

Article: Moses

Moses and the Exodus as a major theme in John's Gospel

This topic was the main focus of my Master's Thesis at Dallas Seminary. It is only a part of a larger discussion that greatly interests me in many ways. I have included the pertinent chapter of my thesis below unedited. Please excuse the footnotes and "library" feel to what I have included. It was intended as an academic work.

While it is also highly effective at battling insomnia, the topic of this chapter plays such a major role in how I approach the Gospel that I thought it pertinent to include for the few that may be interested.

It is not an exaggeration to state that Moses and Jesus are the two most prominent characters in the Scriptures. It should not be surprising, therefore, that John applies such a prominent and relevant device to his masterpiece as a comparison between Jesus and Moses. As this chapter will show, it is indeed one of his most prominent tools.

This chapter will survey the various explicit and allusive appearances of Moses throughout the gospel text, attempting to illustrate the "deliberate pattern in which the career and place of Jesus are interpreted in the light of the ministry of Moses."¹ Among other theories, this "deliberate pattern" has been understood by some to presuppose the book of Exodus as a type regarding both content and structure.² The approach of this chapter, however, is from a higher vantage point. Like a game of hopscotch, we will jump between and comment on only those texts in which the Jesus/Moses theme protrudes from its allusive cover, with no remark on the intervening material. In so doing, we endeavor to distill the depth and pervasiveness of this theme.

¹ Jacob J. Enz, "The Book of Exodus as a Literary Type for the Gospel of John," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 76, no. 3 (1957), 215. See also Carson and Moo, 278. Schnackenburg, *St. John*, 1:121. "The evangelist is not concerned with detailed proof of the fulfillment of Scripture, like Matthew; he is often content with a general allusion (1:45; 2:22; 5:39, 46; 17:12; 20:9)." Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 29-32. Although this matter is notoriously difficult, Hays helpfully lists several criteria for identifying allusions: (1) *availability* of the source of the echo to the author; (2) *volume* of verbatim words in the parent and echoed text; (3) *recurrence* or *clusters* of citations from the same passage or larger portion of text (Scripture); (4) *thematic coherence* – the allusion provides some clarity to the argument or discourse in which it appears; (5) *historical plausibility* – the available level of acceptance and understanding between author, allusion, and audience; (6) *historical interpretation* – recognizes those others who have noticed the allusion; (7) and finally the criterion of *satisfaction* asks if the allusion makes sense. It is not a stretch to see these criterion met in John's use of the Old Testament. It is also clear from the vast amount and diversity of Johannine literature that scholars have identified, with varying degrees of credibility, a wide range of themes, purposes, images, symbols, and patterns in John's Gospel. It would seem that because of the nature of the Gospel, one might be able to find just about any reasonable theme "hidden" in its pages. This is not the purpose of the current study. We aim to simply isolate and distill those elements of John's text that *potentially* have Mosaic background. While the current chapter may appear forced at times, considerable effort has been exerted to validate specific views among scholarship (only as a beginning) and direct further study to the bibliography which has been purposefully and specifically extended to cover subject matter pertinent to this study across a spectrum of traditions.

² Otto Alfred Piper, "Unchanging Promises: Exodus in the New Testament," *Interpretation* 11, no. 1 (1957), 20; Enz, *Exodus as Literary Type*; Richard Morgan, "Fulfillment in the Fourth Gospel: The Old Testament Foundations," *Interpretation* 11, no. 7 (1957), 155-165.

To begin, John's obvious chronological, theological and stylistic departure from the synoptic accounts is an established tenet in Gospel studies. With the freedom this departure affords, John overtly underscores parallels between Moses/the Exodus and Jesus in dense array through the first half of his gospel. But as is common to John's style, the parallels are purposely between the lines and beneath the surface, highlighting the subtlety and allusiveness with which he writes. The final episodes, including the extensive Farewell Discourse and the passion account, function as a consummation of these references. Indeed, John makes certain to represent the Old Testament at every crucial moment in his gospel, albeit in various ways. "It is not fanciful to suggest that in reading John, one must remember his allusiveness; one must be ready to read between the lines and to follow up hints and pointers."³ This is the literary style of gospel literature and ancient biography. We must remember that "general truth is best formulated in abstractions which will encompass any given situation, but abstractions are not comprehensible to the uninitiated."⁴

John has a definite fondness for interchangeable and double meanings, synonyms, and purposed ambiguity. It is in these devices that John begins to shape and develop the undercurrent of his comparison. While at times it may seem as though we are seeing Moses behind every (burning) bush, we must attribute some of this reaction to our distant removal from a first-century Jewish *Sitz im Leben* (setting in life). We will do well to remember the warning of Chavasse: "We Christians can have no conception of the dominance of Moses over the Jewish mind. When every action at every moment of the day was performed in obedience or in disobedience to some precept attributed to him, and when the Torah with its five books, by far the most sacred part of the Canonical Scriptures, were regarded as coming from his pen or from his lips, his figure must have filled the spiritual horizon."⁵ With this mindset we turn our attention to the Gospel text.

The Prologue

The introduction to a work of art such as a play or piece of literature will contain those elements that will prove to be essential to its plot progression and conclusion. John's Gospel is no different. Clearly echoing the opening words of Moses' Torah, the Fourth Gospel has a Mosaic beginning (1:1: *In the beginning...*). This is an intentional rehearsal of Genesis 1:1. And while countless pages have been written on the richness of these opening words, suffice it here to say that John is clearly setting his tune to the rhythm of Moses. However, as we will see, it is not simply Moses of old; it is Moses recapitulated, traced over by Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God.⁶

³ T. F. Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel*, Studies in Biblical Theology, vol. 40 (London: SCM Press, 1963), 36.

⁴ Merrill Chapin Tenney, "Literary Keys to the Fourth Gospel," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 121, no. 481 (1964), 13.

⁵ Claude Chavasse, "Jesus: Christ and Moses - II," *Theology* 54, no. 374 (1951), 294. We must also keep ourselves from several of the errors noted in the previous chapter. These errors include both a forceful deductive approach that forces every pericope into a prescribed mold and an uninterested dismissal of Mosaic elements as simply OT baggage or evidence of an authorial attempt at relevance.

⁶ For further study see M. E. Boismard, *St. John's Prologue*, trans. Carisbrooke Dominicans (Westminster: Newman Press, 1957); Peder Borgen, *Logos Was the True Light: And Other Essays on the Gospel of John* (Trondheim: University of Trondheim, 1983); David J. MacLeod, "The Eternality and Deity of the Word: John 1:1-2," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 160, no. 637 (2003), 48-64; and subsequent articles by MacLeod in *BibSac* (2003-04).

For many of the Jews of John's time, the Law was Moses and Moses was the Law (cf. Acts 15:21: "For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath").⁷ The personality and entity became synonymous in such various ways that characteristics and references of the two began to overlap (e.g. John 9:28). Indeed, it soon becomes clear that "Moses' identity in the first-century was inextricably linked to his giving of the Law."⁸ This feature begins in the prologue (e.g. 1:17) and is manifested throughout the Gospel.

In addition, Enz references the "unrecognized deliverer" present in both John 1:11 (*He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him*) and Exodus 2:11-14 (*But he [a rescued slave] said [to Moses], "Who made you a prince or a judge over us?"*). This similarity eventually blossoms into the great irony revisited throughout the Gospel: the Jewish leaders that should have recognized his arrival rejected the Messiah they so eagerly expected just as the Israelites prayed for a deliverer (Ex 3:7) but grumbled at the one God gave (Ex 14:11-12). As we will see, this evolving rejection rehearses the experience of Moses in the person of Jesus as a major theme in the gospel.

The most quoted line from the prologue (1:14: *And the Word became flesh dwelt among us*) may be a direct play on Exodus 29:43-46. It clearly invokes wilderness language in the original Greek. With the use of *skhno, w* (*fix one's tabernacle, abide or live in a tabernacle or tent*⁹), which is most often translated *dwelt*, John clearly brings a savvy audience back to the Tabernacle tent of the wilderness wanderings. Thus, memory of the presence of YHWH located in the inner part of the Tabernacle would conjure the same sentiment in the life and incarnation of His Son, the Word.¹⁰

⁷ It is prudent here to note in length the depth of which Jewish loyalty in the first-century was directed at Moses. This will be explored later in the main text at 9:28. Lierman's work contains a good survey regarding the perception of Moses by the Jews of Jesus' time. He argues from almost exclusively original sources. Making sense out of Johannine and non-Johannine texts, Lierman digs back into history and ancient writings in an attempt to establish a solid interpretive base from which to understand the many New Testament mentions of and allusions to Moses. The quality discussion occurs under numerous headings including: Moses as prophet, Moses as priest and apostle, Moses as king, Moses as Lawgiver, baptism into Moses, the greatness of Moses, the centrality of Moses illustrated at *Dura-Europos*, Jews as disciples of Moses, Philo's contribution, Moses as a personal focus of loyalty, blasphemy of Moses, Moses as a divine being, Moses as God, Moses as an angelic being, Jewish faith in Moses, apostasy from Moses, and points of contact with Christology. As one makes their way through Lierman's list, it is not difficult to see how Jesus expressly fills these roles in the Gospels, and specifically John. Indeed, proof of these alignments and fulfillments seem to be the goal of the evangelists. Assessing this alignment is largely the goal of our current chapter. John Lierman, *The New Testament Moses: Christian Perceptions of Moses and Israel in the Setting of Jewish Religion*, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 209-257.

⁸ Stan Harstine, *Moses as a Character in the Fourth Gospel: A Study of Ancient Reading Techniques*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series* (New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 46. See also *De Vita Mosis* in Philo, *The Works of Philo*, trans. C. D. Yonge (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993).

⁹ BDAG, 929.

¹⁰ Temple geography, as it relates to the narrative and literary progression, is further explored by David Anderson. His proposal is that the regular ascension from outer court to inner court, from holy place to most holy place in the Temple complex mirrors the narrative progression in John (1-12 refers to the unsaved, the outer court; 13:1-30 refers to the inner court, the unsaved out of fellowship; 13:31-16:33 refers to the holy place of increased fellowship; 17 is the high priestly prayer of the most holy place; 18-20 is the atoning sacrifice). David R. Anderson, *Maximum Joy: First John - Relationship or Fellowship?* (Irving: Grace Evangelical Society 2005), 16.

In fact, the whole section of 1:14-18 is “ripe with language from the Sinai event.”¹¹ Perhaps the most blatant reference is mentioned in 1:17-18 (*The law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God, but He, the only begotten God, has made him known*). This reference mirrors Moses’ encounter with God’s glory on Sinai (Ex 33:18-34:7). The Greek equivalent of $\tau\mu$, ($a/w < \delta s, x, \hat{i} - br :$ (Ex 34:6) is $kai. polue, leoj kai. avlhqino, j$ in the LXX. A synonymous phrase ($ca, ritoj kai. avlhqei, aj$) is purposefully used in John 1:14 and 1:17.

The structural markers opening 1:16 and 1:17 draw the readers’ attention to the prologue’s climactic close.¹² Here the author creates a poetic Mosaic chiasm, mentioning the Son’s grace, Moses’ Law, and the Son’s grace.¹³ This truth, Moses as the vehicle for the Law, will be rehearsed and contrasted throughout the remainder of the Gospel. Finally, in 1:18 (*No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him*) the author gives his audience a clear reference to Exodus 33:20, validating the echo of this same passage in 1:14. This is also the first explicit mention of both Moses and Jesus, which cannot be accepted as accidental within such a premeditated and essential section of the work. With these allusions and illustrations, the prologue sets the course for a rich Mosaic and Exodus background to the rest of the gospel.¹⁴

John I

The testimony of John the Baptizer begins the narrative of the Gospel and contains within it a clear Mosaic reference. John 1:19-23 contains a line of identity questioning (*This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” “...Are you the prophet?”*), which includes a reference to Deuteronomy 18:15, 19. It is clear from first-century Judaism, even in all of its diversity, this prophecy played a significant role in Messianic expectation.¹⁵ The Baptist’s use of Isaiah 40:3 as a response in 1:23, which is replete with Exodus imagery, supports this Messianic expectation. This theme is repeated again in 1:25; 6:14; 7:40.

John and Jesus’ first professional meeting also contains Mosaic sacrificial language in 1:29 (*Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*) and is rehearsed in 1:36 (*Behold, the Lamb of God*). The twice-daily sacrifice of a lamb in Exodus 29:38-46 is undoubtedly the background. But since the sacrifices laid out in the Torah did not remove the sin of the world, the

¹¹ Harstine, *Moses*, 47.

¹² For further study see Zane C. Hodges, "Problem Passages in the Gospel of John - Part I: Grace and Grace - John 1:16," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 135, no. 537 (1978), 35-45.

¹³ A larger chiastic structure in the prologue has been noticed by many. For a good synopsis of various views see Harstine, 40-49.

¹⁴ The nature of this Jesus/Moses comparison has been variously described as antithesis, juxtaposition, contrast and apologetic, which betrays the fact that its nature is less defined than many scholars would like. Nevertheless, one thing is clear: in the introduction to the gospel, the audience is encouraged to compare the two. Although “apologetic” does capture the force of this theme, because of this wide range of descriptors the simple word “comparison” is used throughout. This choice does not deny the force of the other descriptors.

¹⁵ This diversity of opinion regarding the nature of the Messiah is made clear in several good works. See Wayne A. Meeks, *The Prophet-King* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), 91-98; John D. Lierman, "The New Testament Moses in the Context of Ancient Judaism," *Tyndale Bulletin* 53, no. 2 (2002), 317-320; Marinus de Jonge, *Christology in Context: The Earliest Christian Response to Jesus* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976); Cullen I. K. Story, "What Kind of Messiah Did the Jews Expect?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 105, no. 418 (1948), 233-347. Furthermore, the Samaritan Messiah, the *Taheb*, was set almost exclusively in the light of the promised eschatological prophet of Deut 18.

author is properly elevating Jesus' role above the allusion, as did the comparison of 1:17. This elevation of theme is also a common feature of John's Mosaic and Exodus references and is responsible for the understanding of Jesus as "greater."

The conclusion of Andrew in 1:41 (*We have found the Messiah*) can only be understood within a clearly defined Messianic expectation. It was, indeed, an expectation that led an acute observer to the truth, albeit an underdeveloped understanding of the truth (cf. 14:8-11). Paralleled to this epiphany is 1:43-45 (*We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph*). With Philip's proclamation to Nathanael, John begins to increase the pace of his argument that the life and Law of Moses is able to lead men to the Christ. This sentiment coalesces with Harstine's argument that 1:19-51 revolves around the literary theme of "witness."¹⁶ This episode resembles the calling of witnesses in a courtroom trial, each required to assign his respective title to Jesus. Here is a simultaneous progression in title (*Rabbi...Messiah...Son of God...King of Israel*) and yet failure to capture the fullness of Jesus' essence. This irony is but one example of many throughout the Gospel.¹⁷

John 2

We have already noted how decisively important the element of signs is to the argument of John (cf. 20:30-31). This same element, however, also plays a large part in the equipping of Moses and the pre-release narratives of Exodus. The first equipping miracle, or sign, of Moses that resulted in belief from his fellow Israelites was the turning of the Nile water into blood (Ex 4:9, 28-31). In John's account, the first sign that elicits belief from Jesus' people is the turning of water into wine (2:8-9). This report cannot be seen as accidental considering the Mosaic allusions that precede it and the many that follow. Smith has organized the signs of Moses and the signs of Jesus in a provocative way, illustrating the consistent typology from the section of Exodus narrative he understands as most warranting such typology, the material of Exodus 2:23-12:51.¹⁸

| | Exodus | Sign of Moses | John | Sign of Jesus |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|---------|---------------------------|
| 1 | 7:14-24 | Turning water into blood | 2:1-11 | Turning water into wine |
| 2 | 7:25-8:15 | Plague of frogs | | <i>None proposed</i> |
| 3 | 8:16-19 | Plague of gnats | | <i>None proposed</i> |
| 4 | 8:20-32 | Plague of flies | | <i>None proposed</i> |
| 5 | 9:1-7 | Plague on animals of field | 4:46-54 | Healing of official's son |

¹⁶ Harstine, *Moses*, 50; Thomas L. Brodie, *The Gospel According to John: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 148-151; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 45; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 2nd ed., Word Biblical Commentary, 36 (Waco: Word Books, 1999), 282.

¹⁷ Meeks' development of an *ascend/descend* motif in John is worth mentioning here because he first sees its appearance in 1:51 (since the birth of Jesus is omitted from John's account). While there is tremendous merit in his study and the theme itself, it remains largely ancillary to the study of our theme. See Wayne A. Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 91, no. 1 (1972), 44-72.

¹⁸ Robert Houston Smith, "Exodus Typology in the Fourth Gospel," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 81, no. 4 (1962) 333-338. While he is careful not to suggest too much, Smith also seems overly critical of other attempts at interpreting John's types and antitypes as haphazard and inconsistent (Enz, Hunt and Sahlin). His analysis, while helpful, suffers from the same difficulty and yields similar results. We also do not agree with limiting the number of Johannine signs to seven, and instead continue to see the book as an entire collection of signs (20:30-31), the most important of which is Jesus' resurrection. Compare also other schemes of understanding the signs, such as the sign-discourse correspondence well laid on in D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 274.

| | | | | |
|----|----------|----------------------------|---------|--|
| 6 | 9:8-12 | Plague of boils | 5:2-9 | Healing of the lame man |
| 7 | 9:13-25 | Plague of hail and thunder | 6:1-15 | Feeding of the multitude |
| 8 | 10:1-20 | Plague of locusts | 6:16-21 | Stilling of the storm |
| 9 | 10:21-29 | Plague of darkness | 9:1-41 | Healing of blind man |
| 10 | 11:1-12 | Death of first-born | 11:1-44 | Raising of Lazarus and the death and resurrection of Jesus |

Houston recognizes seven signs in the Gospel and understands their order (with the rearrangement of number 7 and 8 for neat correspondence) to be purposefully mirroring those of the pre-release Exodus account. His conclusion is that the dominant role of signs in the Fourth Gospel likely takes its precedent from Moses' theophany and equipping in Exodus 3-4, where he was outfitted with certain miraculous evidences, or signs, for God's calling and leading (Ex 3:12; 4:8, 9, 17, 28, 30). The common subject of signs coupled with a similar theme regarding *knowledge* and *knowing* may suggest a deliberate form and content parallel between the Fourth Gospel and the most important historical and theological book of the Pentateuch, Exodus.¹⁹ This may directly link the stated purpose of the Gospel in 20:30-31 with the dense occasion of signs throughout the book of Exodus. Both works also display a favorable response to the initial signs (cf. Ex 4:30; Jn 2:11), but ultimately they result in both belief (cf. Ex 14:31; Jn 20:30) and a hardening of heart (cf. Ex 14:8; Jn 12:37-40).

The context of the Cana wine miracle seems to be one of both celebration and sacrificial cleanliness based on the passing mention of water jars for purification in 2:6. Of course, ritual purification was made necessary by Moses' Torah. While there is much more at work here, many have understood this context and initial sign as a hint at the expected abundance and celebration of the Messianic age in contrast to the duty and obedience of the current age. It was also Moses' act of turning the Nile water into blood that largely initiated the tumultuous period of plagues that led to the Exodus celebration.

In the temple-cleansing episode of 2:13-25, a change of legacy is further clarified. The first of three (possibly four) Passovers is recorded as Jesus disrupts the inevitably large feast-time crowd with righteous anger. Consequently, the leading Jews ask for a validating sign in 2:18 ("What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?"), apparently correctly interpreting Jesus' actions.²⁰ His response directs them to his future resurrection, also coinciding with a Passover, as validation (2:21-22).²¹ John also seems to overlay the equipping episode of Moses on this account where the disbelieving Israelites and Egyptians are replaced by the leading Jews and Moses is replaced by Jesus. For our study, the most instructive element of this miracle is the clear Messianic expectation and its connection with the want of a validating sign.

¹⁹ It is noteworthy that of the more than 2,600 references to the OT in the NT, Exodus comes in third place (c. 220) to Isaiah (c. 400) and the Psalms (c. 370). Genesis follows in fourth (c. 200) and Deuteronomy fifth (c. 190). This places three of Moses' Torah in the top five most quoted. These statistics do not factor in the extremely large number of allusions, which would likely bolster the use of the Pentateuch. For further study see Enz; Smith; Piper; R. E. Nixon, *The Exodus in the New Testament* (London: The Tyndale Press, 1963).

²⁰ See Zech 14:21 with variant understanding of *Caananite* as *merchant* or *trader*. This alternate reading would lead these Jewish leaders to understand temple cleansing as a Messianic claim. This information was gleaned from class discussion, NT325 The Gospel of John, with Dr. Hall Harris, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2009.

²¹ Passover and other feasts, specifically the feast of Tabernacles, play a large role in the Gospel as we will see throughout our survey. See Aileen Guilding, *The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship: A Study of the Relation of St. John's Gospel to the Ancient Jewish Lectionary System* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960).

John 3

The third chapter of John contains a particularly significant Mosaic reference. Although mention of the Pharisees and Pharisaism is prevalent throughout the Gospel, we must not forget that these men were self-proclaimed experts in the Law of Moses, later calling themselves *Moses' disciples* (9:28). Jesus' interaction with the Pharisees and John's employment of this exchange is a major theme that first appears here in 3:1 with the introduction of Nicodemus.²²

In answer to Nicodemus' concerns (3:2: *Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him*) Jesus responds by revealing that the Son of Man descended from heaven (3:13: *And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man*) and deferring to the sign of Moses (3:14-15: *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life*). Just as Moses' brazen serpent was lifted up on a standard and all who looked unto it were released from the plague of deadly serpents, so the Son of Man is to be lifted up on a standard, providing salvation to all who look upon Him (Num 21). Here Jesus not only predicts his eventual death, but also the mode of death He will endure.

This "introduction of Moses by name reinforces the veracity of Jesus' statements about rebirth: the law is not sufficient to save them from death. Another comparison is drawn between Moses and Jesus, the Son of Man. Moses' standard could only provide earthly life, whereas the standard of the Son of Man provides eternal life"²³ (3:15). Moreover, Harstine agrees with the salvific force of this dialogue by noting that "in this conversation with a representative of 'official Judaism,' Jesus answers the one question Judaism has for him, the question of salvation. His answer is not simplistic even though it appears simple."²⁴ This example shows John's request to compare Jesus and Moses while simultaneously elevating Jesus above Moses. Relief from fiery serpents is exchanged for eternal life.

John 4

In this beloved account of Jesus and the Samaritan woman, there are several elements of note for our study.²⁵ The woman's initial request for life-giving water (4:15) is later complemented by a request for life-sustaining bread (6:34). This intentional device mirrors God's provision of water and bread through the mediation of Moses in Exodus 15:22-16:7.²⁶ The culmination of the conversation is reached in 4:25 when the unnamed woman proclaimed her

²² For a helpful synopsis see Michael J. Cook, "Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity: From the Pharisees to the Rabbis," *Review & Expositor* 84, no. 2 (1987), 201-217. Nicodemus accepted Jesus in His prophetic ministry and recognized in Him the two important aspects of this task, speaking on behalf of God and working miracles, the latter of which vindicates the former. But of a priestly Messiah he had no comprehension (cf. Jn 12:34). The necessity of the new birth and the necessity for the Messiah to be lifted up are closely connected with His sufferings as priest. Story, "What Kind of Messiah;" Zane C. Hodges, "Problem Passages in the Gospel of John - Part 3: Water and Spirit - John 3:5," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 135, no. 539 (1978), 206-220. Zane C. Hodges, "Problem Passages in the Gospel of John - Part 4: Coming to the Light - John 3:20-21," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 135, no. 540 (1978), 314-322.

²³ Harstine, *Moses*, 56.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 53.

²⁵ The Samaritans held a Messianic anticipation that identified the promised eschatological prophet as Messiah, the *Taheb*, a direct fulfillment of Deut 18. See Story, *What Kind of Messiah*.

²⁶ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John, a Commentary*, 2 vols. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 683. See also the extensive first-century Jewish understanding of water as a symbol for life, revelation, wisdom and Torah in Stephen T. Um, *The Theme of Temple Christology in John's Gospel*, ed. Mark Goodacre, Library of New Testament Studies, vol. 312 (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 9-65.

expectancy concerning the arrival of Messiah, as the one who “will declare all things to us.” Jesus’ literal response (*The one speaking to you, I am* [evgw, eivmi]) seems a purposeful quotation of the Septuagint rendering of Exodus 3:14, where YHWH reveals His name (kai. ei=pen o` qeo.j pro.j Mwush/n evgw, eivmi o` w;n).²⁷ John subtly entices his audience to connect the two statements: Jesus is the Messiah, and He will reveal all things. The woman’s subsequent report in 4:29 (*Come, see a man...this is not the Christ, is it?*) seems to support this expectation.

The “I am” statements of John’s Gospel have received far too much scholarly attention to summarize here.²⁸ It must also be said that not all of these statements in John’s Gospel carry allusive import. However, Enz has offered some helpful background for several of these statements.²⁹ Although some of his conclusions are overstated, we will attempt to demonstrate that several illustrate useful insight into the potential background of these statements. All occurrences of the evgw. eivmi, formula spoken by Jesus and Enz’s proposed types are organized in the following chart.

| John | “I am” Statement | OT - Enz | OT Statement |
|------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| 4:26 | I am, the one speaking to you | | Not mentioned |
| 6:20 | I am (it is I), do not be afraid | | Not mentioned (see below discussion) |
| 6:35, 41, 48, 51 | I am the bread (of life) (came down from heaven) | Ex 16:4, 15 | The Lord said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you...” |
| 8:12 | I am the light of the world | Ex 13:21-22; 14:20; 25:37 | The pillar of fire by night...gave light at night... The candlestick of the Tabernacle (never to go out) |
| 8:18 | I am He who bears witness... | Ex 25:16; 27:21 | Ark of testimony.... Tent of meeting.... |
| 8:24 | You will die in your sins unless you believe that I am | | Not mentioned |
| 8:28 | When you have lifted up the Son of Man, you will know that I am | | Not mentioned (But clearly connected to Num 21 and John 3:14-15) |
| 8:58 | Before Abraham was, I am | Ex 3:14-15 | I am who I am...the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob... |
| 10:7, 9 | I am the door (for the sheep) | Ex 29:42ff | The door of the tent of meeting... |
| 10:11, 14 | I am the good shepherd | Ex 3:1 | Moses was pasturing the flock...to Horeb |
| 11:25 | I am the resurrection and the life | Ex plagues; Num 21:9 ³⁰ | The death of Egypt and preservation of Israel at last plague and Red Sea |
| 13:19 | I am telling you now so that you will know that I am | | Not mentioned |

²⁷ While this formula clearly plays a dominant role in John and has been studied extensively, it must also be clearly noted that the expression does not necessarily carry theological weight in every use. It was also a very common way of stating someone’s presence or identity (cf. Jn 9:9). We do not wish to push this formula beyond its intention by the author. But if he does intend theological import in its use, we will do well to understand it correctly.

²⁸ For further study see David Mark Ball, *‘I Am’ in John’s Gospel: Literary Function, Background and Theological Implications*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 124 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd., 1996). While at this point we mention all of the potential “I am” collocations in John’s Gospel, we tend to see only the non-predicated collocations as the truest form of OT allusion to Ex 3:14 (Jn 8:58). This does not mean, however, that the remaining predicated collocations are not allusive in a less forceful manner. For this reason the subsequent discussion will make brief mention of each collocation as it appears in the text.

²⁹ Enz, *Exodus*; Piper, 2.

³⁰ Enz notes here that the “root that stands behind the NT term for ‘resurrection’ is in close context with “life” in the LXX.” Enz, *Exodus*, 213.

| | | | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|---------|--|
| 14:6 | I am the way, the truth, and the life | Ex 32:8 | They have turned aside from the way... |
| 15:1, 5 | I am the (true) vine | Ps 80:8 | You brought a vine out of Egypt |
| 18:5, 6, 8 | When asked Jesus answered, I am | | Not mentioned |

While some of these connections, again, are overstated and based simply on identical vocabulary or similar context, there are some with value. Enz's proposed background to John 6:35 and 8:58 have clear continuity of theme in their Gospel context and, as we will see, are likely correct. His proposals for John 8:12, 11:25 and 14:6 exhibit less clarity but do highlight potential nuances that many scholars fail to notice.

Another feast day is mentioned in passing in 4:45, which after another short narrative interlude, sets up the events of chapter 5. This interrupting story is a healing narrative that explicitly continues the theme of signs (4:48, 54: *Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe; This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee*).³¹

John 5

The unidentified feast of 5:1 serves as yet another marker of the Jewish memorial calendar (cf. 2:13; 4:45; 5:1; 6:4; 7:2; 10:22; 11:56; 12:20; 13:1; 19:14, 31, 42), which largely centered on the Exodus and wilderness experience.³²

The short statement concluding 5:9 (*Now it was the Sabbath on that day*) is the crux of this story: Jesus and the healed man both "worked" on the Sabbath. But as Jesus' response in 5:17 intimates (*My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working*), He was greater than the Sabbath.³³ As circumcision was the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant, the Sabbath was the sign of the Mosaic Covenant (e.g. Ex 16:29-30; 20:8-11), and controversy concerning the Sabbath runs throughout the Fourth Gospel (e.g. 7:22-23; 9:14-16).

There also may be a noteworthy and purposeful mirroring in John 5:19-20 (*...the Son can do [poie, w] nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; ...For the Father loves the Son, and shows [dei, knumi] Him all things [pa, nta] that He himself is doing...*). The LXX of Exodus 25:9, which records God's instruction to Moses, utilizes the exact same vocabulary (*Do [poie, w] according to all [pa, ntwn] that I am going to show [dei, knumi] you, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it*).³⁴ This structure is more than coincidental.

The indictments of 5:45-47 have their foundation in 5:30-31 (*"I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. If I alone bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true"*) with Jesus' obedience to

³¹ See also S. Vernon McCasland, "Signs and Wonders," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 76, no. 2 (1957), 149-152.

³² For further study see Michael A. Daise, *Feasts in John*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament, vol. 229 (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007). Gale A. Yee, *Jewish Feasts and the Gospel of John* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1989).

³³ An examination of the primary sources of the intertestamental period conclude that a logic of provision did exist in Pentateuchal interpretation that allowed for healing on the Sabbath (*m. Shabbat* 14:3; 18:3-19:5; *m. Yoma* 8:6; *b. Yoma* 85b; *m. Ned.* 3.11). Furthermore, it can also be concluded that was present in these schools a belief that God was not required to rest on the Sabbath, thus Jesus' announcement of 5:17 goes beyond a Sabbath challenge to a claim of equality with God (cf. *Ex. Rab.* 30:9) See also *Jub* 2:18; 2:25-30; 50:6-9; *p. Meg* 1:6; *p. Ned* 3:9; *Lev. Rab.* 3:1; *Gen. Rab.* 10:9-11:10; *Pesiq. Rab.* 23:7-8; *m. Abot* 1:1; *t. Ketub.* 1:1; *b. Sabb* 12b; *m. Shabbat* 1:3; 10:5-6; 7:2; 14:3; 22:6; *m. 'Eduyyot* 2:5; CD 11.5-18; *m. Pesahim* 6:1-2; Keener, *John*, 641, 716-717.

³⁴ Glasson, *Moses*, 80.

the law of witnesses (Deut 19:15), continuing the theme of witness mentioned above. Jesus recused himself as a witness and called John the Baptist, His works, His Father, and Scripture itself as witnesses.³⁵ Finally, in the climax of 5:45-47 (*Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"*) Jesus boldly claims that Moses wrote about Him. The Law should have directed its readers to Jesus. Since they rejected Jesus, He concluded that they misunderstood the Law of Moses and all of the witnesses (5:38). "Finally, Jesus brings to the crowd's attention the idea that Moses, the one who gave them the Sabbath command they accuse Jesus of breaking, is the one who accuses them of not obeying scriptures. The discussion revolves full circles until the accusers become the accused because they fail to believe the witnesses introduced."³⁶ This fact again underscores the great irony of John's gospel: the Jews rejected the Messiah they eagerly expected.

Together the narrative and subsequent dialogue of chapter 5 reinforces the Jesus/Moses comparison motif by understanding Moses as a witness to and supporter of Jesus.

The appearance of Moses in chapter 5 introduces a new side of this legendary figure. He is not merely a historical Jew who is contrasted with Jesus or whose mention places the narrative in a Jewish context. Now Moses is introduced as a supporter of Jesus. He is a historical example of the correct response produced by obedience to the law. Moses is an example for true Israelites to follow. The relationship of Moses and Jesus is clarified for the authorial audience. It is not a decision between Moses and Jesus. Rejecting Jesus equates to unfaithfulness to Moses.³⁷

John 6

Chapter six is a climax in John's use of the Jesus/Moses comparison. It is one block of Mosaic allusion and typology that has been described as a "dramatic high point" where "the stage is broader, the crowds are bigger, the discourse is longer, and the reactions are more diverse and decisive."³⁸ For this reason, we will briefly slow the pace of our study here in John 6 to comb for a deeper level of nuance and meaning.

While all of the evangelists include this feeding miracle in their account, John explicitly places it within the context of wilderness and Passover. With its subsequent explanation, this miracle draws attention to "a deeper Christological interpretation: Jesus is not merely a new Moses providing a sample of new manna, but he is heaven's supply for the greatest need of humanity," eternal life.³⁹

³⁵ Although we are inclined to see the reference of "another" in 5:31 as enigmatic and most likely in connection with John the Baptist, Ellis makes a case from the parallelism of the passage that "another" refers to Moses. Ellis, *Genius*, 95.

³⁶ Harstine, *Moses*, 57.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

³⁸ Brodie, *Commentary*, 291. See also the "climax and turning point" in Schnackenburg, *St John*. 2:10. Indeed, "the movement from the miracle to the discourse, from Moses to Jesus (vv. 32-5, cf. i. 17), and, above all, from *bread* to *flesh*, is almost unintelligible unless the reference in v. 4 to the Passover picks up i. 29, 36, anticipates xix. 36 (Exod. xii. 46; Num. ix. 12), and governs the whole narrative." Edwyn Clement Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1947), 281.

³⁹ Keener, *John*, 663.

The curious placement and succinct nature of the mention of Passover in 6:4 becomes the axis on which the entire chapter revolves. John mentions the feast not for chronology or calendar placement but for theology, once again reminding his readers of the Jewish memorial calendar that remembered the events of the Exodus.⁴⁰ The Passover, which was celebrated with the anticipation of a new, eschatological redemption, is the theological lens through which the rest of the narrative is to be properly interpreted, and its rehearsal prepares the reader for John's third Passover and Jesus' death as the fullest expression of the paschal lamb in chapter 19.

Jesus taught his disciples on a mountain in 6:3 (*Then Jesus went up on the mountain* [τὸ ὄρος; ὄρος], *and there He sat down with His disciples*) perhaps resembling Moses, Joshua and the seventy-two elders ascension to Sinai (Ex 19:3; 24:9; 24:13; 34:2-5) to receive instruction from the LORD. Sitting was the expected posture of a rabbi or teacher (cf. Mt 5:1-2; Lk 4:20), but teaching is not mentioned. This is because John is drafting Jesus, the Word of God, as superior to the word of Moses, the Torah, which in Jewish writings was frequently referred to as *bread to be eaten* or as *life-giving sustenance*.⁴¹ This *Incarnate Word > Torah* theme is significant.

The first theme of this chapter is *bread*. The feeding of the multitude of 6:6-14 is an overt duplication and improvement of the manna miracle in Exodus 16. This type and allusion cannot be disputed because of the subsequent explanatory discourse of Jesus, in which he specifically mentions a relationship to the manna miracle. With all four Gospels drawing attention to the "twelve" baskets of leftovers, it is probable that Jesus' provision for the *twelve tribes* of Israel is in sight.⁴² Indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ has ample supply to provide for the needs of Israel. All this is in stark contrast to the individual morsel proposed by the disciples plan (6:7).

The location of the miracle on the mountain with large plots of grass mirrors the explicit quotation of "manna in the wilderness" in 6:31 and 6:49. Furthermore, the miracle paralleled the wilderness manna so closely that those feasting decided that Jesus was the fulfillment of Deuteronomy 18:15 (6:14-15: *Therefore when the people saw that sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet [ὁ προφητῆς] who is to come into the world"*).⁴³ It is clear, that at this point at least, the crowds are interpreting the signs of Jesus in a favorable manner. But, alas, they misunderstand Jesus' role as The Promised Prophet and King, and within moments forget the significance of the sign. This misunderstanding also becomes thematic in the Gospel. "Jesus is not easily grasped and identified. His complex nature does not permit it. Instead, the narrator treats Jesus like a diamond that has a noticeable appearance, but whose inward qualities define its value."⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Carson, *John*, 268.

⁴¹ See Barrett, *John*, 240; Dodd, *Interpretation*, 83.

⁴² Carson, *John*, 271. It may also be noteworthy that three out of the four times John refers to the disciples as "the twelve" occur in chapter 6, immediately following the collection of twelve baskets of leftovers (6:67, 70, 71). Perhaps Jesus, while including reference to the twelve tribes, later connects the twelve apostles to this allusion.

⁴³ Although the diversity of Messianic expectation in the first-century has been referenced above, the scene in 6:14-15 is an obvious reference to Deuteronomy 18:15-19. With significant conjecture, Carson cautiously proposes a potential first-century understanding of the Messiah as that which was clearly present in the third century. "Toward the end of the third century AD, Rabbi Isaac argued that 'as the former redeemer caused manna to descend...so will the latter Redeemer cause manna to descend.'" *Ecc. Rabb.* 1:9; *Ibid.* 271. As noted in the discussion above, see also the Qumran literature: IQS 9:11, and especially Meeks, *The Prophet-King*, 125-129, 138, 147-150, 220-226.

⁴⁴ Harstine, *Moses*, 62.

The crowds likely suffer from quickly empty bellies, rather than amnesia, for they ask for another validating sign the very next day, forgetting Jesus' greater miracle (6:30-31: *So they said to Him, "What do you do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do you perform? Our fathers ate the manner in the wilderness; as it is written 'He gave them bread out of heaven to eat'"*). Here, they quote Psalm 78 but mistakenly assume Moses as the actor. In proper context, the subject is The Most High God (78:17-22). Their focus on the person of Moses hindered understanding of the corrective truth Jesus repeated in 6:32: *"It was not Moses who has given you bread out of heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread of heaven."* In this midrashic rebuttal, Jesus "attacks the disease and not the symptom" manifested in the want of a sign.⁴⁵ The plentiful comparison of *Torah bread to True Bread* is again made plain. Dodd organizes the progressive association in broader form:

*Bread = Torah = Moses < Jesus = Incarnate Word = True Bread from heaven.*⁴⁶

The intervening contextual comment of 6:41 provides yet another Mosaic reference that was likely more glaring to the original audience. In the statement, *"the Jews were grumbling about Him,"* the imperfect of *goggu, zw* is used for *grumbling*. This is exactly the same term used in Exodus 17:3, Numbers 11:1, and 14:27 for the various grumbings of the Israelites in the wilderness. The point is clear: Jesus is cast in the light of Moses and the Jews are the grumbling Israelites.

Furthermore, in 6:41-58 Jesus presses the limits of the bread imagery and its significance to a popularly repulsive level (6:53: *Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves*). As a result many do not follow Him any longer. This exposes the bread of life theme in all of its elevated glory. The manna in the wilderness gave only temporary sustenance to the Israelites in the wilderness. Jesus, Himself, provides *eternal* life to all who feast on Him. This sentiment, expressed in the typical rabbinic debate of v.32-51, is further explained by the early Jewish interpretation of manna as Torah. "In John the bread from heaven has been given the life-giving functions of Torah and wisdom. The presence of the bread is pictured with features from the theophany at Sinai and the invitation to eat and drink extended by wisdom. By combining ideas about the Torah, the theophany at Sinai and the wisdom, John 6:31-58 follows the lines suggested by the prologue (1:1-18) where the same combination has been made."⁴⁷ This first-century conception of Mosaic background shines great light on the apologetic of John 6.

Without pressing the image beyond its intention, the interrupting water-walking miracle of 6:16-21 may also play an important role in this chapter. It is sandwiched between the bread miracle and its explanation, which betrays a purposeful chiasmic placement.⁴⁸ With this placement

⁴⁵ Ibid., 63.

⁴⁶ Dodd, *Interpretation*, 336-37.

⁴⁷ Borgen, *Bread From Heaven*, 157.

⁴⁸ Several popular reasons have been set forth to explain the curious addition of the water-walking episode at this juncture, especially since it does not seem to include pertinent dialogue or discourse. 1) This episode was possibly linked with the manna episode in early Christian transmission (cf. Mt 14:22-34; Mk 6:45-52). 2) It is merely a geographical explanatory episode, transferring Jesus and the disciples back to the other side of the Sea. 3) The placement here is structural, tying it to the manna episode in a highly stylistic literary manner (ABCAB scheme). 4) This episode is also pertinent to the exodus theme. As explained in the previous chapter, this is the option we accept as making best sense of the surrounding context and dominant themes. The proximity of the Red Sea parting and the provision of manna in Exodus 14-16 could supply the pertinence for the inclusion of this water-walking episode here, immediately after Jesus' explicit duplication of the manna miracle and immediately prior to that miracle's explanation. Within such a simple chiasmic structure, it would seem that the author places

the author is asking the reader to understand, or at least connect, the center of the chiasm in light of both ends. While this may seem a terribly unwarranted stretch, like force-feeding a proposed theme, we must remember the deep and pervasive first-century magnetism to Moses already explored. With this understanding, it is perhaps more of a stretch to see the inclusion of this episode at this junction as haphazard or meaningless to the author's literary design and argument rather than significantly decided. But, if the water-walking sign remembers the Red Sea crossing, then both signs would point back to events closely linked in the Torah (Ex 14:21-22; 16:4). In fact, they are separated chronologically by only a song of worship and the provision of *water* from the rock, a theme which is employed in John 7. This water-walking miracle in John once again overlaps Jesus and Moses while representing Jesus as greater. Indeed, Christ walked on top of the water, without need to part it. This chapter clearly sets Jesus and Moses side by side and asks its readers to compare them.

This episode also includes another "I am" statement in 6:20 that is most likely an inclusion of the formula in common speech, with an equivalent meaning to "It's me!" However, by reducing the dialogue to a minimum, the author may be highlighting and theologically elevating the practically common use of the *evgw, eivmi* formula to that which has already been shown to be prevalent and theologically meaningful in the rest of the gospel. At this point, "it is important to see that the Evangelist has achieved this [elevation] not by distorting the history but by subtly sharpening its foci so that the meditative reader will observe, once again, that he or she is privileged to grasp what the first disciples could not understand until later."⁴⁹ This initial failure to understand, progressed by the following explanatory discourse, may also serve as a gentle encouragement to the belief of the reader.

John 7

While "after these things" does not necessarily convey a strict chronology, the themes of the previous chapter plainly find complement in chapter seven where the "forces of belief and unbelief are locked in struggle."⁵⁰ Here, yet another feast day mentioned in 7:2 (*Now the feast of the Jews, the feast of Booths, was near.*) is significant for context and interpretation. The Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles, was considered the greatest and the most joyful feast celebrated by the Jews. It largely revolved around the theme of *light* and *water*, which follows the developed background from chapter six.⁵¹

When Jesus goes into the midst of the temple festivities and begins to teach, conflict erupts yet again. This dialogue includes two related ideas: the law and circumcision. Both are employed by Jesus to shed light once again on His identity and function. He introduces Moses into the discussion in 7:19 (*Did not Moses give you the Law, and yet none of you carries out the law? Why do you seek to kill me?*). Harstine notes that Jesus' comments have three implications: (1)

both hands on the face of his readers and directs their inspection of Christ. And he points them to the Exodus. Carson, *John*, 273; Ellis, *Genius*, 111. Keener notes that some (such as Ellis) "have preferred parallels to the exodus event in which God brought his people through the sea, but, while this fits the Passover and exodus context of the chapter (hence what we should expect to find here), the parallel is not close and John provides at best few clues for this *otherwise fertile interpretation*." [emphasis mine] Keener aptly notes other possible backgrounds for interpretation including Job 9:8 and Psalm 77:16-19, which may be an allusion to the Red Sea crossing (77:19: *Thy way was in the sea, And Thy paths in the mighty waters*). Keener, *John*, 671-674.

⁴⁹ Carson, *John*, 276.

⁵⁰ Schnackenburg, *St John*, 2:136.

⁵¹ A close contextual link is present between chapter 6, 7, and 8. "This section (7-8), like much of the gospel, refracts the themes of the rest of the Gospel in microcosm." Keener, *John*, 703.

Accomplishing God's will is *superior to* abiding by the Law. (2) Accomplishing God's will is *continuous with* abiding by the Law. These are seen in the comment of 7:23 (*If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath that the Law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath?*). (3) Jesus answers the crowd's original question in 7:15 (*The Jews then were astonished, saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?"*) by showing that both his teaching and the Law of Moses flowed from the same source: the Father.⁵² The real difference was one of corrupt mediation of this pure source.

The crowds respond positively to the signs of Jesus in 7:31 (*But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, "When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?"*). The theme of signs is so significant and prominent in John that mentioning it every time it appears belabors the point. However, we must not forget its relevance to the equipping of Moses in Exodus 4.

Particularly significant to our discussion is the coincident of water imagery and the great day of the Feast of Booths in 7:37-38 (*Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water'"*). The Feast of Booths fell late in the fall of the year (October) and was one of the three great feasts for Israel.⁵³ During these seven days of living in home-made booths to memorialize the wilderness wanderings, the nation celebrated several rituals that were passed on from Moses but are not expressly mentioned except in an allusive way here in John seven.⁵⁴ One of these rituals was water libation. A procession of feast-goers followed the priest from the temple to the pool of Siloam for a pitcher of water. Reference was made by the crowd of Isaiah 12:3 (*Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation.*) and the procession would return to the temple mount where the priest would pour out the libation on the altar. This ritual was designed to remember God miraculously providing water from a rock in the wilderness (Ex 17:6; see also Ex 15:25). It also looked ahead to God's promised blessings at the hand of the Messiah (Zech 14; cf. Jn 2:18). With this understanding, the statement of Jesus in 7:37 has overwhelming significance (*If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink*). After six days of procession, rejoicing, remembering, and praying, the true Messiah stands and offers himself as the Divine living water and the doorway to the promised Holy Spirit. The remainder of the chapter must be seen in this feast context, where yet again in 7:40 savvy onlookers relate Jesus to the prophet promised in Deuteronomy 18 (*Some of the multitude therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, "This certainly is the Prophet"*).⁵⁵

At this point Harstine offers a succinct summary:

⁵² Harstine, *Moses*, 66. Ironically, references to the Jewish leaders' plot to kill Jesus (7:1, 11, 19, 25) are sandwiched around their denial of this plot (7:20: *Who seeks to kill you?*). This hypocritical misunderstanding once again supports the great irony of the Fourth Gospel: the Jews who eagerly awaited the arrival of Messiah rejected Him.

⁵³ See Mitch and Zhava Glaser, *The Fall Feasts of Israel* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1987).

⁵⁴ See also Glaser, *Fall Feasts*; Catherine Cory, "Wisdom's Rescue: A New Reading of the Tabernacles Discourse (John 7:1-8:59)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 116, no. 1 (1997), 95-116. George W. MacRae, "Meaning and Evolution of the Feast of Tabernacles," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (1960), 251-276.

⁵⁵ Here in 7:40-42 the crowd seems to distinguish between the eschatological prophet of Deuteronomy 18 and the Davidic Messiah (cf. Jn 1:19-25). The Qumran community also held to such distinctions (e. g. IQS 9:11). Carson, *John*, 272.

In the previous three passages, Jn 5, 6 and 7, Moses is introduced into each discussion by Jesus. In Jn 5, he presents Moses as the accuser of the Jews and not their defender. In Jn 6, Jesus presents him as the mediator and not the source of manna. In Jn 7, he presents Moses as both the giver of the law and the one who permits circumcision to circumvent the Sabbath command. Each introduction functions to correct a current perception of Moses by the crowd and further identify Jesus. The crowd responds to these comparisons with unbelief. They are not willing to transplant Moses. At no time does Jesus directly compare himself to Moses. However, the portrait presented in these three passages is that Jesus possesses greater authority than Moses. This portrait is consistent with what is initially presented in the Prologue.⁵⁶

John 8

As Passover was the interpretive lens for chapter six, Tabernacles becomes the lens for chapters seven and eight. And although the origin of the initial narrative of this chapter is highly debated in text critical circles because of its absence and misplacement in some early manuscripts, while making no uncritical acceptance of the pericope, we choose to include it in our discussion.⁵⁷

The trap set early in this chapter is explained by the omniscient author in 8:6 (*They were saying this to test Him [Jesus], so that they might have grounds for accusing Him*). It was a test. Moses was the criterion. Jesus was on trial. Would he condemn the adulteress to death and bring upon himself the wrath of the Romans (18:31)? Or would he succumb to Roman pressure and usurp the Law of Moses (Lev 20:10; Deut 5:18)? Either way, the scribes and Pharisees would be rid of their nuisance. But by appealing to Moses (Deut 19:15-20) Jesus simultaneously revealed the hypocrisy and maliciousness of the tempters and extended grace and forgiveness to the woman (cf. 1:17).⁵⁸

While much expositional attention is paid to what exactly Jesus wrote on the ground, perhaps a more significant factor has been overlooked in this interesting event. It is at least possible that John orchestrates his narrative as a subtle Scriptural interplay when Jesus stoops in 8:6 (*But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground*).⁵⁹ Although all textual traditions retain the use of ἔγραψεν, Jesus was in the temple complex, where even though there was likely much dirt and dust, the surface on which he walked was very likely stone. It is also significant that John specifically says “wrote with his finger.” Only two other times in the Scripture does a finger write on stone: Daniel 5:5 (plaster, 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤏) and Exodus 31:18 (with parallels), the tablets of stone, written by “the finger of God.” Of course, contained in these tablets was “You shall not commit adultery.” In this potential light, the scene becomes rich with subtlety. Perhaps Jesus is conveying that he need not be instructed in the Law, for He himself wrote the Law. Moreover, He was the Law embodied. Jesus displays a masterful knowledge of the Law,

⁵⁶ Harstine, *Moses*, 67-68.

⁵⁷ This is a highly debated pericope and a full discussion is beyond the scope of this thesis. For a good synopsis of the issues see Zane C. Hodges, “Problem Passages in the Gospel of John - Part 8: The Woman Taken in Adultery (John 7:53-8:11): The Text,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136, no. 544 (1979), 319-332; Zane C. Hodges, “Problem Passages in the Gospel of John – Part 9: The Woman Taken in Adultery (John 7:53-8:11): The Exposition,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136, no. 545 (1979), 41-53; Glasson understands this pericope as a continuation of the Tabernacles episode. Glasson, *Moses*, 60.

⁵⁸ For an excellent literary analysis, see Charles P. Baylis, “The Woman Caught in Adultery: A Test of Jesus as the Greater Prophet,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 146, no. 582 (1989), 172-184.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 180.

especially the law of a malicious witness in Deuteronomy 19:16-18, which immediately follows the law requiring two witnesses (Deut 19:15). His reference to “those without sin,” in this view, was a direct indictment to the sin of malicious witness (8:7: *But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her"*). The import of this writing event is exaggerated by its placement either side of Jesus’ statement of judgment (8:6, 8).

Several more *evgw. eivmi*, formulas appear in this chapter, beginning in 8:12 (*I am the light of the world...*) and following with 8:24, 28. This name formula reaches an apex in 8:58 when Jesus claims to be before Abraham (*Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am*). The un-predicated collocation of “I am” is the truest form of allusion to Ex 3:14 in the gospel. The force of this claim is reinforced by its reception in 8:59 (*Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple*).

The illustration and example of *light* also has tremendous Mosaic precedent (e.g. Ex 10:23 light in the plagues; 25:37 seven lampstands of the Tabernacle; Ex 27:20, Lev 24:2 the ordinance of perpetual light). It is probably more likely, however, that this reference to light still plays within the context of the feast of Tabernacles. The lighting of the candelabra in the temple court on the first night of the feast memorialized the pillar of fire which gave the Israelites nightly light in the wilderness (Ex 13:21; 14:20). It also expressed their hope that the coming Messiah would bring more light (Isa 9:2-7).

Yet another reference to the commandment for two witnesses in Deuteronomy 19:15 is made in 8:17. Perhaps this thick context of similarity is the reason why the *Pericope Adulterae* found one final resting place at this location. The referent of 8:28 (*When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am*) must be understood in light of the Mosaic type already discussed in John 3:14-15.

John 9

Chapter nine of the Fourth Gospel begins at a gallop. Carrying the polemical momentum from the previous chapters this trial scene is the literary apex of the Gospel.⁶⁰ It “marks a new level of literary achievement as it ties the discourse material to the sign and weaves the whole into a delightful ironic and dramatic unit.”⁶¹ This chapter is dramatic, spirited, and brilliant in its form, nuance and irony.⁶²

Following briskly after a section of dialogue in which Jesus accuses the leading Jews of an inability to see (8:56-58), He will heal a man born blind, repeating a similar formula to 8:12 in 9:5 (*While I am in the world, I am the light of the world*). This ironic interplay is highlighted in 9:13 (*They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind*). Here is a man who has been blind from birth and yet is healed. Subsequently his identification of Jesus progresses from simply a man (9:15), to a prophet (9:17), to one from God (9:33), and finally Son of Man and Lord (9:35, 38). Simultaneously, the Pharisees, who repudiated the charge that they could not see (9:40b: *We are not blind too, are we?*), grow increasingly more darkened in their understanding of Jesus’ identity as they first accept the miracle (9:15, 17), then question it (9:18), and finally reject Jesus’ origin (9:25, 29). And 9:14 presents the reason for the conflict: *Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes* (cf. 9:16). This was precisely the conflict of 5:9 above. Again, the Sabbath is the sign of the Mosaic covenant and within this Gospel, the source of much of

⁶⁰ Harstine, *Moses*, 68.

⁶¹ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 73.

⁶² Brodie, *Commentary*, 350; Brown, *John I*, 9; Morris, *John*, 490.

Jesus' conflict and instruction. Yet again, John records this historical event in such a way as to juxtapose Jesus and Moses. He then asks his audience to compare. The principal image here is *light* (blindness), a theme with implications throughout the gospel (chapters 1, 3, 8, 9, 12).

The crisis reaches a climax in the statement of 9:22b (*for the Jews had already agreed, that if anyone should confess Him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue*). This fear was realized with the cold succinct words of 9:34 (*So they put him out*). This event highlights the same themes we have seen thus far: Jesus' superiority over the giver of the Law, the Law itself, and the blessings of the Law, in this case, privileges to enter the synagogue for worship and instruction.

John 9:28-29 is the last explicit reference to Moses in the Gospel, and the first to be raised by Jesus' opponents (*And they reviled him [formerly blind man], and said, "You are His [Jesus'] disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. "We know that God has spoken to Moses; but as for this man, we do not know where He is from"*). Boismard aptly notes that this statement presents an implicit problem. "One must now choose between Moses and Jesus, between Moses and the prophet like him, announced in Deut 18:18."⁶³

Moreover, finding the man after he had been put out of the synagogue, Jesus reveals His identity to him, and the pericope ends with an explanation of blindness and judgment in 9:39-41 (*And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see; and that those who see may become blind." Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things, and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains*). The Sabbath of the Mosaic Covenant was the catalyst of this entire narrative.

The irony of this pericope is the same one begun in 1:11: those Jewish leaders that should have first accepted Jesus as Messiah were responsible for his rejection. Unwilling to release their tight grasp on Moses, the Pharisees are unable to embrace the life and blessing of the Messiah of which Moses spoke. John's polemic comparison has reached its apex. His message: "The totality of Jesus' identity can only be viewed through the lens that Moses provides."⁶⁴

John 10

As a continuation of the previous chapter's dialogue (cf. 10:21), 10:1 maintains the indictment Jesus makes to his opponents (*Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber*), as 10:6 makes clear (*This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them*).⁶⁵

The sheep/shepherd imagery in John 10 is not without Old Testament precedent. While there are many shepherds in the Old Testament, including the kings of Israel, Moses was also a shepherd of the flocks of Jethro (Ex 3:1). This rich zoological metaphor is also present in Numbers 27:15-17, where Moses prays for a worthy successor to complete the journey into the Promised Land (*who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be like sheep which have no shepherd*). God sets apart

⁶³ M. E. Boismard, *Moses or Jesus: An Essay in Johannine Christology*, trans. B. T. Viviano, vol. LXXXIV-A, *Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium* (Leuven: University Press, 1993), 22.

⁶⁴ Harstine, *Moses*, 72.

⁶⁵ See also Robert Kysar, "Johannine Metaphor - Meaning and Function: A Literary Case Study of John 10:1-8," *Semeia* (1991), 81-111.

Joshua, the son of Nun, and the leadership of the nation continues.⁶⁶ This theme is obviously pertinent to the transference of leadership from Jesus to the disciples, and it will take center stage in our discussion of the Upper-room Discourse in John 13-17.

Because of its simplicity and regularity within dialogue, the *evgw. eivmi*, formula cannot be forced into any premeditated mold in every case. But, the frequency with which it appears in this chapter is noteworthy (10:7, 9, 11, 14). See the above discussion of the relevance of this formula to Exodus 3:14 and its theological and literary implications.

Following the climactic interaction of the previous chapter, 10:22-33 removes any lingering doubt as to Jesus' identity and the popular rejection of this revelation.⁶⁷ It begins with a blatant question posed by the Jews in the temple area in 10:24 (*How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly*). In a less desperate context, this question could be humorous considering the events and dialogues prior to it. Jesus' clearly affirmative response, replete with more sheep/shepherd imagery, is met with increasing opposition in 10:31-33 (*The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God*).

Despite all the opposition and rejection, which appear to be on an ever increasing scale, this chapter ends with the same glimmer of hope that is scattered throughout the gospel: *Many believed in Him there* (10:42; cf. 2:11, 23; 4:39, 41; 7:31; 11:45; 12:11, 42; cf. 20:30-31).

John 11

Once again, an *evgw. eivmi*, formula appears in 11:25 as an explanatory comment to the sign of resurrection (*I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies*). This statement is immediately followed with a response by Martha in which she expresses faith in His true identity as *ku,rie(o` cristo.j and o` ui`o.j tou/ qeou/* (*Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world*). This three-fold title designation helps to demonstrate the progressive acceptance of Jesus' identity throughout the Gospel.

The theme of signs also reaches a high point with the raising of Lazarus (Jesus' resurrection is the greatest sign). The reference to the public responding in belief (11:45) is immediately followed by an account of the Pharisees plot to rid themselves of Jesus (11:46-48; cf. 12:9-11). Yet again, the irony that these signs should have led the leaders to recognize Jesus' identity as Messiah and God but instead led them to reject Him, reaches full volume. This is clear in the high priest's unconscious prophecy (11:49-52), which has immediate relevance to substitutionary claims such as 1:29 and prepares for the latter claims of chapter 19.

Chapter 11 closes by setting up the passion section of the gospel with the mention of the third and final Passover feast (11:55-57; cf. 2:13; 6:4). It is not insignificant that John arranges his Gospel account with the raising of Lazarus leading into Jesus' third and final Passover. This, the

⁶⁶ H. Sahlin sees in John 10 and 11 a comparison between Jesus and Joshua, the successor of Moses. Harold Sahlin, *Zur Typologie Des Johannesevangeliums* (Uppsala: Lundequistska Bokhanden, 1950).

⁶⁷ This pericope is within the context of yet another feast, and it is the only feast mentioned that does not find its origin in the Law of Moses. It is Hanukkah, or the Feast of the Dedication in 10:22 (*At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem*). This feast remembered the rededication of the temple under the Maccabean revolt in the 2nd Century b.c. It is referenced in 1 Macc 4:56-59.

greatest of the signs, prefigures the death and resurrection of the Messiah, which perfectly coincides with Passover.

John 12

Because of the close identification between Moses and Law already discussed, 12:34 is another one of the many passages in John's purposefully allusive text that may require the audience to provide "extra-textual information" in order to properly relate these passages with Moses within the hopes of the author.⁶⁸ (*The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law [tou/ no, mou] that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?").* This is of course a response to Jesus' repeated reference to Numbers 21 and the bronze serpent of Moses (12:32: *And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself*). Clearly the crowd connected "lifted up" with death because they assumed it as an irreconcilable with "remaining forever" (cf. 3:14-15). Jesus' final response to this line of questioning (12:35-36) includes yet another reference to *light* contrasted to *darkness*, obviously a favorite theme of John's. In fact, the interrupting explanation is bookended on either side by reference to light (12:46), potentially due to the prominence of the theme in the Torah already noted above (e.g. Ex 10:23; 13:21; 14:20; 25:37; 27:20).

This narrative explanation contains another reference to signs (12:37) and a refusal to believe. John explains this unfortunate response by referencing Isaiah 53:1 and 6:10, the latter of which contains a reference to "hardening of heart," of which Pharaoh is a consistent example (12:38-41). The people described in John 12 are portrayed as following in the path of the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

John 13-17

While the synoptics record the last few hours of Jesus' ministry before His crucifixion in various particulars, John almost entirely disregards the Last Supper. Compared to the synoptics, his chronology understands the Passover to occur simultaneous to the crucifixion (see discussion below) instead of the Last Supper. In regards to this communal meal, it seems John is more interested in the dialogue that occurred there, which instead of four verses (cf. Mk 14:22-25) he records across five chapters. Understood as a whole, we will survey chapters 13-17 as a unit.⁶⁹

Chapter 13 begins with the third and final Passover. The opening lines (13:1-3) clearly begin a new section regarding the consummation of Jesus' signs and John's literary allusions in the previous twelve chapters. This consummation will be the theme of the last half of John's gospel. As such, John does not offer much new material in support of his Jesus/Moses comparison theme. From now on he is interested in its fullest manifestation in the passion of Christ Jesus.

There is sufficient textual evidence to see this last supper of Jesus and his disciples as a Passover meal (13:12-30). If so, Jesus would have undoubtedly injected new and fuller meaning into the elements of this memorial meal. But why aren't they mentioned? Simply put, they are not mentioned here because John has already inserted Jesus' elevated interpretation of the Passover meal, at least certain elements of it, in the Manna discourse of John 6 (v.26-58; especially v.53-57). John chose to place these seminal statements of Jesus within the explicit Mosaic context of the transitory nature of the "life" provided by the manna in the wilderness and life

⁶⁸ Harstine, *Moses*, 41.

⁶⁹ See also G. R. Beasley-Murray, "John 13-17: The Community of True Life," *Review & Expositor* 85, no. 3 (1988), 473-483.

eternal rather than placing them within the context of the Passover meal as do the synoptics. In their stead, John records the discussion of cleanliness and modeled servanthood (13:4-20).

This non-miraculous sign is also rich in symbolism, as Jesus' first words allude (13:7: *What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand later*). This cleanliness theme (13:10), and traditional role of the host of a meal, is elevated by Jesus to a level above Mosaic cleanliness laws or ritual washing before meals. He intimates by his actions that cleanliness now flows from Himself (13:8, 12-17). Moreover, the statement of 13:34 (*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another*) may reference the original giving of the commandments, the Decalogue, or more widely, the Torah.⁷⁰

The discourse beginning in 13:12 should likely be understood as the beginning, or *prolegomena*, to a discourse that finds fuller pace in 13:31.⁷¹ Attention has been drawn to the parallel nature of the Farewell Discourse and the last "testament" of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy.⁷² In this final section of the Torah, Moses reminds the people of all that the LORD had revealed and asked them to continually respect their place in it. He also places Joshua before the people as his replacement, or disciple, the one who will continue the journey and finalize their entrance into the Promised Land (Deut 31:3-8). Joshua is commissioned by God himself (Deut 31:14-23). Of course, the Farewell Discourse in John contains exactly these same elements.⁷³

⁷⁰ Morgan, 159.

⁷¹ This block of text is a high-point in John's gospel, as seen by the large percentage of space given to its detail. Glasson lists the following in short order: (1) John 13:1 contains a striking similarity to the Jerusalem Targum I: "*And when the last end of Moses the prophet was at hand, that he should be gathered from this world.*" The fragmentary Jerusalem Targum II also has "*When the end of Moses came, that he should be removed from the world.*" This is very likely an introductory allusion linking Jesus' statement with precedent in Moses' farewell speech. (2) The foot washing ceremony of John 13 may also have precedent in the transference of authority and "glory" from Moses to Joshua (Num 27:20; Deut 9:9; John 17:22). If so, John selects its placement and description to purposely highlight the similarity in the scheme of his Jesus/Moses comparison. So, as Moses became Joshua's attendant, especially evident in later tradition, so the Messiah Jesus assumes the role of servant in 13:4-12. (3) The words "fear not, neither be dismayed" in Moses' charge to Joshua in Deut. 31:7-8 echo those Jesus gives to his disciples in 14:1 and 14:27: "*Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.*" (4) In Deut 34:9 Moses imparts the Spirit to Joshua and "ordains" him, while Jesus imparts the Spirit to his disciples and "chooses" them; 20:22; 15:16. (5) Also, as Jesus calls his disciples to follow in His example, 13:12-17, so Joshua was called to be a shepherd in the way of Moses, Num 27:17. Glasson, *Moses*, 74-85.

⁷² See Beasley-Murray, "John 13-17"; Glasson, *Moses*, 74-85. The whole of Deuteronomy should be seen as a farewell discourse following 1:3: "*In the fortieth year, on the first of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the children of Israel, according to all that the LORD had commanded him to give to them;*" See also J. Priest, "Testament of Moses: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. I (New York: Doubleday, 1983).

⁷³ Although beyond the scope of this thesis, the Pseudepigraphical *Testament of Moses* is a field of potentially rich study in regards to its similarities and differences with John's Farewell Discourse. See Bruce E. Carter, "Moses as a Typological Figure of Christ in Intertestamental and New Testament Literature," (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1982); James H. Charlesworth, ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols., vol. 1: *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1983); James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament: Prolegomena for the Study of Christian Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); James H. Charlesworth, "Messianology in the Biblical Pseudepigrapha," in *Qumran-Messianism: Studies on the Messianic Expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, Hermann Lichtenberger and Gerbern S. Oegema (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998); Daniel J. Harrington, "Interpreting Israel's History: The Testament of Moses as a Rewriting of Deut 31-34," in *Studies on the Testament of Moses: Seminar Papers*, ed. George W. E. Nickelsburg Jr. (Cambridge: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973); David L. Tiede, "The Figure of Moses in the Testament of Moses," in *Studies on the Testament of Moses: Seminar Papers*, ed. George W. E. Nickelsburg Jr. (Cambridge: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973).

The repeated sentiment of Jesus, “*If you love me you will keep my commandments*” (14:15, 21, 23; 15:10) find a parallel in Deuteronomy as well. In particular, Deuteronomy 7:9 says, “*Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments*” (see also Deut 5:10; 11:1, 22; 13:3-4; 19:9; 30:16). Other parallel statements from Jesus’ discourse are: John 14:1 (*Let not your heart be troubled*) = Deut 14:27; 31:8; John 15:4-10 (repeated use of the word *abide*) = Deut 10:20; 11:22; John 15:16 (*You did not choose me, but I chose you [the disciples]*) = Deut 4:37; 7:6-7; 10:15; 14:2;

The moving prayer of John 17 also has several more points of unmistakable contact with Moses’ Torah. First of all, as a whole, the intercession of John 17:6-26 has Mosaic precedent in the intercessory prayers of Exodus 32-33. If this allusion has a wider purpose at the end of this discourse, it perhaps relates the whole of the discourse to God’s instruction of Israel in Exodus 20-31.⁷⁴ Moreover, the Suffering Servant of Isaiah was also said to make intercession for sinners (Isa 53:8-9).⁷⁵ Other points of reference may include: John 17:5 (*Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was*) = Ex 32-33:16; John 17:8 (*for the words which You gave Me I have given to them [the disciples]; and they received them...*) = Deut 33:3. In Glasson’s words, these “parallels are sufficiently striking to be significant.”⁷⁶

John 18

In the episode of Jesus’ retreat to the garden and subsequent betrayal, the three-fold *evgw, eivmi* (18:5-8) formula charted above is striking in its response by the cohort of Romans, Pharisees and officers of the chief priests. Upon answering Jesus’ question, “*whom do you seek*” with “*Jesus the Nazarene*” (18:4-5), Jesus responds with “*I am*.” At this “*they drew back and fell to the ground*” (18:6). This reaction is intriguing considering the reason for their meeting late at night in the garden. This is either a reaction to the man or a reaction to the force of the “*I am*” statement itself.

Again the passing reference to ritual cleanliness in 18:28 (*...and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover*) continues to keep Moses within the context although he is not mentioned by name. He is always just beneath the surface, keeping the seminal comparison within reach at all times.

John 19

While John has clearly made sure that every crucial moment in his Gospel is represented, indeed interpreted, by the Old Testament, this fact is nowhere more important than chapter 19. John quotes the Old Testament four times in his description of Jesus’ death (19:24, 28, 36, 37). In

⁷⁴ Enz, *Exodus*, 210.

⁷⁵ Scholars such as Menken and especially Chavasse see significant overlap and identification in John’s comparison of Moses and Jesus’ identity with the Suffering Servant of (Deutero) Isaiah. Although the present writer does not see adequate evidence to read *Moses* as the retro-referent of the Suffering Servant prophecies, in an effort to seemingly consolidate John’s prophetic allusions Chavasse presses an argument to this end. Claude Chavasse, “The Suffering Servant and Moses,” *Church Quarterly Review* 165, no. 355 (1964), 152-163. We are satisfied with seeing John’s portrayal of Jesus as fulfilling the prophecies of the greater Moses and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah independently instead of combining the two into one. Nonetheless, the many allusions John makes to Isaiah’s Servant are also an area of study that would prove profitable. See Claude Chavasse, “Jesus: Christ and Moses - I,” *Theology* 54, no. 373 (1951), 244-250; Maarten J. J. Menken, “Observations on the Significance of the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel,” *Neotestamentica* 33, no. 1 (1999), 125-143.

⁷⁶ Glasson, *Moses*, 85.

this respect, John rises above the synoptic accounts. It is here that allusions to the paschal lamb of the Exodus and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah intersect.

Of course, the Exodus and Passover have been regarded throughout the centuries before Christ to be the pattern and prototype of the Messianic redemption.⁷⁷ Indeed, "it is the presupposition of the New Testament as a whole, and pre-eminently the Gospels, that Jesus' death is the redemptive act inaugurating the new eschatological Exodus of salvation."⁷⁸ And it is perhaps here, in John, where this expectation comes to its most glorious consummation.

Reminders of the Passover permeate the context (13:1; 18:28, 39; 19:14) with one clear objective: the paralleling of redemptive actions. The deliverance Jesus afforded is purposefully laid over the deliverance Moses brought to the enslaved Israelites. The feast of Passover provides the readership with a theological framework with which to interpret Jesus' passion. This framework provides the context for Jesus' interaction with Nicodemus and the feeding of the multitude mentioned above, which both anticipate elements of provision at the realization of Jesus' death.

In the memorial feast, the chosen paschal lamb was supposed to be perfect or unblemished. To verify this fact, the households were to keep the lamb with them for four days, then kill it at twilight (Ex 12:5-10). It is within this context that Pilate's statement in 19:6 is most meaningful: "*Take Him yourselves [leaders of the Jews] and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.*"

The statement of 19:18 (*There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side [evnteu/qen kai. evnteu/qen], and Jesus in between*), which seems to be an overly detailed passing remark, is perhaps another of John's allusions to the popular picture among first-century Jews of Moses *lifting up and stretching his hands*.⁷⁹ In Exodus 17 the Israelites battled the Amalekites and continued to prevail as long as Moses held up his staff. "*But Moses' hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other [evnteu/qen ei-j kai. evnteu/qen ei-j]. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set*" (Ex 17:12). It may not be insignificant that the detail of John's statement finds almost verbatim precedent here in Exodus 17, a text that played an important role in the first-century concept of Moses.⁸⁰

Jesus' was crucified on the day of preparation of the Passover (19:31, 42), which was the fourteenth of Nisan according to John's chronology (Ex 12:6). This was the same time that the faithful Israelites would have been slaughtering their lambs in celebration of the Passover. The fact that the guards did not break Jesus' legs (19:33) was directly related to the prescribed treatment of the paschal lamb and is explicitly corroborated in 19:36 (Ex 12:46 "*It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it.*" Cf. Num 9:12).

⁷⁷ See Howard M. Teeple, "The Mosaic Eschatological Prophet," *Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series X* (1957).

⁷⁸ George L. Balentine, "Death of Jesus as a New Exodus," *Review & Expositor* 59, no. 1 (1962), 30.

⁷⁹ Glasson, *Moses*, 40-43. Here Glasson also notes that the Serpent of Num 21 and the Battle with Amalek in Exodus 17 were typically found together in places like Barnabas 12, Justin's *Dialogue*, Cyprian, and Irenaeus.

⁸⁰ See especially Jeremias, *Mwush/j*, 848-873. His survey of the view of Moses in Later Judaism is particularly significant here. He recognizes that Moses is portrayed as a reflection of Adam and as a model of the Messiah, which includes a "Second Moses" and "Suffering Servant" concept.

John 20

If the post-resurrection dialogue and appearances play a significant role in the gospel itself, and certainly they do, then it is in direct connection with the expressed purpose of the Gospel in 20:30-31. Indeed, the resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah, is the final and climactic sign of John's Gospel, as evidenced by the prevalence of *belief* afterward (20:8, 16, 18, 20, 28-29). This believing response reaches a final climax with Thomas' proclamation, "*My Lord and my God*" (20:28). Immediately following is John's explicit purpose statement, faithfully linking the historical precedent of belief and his intended future goal for the work itself, which like the characters in his historical narratives, call the reader to life-giving belief in Jesus the Messiah.⁸¹

John 21

This final section of John's Gospel clearly acts as a reminder of several central themes in the heart of the pre-cross narratives, including evangelism (21:1-11) and discipleship (21:19b). The interrupting reinstatement of Peter (21:15-17) is laced with commands to "feed the sheep." This theme is reminiscent of Jesus' statements in John 10 and the sheep/shepherd imagery from Num 27:17 and acts as a formative reminder of His teaching regarding pastoral care (17:1, 6-26).

It should not be surprising that a theme such as the one under consideration would wane in the latter sections of such a work. Its role has been completed, its job complete. Furthermore, this Jesus/Moses comparison, not being the ultimate goal of the text, is properly emphasized in the fore as a means to the end.

We have shown in this extensive survey that John uses Moses, the Exodus and Pentateuchal references as a means of highlighting both his portrayal of Jesus and his exhortational agenda of engendering faith in Jesus' true identity (20:30-31; cf. 10:24, 36; 11:27). This goal is the ultimate impetus for every word John writes, every story he includes, the chronology in which he includes them and the light in which they are cast. Moses is the fundamental figure in the development of this plan.

⁸¹ Keener, *John*, 251.