

# Haggadah in Early Judaism and the New Testament

Edited by  
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# Scripture and Haggadah in the Fourth Gospel. Haggadic Strategy in John 10:34–36

*Harold W. Attridge*

As thoughtful readers of the Fourth Gospel recognize, the Gospel uses an impressive array of literary tropes, motifs, and intertextual allusions to make its distinctive case for the vital importance of Jesus for all who want to relate to the divine. It does so as well with awareness of profound theological issues that were subjects of contemporary discussion. As part of its complex tapestry the gospel certainly uses Jewish scriptures, and the way it does so has been carefully traced with attention to a broad hermeneutical perspective<sup>1</sup> and detailed focus on the texts explicitly cited<sup>2</sup> or strongly evoked.

The explicit citations or references, with notes to important focused studies, are:

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<sup>1</sup> Cornelius van der Vaal, "The Gospel according to John and the Old Testament," *Neot* 6 (1972) 28–47; Günter Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums* (SNTSMS 22; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974); idem, *Erweiterte Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums* (Erlangen: Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission, 1995); Johannes Beutler, S.J., "Der Gebrauch von 'Schrift' im Johannes-evangelium," in idem, *Studien zu den johanneischen Schriften* (SBAB 25; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1998) 295–315; Wolfgang Kraus, "Johannes und das Alte Testament: Überlegungen zum Umgang mit der Schrift im Johannesevangelium im Horizont Biblischer Theologie," *ZNW* 88 (1997) 1–23; Anthony T. Hanson, "John's Use of Scripture," in Craig A. Evans and W. Richard Stegner, eds., *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994) 358–379; D. Moody Smith offers a useful review of relevant literature in *RSR* 24,2 (April, 1998) 108–109; Andreas J. Köstenberger, "John," in G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007) 836–1023.

<sup>2</sup> E. D. Freed, *Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John* (NovTSup 11; Leiden: Brill, 1965); Roger J. Humann, "The Function and Form of the Explicit Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John," *Lutheran Theological Review* 1 (1988–89) 31–54; Bruce G. Schuchard, *Scripture within Scripture: The Interrelationship of Form and Function in the Explicit Old Testament Citations in the Gospel of John* (SBLDS 133; Atlanta: Scholars, 1992); Maarten J. J. Menken, *Old Testament Quotations in the Fourth Gospel: Studies in Textual Form* (CBET 15; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996).

Exod 12:10 (or Ps 34:21) (John 19:36)<sup>3</sup>

Deut 17:6 (John 8:17)<sup>4</sup>

Ps 22:19 (John 19:24)<sup>5</sup>

Ps 35:19 (John 15:25)<sup>6</sup>

Ps 41:10 (John 13:18)<sup>7</sup>

Ps 69:4 (John 19:28)<sup>8</sup>

Ps 69:10 (John 2:17)<sup>9</sup>

Ps 78:24 (John 6:31)<sup>10</sup>

Ps 82:6 (John 10:34)

Ps 118:25 (John 12:13)<sup>11</sup>

Isa 6:10 (John 12:40)<sup>12</sup>

Isa 40:3 (John 1:23)<sup>13</sup>

Isa 53:1 (John 12:38)

Isa 54:13 (John 6:45)<sup>14</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Maarten J. J. Menken, "The Old Testament Quotation in John 19:36: Sources, Redaction, Background," in F. Van Segbroeck, et al., *The Four Gospels 1992: FS Franz Neirynck* (BETHL 100; Leuven: Leuven University: Peeters, 1992) 2101–2118.

<sup>4</sup> Jean-Pierre Charlier, "L'exégèse johannique d'un précepte legal: Jean VIII 17," *RB* 67 (1960) 503–515.

<sup>5</sup> Maarten J. J. Menken, "The Use of the Septuagint in Three Quotations in John: Jn 10,34; 12:38; 19:24," in Christopher M. Tuckett, ed., *The Scriptures in the Gospels* (BETHL 131; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 1997) 367–393.

<sup>6</sup> Maarten J. J. Menken, "'They Hated Me Without Reason' (John 15:25)," in idem, *Old Testament Quotations*, 139–145.

<sup>7</sup> Maarten J. J. Menken, "The Translation of Psalm 41:10 in John 13:18," *JSNT* 40 (1990) 61–79; idem, "'He Who Eats My Bread, Has Raised His Heel against Me' (John 13:18)," in idem, *Old Testament Quotations*, 123–138; J. Ramsey Michaels, "Betrayal and the Betrayer: The Uses of Scripture in John 13:18–19," in Evans and W. Stegner, *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel*, 459–474.

<sup>8</sup> Wolfgang Kraus, "Die Vollendung der Schrift nach Joh 19,28: Überlegungen zum Umgang mit der Schrift im Johannesevangelium," in Christopher M. Tuckett, ed., *The Scriptures in the Gospels* (BETHL 131; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 1997) 629–636.

<sup>9</sup> Maarten J. J. Menken, "'Zeal for Your House will Consume Me' (John 2:17)," in *Old Testament Quotations*, 37–46; Margaret Daly-Denton, *David in the Fourth Gospel: The Johannine Reception of the Psalms* (AGJU 47; Leiden/Cologne/New York: Brill, 1999) 121–131.

<sup>10</sup> Diana Swancutt, "Hungers Assuaged by the Bread from Heaven: 'Eating Jesus' as Isaian Call to Belief: The Confluence of Isaiah 55 and Psalm 78(77) in John 6:22–71," in Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, eds., *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals* (JSNTSup, 148; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) 218–251.

<sup>11</sup> Andrew C. Brunson, *Psalms 118 in the Gospel of John: An Intertextual Study on the New Exodus Pattern in the Theology of John* (WUNT 2.158; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Craig A. Evans, "The Function of Isaiah 6:9–10 in Mark and John," *NovT* 24 (1982) 124–138.

<sup>13</sup> Klyne R. Snodgrass, "Streams of Tradition Emerging from Isaiah 40:1–5 and their Adaptation in the New Testament," *JSNT* 8 (1980) 24–45.

Mic 5:1 (John 7:42)<sup>15</sup>  
 Zech 9:9 (John 12:15)  
 Zech 12:10 (John 19:37).<sup>16</sup>

Thus the most prominent texts come from the Psalms,<sup>17</sup> Isaiah<sup>18</sup> and Zechariah.<sup>19</sup> Beyond explicit citations, the Gospel uses abundant allusions and plays

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<sup>14</sup> Maarten J. J. Menken, “The Old Testament Quotation in John 6,45: Source and Redaction,” *ETL* 64 (1988) 164–172; Michael E. Theobald, “Schriftzitate im ‘Lebensbrot’-Dialog Jesu (Joh 6): Ein Paradigma für den Schriftgebrauch des vierten Evangelisten,” in Tuckett, ed., *The Scriptures in the Gospels*, 327–366.

<sup>15</sup> Harold W. Attridge, “Some Methodological Considerations Regarding John, Jesus and History,” in James H. Charlesworth with Jolyon G. R. Pruszinski, eds., *Jesus Research: The Gospel of John in Historical Inquiry* (Jewish and Christian Texts in Context and Related Studies; London, New York, Oxford: T&T Clark, 2019) 71–84.

<sup>16</sup> Rudolph Schnackenburg, “Das Schriftzitat in Joh 19,37,” in Josef Schreiner, ed., *Wort, Lied und Gottesspruch: Beiträge zu Psalmen und Propheten: FS J. Ziegler* (FzB 2; Würzburg: Echter, 1972) 239–247; Christopher M. Tuckett, “Zechariah 12:10 and the New Testament,” in Christopher Tuckett, ed., *The Book of Zechariah and its Influence* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003) 111–121; William Randolph Bynum, *The Fourth Gospel and the Scriptures: Illuminating the Form and Meaning of Scriptural Citation in John 19:37* (NovTSup 144; Leiden: Boston: Brill, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> Margaret Daly-Denton, *David in the Fourth Gospel*.

<sup>18</sup> David R. Griffiths, “Deutero-Isaiah and the Fourth Gospel: Some Points of Comparison,” *ExpT* 65 (1954) 355–360; Franklin W. Young, “A Study of the Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel,” *ZNW* 46 (1955) 215–233; Paul Beauchamp, “Lecture et relectures du quatrième chant du Serviteur: d’Isaïe à Jean,” in Jacques Vermeulen, ed., *The Book of Isaiah – Le Livre d’Isaïe* (BETHL 81; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989) 325–355; John Duncan M. Derrett, “Ecce Homo Ruber (John 19.5 with Isaiah 1:18; 63:1–2),” *BeO* 32 (1990) 215–229; Catrin H. Williams, “‘He saw His glory and spoke about Him’: The Testimony of Isaiah and Johannine Christology,” in *Honouring the Past and Shaping the Future: Religious and Biblical Studies in Wales: Essays in Honour of Gareth Lloyd Jones* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2003) 53–80; eadem, “Isaiah in John’s Gospel,” in Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, eds., *Isaiah in the New Testament* (London, New York: T&T Clark International, 2005) 101–116; eadem, “The Testimony of Isaiah and Johannine Christology,” in Claire Matthews McGinnis and Patricia K. Tull, eds., *As Those Who Are Taught: The Interpretation of Isaiah from the LXX to the SBL* (SBLSS 27; Atlanta; SBL, 2006) 107–124; eadem, “Johannine Christology and Prophetic Traditions: The Case of Isaiah,” in Benjamin E. Reynolds and Gabriele Boccacini, eds., *Reading the Gospel of John’s Christology as Early Jewish Messianism: Royal, Prophetic and Divine Messiahs* (Leiden: Brill, 2018) 92–123; James M. Hamilton, “The Influence of Isaiah on the Gospel of John,” *Perichoresis* 5 (2007) 139–162; Kai Akagai, “The Light from Galilee: The Narrative Function of Isaiah 8:23–9:6 in John 8:12,” *NovT* 58 (2016) 380–393; Andreas Köstenberger, “John’s Appropriation of Isaiah’s Signs Theology: Implications for the Structure of John’s Gospel,” *Themelios* 43 (2018) 376–387.

<sup>19</sup> Adam Kubiś, *The Book of Zechariah in the Gospel of John* (Pendé, France: Gabalda, 2012).

on biblical motifs. Critics have detected echoes to Genesis,<sup>20</sup> Exodus,<sup>21</sup> Deuteronomy,<sup>22</sup> Numbers,<sup>23</sup> the prophets in general,<sup>24</sup> to Jeremiah<sup>25</sup> and Ezekiel,<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Edwin C. Hoskyns, "Genesis I–III and St. John's Gospel," *JTS* 21 (1919) 210–218; Annie Jaubert, "La symbolique de puits de Jacob Jean 4,12," *L'Homme devant Dieu. Mélanges offerts au Père Henri de Lubac* (Theologie 56–58; 3 vols.; Paris: Aubier, 1963) 1.70–71; W. R. Hambly, "Creation and Gospel: A Brief Comparison of Genesis 1,1–2,4 and John 1,1–2,12," *StEv* 5 (1968) 69–74; Norman R. Bonneau, "The Woman at the Well, John 4 and Genesis 24," *BiTo* 67 (1973) 1252–1259; E. G. Clark, "Jacob's Dream at Bethel as Interpreted in the Targums and the New Testament," *Studies in Religion* 4 (1974–75) 367–377; Jerome H. Neyrey, S.J., "Jacob Allusions in John 1:51," *CBQ* 44 (1982) 586–605; William J. Kurz, S.J., "Intertextual Permutations of the Genesis Word in the Johannine Prologues," in Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, eds., *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel* 179–190; Elaine Pagels, "Exegesis of Genesis 1 in the Gospels of Thomas and John," *JBL* 118 (1999) 477–496; John Painter, "Earth Made Whole: John's Rereading of Genesis," in idem, R. Alan Culpepper, and Fernando F. Segovia, eds., *Word, Theology and Community in John* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 2002) 65–84; idem, "Rereading Genesis in the Prologue of John," in David E. Aune, Torrey Seland, and Jarl Henning Ulrichsen, *Neotestamentica et Philonica: Studies in Honor of Peder Borgen* (NovT Sup 106; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003) 179–201; George H. van Kooten, "The 'True Light Which Enlightens Everyone' (John 1:9): John, Genesis, The Platonic Notion of the 'True, Noetic Light', and the Allegory of the Cave in Plato's Republic," in idem, ed., *The Creation of Heaven and Earth: Reinterpretations of Genesis in the Context of Judaism, Ancient Philosophy, Christianity, and Modern Physics* (Leiden: Brill, 2005) 149–194; Gregory E. Sterling, "'Day One': Platonizing Exegetical Traditions of Genesis 1:1–5 in John and Jewish Authors," *SPhA* 17 (2005) 118–140; Maarten J. J. Menken and Steve Moyise, *Genesis in the New Testament* (LNTS 466; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012).

<sup>21</sup> Jacob J. Enz, "The Book of Exodus as a Literary Type for the Gospel of John," *JBL* 76 (1957) 208–215; Robert Houston Smith, "Exodus Typology in the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 81 (1962) 329–342; Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, "John i.14–18 and Exodus xxxiv," *NTS* 23 (1976–1977) 90–101, repr. in idem, *The New Testament Interpretation of Scripture* (London: SPCK, 1980) 97–109; Henry Mowvley, "John 1:14–18 in the Light of Exodus 33:7–34:35," *ExpT* 95 (1984) 135–137; Stanley E. Porter, "Exodus 12 and the Passover Theme in John," in idem, *Sacred Tradition in the New Testament: Tracing Old Testament Themes in the Gospels and Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016) 127–151.

<sup>22</sup> Aelred Lacamara, "Deuteronomy and the Farewell Discourse (Jn 13:31–16:33)," *CBQ* 36 (1974) 65–84.

<sup>23</sup> John Duncan M. Derrett, "Lazarus, the Body, and Water (John 11,44; Isaiah 58,11; Numbers 20,9–11)," *BeO* 39 (1997) 169–182.

<sup>24</sup> Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, *The Prophetic Gospel: A Study of John and the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991); Paul Miller, "'They Saw His Glory and Spoke of Him': The Gospel of John and the Old Testament," in Stanley E. Porter, ed., *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) 127–151.

<sup>25</sup> Ross E. Winkle, "The Jeremiah Model for Jesus in the Temple," *AUSS* 24 (1986) 155–172; Sean Goan, "Jeremiah 31 (LXX 38) and the Gospel of John," *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 39 (2016) 17–29.



Daniel,<sup>27</sup> to the Song of Songs,<sup>28</sup> and to sapiential literature.<sup>29</sup> Scholars have also highlighted the motifs and images derived from the descriptions of sacred Jewish time<sup>30</sup> and space,<sup>31</sup> and have explored exegetical argumentative

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<sup>26</sup> Bruce Vawter, “Ezekiel and John,” *CBQ* 26 (1964) 450–458; Gary T. Manning, *Echoes of a Prophet: The Use of Ezekiel in the Gospel of John and in Literature of the Second Temple Period* (JSNTSup 270; London: T&T Clark, 2004).

<sup>27</sup> Mary R. Huie-Joly, “Threats Answered by Enthronement: Death/Resurrection and the Divine Warrior Myth in John 5:17–29, Psalm 2 and Daniel 7,” in Evans and Sanders, *Early Christian Interpretation*, 190–217; Stefanios Mihailios, *The Danielic Eschatological Hour in the Johannine Literature* (LNTS 436; London, New York: T&T Clark, 2011).

<sup>28</sup> Ann Roberts Winsor, *A King is Bound in the Tresses: Allusions to the Song of Songs in the Fourth Gospel* (Studies in Biblical Literature; New York: Peter Lang, 1999).

<sup>29</sup> Richard J. Dillon, “Wisdom Tradition and Sacramental Retrospect in the Cana Account (Jn 2:1–11),” *CBQ* 24 (1962) 268–296; Henry R. Moeller, “Wisdom Motifs and John’s Gospel,” *BETS* 6 (1963) 92–100; Martin Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus* (JSNTS 71; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); Michael E. Willet, *Wisdom Christology in the Fourth Gospel* (San Francisco, CA: Mellon Research University Press, 1995); Maryanne Meye Thompson, “Thinking about God: Wisdom and Theology in John 6,” in R. Alan Culpepper, ed., *Critical Readings of John 6* (BIS 22; Leiden/New York/Cologne: Brill, 1997) 221–246; Andrew Glicksman, “Beyond Sophia: The Sapiential Portrayal of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel and its Ethical Implications for the Johannine Community,” in Jan G. van der Watt and Ruben Zimmermann, eds., *Rethinking the Ethics of John: “Implicit Ethics” in the Johannine Writings: Kontexte und Normen neutestamentlicher Ethik* (Contexts and Norms of New Testament Ethics 3; WUNT 2.291; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012) 83–101.

<sup>30</sup> Gale A. Yee, *Jewish Feasts and the Gospel of John* (Wilmington: Glazier, 1989); Michael A. Daise, *Feasts in John: Jewish Festivals and Jesus’ “Hour” in the Fourth Gospel* (WUNT 2.229; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); idem, “Jesus and the Jewish Festivals: Methodological Reflections,” in James H. Charlesworth and Brian Rhea, eds., *Jesus Research: New Methodologies and Perspectives, the Second Princeton-Prague Symposium 2007* (Princeton Prague Symposia Series on the Historical Jesus 2; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014) 283–304; Maarten J. J. Menken, “Jewish Feasts in the Gospel of John,” in idem, *Studies in John’s Gospel and Epistles: Collected Essays* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 77; Leuven: Peeters, 2013) 187–207.

<sup>31</sup> Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, “The Theme of Christ as the True Temple in the Fourth Gospel,” in idem, *The New Testament Interpretation of Scripture* 110–121; Ivor Buse, “Die Tempelmetaphorik als ein Beispiel von implizitem Rekurs auf die biblische Tradition im Johannesevangelium,” in Christopher M. Tuckett, ed., *The Scriptures in the Gospels* (BETHL 131; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 1997) 395–428; Johannes Frühwald-König, *Tempel und Kult: Ein Beitrag zur Christologie des Johannesevangeliums* (BU 27; Regensburg: Pustet, 1998); Johanna Rahner, “Er aber sprach vom Tempel seines Leibes”: *Jesus von Nazaret als Ort der Offenbarung Gottes im vierten Evangelium* (BBB 117; Bodenheim: Philo, 1998); Mary Coloe, *God Dwells with us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2001); eadem, “Anointing the Temple of God: John 12:1–8,” in R. M. Chennattu and M. L. Coloe, eds., *Transcending Boundaries: Contemporary Readings of the New Testament in Honour of Professor Francis Moloney, S.D.B.* (Rome: LAS Publications, 2005) 158–175; Alan Kerr, *Temple of Jesus’ Body: the Temple Theme in the Gospel of John* (London/New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002); Jarl Henning Ulrichsen, “Jesus –

techniques,<sup>32</sup> such as *gezera shawa*,<sup>33</sup> as well as the ways in which scriptural elements grounded Christology,<sup>34</sup> developed characterization,<sup>35</sup> and shaped the narrative.<sup>36</sup>

Scholars have often been sensitive not only to the evangelist's use of the sacred scriptures of Israel but also to their reflection on the texts in later Jewish literature, the *pesharim* of Qumran,<sup>37</sup> *targumim*,<sup>38</sup> with their invocation of

der neue Tempel? Ein kritischer Blick auf die Auslegung von Joh 2,13–22," in Aune, et al., *Neotestamentica et Philonica*, 202–214; Paul M. Hoskins, *Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple in the Gospel of John* (Paternoster Biblical Monographs; Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006); Sandra Schneiders, "Raising the New Temple: John 20.19–23 and Johannine Ecclesiology," *NTS* 52 (2006) 337–355; Stephen T. Um, *The Theme of Temple Christology in John's Gospel* (LNTS 312; London, New York: T&T Clark, 2006); Harold W. Attridge, "Temple, Tabernacle, Time, and Space in John and Hebrews," *Early Christianity* 1 (2010) 261–274; Jacob Chanikuzhy, *Jesus, the Eschatological Temple: An Exegetical Study of Jn 2,13–22 in the Light of the Pre-70 C.E.: Eschatological Temple Hopes and the Synoptic Temple Action* (CBET 58; Leuven, Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2012); Bruce G. Schuchard, "Temple, Festivals, and Scripture in the Gospel of John," in Judith M. Lieu and Martinus C. De Boer, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Johannine Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018) 381–395.

<sup>32</sup> Georg Richter, "Die alttestamentlichen Zitate in der Rede vom Himmelbrot 6,26–51a," in idem, *Studien zum Johannesevangelium*, ed. J. Hainz (BU 13; Regensburg: Pustet, 1977) 199–265; Martin Hengel, "Die Schriftauslegung des 4. Evangeliums auf dem Hintergrund der urchristlichen Exegese," *JBTh* 4 (1989) 249–388; Bruce G. Schuchard, *Scripture within Scripture*; Christian Dietzfelbinger, "Aspekte des Alten Testaments im Johannesevangelium," in Hubert Cancik, Hermann Lichtenberger, and Peter Schäfer, eds., *Geschichte–Tradition–Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag* (3 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996) 3.203–218.

<sup>33</sup> Jocelyn McWhirther, "Messianic Exegesis in the Fourth Gospel," in Reynolds and Bocacini, eds., *Reading the Gospel of John's Christology* 124–148.

<sup>34</sup> Andreas Obermann, *Die christologische Erfüllung der Schrift im Johannesevangelium: eine Untersuchung zur johanneischen Hermeneutik anhand der Schriftzitate* (WUNT 2.83; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996); Knut Backhaus, "'Before Abraham was, I am': the Book of Genesis and the Genesis of Christology," in Nathan MacDonald, M. W. Elliott, and G. Macaskill, eds., *Genesis and Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012) 74–84.

<sup>35</sup> Alicia D. Myers, *Characterizing Jesus: A Rhetorical Analysis on the Fourth Gospel's Use of Scripture in its Presentation of Jesus* (London: T&T Clark, 2012).

<sup>36</sup> Judith Lieu, "Narrative Analysis and Scripture in John," in Steve Moyise, ed., *The Old Testament in the New Testament, FS J. L. North* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000) 144–163.

<sup>37</sup> Stephen E. Witmer, "Approaches to Scripture in the Fourth Gospel and the Qumran *Pesharim*," *NovT* 48 (2006) 313–328; James H. Charlesworth, *John and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Crossroad, 1990); idem, "A Study in Shared Symbolism and Language: The Qumran Community and the Johannine Community," in idem, ed., *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Vol. 3: The Scrolls and Christian Origins: The Second Princeton Symposium on Judaism and Christian Origins* (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2006) 97–152.

<sup>38</sup> Marie-Émile Boismard, "Les citations targumiques dans le Quatrième Évangile," *RB* 66 (1959) 374–378; Domingo Muñoz-León, *Dios Palabra: Memra en los Targumim del Penta-*

the divine Memra,<sup>39</sup> echoed especially in the prologue<sup>40</sup> but also in other parts of the Gospel,<sup>41</sup> and midrashim, which offer an array of scriptural interpretations.<sup>42</sup>

A feature of the use of scripture in many of these sources is the way in which they expand and interpret the scriptural account with narrative elements, what we generally mean by haggadah. These expansions introduce another lens through which to view the connection of the Fourth Gospel and Jewish literary tradition. Jewish haggadah based on the biblical texts has been explicitly invoked as the background for elements of various Johannine episodes, the wedding at Cana,<sup>43</sup> the saying about Moses lifting the serpent,<sup>44</sup> the

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*teuco* (Granada: Santa Rita-Monachil, 1974); François-Marie Braun, “Le sacrifice d’Isaac dans le quatrième évangile d’après le Targum,” *NRTh* 101 (1979) 481–497; Frédéric Manns, *L’Évangile de Jean à la lumière du Judaïsme* (SBFA 33; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1991); Günter Reim, “Targum und Johannesevangelium,” *BZ* n. s. 27 (1983) 1–13.

<sup>39</sup> Charles T. R. Hayward, “The Memra of YHWH and the Development of Its Use in Targum Neofiti,” *JJS* 25 (1974) 16–32; Bruce Chilton, “Typologies of Memra and the Fourth Gospel,” *Targum Studies* 1 (1992) 89–100.

<sup>40</sup> Martin McNamara, “Logos of the Fourth Gospel and *Memra* of the Palestinian Targum (Ex 12.42),” *ExpT* 79 (1967–1968) 115–137; Peder Borgen, “Observations on the Targumic Character of the Prologue of John,” *NTS* 16 (1969–70) 288–295; Daniel Boyarin, “The Gospel of the Memra: Jewish Binitarianism and the Prologue of John,” *HTR* 94 (2001) 243–284; John L. Ronning, *The Jewish Targums and John’s Logos Theology* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010); Pieter de Vries, “The Targumim as Background to the Prologue of the Gospel According to John,” *Journal of Biblical Theology* 1 (2018) 97–122.

<sup>41</sup> Bruce Malina, *The Palestinian Manna Tradition: The Manna Tradition in the Palestinian Targums and Its Relationship to the New Testament Writings* (AGJU 7; Leiden: Brill, 1968); A. M. Serra, “Le tradizioni della teofania sinaitica nel Targum dello pseudo-Jonathan Es 19,24 e in Giov 1,19–2,12,” *Mar* 33 (1971) 1–39; Domingo Muñoz-León, “El sustrato targumico del Discurso del Pan de Vida: Nuevas aportaciones: La equivalencia ‘venir’ = ‘aprender/creer’ (Jn 6,35. 37. 45) y la conexión ‘vida eterna’ y ‘resurrección’ (Jn 6,40. 54),” *EstBib* 36 (1977) 217–226; Bruce Chilton, “John XII 34 and Targum Isaiah LII 13,” *NovT* 22 (1980) 176–178; Frédéric Manns, “Traditions targumiques en Jean 2,1–11,” *Mar* 45 (1983) 297–305; idem, “Traditions targumiques en Jean 10,1–30,” *RevSR* 60 (1986) 135–157; Christopher Rowland, “John 1,51: Jewish Apocalyptic and Targumic Tradition,” *NTS* 30 (1984) 498–507; Jarl Fossum, “The Son of Man’s Alter Ego: John 1.51, Targumic Tradition and Jewish Mysticism,” in idem, *The Image of the Invisible God: Essays on the Influence of Jewish Mysticism on Early Christianity* (NTOA 30; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995) 135–151; Craig Morrison, “The ‘Hour of Distress’ in Targum Neofiti and the ‘Hour’ in the Gospel of John,” *CBQ* 67 (2005) 590–603.

<sup>42</sup> Fundamental is Peder Borgen, *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo* (NovTSup 10; Leiden: Brill, 1965). More recently see Paul Anderson, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Its Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6* (WUNT 2.78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996; Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1997; Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2010<sup>3</sup>).

<sup>43</sup> Roger Aus, “The Wedding Feast at Cana (John 2:1–11), and Ahasuerus’ Wedding Feast in Judaic Traditions on Esther 1,” in idem, *Water into Wine and the Beheading of John the*

encounter with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well,<sup>45</sup> allusions to the desert generation in the feeding story,<sup>46</sup> the interpolated story of the adulteress,<sup>47</sup> the image of the Good Shepherd,<sup>48</sup> the reference to Abraham's vision,<sup>49</sup> and the passion account.<sup>50</sup> That the evangelist is familiar not only with traditional Jewish texts, but also with the ways in which they have been expanded and shaped is clear.

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*Baptist: Early Jewish-Christian Interpretation of Esther 1 in John 2:1–11 and Mark 6:17–29* (BJS 150; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 1–37.

<sup>44</sup> Jörg Frey, "'Wie Mose die Schlange in der Wüste erhöht hat . . .': Zur frühjüdischen Deutung der 'ehernen Schlange' und ihrer christologischen Rezeption in Joh 3,14f.," in Martin Hengel and Helmut Löhr, eds., *Schriftauslegung: im Frühjudentum und im Urchristentum* (WUNT 73; Tübingen: Mohr, 1994) 153–205.

<sup>45</sup> Donatien Mollat, "Les puits de Jacob (Jn 4:1–42)," *BVC* 6 (1954) 81–91; Jerome Neyrey, S.J., "Jacob Traditions and the Interpretation of John 4:10–26," *CBQ* 41 (1979) 419–437; Roger Aus, "Another Very Early Example in the Gospels of Haggadic Interpretation of Jacob's Well: John 4:1–42," in idem, *The Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus, and the Death, Burial, and Translation of Moses in Judaic Tradition* (Studies in Judaism; Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2008) 198–207; Hans Förster, "Die Begegnung am Brunnen (John 4,4–42) im Licht der 'Schrift': Überlegungen zu den Samaritanern im Johannesevangelium," *NTS* 61 (2015) 201–208.

<sup>46</sup> Roger Le Déaut, "Une aggadah et les 'murmures' de Jean 6," *Bib* 51 (1970) 80–83; Roger Aus, "Walking on the Sea. The Crossing of the Reed Sea in Exodus 14–15, and Jesus as Second Moses and Messiah in Mark 6:45–52, Matt 14:22–33, and John 6:16–21," in "Caught in the Act," *Walking on the Sea, and the Release of Barabbas Revisited* (SFSHJ 157; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) 51–133; idem, "Baal-shalishah, Shalishah, and John 6," in idem, *Feeding the Five Thousand: Studies in the Judaic Background of Mark 6:30–44 par. and John 6:1–15* (Studies in Judaism; Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010) 47–67 and 133–135.

<sup>47</sup> Roger Aus, "'Caught in the Act' – With Whom, and By Whom? The Judaic Background of the Incident of the Adulteress in John 7:53–8:11," in idem, "Caught in the Act" 1–48. On this passage and its complex history of interpretation see now Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman, *To Cast the First Stone: The Transmission of a Gospel Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019).

<sup>48</sup> John Duncan M. Derrett, "The Good Shepherd: St. John's Use of Jewish Halakah and Haggadah," *ST* 27 (1973) 25–50.

<sup>49</sup> Roger Aus, "Abraham's Prophetic Vision of the Messiah: The Judaic Background of John 8:56–58," in idem, *My Name Is "Legion." Palestinian Judaic Traditions in Mark 5:1–20 and Other Gospel Texts* (Studies in Judaism; Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2003) 253–287.

<sup>50</sup> Roger Aus, "Jesus' Tunic Without a Seam, Woven in One Piece from the Top (John 19:23)," in idem, *The Wicked Tenants and Gethsemane: Isaiah in the Wicked Tenants' Vineyard, and Moses and the High Priest in Gethsemane: Judaic Traditions in Mark 12:1–9 and 14:32–42* (University of South Florida International Studies in Formative Christianity and Judaism, 4; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 130–133; idem, "John 19:28–30 and the Significance of Hyssop," in idem, *Essays in the Judaic Background of Mark 11:12–14, 20–21; 15:23; Luke 1:37; John 19:28–30; and Acts 11:28* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2015) 117–166.

## I. Jesus Uses a Psalm

This paper focuses on how one passage of the Gospel works using conventions that are most at home in the world of Jewish haggadah. The passage appears in the account of Jesus in Jerusalem at Hanukkah, in the midst of a contentious exchange between Jesus and the locals in Jerusalem after he has told them the parable of the Good Shepherd. The crowd asks Jesus to tell them plainly if he is the Messiah (John 10:24). Jesus responds that his “works” testify on his behalf. If the crowd cannot understand them, they are not part of his flock (vv. 25–26). After commenting on what the Father has given him, Jesus claims that he and the Father are one (v. 30), to which the crowd responds by picking up stones. Jesus asks why, and they respond that he is “making himself God” (v. 33). The dialogue continues:

34) Jesus answered them, “Isn’t it written in your Law, ‘I said, You are gods.’ 35) If it calls those to whom the word of God came ‘gods’ and the scripture cannot be broken, 36) why do you say of the one whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are committing blasphemy,’ because I said, ‘I am God’s son’? 37) If I am not doing my Father’s deeds, do not believe in me. 38) But if I am doing them, even if you do not believe me, believe in my deeds, so that you may come to know and recognize that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” 39) So they were again seeking to seize him, and he went out of their grasp.

Jesus responds to the charge of blasphemy or “making himself God” (v. 33) by invoking (v. 34) Ps 82:6, characterized as part of the “Law,” which here refers not simply to the Torah but to the whole of sacred scripture.<sup>51</sup> He goes on to make an argument on the basis of the citation, the force of which has been variously assessed. The argument seems to be a simple case of *a minore ad maius* or *qal wahomer* reasoning. If the term “God” was applied to beings who hardly deserved such an honorific title, the chosen and sanctified one sent by God deserves to be called God. This argument, however, seems to suggest that Jesus is simply a worthy human prophet or Messiah, “sanctified” and “sent” by God like so many predecessors, but not one who is one with the Father (10:30), who was in the Father’s bosom in the beginning (1:1), who laid claim to the divine name before Abraham existed (8:58), and who now dwells in the Father as the Father does in him (v. 38). Some have dealt with the discrepancy between the argument and the gospel’s general view of Jesus by suggesting that the argument in these verses is either an interpolation or an ironic parody of a rabbinic argument.<sup>52</sup> Others have suggested that what is involved in the exchange involves more than a simplistic citation of a proof

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<sup>51</sup> A similar reference to the Law introduces the citation of Ps 35:19 at John 15:25.

<sup>52</sup> Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John* (Philadelphia: Westminster; Oxford: Blackwell, 1971) 389.

text.<sup>53</sup> The observations of such scholars deserve further exploration and refinement.

## II. The Psalm and its Difficulties

It is worth recalling the whole context from which the Psalm citation derives. This psalm of Asaph depicts a conversation in the heavenly court between Yahweh and his courtiers. The opening verse sets the scene: “God (אלוהים) has taken his place in the divine council (בְּעֵדֹת אֵל); in the midst of the gods (אלוהים) he holds judgment.” The psalmist works with the traditional mythology, wherein the inhabitants of heaven were all אלוהים or בני אלוהים, “gods” or “sons (or members of the category) of gods.” God castigates these courtiers for defending the unjust (v. 2): “How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?” He commands them instead to do what is right: “Give justice to the weak and the orphan, maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute; rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked” (vv. 3–4). Another voice, perhaps of the psalmist, or perhaps of the character of God in an aside, insults the courtiers: “They (scil. the ‘gods’ in the divine council) have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk around in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken” (v. 5). God then challenges them and predicts their downfall: “I say, ‘You are gods, children of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, you shall die like mortals and fall like any prince’” (vv. 6–7a). What seems to be another voice, presumably that of the Psalmist, chimes in with a stirring cry, “Rise up, O God, judge the earth; for all the nations belong to you!” (v. 7b).

The construal of the Psalm offered here is based on a modern assessment of the history of ancient Israel’s religious beliefs and the ways in which the ancient environment shaped the poetic imagery of the Psalms. Rabbinic readers adopted a different way of contextualizing what could have been a problematic verse. Who, after all, would have deserved the title of “God” other than the Holy One, Blessed be He?<sup>54</sup> The way of solving that problem in-

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<sup>53</sup> Richard Jungkuntz, “An Approach to the Exegesis of John 10:34–36,” *CTM* 35 (1964) 556–565; James S. Ackermann, “The Rabbinic Interpretation of Psalm 82 and the Gospel of John: John 10:34,” *HTR* 59 (1966) 186–191; Anthony T. Hanson, “John’s Citation of Psalm LXXXII. John X.33–6,” *NTS* 11 (1965–66) 158–162; idem, “John’s Citation of Psalm LXXXII Reconsidered,” *NTS* 13 (1966–67) 363–367.

<sup>54</sup> Other texts could be equally problematic and elicited various responses. Philo, probably with Exod 7:1 in mind, also knows that men can be called “gods” in relationship to other men. His explanation is that such a person is “possessed by love of the divine and worshipped the Self-existent only” (*Prob.* 43), and he notes that Moses is appointed as a “god” to Pharaoh in Exod 7:1 (*Sac.* 9; *Mos.* 1.158), symbolizing the rule of mind over passion. “God” is also used of a human being at Exod 4:16, where Aaron is appointed as the prophet speaking for

volved an important haggadic technique, telling a story that provided a setting for the problematic verse that rendered it intelligible and potentially useful for making a homiletic point.

At least two settings are attested in rabbinic applications of the Psalm. One simply posits that God is addressing human judges. This reading appears in Midr. Pss. 82.1, a largely haggadic work of uncertain final date, compiling material from the Tannaitic and Amoraic periods, up to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The midrash interprets Ps 82:1:

Hence the verse “He is a Judge among Elohim” is to be read *He is a Judge among judges*. What can “Elohim” signify except “judges,” as in the verse “The cause of both shall come before the judges (*Elohim*)” (Ex. 22:8).<sup>55</sup>

The reading appeals to Exod 22:8–9 that litigants are to be brought before “God” (אלוהים) to settle disputes, which may originally refer to deciding issues by appeal to an oracle. Here there is no appeal to a narrative setting, simply a philological note about the meaning of the word Elohim explained by appeal to another verse. The midrash disposes of the problematic address to the members of the council as “gods” by appeal to the story of Adam, whom the Psalm itself mentions (v. 7).

Though I said: Ye are godlike beings (אלוהים), and all of you are sons of the Most High (Ps. 82:6), yet the one and only precept I gave Adam, he did not abide by. So I drove him out of the Garden of Eden, and I imposed the decree of death upon him.<sup>56</sup>

A similar reading of the Psalm appears in the Talmud at b. Sanh. 6b. The whole section of the treatise deals with how proper judgment is to be made and what is the role of mediation in the process. The verse is not given a specific narrative context but simply assigned to the context in which those who exercise judgment work: “And Judges should know whom they are judging, and before Whom they are judging, and who will ultimately exact payment from them. As it is stated Ps 82:1: ‘God stands in the congregation of

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Moses, who will “serve as God to him.” The NRSV softens the expression in these verses, translating the expressions as similies. Jewish tradition also wrestles with these verses. The Targums translate “God” in Exod 7:1 as “leader” (Onqelos) or “ruler” (Neofiti 1) or introduce a comparative (Pseudo-Jonathan). Some midrashim introduce the verses from Exodus in their explanation of Ps 82:6. So Tanḥuma B Qedoshim 5 on Lev 19:2 (Buber 74; Eng. Townsend 304) and Midr. Pss. 21.2 (Buber 178; Eng. Braude 1.294). Our evangelist avoids mention of the Exodus texts, perhaps to avoid an equivalence between Jesus and Moses, although passages such as these may have influenced some early Christians in the development of language celebrating their estimation of Jesus. For a contemporary version of the concern with the use of the term “god” in some biblical passages, see Stephen L. Homcy, “‘You Are Gods’? Spirituality and a Difficult Text,” *JETS* 32 (1989) 485–491.

<sup>55</sup> Buber 368; Eng. in William G. Braude, *The Midrash on Psalms* 2.59.

<sup>56</sup> 82.3, in Buber 369, Braude, *The Midrash on Psalms*, 2.60.

God.”<sup>57</sup> Like the Midrash on Psalms this application offers no detailed explanation of the reference to the members of the assembly as “gods.”

The second type of reading of the Psalm provides both a specific narrative setting and a rationale for the address. A straightforward version of this haggadic reading appears in Exodus Rabba 32,7, commenting on Exod 32:20 and the declaration by God that he would “send an angel” before the people of Israel to bring them to the promised land. The midrash offers various reflections on that verse, adducing other scriptural passages:

Another explanation of “Behold I send an angel.” It is written, “I said: ye are godlike beings (אֱלֹהִים), and all of you sons of the Most High.” When Israel stood at Sinai and received the Torah, the Holy One, blessed be He, said to the Angel of Death, “Thou hast power over all the heathen but not over this people, for they are my portion, and just as I live forever, so will my children be eternal, as it says, “When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance . . . for the portion of the Lord is his people, Jacob the lot of his inheritance” (Deut 32:8–9).<sup>58</sup>

The context of the address is “when Israel stood at Sinai and received the Torah.” The significance of labelling the people “gods” is that God has prohibited the Angel of Death from having power over them. That prohibition, alas, did not last, since the people disobeyed and worshipped the golden calf.<sup>59</sup>

The same explanatory framework for Ps 82:6 is reflected in the Talmud at *b. 'Avod. Zar. 5a*, where, as is so often the case, a solution creates new problems. The dialogue begins with a citation: “Said Resh Lakish: Come let us render gratitude to our forebears, for had they not sinned, we should not have come to the world, as it is said: ‘I said ye are gods and all of you sons of the Most High; now that you have spoilt your deeds, ye shall indeed die like mortals,’ etc.” To that an anonymous voice queries, “Are we to understand that if the Israelites had not committed that sin they would not have propagated?”<sup>60</sup> The discussion continues for some time exploring whether the verse truly implied the immortality, even if temporary, of the people at Sinai.<sup>61</sup> The

<sup>57</sup> My translation; cf. Soncino 24.

<sup>58</sup> Mirkin 6.84. Cf. the translation by Ackermann, “The Rabbinic Interpretation of Psalm 82,” 186–187. See also Soncino 3.411.

<sup>59</sup> Worship of the golden calf is also invoked as an explanation for the limitation of the Godlike state in Sipre Ha'azinu 320 on Deut 32:20 (Finkelstein 366; Hammer 329). In a midrash in Sipre Ha'azinu 306 (Finkelstein 341; Hammer 307) the divinity of the Israelites is explained through a reflection on the body and the soul: “Therefore, if man lives by the Torah and performs the will of his Father in heaven, he is like the heavenly creatures, as it is said,” and Ps 82:6 is cited.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Soncino 19.

<sup>61</sup> A baraita, a Tannaitic tradition not found in the Mishnah, then quotes the comment of R. Yose (b. Halafta), a third generation Tanna, on Ps 82:6. On him, cf. Hermann Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992)



details of the setting did not need be specified; the haggadic setting is simply assumed. Other, more allegorical options are explored, including various metaphorical senses of being liberated from death. The complex rabbinic debate need not concern us here. The passage confirms that, at the latest by the time of the Bavli, the haggadic setting of the verse of the Psalm represented in Exodus Rabba could be assumed and could serve as the basis of further reflection and debate.

### III. The Psalm in the Gospel Again

John 10:34 does not offer a detailed haggadic setting for the citation of Ps 82:6. Yet one phrase strongly suggests that the setting is indeed assumed and that more might be at work than a simple proof texting or ironic imitation of an exegetical argument. In highlighting the significance of the addressees as “gods,” Jesus identifies them as “those to whom the word of God came (πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐγένετο),”<sup>62</sup> an appropriate way of describing the delivery of the Torah to the people of Israel at Sinai. The phrase also echoes the Prologue’s description of the Logos who “came to his own” (εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, 1:11). That echo, part of the gospel’s play on the relationship of Jesus and Moses announced at John 1:1:17,<sup>63</sup> suggests that the confrontation between

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84. A parallel is found in Mek. R. Ish. Baḥodesh 9 on Exod 20:19 (Lauterbach 2.272). Other Tannaitic comment on Ps 82:6 is found, for example, in Sipre Ha’azinu 306 on Deut 32:2 (Finkelstein 341; Eng. Hammer 307) and *Lev. Rab.* Vayyikra 1 on Lev 4:2 (Mirkin 7.43; Soncino 4.47–48). The latter is spoken by R. Joshua (b. Ḥananyah), a second generation Tanna (Strack and Stemberger, *Introduction* 77). These passages also thus show very early rabbinic haggadic interpretation of Ps 82:6. I am grateful to Roger Aus for pointing out these references.

<sup>62</sup> The relative clause, “those ... came” is lacking in P<sup>45</sup> and Cyprian. The omission is probably a simple mechanical mistake, although it is possible that a scribe resisted the kind of haggadic reading of the Psalm to which the phrase points.

<sup>63</sup> On Moses in Johannine Christology, see T. Francis Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel* (SBT 40; London: SCM, 1963); Wayne A. Meeks, *The Prophet-King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology* (NovTSup 14; Leiden: Brill, 1967); Severino Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel: The Torah and the Gospel, Moses and Jesus, Judaism and Christianity according to John* (NovTSup 42; Leiden: Brill, 1975) 16–32; Marc-Èmile Boismard, *Moïse ou Jésus: Essai de christologie johannique* (BETHL 84; Leuven: Peeters, 1988), Eng. Trans. *Moses or Jesus: An Essay in Johannine Christology* (Benedict Viviano, trans.; Minneapolis: Fortress; Leuven: Peeters, 1993); L. Paul Trudinger, “A Prophet Like Me (Deut. 18:15): Jesus and Moses in St. John’s Gospel, Once Again,” *DRev* 113 (1995) 193–195; Dieter Sänger, “‘Von mir hat er geschrieben’ (Joh 5,46): Zur Funktion und Bedeutung Mose im Neuen Testament,” *KD* 41 (1995) 112–135; Matthias Gawlick, “Mose im Johannevangelium,” *BN* 84 (1996) 29–35; Stanley Harstine, *Moses as a Character in the Fourth Gospel: A Study of Ancient Reading Techniques* (JSNTSup 229; London/New York: Sheffield Aca-

Jesus and “his own” already began at Sinai. The evangelist has deployed, perhaps even created, new haggadah based upon a traditional one.

Yet more than mere confrontation is involved in the implicit Christological reading of the Psalm. The traditional story used to interpret the Psalm meshes neatly with Johannine theology. The gracious Word of God came to the people of Israel through Moses at Mount Sinai, offering them freedom from death if they accept and obey that Word. They did not do so and suffered the consequences. That gracious Word of God has now come into the world again in the person of Jesus, offering the same gift of eternal life (John 3:15; 5:39; 6:54, 68; 12:25; 17:2–3), a promise of which Jesus had just reminded the Jerusalem crowds (10:28). The voice of God in the Psalm, his Word, challenged the human “gods,” given a taste of eternal life, to do what is right, to give justice to the weak and the orphan, to maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute, to rescue the weak and the needy from the hand of the wicked (Ps 82:3–4). Jesus’ reference to “the works of his Father” (John 10:37) echoes the Psalm’s challenge, although it refers to the “works” Jesus has done, healing the crippled (John 5), feeding the hungry (John 6), giving sight to the blind (John 9). Jesus in John 8 uses the “works” he has done not primarily as a model for behavior but as a vehicle for seeing the truth of who he is, the one intimately related to the Father (10:30, 38).<sup>64</sup> In the Psalm, a voice condemned the addressees for not doing the works of God, for “walking in darkness” (Ps 82:5), something that Jesus himself warns against in the Gospel (11:9–10).<sup>65</sup> The key sin in Johannine reckoning is the willful refusal to see the light, the embrace of the darkness of disbelief, a sin that the author condemns through the words of Isaiah at 12:38–40.<sup>66</sup>

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demic, 2002); PHEME PERKINS, “Moses in the Gospel of John,” in Christopher G. Frechette, Christopher R. Matthews, and Thomas D. Stegman, S.J., eds., *Biblical Essays in Honor of Daniel J. Harrington, S.J. and Richard J. Clifford, S.J., Opportunity for No Little Instruction* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2014) 237–254; Christopher A. Maronde, “Moses in the Gospel of John,” *CTM* 77 (2013) 23–44; Dorothy A. Lee, “The Significance of Moses in the Gospel of John,” *ABR* 63 (2015) 52–66; Joel Willets, “David’s Sublation of Moses: A Davidic Explanation for the Mosaic Christology of the Fourth Gospel,” in Reynolds and Boccacini, eds., *Reading the Gospel of John’s Christology*, 203–225.

<sup>64</sup> There may, however, be an “implicit” ethics involved. On that possibility, see van der Watt and Zimmermann, *Rethinking the Ethics of John*, and Jan van der Watt, “‘Working the Works of God’: Identity and Behaviour in the Gospel of John,” in Jan Krans, Bert Peerbolte, Peter-Ben Smit, Arie Zwiep, eds., *Paul, John, and Apocalyptic Eschatology: Studies in Honour of Martinus C. de Boer* (Leiden: Brill, 2013) 135–150.

<sup>65</sup> The admonition continues the theme flowing from the declaration of John 8:12, but with the twist that the darkness may lie within the self.

<sup>66</sup> On this passage see Rudolph Schnackenburg, “John 12,39–41: Zur christologischen Schriftauslegung des vierten Evangelisten,” in H. Baltensweiler and Bo Reicke, eds., *Neues Testament und Geschichte: Historisches Geschehen und Deutung im Neuen Testament: FS Oscar Cullmann* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag; Tübingen: Mohr, 1972) 167–177, repr. in

Psalm 82, construed as a dialogue between God and his people when they encounter his Word, thus maps onto the Gospel's depiction of the relationship of the people of Israel and the incarnate Word. If that is the case, then another detail of the Johannine reference to the Psalm comes into clearer focus. In his argument to the people of Jerusalem about the appropriate use of the title "Son of God" Jesus refers to himself as one whom the Father "sanctified" (*ἡγιασεν*) and "sent" (*ἀπέστειλεν*) (John 10:36). Our initial reading of the passage raised the question of whether this language was adequate to the Christology characteristic of the Gospel. The question reflects a long scholarly discussion about the roots of Johannine Christology in notions of a divine emissary.<sup>67</sup> Whatever its history, the Gospel's Christology as a whole, and this passage in particular, maintains that Jesus is, since "the beginning" (1:1), in intimate relationship with the Father (10:30, 38), a relationship through which "all things came to be" (1:3).<sup>68</sup>

The reference to Jesus being "sanctified" and "sent" is certainly of a piece with the Gospel's affirmation that Jesus is God's agent. The affirmation that Jesus has been "sent" by the Father is a constant feature of the text.<sup>69</sup> That Jesus is "sanctified" is rarer, appearing only at 17:19, where Jesus sanctifies *himself* so that his disciples may be sanctified.<sup>70</sup> Exactly what the Father's action is meant to be here is less clear, but some sort of sacral commissioning seems likely. An intriguing possibility is that Psalm 82 is again in view and that the whole of the Psalm has been construed as a dialogue between God, the people of Israel at Sinai, and the Son who has come to that people as God's Word, an interpretive technique attested in Paul and the Epistle to the

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idem, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HThKNT 4,4: Ergänzende Auslegungen und Exkurse; Freiburg: Herder, 1984) 4.143–152; Daniel Brendsel, "Isaiah Saw His Glory": *The Use of Isaiah 52–53 in John 12* (BZNW 208; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014).

<sup>67</sup> See Rudolf Schnackenburg, "'Der Vater, der mich gesandt hat': Zur johanneischen Christologie," in Cilliers Breytenbach and Henning Paulsen, eds., *Anfänge der Christologie: Festschrift für Ferdinand Hahn zum 65. Geburtstag* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991) 275–291; William R. G. Loader, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Structure and Issues* (BBET 23; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1992<sup>2</sup>); Paul Anderson, "The Having-Sent-Me Father—Aspects of Agency, Irony and Encounter in the Johannine Father-Son Relationship," *Sem 85* (1999) 33–57.

<sup>68</sup> Some readers of the Prologue reject the allusion to Genesis. See most recently John Behr, *John the Theologian & His Paschal Gospel: A Prelude to Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). For analysis of the affirmation of preexistence, see Friedericke Kunath, *Die Präexistenz Jesu im Johannesevangelium* (BZNW 212; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016); idem, "Jesus' Preexistence and the Temporal Configuration of the Gospel of John," *Early Christianity 8* (2017) 30–47.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. John 3:17, 34; 4:44; 5:23–24, 30, 36–38; 6:29, 38–40, 57; 7:16, 28–29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 9:4; 11:42; 12:44–45; 13:20; 14:24; 15:21; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23; 20:21.

<sup>70</sup> The verse may play on motifs of a "priestly" Christology. See Harold W. Attridge, "How Priestly is the 'High Priestly' Prayer of John 17," *CBQ 75* (2013) 1–15.

Hebrews.<sup>71</sup> If such a construal is at work, the last verse of the Psalm would not have been, as suggested earlier, an exclamation by the Psalmist, but a continuation of God's address. After denouncing the "gods," i.e. the people of Israel, because they do not judge rightly, the voice turns to someone else and says, "Arise, O God, judge the earth, for the nations belong to you." If God is speaking, he appoints a new universal judge and calls that judge God. The appointment is the "sanctification" and sending of the Son, appropriately designated with the name of the sender. He deserves that name because he does not "make himself God," as the crowd charged (John 10:33), but because God has given it to him as part of his commission.<sup>72</sup> Early Christians read Ps 2:7 as a heavenly dialogue between Father and Son,<sup>73</sup> in which the voice of the "Son" reports his commission or "begetting" and the divine promise to "Make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession." Ps 82:8 makes a similar promise.

This reading of the passage in John against the background of Psalms, dialogically construed, resolves one further problem. As part of his argument about the use of the title God, Jesus says that scripture "cannot be broken" (John 10:35).<sup>74</sup> The verb used here (λύω) can have a narrow sense that a scriptural command cannot be disobeyed, as at John 7:23, where the prohibition of work on the Sabbath is in view. Here the cited verse of the Psalm does not involve any command. The Psalm's conclusion does so, however, when the mysterious and possibly divine voice tells the addressee, God, to rise and judge the nations. Jesus is not one to disobey the Father's command, and, as

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<sup>71</sup> On the address to the Son as God, see Heb 1:8–9, citing Psalm 44. On the conceit of construing the Psalms as dialogues, see Harold W. Attridge, "Giving Voice to Jesus," in idem and Margot Fassler, eds., *Psalms in Community* (Atlanta: SBL; Leiden: Brill, 2004) 101–112, repr. in idem, *Essays on John and Hebrews* (WUNT 264; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010) 320–330, and Madison Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations of Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2020). The article by Anthony T. Hanson, "John's Citation of Ps LXXXII," 161, initially made the case for a dialogical reading of Ps 82 in John 10, although he construes it primarily as a dialogue between the preexistent Word and the people of Israel.

<sup>72</sup> Jewish tradition also knows of the possibility of God addressing the Messiah with a divine name. Midr. Pss. 21.2, after citing, among other texts, Ps 82:6, notes: "God will call the king, the Messiah, after his own name, for it is said of the king, the Messiah, 'This is his name, whereby he shall be called: The Lord our Righteousness (Jer 23:6).'"

<sup>73</sup> See Heb 1:5; Acts 13:33.

<sup>74</sup> Klaus Scholtissek, "'Die unauflösbare Schrift' (Joh 10,35): Zur Auslegung und Theologie der Schrift Israels im Johannesevangelium," in Thomas Söding, Klaus Berger, Jörg Frey, eds., *Johannesevangelium – Mitte oder Rand des Kanons? Neue Standortbestimmungen* (QD 203; Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 2001) 146–177; Jaime Clark-Soles, *Scripture Cannot be Broken: The Social Function of the Use of Scripture in the Fourth Gospel* (Boston: Brill, 2003). Hanson, "John's Citation of Ps LXXXII," 161, takes the Psalm as a prophecy, not "broken" inasmuch as it is fulfilled.

“God,” he will “judge the world.” Those who read the Psalm aright, anticipating that judgment, should also follow the divine example and call the Son by the title his Father gave him.

The move in interpreting Psalm 82 suggested here is not without precedent in early Jewish haggadah. Midr. Pss. 21/2 ascribes a divine title to the Messiah, citing both the precedent of Moses being called a “god” to Pharaoh (Exod 7:1) and the address to the people of Israel as “gods” in Ps 82:6. It concludes: “God will call the king, the Messiah, after his own name, for it is said of the king, the Messiah, “This is his name whereby he shall be called: The Lord.” Jer 23:6, which says that David the “righteous Branch” will be called “The Lord is our righteousness” may also lie in the background.<sup>75</sup>

#### IV. Conclusion

The citation of Ps 82:6 on the part of Jesus in John 10:34 is not a casual part of the episode, but probably involves a reading of the whole Psalm from which the citation derives. The reading relies on and expands an early haggadah or story that interprets the Psalm. That framing story interprets the Psalm’s problematic declaration that someone other than God is God by presenting the text as a dialogue between God and the people of Israel at Mt. Sinai. That narrative framework, reflected in rabbinic sources, was already a part of the tradition on which the evangelist drew. He makes a further haggadic move, introducing another addressee into the mix. God is understood to be speaking not only to his people as a whole, but also to his Son, whom he appoints as judge over all the earth.<sup>76</sup> How he exercises that judgment is another issue that will occupy the evangelist, but that he does judge is clear.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Cf. Buber 178, Braude, *Midrash on Psalms*, 293–294. The haggadic tradition, with the implication that the Messiah is summoned to judge the nations, appears to lie behind Justin Martyr’s interpretation of Psalm 82. In “Dialogue with Trypho” 124.1, the apologist defends the application of “god” to Christ. In doing so he introduces Psalm 82 as the word of the Holy Spirit who addresses the people of Israel as “sons of the Most High” and tells how Christ will be “present in their assembly, rendering judgment” (ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ παρέσται ... τὴν κρίσιν ... ποιούμενος). Again, I am grateful to Roger Aus for noting the parallels.

<sup>76</sup> The interpretation of another “Messianic” psalm may influence the framing of Psalm 82. In Psalm 2, another royal psalm prominent in other early Christian texts such as Heb 1:5, the addressee is declared to be “Son” and then, in words of Scripture also promised eternal dominion (vv. 8–13).

<sup>77</sup> On the theme of judgment in John, see Josef Blank, *Krisis: Untersuchungen zur johanneischen Christologie und Eschatologie* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Lambertus, 1964); Jerome H. Neyrey, “Jesus the Judge: Forensic Process in John 8:21–59,” *Bib* 68 (1987) 509–542; Harold W. Attridge, “Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility in the Fourth Gospel,” in John Ashton, ed., *Revealed Wisdom: FS Christopher Rowland* (AJEC 88; Leiden, New York: Brill, 2014) 183–199, and the treatments of forensic imagery, especially Andrew Lincoln, “Trials,

The Fourth Evangelist was thus an heir to a tradition of haggadah, to reading scripture that built stories on and around the sacred text, thereby creating new meaning. He used the narrative setting provided by tradition and expanded it in his own creative way to affirm his belief in Jesus as the Son of God.

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Plots and the Narrative of the Fourth Gospel,” *JSNT* 56 (1994) 3–30; idem, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000); George Parsenios, *Rhetoric and Drama in the Johannine Lawsuit Motif* (WUNT 1.258; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); and Jeffrey M. Tripp, “Claiming Ignorance and Intimidating Witnesses: Reading John 9 in Greco-Roman Forensic Context,” *CBQ* 80 (2018) 470–490.