology*, 221.
[22] Endo, *Creation and Christology*, 222.

bloods (plural), implying that physical birth results from (parents?) human sexual intercourse. Secondly, divine birth, or birth 'from above' (3:3) does not result from the will or desire of the flesh (θελήματος σαρκὸς). Third, it does not stem from the will of a male (husband). Rather, it denotes birth from the heavenly God (ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν).

The theme of birth from above (God) or birth from below (human) recurs when Nicodemus and Jesus discuss what is required in order to enter the kingdom of God (Jn 3:1–16). Hence, the narrator here provides the audience with 'inside' information from the Prologue (especially verse 12) in order to highlight the claim that their privileged identity as 'the children of God' results only from their ability to accept the *Logos*, and also from their continuous believing his name.[23]

In sum, this part of the Prologue states that the *Logos*-light comes to his own people but the people are not able to understand him and even show hostility towards him. However, there are some who recognize the *Logos*-light and call upon his name and believe in him. As a result, they are granted the special status of becoming 'children of God', and thus a newly formed family of God. John 1:12–13 carefully states that τέκνα θεοῦ is born from God. It is an eschatological gift, promised in the Scriptures, to God's people. By interpreting the failure of Israel to receive its creator as prophetic fulfillment in the *Logos* narrative, a new community as the children of God is formed according to the word of God.

3. Torah and Witness: Sinai Revelation Recalled (1:14–18)

In the final section of the Prologue, the narrator uses the inclusive term 'we' in order to

[23] Brown proposes the aorist verbal form of 'accept' as the original acceptance of Jesus (12a) and the present participial verbal form of 'believe' (12c) as a continuous action. See Brown, *John*, 11.

facilitate and highlight the connection between the audience and the ancient Sinai narrative as recorded in particular in the Book of Exodus. The authority of the Torah and the endorsement of John the witness provide the audience with a powerful rhetorical tool to shape the perception of their own identity.[24] To achieve this aim, the narrator's interpretation of Isaiah, it will be argued, offers a significant hermeneutical lens through which to establish the identity of believers as members of the family of God.

3.1 The *Logos* Became Flesh (1:14)

v. 14 Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.

The Prologue's envisaged audience has already been informed that children of God are not begotten by the will of the flesh (v. 13). Immediately afterwards, the narrator declares that the divine *Logos* has come into the world by becoming 'flesh'(σὰρξ ἐγένετο), and has dwelt among 'us' (v.14). This surprising twist should puzzle the audience.[25] The origin of the *Logos* has already been stated in terms of his heavenly status, his divine identity (God) and his communion with God (with God in 1:1); whereas flesh is a term for created humankind with all its frailties and weaknesses, including mortality. The concept of incarnation, as Lincoln admits, 'would be astounding both for those from the Jewish tradition and for those familiar with Graeco-Roman thought'.[26]

[24] Further discussion about the relationship between textual authority, author and audience can be found in George Brooke, 'Authority and the Authoritativeness of Scripture: Some Clues from the Dead Sea Scroll', *RevQ* 25/100 (2012): 507–23.
[25] McHugh suggests that the conjunction καὶ at the beginning of v. 14 can express an astonishment or unexpected meaning to the audience. See his *John 1–4*, 50.
[26] Lincoln, *John*, 103–4.

Many commentators interpret the use of the Greek verb 'to dwell' in verse 14 (ἐσκήνωσεν) as evoking references to the tent or tabernacle in the LXX. However, it should be noted that all such occurrences in LXX refer to physical dwelling and residing in material tents (Gen. 13:12; Judg. 5:17; 3 Kgdms. 8:12).[27] To describe God's dwelling in the tabernacle or the Temple (e.g., Num. 35:34: 1 Chr. 23:25: 2 Chr. 6:1), the LXX translators make greater use of the compound form κατασκηνόω. In particular, κατασκηνόω is used in Sirach 24:8 to describe Wisdom, God's immanent presence, taking up her dwelling both in Jacob and Israel.[28] According to the LXX usage, the compound form with prefix κατα probably brings out the idea of a long, and even permanent residence.[29]

Rather than purely tracing the source of the verb 'dwell' from the Jewish Scripture, Barrett proposes that 'the word σκηνόω was chosen here with special reference to the word δόξα which follows. It recalls, in sounding and in meaning, the Hebrew שׁכן, which means 'to dwell''.[30] The dwelling of God among his people is a theme derived from Exodus 25 and 29. When God on Mount Sinai gives his people directions to build the tabernacle, the divine covenantal promise is as follows: 'I will dwell in their midst' (וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם) (25:8).[31] A few chapters later, an almost identical promise can be found in Exodus 29:45: 'I will dwell among the Israelites, and I will be their God'. Similarly, during the exilic period, an analogous promise is recorded by some of the prophets (Ezek. 43:7; Zech. 2:10) though now focusing on God's future presence.[32] Therefore, for John's scripturally informed audience, the declaration that 'the *Logos* (who is God) dwelt among us' (verse 14) would easily be

[27] McHugh, *John 1–4*, 54.
[28] Lincoln, *John*, 104.
[29] McHugh, *John*, 54.
[30] Barrett, *St. John*, 165.
[31] The LXX translation of Exodus 25:8 (25:7), however, does not mean 'dwell among'. *NETS* translates as: 'And you shall make a holy precinct for me, and I shall appear among you' (ὀφθήσομαι ἐν ὑμῖν).
[32] McHugh also suggests that references to the connection of 'tabernacle/ Temple' and 'dwell among' are drawn from Hebrew MT (Exod. 25:8, 29:45, Ezek. 43:7 and Zech. 2:10), instead of LXX. See his *John*, 55.

understood as the fulfilment of a prophetic promise.

Having said that, verse 14 is the first time in the Johannine Prologue for the narrator to use the inclusive term 'us' (ἡμῖν), followed in the next clause by the first-person plural verbal form 'we gazed' (ἐθεασάμεθα). By using this particular verb, the narrator makes use of a stronger verb to denote not merely the act of seeing with the physical eyes but of perceiving something with spiritual insight.[33] Lincoln explains, in this respect, that this 'seeing' denotes perception with belief (v. 12: believing in his name), so that 'faith finds in Jesus the glory of the divine presence'.[34] By means of 'the *Logos* become flesh', the narrator of the Prologue claims that God has visibly appeared among the people, implying that the prophetic promise about the future manifestation of divine glory has now been fulfilled. Only the faithful ones, those who can perceive the glory, are classified as belonging to the 'we' group and therefore have the right to be among the 'children of God'.

'Glory' is undoubtedly a favourite concept in the Fourth Gospel. The noun 'glory' (δόξα) occurs 19 times, while the verb 'to glorify' (δοξάζω) is used 23 times.[35] In the rest of the Gospel, the narrator uses the word 'glory' many times, often with reference to belief, to describe the signs of Jesus (Jn 2:11) or his crucifixion as 'the work' that he has been given by the Father to accomplish on his behalf (17:4–5).

Thus, for example, after Jesus turns the water into wine during the wedding in Cana, his glory is said to be revealed and that his disciples believe in him (2:11). Also when Lazarus is said to

[33] Richard Bauckham claims that verse 14 refers to the eyewitnesses who saw the flesh of Jesus with their own physical eyes, but not all of these characters in the Fourth Gospel can see the glory even after they saw the miracles from Jesus (e.g. Jn 9:39–41). See Richard Bauckham, *The Gospel of Glory: Major Themes in Johannine Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 51.
[34] Lincoln, *John,* 105.
[35] According to BDAG, δόξα can mean: 1. brightness, splendour, radiance; 2. being magnificent, greatness; 3. honour, fame, recognition; 4. transcendent, majestic being.

have been dead for four days, Jesus asks Martha to take away the tomb stone and he says to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believe, you would see the glory of God?'. At that point he raises Lazarus from the dead (11:40). Another example is when Jesus prays to his Father: 'I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed' (17:4–5). Given the intimacy of the relationship between the *Logos* and God from the beginning of all creation (vv.1–2), the narrator claims that to gaze on the glory of the incarnation of the *Logos* is to see the revelation of the divine in the human world.

The example from John 17:4–5 amounts to an elaboration of 1:14b: the glory as of an only son (μονογενοῦς) from a father. The narrator at this point begins to use a new filial term to describe the relationship between God and the *Logos*, that is, like the unique/only son of a parent (cf. also 1:18).[36] The preposition παρὰ also conveys a sense of mission (sent from the father).[37] In light of what was earlier noted about becoming children of God (verse 12), the use of the term μονογενοῦς expresses the unique status of the *Logos* (or human Jesus), because he is the origin and source for all believers to be able to participate into the divine family (through receiving and believing in his name).

The narrator then adds a further characteristic to the *Logos*: full of grace and truth (πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας).[38] Many commentators interpret this term as an allusion to Moses'

[36] Throughout the LXX, the term μονογενής means 'unique' or 'only'. Brown suggests that this word 'reflects Heb. *yahid*, "only, precious", which is used in Genesis 22:2, 12, 16 of Abraham's son Isaac…' Apparently Isaac is not the only son of Abraham, but the only son of a kind, that is the only child born as the result of a promise. See Brown, *John,* 13–14 and further Philips, *The Prologue*, 204.

[37] McHugh, *John 1–4,* 59.

[38] According to Ridderbos, if the adjective 'full of' (πλήρης) is declinable nominative, it should qualify the subject *Logos,* but it can also be indeclinable noun followed by a genitive, which make it link to glory. See Ridderbos, *Gospel of John*, 54 n.117. Here we follow McHugh that this adjective qualifies the *Logos*. See his *John 1–4*, 59.

request to see the glory of the Lord at Sinai (Exod. 33:18–22):[39] 'The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the name, '"The Lord". The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "'The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness…'" (Exod. 34:5–6). Bauckham is among those who propose that the narrator's phrase, 'full of grace and truth' (v. 14e), is almost a literal translation of the Hebrew expression, 'abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness' (וְרַב־חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת).[40] As a result, God's loyalty to his covenant with Israel and his revelation in a vision of glory are now manifested in the *Logos* incarnate.[41]

However, the Hebrew word for 'steadfast love' (חֶסֶד) is translated in the LXX as πολυέλεος (Exod. 34:6), and most often rendered as ἔλεος (e.g., Psalms 25:10 and 26:3), rather than χάρις as in the Prologue. This is not to deny that their meanings are similar and refer to 'grace' or 'undeserved favor'. Moreover, since the word χάρις only appears four times in the whole of the Fourth Gospel, all of which are concentrated in the last section of the Prologue (vv. 14, 16x2 and 17), Francis Moloney puts more weight on the meaning of this word in relation to the two verses that follow (vv. 16–17).[42] Therefore, he proposes an alternative meaning for χάρις in the Prologue, namely that it denotes 'an unsolicited gift', and that the connective καὶ is epexegetical to allow 'truth' to define the content of the unsolicited gift. Moloney therefore translates the phrase as 'the fullness of a gift, that is truth'.[43]

Alternation or substitution of vocabulary in scriptural citations is also a common literary practice in Jewish Rewritten Scripture. Scholars thus explore the possible exegetical

[39] McHugh, *John 1–4*, 59; Lincoln, *John*, 106, and Ridderbos, *The Gospel*, 54.
[40] Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, 52; Brown's translation: 'filled with enduring love' (his *John*, 1:4, 14, 16) and also McHugh, *John 1–4*, 61.
[41] Lincoln, *The Gospel*, 105
[42] Francis Moloney, 'The Use of χάρις in John 1:14, 16–17', in his *Johannine Studies 1975–2017* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 283–305.
[43] Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 39.

intentions of the authors. For example, Brooke, from the newly found Qumran text 4QJub[a], in the restored *Jub*ilees 2:21,[44] finds that the author substitutes the word 'nations' – from the original scriptural rewritten text of Exodus 19:5: 'you shall be my treasured possession out of all the people (עַם)' - with a synonymous word from Deut. 26:18–19: 'for him to set you high above all nations (גּוֹי)'. It is likely that the author of *Jubilees* has the Deuteronomy verses in mind and makes the substitution 'in order to accentuate the difference between the people of God and the nations'.[45] This change betrays the importance of the identity of his people to the author.

Since many examples show that the author of the Fourth Gospel adopts and modifies different sources, including Hebrew and Greek translations, in his scriptural citations,[46] it is also possible that the narrator use χάρις in verse 14, on the one hand, to evoke the characteristics of God revealed to Moses in the Sinai event, and, on the other hand, to denote the truth that defines the fullness of the gift given by God. This double meanings of χάρις can be explained as follows: first, the steadfast love and faithfulness of God is now manifested in the incarnation of the *Logos;* and, secondly*,* the contrast between the two gifts from God in verse 17, namely the law given by Moses and the grace that is the truth came through Jesus Christ. Thus, 'truth' becomes a distinctive characteristic of Jesus, not only in the Prologue, but also in the whole gospel (cf. 8:32; 16:13; 17:17, 19, and 18:37) to understand the mission of Jesus.

[44] According to George Brooke's translation: 'as he blessed them and sanctified them for himself as a special people/ out of all nations and to be [keeping sabbath] together [with us]'. (George Brooke, 'Exegetical Strategies in Jubilees 1–2', in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, edited by Matthias Albani, Jörg Frey, and Armin Lange (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 39–57, here 44.

[45] Brooke, 'Exegetical Strategies in Jubilees 1–2', 44.

[46] Various examples can be found in Catrin Williams, 'Composite Citations in the Gospel of John', in *Composite Citations in Antiquity: New Testament Uses*, edited by Sean A. Adams and Seth M. Ehorn (London: T&T Clark, 2018), 94–127.

3.2 John The Witness Revisited

v. 15 Ἰωάννης μαρτυρεῖ περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ κέκραγεν λέγων· οὗτος ἦν ὃν εἶπον· ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν.

To identify the historical location of the manifestation of glory, the testimony of a well-known person proves to be an effective starting-point. After informing his envisaged audience of the incarnation of the Logos, the author returns to John the Baptist, the human witness sent by God (vv. 6–8). Here, in verse 15, John provides first-person and direct speech testimony about the identity of the *Logos*: 'John testified to him and cried out, "This was he whom I said, 'He who come after me ranks before me, for he was before me'". The perfect tense of the verb 'to cry out' (κέκραγεν) secures the ongoing validity of John's testimony with a view to the gospel's current audience.

It is significant to note in this respect that direct speech is a frequently used literary strategy in the Jewish Scriptures to confirm the narrator's point of view. 'Phrases or whole sentences first stated by the narrator do not reveal their full significance until they are repeated, whether faithfully or with distortions, in direct speech by one or more of the characters'.[47] Furthermore, Susan Docherty, in her discussion of New Testament scriptural interpretation in the context of early Judaism, suggests that 'prayers, blessings and speeches, as a literary technique, are often created for leading characters in the genre of Rewritten Scripture.[48] In particular, 'direct address allows readers to experience the characters' words and actions firsthand, creating the illusion that the readers witness the action directly, not through the

[47] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (NY: Basic Books, 1981), 182.
[48] Susan Docherty, 'New Testament Scriptural Interpretation in Its Early Jewish Context', in *NovT* 57 (2015), 1–19, here 12.

narrator.'[49]

In relation to direct address, one kind of technique called soliloquy is commonly used in *LAB* to convey important information, judgements, and generalizations to the readers. Murphy suggests that when the narrator wants to inform the reader about the motivations of a characters, including God, he usually lets the readers hear the character thinking or speaking aloud in a soliloquy.[50]

For example, Amram, the father of Moses, is attributed a long speech (*LAB* 9:3–6) in response to the oppression by Pharaoh (his plan to kill all male Hebrew babies), as well as the plan of the Israelite elders (to set rules to stop Hebrew men to approach their wives to avoid male baby being killed and female baby being enslaved). In his speech, Amram is not shy to declare his intention: 'Now therefore I will not abide by what you decree, but I will go in and take my wife and produce sons, so that we may be made many on the earth. For God will not abide in his anger, nor will he forget his people forever, nor will he cast forth the race of Israel in vain upon the earth; nor did he establish a covenant with our fathers in vain; and even when we did not yet exist, God spoke about these matters' (9:4).

By his speech, Pseudo-Philo conveys not only the action of Amram, but also the reason behind it: the covenantal promise of God to Israel is never in vain, even after many years. If the promise is valid to Moses and his contemporaries, it is also valid to the audience or readers of *LAB*. Similarly, this technique is employed in the speech of John (the Baptist) to confirm the pre-existent divine status of the *Logos*, who 'comes after' John in the flesh, but

[49] Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 21.
[50] Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 22.

'ranks before' him.[51]

Mona Hooker argues, convincingly in our view, that in verse 15 John is made to cry out (κέκραγεν) that to which he is going to bear witness.[52] Later in the first chapter, John performs exactly what he declares in verse 15, namely pointing to Jesus as the Lamb of God (v.29) and bearing witness to seeing the Spirit descending on Jesus (v. 32). Hence, the function of John the Baptist in the Prologue, including his initial appearance in verses 6–8, is 'to confirm the truth of what has just been said, …that we have seen the glory of the incarnate *Logos*'.[53]

3.3 Sinai Remembered

v. 16 ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος·

v. 17 ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο.

v. 18 Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε· μονογενὴς θεὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο.

In verse 16, the narrator resumes the subject of verse 14: fullness (πληρώματος), as well as the situation of the 'we' community (ἡμεῖς).[54] 'From the fullness of the Logos incarnate, we all have received'. Nevertheless, scholars dispute the translation of the preposition between

[51]The preposition ἔμπροσθέν here means spatial precedence, and metaphorically surpassing, or rank before. See McHugh, *John 1–4*, 63, and Ridderbos, *The Gospel,* 55.

[52] Mona Hooker, 'John the Baptist and the Johannine Prologue', *NTS 16* (1970), 354–8.

[53] Hooker, 'John the Baptist', 357.

[54] Barrett agrees that ὅτι of verse 16 more probably to be connected with verse 14. See his *John*, 168.

the two references to grace (ἀντὶ): grace upon grace (NRSV) or grace instead of grace.[55] The argument is whether the grace of the Logos is accumulated upon the grace of the Law, or whether the grace of Logos replaces the grace of the Law (Torah). However, McHugh gives an insightful example of this word in Wis 7:10: 'I chose to have her rather than light' (ἀντὶ φωτὸς ἔχειν). He explains that the context of Jn 1:16 often implies a preference for one rather than the other. Thus, there is a superior choice available that 'the old law is not seen as a burden, but as a grace (gift), which is superseded by a grace (gift) that is more attractive still.[56]

Verse 17, therefore, provides a contrast between the Law (Torah) given through Moses and the grace that is truth and comes through Jesus. Though there is no adversative connection between the two clauses, a comparison is invited for the benefit of the audience. 'The Law is regularly [seen] in Jewish sources as a gift of God to Israel'.[57] According to the narrator, the incarnation of the *Logos,* full of grace that is truth, is superior to the indirect giving of the Law to his people. From this verse, the name for his people to believe (v. 12), as the enfleshed *Logos*, is disclosed now as Jesus, the Messiah (Christ).

In order to prove the superiority of this gift, the narrator elaborates the meaning of the 'fullness' in terms of the divine blessings coming through Jesus in the rest of the gospel. For example, an abundance of wine (Jn 2), living water (Jn 4), heavenly bread (Jn 6), light (Jn 8) are the blessings poured out by God in Jesus.[58] So the content of fullness in verse 17 not just points back the revelation of God by giving the law to Moses in the Mt Sinai (Exod. 33–34), it also points forward to the following narrative about Jesus.

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[55] Details of debate can be found in Brown, *John*, 1:15–16 and McHugh, *John 1–4*, 64–67
[56] McHugh, *John 1–4*, 67.
[57] Barrett cites Josephus, *Ant. VII.* 338, *Siphre Deut*. 31:4 as references (*John,* 169).
[58] Marianne Meye Thompson, *John: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015), 35.

At the beginning of verse 18, the narrator makes a bold claim 'No one has seen God'. Here is another direct allusion to Exodus 33 which highlights Moses' failure to see God's face. When Moses requests to see the glory of the Lord, the Lord said, 'you cannot see my face, for no one shall see me and live' (Exod. 33:20; cf. Deut. 5:23–29). However, the author of the gospel probably knows that many scriptural figures had spoken to God 'face to face' (e.g., Moses in Exod. 33:11, the seventy elders in Exod. 24:9–11) or some visionary experiences to encounter God (Isaiah 6, Ezekiel 1 and Daniel 7). Contradiction on the surface usually brings out certain polemic or exegetical attempt of the author.

Thompson observes that in many Second Temple Jewish texts various attempts are made to address this alleged contradiction. For instance, Philo qualifies the phrase 'the one who sees God', with a note that one sees God as 'through a mirror', that is not directly seeing (e.g. *Mos*. 2.99–100).[59] Another example is the *Targum Onqelos* on Exodus 34:10, which reads that the elders of Israel saw 'the Glory of the God of Israel'; or Number 14:14, which reads: 'You are the Lord, whose Shekinah rests among this people, who with their eyes have seen the Shekinah of your Glory, O Lord'.[60]

With regard to the Johannine Prologue, Williams suggests that the 'veiled character of God's revelation' in the past can explain this alleged scriptural contradiction.[61] From the verbal parallel of 'seeing' (vv. 14, 18) and 'glory' (v. 14), the narrator provides an explanatory comment on 12:41: 'Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke about him'. Thus, when Isaiah announces his seeing of the throne and glory (τῆς δόξης only appears in LXX) of

[59] Thompson, *John*, 36.
[60] Thompson, *John*, 36.
[61] Catrin H. Williams, '(Not) Seeing God in the Prologue and Body of John's Gospel', in *The Prologue of the Gospel of John*, edited by Jan G. van der Watt, R. Alan Culpepper, and Udo Schnelle (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 79–98.

God in the Temple (Isa. 6:1), the Johannine narrator interprets Isaiah's Temple vision as a vision of the glory of Jesus.[62] In so doing, the lack of belief of the people to Jesus provides the backdrop for the fulfilment of the words of Isaiah (Isa. 6:10), that is, the Johannine comment on Isaiah seeing his glory. Hence, in this period of eschatological fulfilment, the privilege of seeing the divine glory is not only given to the ancient prophets, but it is now also shared by the narrator and his 'we' group (1:14).

According to the narrator, the *Logos* alone has experienced a direct vision of God (6:46), because he has been with God from the beginning (1:1). Other ancient scriptural figures, including Moses or Isaiah, have no capacity to see God's face directly. What they have seen, as in the vision of Isaiah, is the glory of God embodied and manifested in the human Jesus.[63] He is the unique son (μονογενὴς), who is also God, and who is always close to the heart of the Father (εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς 1:18). McHugh points out that the use of bosom or heart (κόλπος) is a frequent metaphor in the Jewish Scriptures to indicate intimate human relationship (e.g. Num 11:12; Ruth 4:16; 1 Kgs 3:20; 17:19).[64]

Because of his uniqueness and intimate relationship with the Father, the Son is the only way to give an account or make God known (ἐξηγήσατο) to humankind.[65] In this way, the Prologue ends by contrasting two agents of God in relation to his revelation. The law was given through Moses; when he sought to see God's glory, he was denied a direct vision and only allowed a glimpse of God's back (Exod. 33:22–23). In contrast, the Logos is the unique

[62] To explain the composite citation of John 12:38–40, Williams indicates that both the Temple vision in Isa. 6:10 and the fourth Servant Song in Isa. 53:1 plays a part in the identification of Jesus as Messiah who manifests the divine glory. See her '(Not) Seeing God', 91–97.

[63] Another supporting argument is from Abraham in John 8:56.

[64] McHugh, *John 1–4,* 70.

[65] The word ἐξηγέομαι can mean telling or giving an account of facts (e.g. Luke 24:35, Acts 10:8); whereas in other Greek sources, it can mean the disclosure of divine secrets. See Barrett, *John*, 170 and McHugh, *John 1–4*, 73–74.

son, light of life, and becomes flesh in the world. His glory fully reflects the glory of God and, through his embodiment, the revelation of God is made fully known to his people (Jn 1:18).

4. Conclusion

Similar to the first part of the Prologue, John 1:9–18 is richly influenced by Jewish Scriptural tradition in its composition of the *Logos* narrative. The richness and breadth of this exegetical activity, similar to contemporaneous examples of Rewritten Scripture, is not just a display of interpretative artistry in terms of method and content. It also carries profound theological and Christological messages.

First, the narrator views himself and his 'we' community as the eschatological fulfilment of the prophetic oracle. The *Logos* comes to his own people but many of them do not know or accept him. Those who believe the *Logos* possess the authority to be the children of God.

Secondly, the *Logos* becomes flesh and dwells among his people. His coming in human form not only manifests the divine glory, but also acts as a gift of truth from God. It is abundant in the characteristics of God, particularly his steadfast love and faithfulness. This fullness of divine blessings is now offered to whoever receives / believes his name.

Thirdly, the verbal parallel with the prophet Isaiah 'seeing' the 'glory' of Jesus provides an important hermeneutical lens for the narrator to interpret the revelation at Sinai. In doing so, he provides a fresh exegesis of Exodus that only through the enfleshed *Logos* can the divine glory be seen. The privilege of seeing, as in the case of Isaiah, is now shared by the narrator and his 'we' community.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

This dissertation has sought to demonstrate how the Jewish Scriptures are used in the Gospel of John and, in particular, how the Fourth Evangelist (FE) interprets the Mosaic Law or Torah in the Prologue. The author sometimes refers the Law (νόμος) as a concept representing the whole of Scripture, whereas at other times he refers to a specific regulation drawing from the Torah, the five Books of Moses. In addition to explicit scriptural quotations, the FE also employs various allusions, motifs, imageries and analogies from the Torah and crafts them into his story of Jesus. Based on recent studies of Second Temple Judaism, we have also argued that the Fourth Gospel (FG) and Rewritten Scripture, a specific genre of Jewish exegetical writing, both share many similar interpretative strategies and exegetical techniques. In this concluding chapter, we will offer a summary of our findings and then suggest some possible areas for further study.

1. Summary Of Findings

In Chapter 2, we studied the status of Torah during the Second Temple period, when the five Books of Moses are deemed to be authoritative writings influencing the daily life and religious practices of the Jews. Examples of Rewritten Scripture composed during this period, such as *Jubilees* and the *Temple Scroll,* sought to imitate and interpret the Torah in terms of their form and content. This formed the basis for our exploration of the relationship between 'Torah' and 'Scripture' in the FG. For John, Torah is an authoritative writing given by God through Moses (Jn 1:17). It is also an important witness to Jesus (5:39) and sometimes, it is synonymous with all the Jewish Scriptures (10:34). In many places, Scripture / Torah,

whether in the memory of the disciples (2:19–22) or in the speeches of various characters (John the Baptist 1:23; Jesus 10:34–35), is interwoven seamlessly into the narrative by performing the role of witness to the life and mission of Jesus as the scriptural fulfilment.

Then, in Chapter 3, we reviewed recent scholarship on Rewritten Scripture (RS). This term describes those compositions, mainly narratives, that offer retellings of the Jewish Scriptures through rearrangement, conflation, omission or supplement. Since Susan Docherty finds many parallels between the RS and the New Testament writings,[1] we followed her path, especially in respect of exegetical and literary techniques, by comparing the FG with three typical RS texts, namely *Jubilees*, *Genesis Apocryphon*, and *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (LAB)*. Focusing on their writing strategies and exegetical techniques, we found that the FG follows certain Jewish traditions in its writing and also shares many similar exegetical patterns to the RS compositions.

First, both *Jubilees* and the FG show a tendency to claim authoritative status for their own writing. In order to disclose a special divine revelation, the author of *Jubilees* depicts his book as having been dictated by the angel of the presence from a heavenly tablet. The FE's strategy is to portray the pre-existent *Logos*, who was with God and was God before creation (Jn 1:1), as becoming human. Hence, their distinctive ways of presenting revelation form the authoritative status in their respective interpretations of Torah. For example, *Jubilees* insists that its correct interpretation of the solar calendar and festivals, while John's focus on Jesus' understanding of himself as the heavenly bread for eternal life (Jn 6:35), and in both cases they are to be considered as *the* authoritative interpretation of Scripture in their own

[1] Susan Docherty, 'Exegetical Methods in the New Testament and "Rewritten Bible": A Comparative Analysis', in *Ancient Readers and Their Scripture: Engaging the Hebrew Bible in Early Judaism and Christianity*, edited by G.V. Allan and J.A. Dunne (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 91–108.

communities.

Second, both the FG and RS share many ancient Jewish exegetical techniques. In particular, catchword association and Scripture interpreting Scripture are two common devices in their writings. In doing so, certain rhetorical aims or exegetical emphases can be found. For example, both *Jubilees* and *LAB* bring together the throwing of the Hebrew infants into the River Nile (Exod. 1) and the drowning of the Egyptian soldiers in the Red Sea (Exod. 14) in order to emphasize the covenantal care of God for Israel and the certainty of punishment to those who persecute his people. Similarly, the Fourth Evangelist amalgamates scriptural words from different places (Exod. 12:10, 46; Num. 9:12 and Ps. 33:21) to depict the unbroken bones of Jesus during his crucifixion (Jn 19:36). The inclusion of the Psalm's retelling of the narrative ('not one of them will be crushed') into the Torah citation not only identifies Jesus as both the Passover lamb and the suffering righteous one, but also highlights the fulfilment of God's earlier promise of his protection.

Based on the insights of Joshua Levinson and Ruth Sheridan,[2] we introduced, in Chapter 4, the distinctive features of exegetical narrative that are shared among the RS narrative texts. For instance, scriptural allusions or symbols are implicitly crafted into the new narrative composition. Sheridan also claims that the Johannine Prologue can be considered as exegetical narrative because of its seamless interweaving of the scriptural exegetical tale and the *Logos*' (or Jesus') tale. By taking a detailed exegesis of the first half of the Prologue (1:1–8), we found that the FE uses various scriptural allusions, motifs, and symbols from the first creation account (Genesis 1) as well as the Wisdom traditions, in his composition of the *Logos* narrative. The use of the symbolic cluster *Logos*-light is not merely designed to remind

[2] Ruth Sheridan, 'John's Prologue as Exegetical Narrative', in *The Gospel of John as Genre Mosaic*, edited by Kasper Bro Larsen (Gőttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 171–90.

the audience of the powerful word / wisdom of God in creation (Gen. 1:3; Prov. 8:23), but also to point to the divine identity of this pre-existent figure, who was with God and was God, and becomes flesh to come to the human world for the purpose of giving life and light (Jn 1:4–5, 9, 14). The *Logos* narrative, then, is enriched by various elements drawn from the Creation account (Gen. 1) and wisdom traditions.

After introducing the heavenly *Logos*-light, the narrator introduces a human character, John the Baptist. The narrator insists that John is not the light and he is just performing the role of bearing witness. Placing John separately in the Prologue (1:6–8 and 1:15), near the references of two Torah stories (the first creation account from Genesis 1 and Sinai event in Exodus 34), extends his role as not only bearing witness to the messianic identity of Jesus, which he does in the rest of the gospel narrative (e.g. 1:19–42), but also bearing witness to the Torah testimony to the *Logos*. Similarly, *Jubilees* stresses the observance of Mosaic laws by the patriarchs, such as Noah, Abraham and Jacob, as testimony to the author's correct interpretation of the Torah. Thus, both the FG and *Jubilees* share the similar hermeneutical strategy of bringing the authoritative past of Torah to their respective audiences in the present.

In Chapter 5, we found that the narrator of the Prologue differentiates between two kinds of responses to the coming of the light. The first refers to those who do not know him (the world, Jn 1:10) and those who do not receive him (his people, 1:11). The term his people (οἱ ἴδιοι) normally denotes the relationship between God and Israel in Jewish tradition (Exod. 19:5). In the light of prophetic words, the narrator is proclaiming the rejection / reception of the people in an eschatological sense, that is, the unfaithfulness of Israel's people to God (Hosea 1:8–11). This kind of eschatological understanding of renewed faithfulness on the part of God's people is also a shared concern in other Second Temple Rewritten works, similar to

what is attested in the prophetic promise of eternal life mentioned in the speech of Joshua (*LAB* 23:13).

The second response, in verse 12, centres on those who believe in the name of the *Logos*-light. They are given the right to become children of God. The narrator adds that being the children of God are not coming from any human means (Jn 1:13). Through exegesis of the prophetic Scriptures, such as Isaiah 43:6–7, the narrator prepares the audience to the expectation of the fulfilment of the prophet's promise, namely to be the children of the divine family.

In the last section of the Prologue (1:14–18), the narrator discloses the climax of the narrative - how the eschatological promise is fulfilled - the *Logos* becomes flesh. In verse 14b, he uses an inclusive term 'we' to connect the audience and his recall of the Sinai story of Exodus. The enfleshed *Logos* dwelt among the 'we' community and this privileged community has seen his glory from God, the Father (1:14). Parallel to the scribal practice of the substituting vocabulary in *Jubilees*, the narrator's use of the phrase 'grace and truth' probably attempts to point to two-layered of meanings: 1. the characteristics of God (steadfast love and faithfulness drawing from Exod. 34:6), and 2. the gift of God defined by the truth (Jn 1:16).

Last but not least, the contrast between the law, given (by God) through Moses, and the grace and truth, coming from Jesus Christ (1:17), demonstrates the superior status of Jesus, the *Logos* incarnate. The closing verse (1:18) also forms a contrast: 'no one has seen his glory' once again recalls the Sinai story. By alluding to the incident of God's denial of Moses' request to see his glory (Exod. 33:18–20), the narrator declares to his audience that 'only the unique son, God, who is in the Father's bosom, has made him known'. Based on his exegesis of the Temple vision in Isaiah 6:1 (Jn 12:41), the narrator can tell the audience that Jesus

Christ, both the unique Son and the enfleshed *Logos*, is the only way to reveal the glory of the Father to his people.

In summary, scriptural exegesis forms a significant component of the composition of the Johannine Prologue. As an introduction to the whole gospel account, this opening exegetical narrative helps to present the divine identity of its protagonist drawing from different scriptural resources, such as the *Logos*, the light, and the Son. Moreover, the eschatological reading of prophetic words highlights the rhetorical purpose of the narrator to persuade his 'we' community to receive / (continue to) believe in the Son of God in order to become or remain the children of God. In addition, examples of Second Temple Jewish Rewritten Scripture provide many guiding parallels for the exegetical patterns and hermeneutical strategies discovered in our study of the scriptural interpretation found in the Fourth Gospel.

2. Possible Areas of Further Study

This study of the Fourth Gospel's interpretation of Scripture builds on recent scholarship, especially the scholarly contributions on Rewritten Scripture in the Second Temple Judaism. We also found that there are at least two areas which are worthy of further investigation.

2.1 The Use of Jewish Hermeneutical Strategies and Exegetical Techniques in Other New Testament Writings

Situated in the late Second Temple period, many New Testament writings share the interpretative methods or approaches of their Jewish contemporaries in their reading of authoritative Scripture. Common exegetical patterns help one to identify their shared

interpretative strategies and exegetical techniques.[3] In particular, comparative study of similar genre is an underexplored area. In this respect, there are many different Jewish texts which can be used by scholars to trace their common interpretative methods, literary techniques and rhetorical purposes. For example, in the Second Temple Jewish literature, there are still many different types of writing that are rich in scriptural interpretation. Therefore, for those books with similar genre, such as Jewish biographical narratives (e.g., *Joseph and Aseneth* and the Gospels), or apocalyptic narratives (e.g., the *Books of Enoch* and the Book of Revelation) should be put together to study their scriptural interpretation style and exegetical patterns.

2.2 The Exegetical Motivations of the Fourth Gospel

Scriptural exegesis can be found in many Second Temple Jewish literatures.[4] According to Molly Zahn, exegetical motivation is an important feature of the composition of Rewritten Scripture.[5] Through the exposition of Scripture, the author of RS texts can state his/ her ideological or theological point of view and persuade his/her own audience. Many studies of the RS have already demonstrated that ideological preferences and rhetorical purposes can be traced to their exegetical style and literary techniques, particularly in terms of their omissions, expansions, and embellishments of their antecedent scriptural text.[6] In a similar way, exegetical motivation in the scriptural interpretation in different episodes of the FG can

[3] Serger Ruzer demonstrates that many NT examples attest the Jewish exegetical patterns, which are similar to other Second Temple Jewish literature. See *Mapping the New Testament: Early Christian Writings as a Witness for Jewish Biblical Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).
[4] For examples, Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), and Matthias Henze, ed., *A Companion to Biblical Interpretation in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012) .
[5] Molly Zahn, 'The Rewritten Scripture', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, edited by Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 323–36.
[6] For example, Bruce Fisk, *Do You Remember? Scripture, Story and Exegesis in the Rewritten Bible of Pseudo-Philo* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), and Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

be further explored.

Recent studies of the Dead Sea Scrolls provide significant historical background knowledge to our understanding of the Second Temple Judaism, particularly in the area of their scriptural interpretation habits. Not only the Rewritten Scripture, but also other genres of their writings, such as *Pesharim* and *Hadayot*, can also serve as the template for studying their exegetical motivations and rhetorical purposes. In our study, we have focused on the Johannine Prologue as a test case. There are, however, still many episodes of scriptural interpretations in the gospel narrative, such the heavenly bread discourse in John 6 and 'the Father and I are one' (Shema?) in John 10:30. Together with certain types of texts, more new light regarding the exegetical motivation and rhetorical purpose of the author should be worthy to explore.[7]

Jewish Scriptures play a pivot role in the New Testament writings. Particularly, the Fourth Evangelist interweaves various kinds of interpretational devices into his presentation of Jesus narrative. This dissertation confirms that, by finding the exegetical and literary parallels with the Rewritten Scripture texts, the Fourth Gospel's scriptural use is not just a citation or an allusion of individual clauses, phrases, or words, but rather a network of wider literary context with theological purpose.

[7] Scholars' earlier studies of these passages of the FG are all from different perspectives. Peder Borgen compares John 6 with the writing of Philo and Lori Baron focuses the study of John 10 into the divinity unity within the socio-historical situation of the Johannine community. See Peder Borgen, *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo* (Leiden: Brill, 1965), and Lori Baron, *The Shema in John's Gospel Against its Background in Second Temple Judaism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2022).

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