5-1-2007

A Household to be Gathered-The Anointing at Bethany and the Day of Jesus' Death in the Gospel According to John

Jonathan A. Blanke
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, jonathan.blanke@rlcary.org

A HOUSEHOLD TO BE GATHERED: THE ANOINTING AT BETHANY AND THE DAY OF JESUS' DEATH IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

By
Jonathan A. Blanke
May 2007

Approved by

Dr. Bruce G. Schuchard — Advisor

Dr. Jeffrey A. Oschwald — Reader

Dr. Kent J. Burreson — Reader

To my beloved wife, friend, and co-worker, Juli

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ABSTRACT

Blanke, Jonathan A. "A Household to Be Gathered: The Anointing at Bethany and the Day of Jesus' Death in the Gospel according to John." Ph.D. diss., Concordia Seminary, 2007. 224 pp.

This dissertation focuses on the theological significance of the anointing at Bethany in the Fourth Gospel and its relationship to the passion and death of Jesus. The dissertation responds to the conclusion of much twentieth-century scholarship that John 12:1–7 is essentially meaningful as a text that evolved from an oral tradition comparable to other anointings of Jesus with perfume by unnamed women in the Synoptic Gospels. It supplements this prior scholarly study by focusing on the literary context of the Bethany anointing within the Fourth Gospel and its sociohistorical context in light of biblical and extra-biblical texts of the first-century. This investigation concludes that the Bethany anointing is especially meaningful with regards to the Gospel's household theme. The same holds true for two "narrative echoes" of John 12:1–7: John 13:2–30 and John 19:38–42. The dissertation demonstrates that these narrative echoes mark the beginning and the end of a final 24-hour period in the Fourth Gospel that first-century readers of the Fourth Gospel would have understood to be Passover. John 12:1 indicates that the anointing took place at the beginning of a six-day "week," ending on the Passover. Allusions throughout the latter portion of the Gospel to a new household of God, gathered by Jesus through his death, associate the Passover imagery in this portion of the Gospel with the gathering of the new household having Jesus as its focus. Thus, the dissertation finds the anointing at Bethany to be simultaneously anticipating Jesus as Passover lamb and head of a household which he gathers to his Father through his death. It demonstrates how Mary and her siblings, in addition to their status as unique individuals in the Fourth Gospel, nevertheless have a representative role to play for first-century and present-day readers. The anointing at Bethany in the Gospel of John depicts Jesus as one whose intention it is to die in order that he might gather unto himself a new household of God.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Thesis

John 12:1–7[1] depicts Jesus as one whose intention is to die in order that he might gather unto himself a new house(hold)[2] of God. At least three considerations are significant for this thesis: in the recent scholarly study of the Fourth Gospel (1) much has been done to trace the Gospel's evident interest in a household theme; (2) John 12:1–7 has played an unjustifiably limited role in efforts to describe this theme; and (3) a useful methodological procedure for analyzing the Gospel's interest in a household theme has been identified. The present study will show that sociohistorical, literary, and theological considerations lead to the following conclusion: John 12:1–7 has both an evident interest in a household theme and, especially in light of the narrative that follows, a key role to play in advancing this interest.

The Fourth Gospel and the Household of God

The recent scholarly study of the Fourth Gospel has done much to trace the Gospel's evident interest in a household theme. The present chapter will first consider the household theme in the Gospel of John by (1) giving as precise a definition of a first-century household as

[1] The secondary nature of John 12:8 will be argued in ch. 2, p. 95.

[2] The parentheses will be omitted from future references to "household," but here they are inserted as a reminder that, especially in the LXX and throughout the NT, the Greek terms οἶκος and οἰκία may refer to either a building where a household resides or the household itself (or both). The term *house* functions similarly in English.

can be provided[3] and (2) specifying in concrete terms the manner with which the Fourth Gospel reveals its interest in a household theme outside of John 12:1–7.

A Preliminary Caution

A word of caution is necessary before beginning. The specific circumstances of first-century households are difficult to ascertain today; even if we possessed adequate knowledge, we should not make sweeping generalizations about the intentions of authors concerning the households they describe. Several points are relevant. Recent research on the topic has demonstrated that first-century families and their dependents lived in a variety of concrete circumstances according to their lifestyle and socioeconomic status.[4] The laws and customs prevailing in traditional Jewish households and non-Jewish Hellenistic households sometimes differed from one household to another.[5] The best we can do today is generalize about what households were like and how persons of the first-century likely conceived of them. Though the documents we have today are of great value in piecing together first-century households, these

[3] This definition will be on the basis of texts which are external yet roughly contemporary to the Fourth Gospel, that is, written material and archeological evidence of the first-century CE that elucidates a first-century understanding of households. The limitation of such material for a historical recreation of first-century documents will be noted (see further this page).

[4] Note, for example, the variety of Mediterranean dwellings and the customs surrounding their use described by Michael Trainor, *The Quest for Home: The Household in Mark's Community* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2001), 20–34. One may add to this discussion the variety of customs associated with nomadic tent-dwelling and those associated with the more permanent houses of city-dwellers. See Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (trans. John McHugh; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961), 19–23.

[5] For example, there were likely distinctions between the customs of women in traditional Jewish households and those in households more greatly influenced by Greco-Roman culture; see Kathleen E. Corley, *Private Women, Public Meals: Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993), 68. For differences in the inheritance rights of women and their impact on households, see Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and Household Churches* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 57. Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 41, differentiates between Greek and Roman divisions of public and private space in the first-century home.

documents do not provide an adequate historical "re-creation."[6] Moreover, we must be cautious in our use of material that either predates or is subsequent to the first century CE. Though we recognize the importance of earlier literary and religious texts for people in the first century, these must be used sparingly, only in instances that either support or throw a potential light on the prevailing view of first-century households. Rabbinical works and biblical commentary produced by the early church fathers are generally dated to the second century or later, and so these will not be considered. No matter how the first-century household is ultimately understood, it is important to admit our present distance and to exercise care in forming conclusions, especially with regard to how the household theme might have been utilized by the evangelist of the Fourth Gospel.

What, then, is the goal of the present study in examining the household theme? We want to ascertain the first-century context as best we can so as to interpret and apply the Fourth Gospel meaningfully for twenty-first-century readers.[7] Understanding the first-century context will help us to recognize household imagery found throughout the Fourth Gospel. Where data from various literary sources and archeological evidence from the first-century Mediterranean world converge, a general picture of the first-century household can be discerned. The present study will focus on the characteristics and terminology of such households that appear to elucidate the Fourth Gospel, enriching a reading of the Gospel that seeks to understand the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection.[8] Once we recognize the theological connotations of the household

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[6] Trainor, *Quest,* 37–38, describes the limitations of the extant literature from the first century for reconstructing first-century households, due both to the gender bias of such writings and their tendency to reflect the specific concerns of the social elite.

[7] "Reader" will be used throughout this study to indicate all who receive the Gospel, whether orally or in literary form.

[8] Regarding the use of data from first-century manuscripts to elucidate the Fourth Gospel for people today, see Jan G. Van der Watt, *Family of the King: Dynamics of Metaphor in the Gospel according to John* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 162–65

concept in the Fourth Gospel, we will be better able to interpret the Gospel for readers today. The household metaphor was meaningful for most first-century readers, but this is not the case for most readers today who may be inclined either to overlook or ignore this imagery. In some instances, other metaphors besides "household" (e.g., "community") will be helpful to convey the theological significance of first-century household imagery.

Not everything about first-century households is foreign to present-day readers. Like families today, first-century families intermarried, raised children, worshiped, worked, played together, ate meals together, and grieved their dead. Then as now, the family offered companionship and community for those within its compass. The concept of family has certain universalities that make it recognizable for all people, regardless of time and place. Although there are broad differences even among families of the twenty-first century, the family imagery of the New Testament continues to resonate with a wide spectrum of readers today.[9]

Four Proposed Characteristics of First-Century Households

What would have been particularly defining about the household concept for people of the first century? Four characteristics can be briefly summarized. First, the father [10] defined the reality of the first-century household. Second, the household typically encompassed more than

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[9] However, many families especially in the postindustrial West tend to value the rights of the individual over the needs of the group as a whole. In contrast, first-century households of the Mediterranean world were composed of people whose identity and core values were not defined primarily by each individual, but rather by the group; this family structure is often termed "dyadic." See Karl Olav Sandnes, "Equality within Patriarchal Structures: Some New Testament Perspectives on the Christian Fellowship as a Brother- or Sisterhood and a Family," in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (ed. Halvor Moxnes; New York: Routledge, 1997), 154.

[10] The head of the household is variously described in all the literature under consideration (e.g., ראש, אב, πατήρ, οἰκοδεσπότης, *paterfamilias*, etc.). Usage of specific terms to encompass concepts held by various groups over a period of centuries will at times be necessarily anachronistic. The present study finds the concept "father" to be the most helpful for describing the head of the household in relational terms, and will reserve the term *paterfamilias* to describe the legal or property rights of one who is not a dependent in the household of another. See Carolyn Osiek and Margaret Y. Macdonald, *A Woman's Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 154.

the limited nuclear or even extended family relationships familiar to readers today; households of the first century CE often included cohabiting adult children, grandchildren, in-laws, and, in cases in which the family was wealthy or prominent, servants/slaves or "clients."[11] Third, because households were concerned with lineage and might have traced their origins to a patriarch who was no longer living, the household concept could apply to relationships spanning several generations and extending beyond immediate physical dwellings. Indeed, households were frequently defined in such a way that the "father" of the household was a revered ancestor, and the household concept could incorporate entire nations or tribes.[12] And finally, though households are to be distinguished from dwelling places, the two concepts are closely related, and in rare instances either or both may be signified by their equivalents in either Greek (οἶκος, οἰκία) or Hebrew/Aramaic (בַּיִת).[13]

In support of this four-part understanding of the first-century household, the present study will now examine appropriate nonbiblical documents as well as biblical sources. Each of the characteristics of a household as described above will be explored in greater detail. As a result, we will describe the extent to which each pertains not only to (1) the everyday characteristics of first-century households but also to both (2) the everyday characteristics of households in the

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[11] Thus, a household included those who received help or favors from friends or benefactors. Cf. Colin G. Kruse, *The Gospel according to John: An Introduction and Commentary* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 328. Regarding the distinction between the first-century understanding of "household" and the modern institution of the family, see especially Moxnes, *Putting Jesus*, 28–29; and Roger W. Gehring, *House Church and Mission: The Importance of Household Structures in Early Christianity* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2005), 8.

[12] Regarding the relationship often defined by sociologists or anthropologists as "kinship," see Halvor Moxnes, "What Is Family? Problems in Constructing Early Modern Families," in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Families as Social Reality and Metaphor* (ed. Halvor Moxnes; New York: Routledge, 1997), 15.

[13] The present study will proceed by interpreting οἶκος and οἰκία as either "household" or "house." While taking a specific interest in understanding passages that have to do with households, this study will nevertheless attempt to understand the significance of any houses in passages where they might elucidate an interest in a household theme.

biblical narrative and (3) household in Israel's faith and hope. This will support the conclusion that (4) the Gospel of John has an evident interest in a similar theme.

The Everyday Characteristics of First-Century Households. Each of the four characteristics of a household described above is to be found in the everyday characteristics of first-century households outside the biblical narrative. We will now consider examples from the extant literature from the period in question in order to demonstrate how the household concept was understood in specific instances.

First, it was especially the father who defined the reality of a household for people in the first century. People of antiquity generally had a high regard for the role of both parents who were to rule their households with authority and care for their children as best they could (Philo, *Spec. Laws* 2.226–33; Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 1.1.6–7[14]; cf. Sir 3:1–16; Plato, *Leg.* 3.690a; Aristotle, *Pol.* 1259b). But a strong patriarchal and androcentric orientation in antiquity[15] meant that the father was the sole owner of the household (Philo, *Spec. Laws* 2.24–25, 30–31; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 2.10.7; cf. Andocides, *Myst.* 1.117–19).[16] In the absence of a father or upon his death, others (Jdt 8:1–8, 16:21–25; Plutarch, *Ti. C. Gracch.* 1.4–5), especially eldest sons (1 Macc 2:65; Josephus, *Ant.* 20.24), would serve the household in the father's place. The importance of the father may be further elaborated by the great disparity between the legal rights of the *paterfamilias* and other household members, particularly wives and daughters. A woman's legal rights, especially her ability to hold property, were greatly proscribed, if indeed they existed at

[14] Regarding the reference, see Osiek and Macdonald, *A Woman's Place,* 84.

[15] For examples of the trend, see the extensive references listed in Gottlob Schrenk and Gottfried Quell, "πατήρ," *TDNT* 5:948–82.

[16] See Van der Watt, *Family*, 204–6. Regarding the *paterfamilias* as owner of all household property (and so chief provider for all the needs of the household), see also Richard P. Saller, *Patriarchy, Property and Death in the Roman Family* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 155.

all (cf. Lysias, *Speeches* 32.14–18[17]; Andocides, *Speeches* 1.117–19). Children unassociated with a *paterfamilias* may have actually been considered "orphaned," even if their mothers were still living (Josephus, *J.W.* 1.556–58; cf. Euripides, *Suppliants* 1132–35[18]). Proper care for fatherless children and the ongoing maintenance of a household that had lost a *paterfamilias* were understood to be possible only if a widowed mother remarried. Though the role of both parents in caring for, loving, and raising the children of the household was emphasized, the male-oriented world of the first century generally highlighted the father as the determinant figure for the household.

Second, first-century households differed from most households of the twenty-first century in that they could include people who cohabited with what we would consider to be the nuclear family unit (that is, a family comprised of a father, mother, and their sons and daughters who have not yet come of age.) The extended first-century family typically included in-laws (Tob 10:12) and could also include other dependents, such as grandparents, uncles/aunts, or nieces/nephews (cf. Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.7.1–2).[19] Families could also include servants and slaves, though this tended to be the province of governors or royalty (Plautus, *Capt.*; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.203–7[20]; cf. Aristotle, *Pol.* 1255b).

Third, the first-century household concept was employed to describe communities actually comprised of multiple household units, that is, tribes or other social groupings that shared a

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[17] See Sarah B. Pomeroy, Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity (New York: Schocken, 1995), 63.

[18] Ibid., 111, points out that fatherless children whose mothers were still living are described by Euripides as "orphans."

[19] Cf. Santiago Guijarro, "The Family in First-Century Galilee," in *Constructing Early-Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (ed. Halvor Moxnes; New York.: Routledge, 1997), 50–52.

[20] As the citation from Josephus demonstrates, at least wealthy Jews or ruling families among the Jews held slaves in the first century. Cf. J. Duncan M. Derrett, "The Parable of the Profitable Servant," in *Midrash, the Composition of Gospels, and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 158.

common ancestor.[21] Ancestors were revered, so in certain cases a patriarch (a "father" now deceased) defined an ethnic group as a "household," though later fathers related by blood to the first would further the tribe's identity (1 Macc 2:54; Josephus, *Ant.* 14.255; cf. Hom., *Od.* 24.508). Households could make up an entire nation or clan (Philo, *Spec. Laws* 2.128; Tob 4:12; Appian, *Bel. Civ.* 2.127). Kingdoms too were often conceived in household terms (Polyb., *Histories* 2.37.7; Josephus, *J.W.* 6.350; cf. Herodotus, *Hist.* 5.31.4).

Finally, for first-century households, the term "house" (οἶκος/οἰκία) designated either the place of a household's residing, its persons, or both.[22] On occasion, the same Greek vocable (οἶκος) depicted either a dwelling place or a family (compare οἶκον ἱκάνεται and οἶκον κήδεσκον in Hom., *Od.* 23.7). But especially in the case of a royal "house," it is not always clear if the dwelling place or the family is the intended focus in literature from the first century (Philo, *In. Flacc.* 35; Josephus, *Ant.* 17.142; Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 17.35.3).

The Everyday Characteristics of Households in the Biblical Narrative. How do the four characteristics of first-century households manifest themselves in the biblical narrative, especially with regard to ordinary households? While some minor distinctions may be made, the attributes detailed above are quite apparent in the biblical narrative, especially the biblical narrative composed in the period that would have been roughly contemporaneous with the Fourth Gospel.

In the Bible the father is portrayed as the dominant figure in a household, identified as the provider and protector as well as the sole owner of property (Luke 11:11–13; 15:11, 30). Fathers, as the bearers of seed/descendants, were viewed as determinative of the household, especially in the context of the Old Testament (Heb 7:10; cf. Gen 15:2–7; Deut 1:8; Josh 24:3). It was the

[21] Cf. BDAG, s.v. οἶκος, 3; LSJ, s.v. οἶκος, III.

[22] See BDAG, s.v. οἰκία, 3.

father who passed on the blessing of the household (Heb 11:20–21; 12:17; cf. Gen 27:4–40; 28:1; 44:8–22; Prov 1:8; 2:1).[23] The householder (οἰκοδεσπότης) was one who administered servants and slaves and oversaw the household's livelihood (Matt 13:24–30; 20:1–16; Luke 14:16–24). Though the legal rights of women, both wives and daughters, might have changed between the Old and New Testament eras, the ability of women to inherit only in conjunction with other male household members in the Old Testament (e.g., uncles, Num 36:1–12; Josh 17:4) reflects the prevailing custom found throughout the Mediterranean world in the first century. In the absence or death of a father, others needed to function in the capacity of the *paterfamilias,* for without a *paterfamilias* the ability for family members to hold and manage property was infringed (Matt 21:38; Mark 12:7; Luke 20:14; cf. Gen 27:1–40; 1 Macc 2:65).[24]

Households in the biblical narrative are also comprised of more than just the nuclear family. Again, the family typically included in-laws (Mark 1:30; cf. Matt 10:35–36; Gen 7:1), grandchildren (1 Tim 5:4), and other dependents (cf. Gen 12:1, 5; 29:13–14; 2 Sam 9:6–13). In the biblical narrative we find that wealthier families employ clients or hold slaves and these are considered part of the household. Though such people were under the authority of the *paterfamilias* and at times depicted as victims of injustice (1 Pet 2:18–20; cf. Gen 39:1–20), in Jewish households male slaves were circumcised as were any ordinary members of the family (cf. Gen 17:12–13, 27; Exod 12:44) and could even become an heir of the household or be adopted as a member of the family (Gal 4:22–31; cf. Gen 15:3; 16:1–2; 30:3–5, 9; Prov 17:2).

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[23] This patriarchal orientation is evident in the way that primarily fathers' and sons' names are listed in genealogies (Matt 1:2–16; Luke 3:23–38; cf. Gen 10:1–31; Num 1:2; Neh 12:1–24).

[24] In the Old Testament, the institution of levirate marriage required brothers to marry their widowed sisters-in-law (Gen 38:8; Deut 25:5–15; cf. Mark 12:18–27). Allowance was made for a kinsman-redeemer to provide for those who were without a household (Ruth 3:9; 4:1–6; Jer 32:8–12; Esther 2:6–7).

Biblical and nonbiblical narratives alike describe social groupings by way of the household concept. The communities in question are often comprised of multiple households when all share a common ancestor. The "household" of Israel is defined as all throughout the ages who have Abraham as their patriarch or "father" (Matt 1:1; 3:9; cf. Gen 18:19; Isa 41:8) and share in his blessing. Tribes and other endogamous groups in the biblical narrative extending across family lines are also conceived as households (Luke 2:4, 41–44; cf. Gen 24:37–38, 40; 28:1–2; Ruth 4:11). Even as a nomadic people wandering in the desert, Israel (cf. Exod 16:31) is conceived as a household (nation and kingdom: Matt 10:5 –7) over against the opposing households of the Gentiles (cf. of Pharaoh, Gen 41:40). The Gentiles are defined by fathers other than Abraham (cf. Gen 19:37–38).

In the biblical narrative the term "house" is designated as the everyday places where the household resides, the persons of the household, or both. In several passages of Scripture, whether a household or a house is indicated is difficult to judge (Phil 4:22; cf. Gen 24:40; 46:31; 47:12; Exod 12:3; Num 1:2; Josh 2:12–13; Judg 6:15; 9:18; 16:31; 1 Sam 22:16; 2 Sam 14:9; 1 Chron 8:24). There is even one case where "house" appears to refer to both a place and a group of people simultaneously (Matt 10:12).[25] Though "dwelling place" and "household members" are distinct ideas, a close association exists between the two, as will be pointed out below.[26]

The Household Concept in Israel's Faith and Hope.[27] We now turn our attention from the everyday characteristics of households in the first century to Israel's manner of understanding such a construct in specifically theological terms, an especially important focus

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[25] Cf. BDAG, s.v. οἰκία, 3.

[26] Cf. p. 15, and in regards to John 1:11 and 19:27, pp. 22–25.

[27] The term "Israel" for the present study refers to (1) the elect of Yahweh and those who confess Yahweh as the one true God prior to the time of Jesus, and (2) in the first century, followers of Jesus Christ, both Gentile and Jew.

for understanding the Fourth Gospel and its evident interest in the household theme. In the New Testament especially, we find that the four characteristics of first-century households pertain. However, as we investigate the theological application of the household concept it will still be important to examine exactly how this imagery functioned. Just because household imagery was used to define God and God's people does not mean that all of the biblical narrative about everyday households necessarily applies to what the people of God confessed or understood about God or their new relationship with each other in Christ.[28]

For households in Israel's faith and hope, God is "Father." Once again, "household" is determined by the person and significance of the provider, protector, and life-giver of the household (Matt 6:8, 26, 32; 2 Thess 2:16; cf. Isa 64:7–8; Jer 31:9; Mal 2:10; Sir 23:1; Philo, *Leg.* 1.14). The relationship between God and humanity as defined reflects the androcentric and patriarchal mores of people in the first century. At the same time, however, God as heavenly Father is distinguished from earthly fathers in giving perfect love and eternal consolation (2 Thess 2:16; cf. Jer 31:3).[29] Israel's God ("God our Father") or "God" (the Father of all) is father to believers because he is the father of Jesus Christ his son, with whom believers claim relationship (Matt 6:9; Gal 4:6–7; Eph 2:13–19). "Heavenly Father" implies perfect fatherhood (cf. Matt 23:8–10); the Father in heaven is exalted yet near.[30]

Jesus, as Son of the "Father," is one in a unique relationship with the Father who concretely manifests his life-giving work. Thus "household" for the new people of God is ultimately understood in light of Jesus' person and work. By virtue of Jesus' unique relationship with the Father, he is one who has been entrusted by the Father with "all" (Matt 11:27; 17:5;

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[28] For a similar treatment of the underlying household concept in the letters of Paul, see Sandnes, "Equality," 151.

[29] In rare instances the biblical sources employ feminine imagery to convey this aspect of God. Cf. Isa 66:13.

[30] See Schrenk and Quell, "πατήρ," *TDNT* 5:1005.

Mark 9:7; Luke 1:35). Jesus manifests the loving-kindness of the Father for his own, for he gives up his own life on the cross (cf. Eph 5:23, 25, 29–30; cf. Hos 11:1–11). Through his death and resurrection, Jesus overcomes even those things that would inhibit the mission of those whom he sends (Matt 28:17–18).

The church is defined in relation to its Father in heaven and those who deliver the life-giving Word of the Father to their brothers and sisters in Christ, even as it is identified in terms of a new egalitarianism reflected in the language of "brother" and "sister" (Acts 13:26; Rom 16:1; 1 Cor 7:15). The Father and giver of life is God alone, despite the fact that Paul uses "father language" to describe his relationship to churches that he calls to obedience (1 Thess 2:11; 1 Cor 4:14–16) and refers to individuals he has nurtured and worked with as his own "children" (Onesimus, Philemon 10; Timothy; 1 Cor 4:17 and Phil 2:22; Titus, Titus 1:4).[31] Paul's purpose is not to establish himself in theological terms as a stand-in or representative of the heavenly Father. Rather, Paul is at pains to perform a perlocutionary task: to have his readers identify his own integrity on behalf of the Gospel (1 Thess 2:10–11), accept his words in the right spirit (1 Cor 4:14), and receive those whom he sends (1 Cor 4:17; Phil 2:22; Philemon 10–12). In the process, Paul's use of father language serves as a reminder that the apostle's proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings to life those who hear it (1 Cor 4:15). In the age that followed the earthly ministry of Jesus, without this work of the apostles, there could be no other way for people to believe (Rom 10:14–7) and so be gathered into the household of the heavenly Father.

Father imagery is not the only way that God and God's relationship with the heavenly

[31] Paul consistently addresses the recipients of his letters as "brothers" (cf. the above passages in light of 1 Thess 2:1, 9, 14, 17; 1 Cor 4:6; Phil 1:12; 3:1; Philemon 16). Moreover, in illustrating his care and self-sacrifice for the churches to which he wrote, Paul seems comfortable drawing on other household language (a wet nurse or nursing mother, 1 Thess 2:7; cf. Eph 5:29; a woman in labor, Gal 4:19).

household is depicted. Members of the house of Israel, regardless of gender, had been depicted as the symbolic "bride" of Yahweh before the time of Jesus (cf. Hos 2:7–10, 19–20; Isa 54:4–8; 62:5; Jer 2:2; Ezek 16:8–14). Bridegroom imagery is used throughout the New Testament to describe Jesus, the one to whom the bride, his church, is now joined and enjoys fellowship with the Father (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:23–27: Rev 19:7–8; 21:2; 22:17).[32] Similarly, the people of God, both men and women, had already been referred to as "sons of God" prior to the first century (Deut 14:1; Hos 11:1; cf. Exod 4:22–23).[33] This same expression is particularly important in the New Testament era and now refers to all who have been freed from the enslaving power of sin and receive the Spirit of God. "Sons" of God now enjoy a household relationship with the Father by virtue of Jesus, his Son (Rom 8:14–17; Gal 4:6–7; cf. 2 Cor 6:18). They live in a way that manifests their relationship with their heavenly Father, both now (Matt 5:44–45) and in the age to come (Luke 6:35). The more expansive term "children of God," at least for Paul, flows out of this usage (cf. Rom 8:15–17). Though the term "sons of God" is most often used as a synecdoche to refer to all the people of God, it can also occur in tandem with references to daughters of God (2 Cor 6:18; cf. Isa 43:6; Wis 9:7).

The singular term "son," though it had earlier referred to the king of Israel (2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:7; 89:26–27; 2 Esd 7:28–29; cf. Matt 26:63; Mark 14:61) and Israel as a nation (Exod 4:22; Jer 31:20; Hos 11:1; Wis 18:13), in the New Testament era is applied to Jesus Christ in a radically new way. Jesus, the Son of God, is the promised Messiah. But through Jesus, the reign of God entered human history in a way that it had never done before (Matt 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 12:28; Mark 1:15; Luke 8:1; 10:9–11; 11:20; 17:21; 18:16). Like Israel's prior, ordinary kings, Jesus as Son

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[32] Cf. the parables of Jesus, where Jesus depicts himself as bridegroom and his followers as guests attending the wedding feast (Matt 22:1–14; 25:1–13; Mark 2:19–20).

[33] See Matthew Vellanickal, *The Divine Sonship of Christians in the Johannine Writings* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1977), 10–11, 26–27.

of God is subordinate to the Father and must obey the Father's will (Matt 20:23; Mark 13:32; Eph 1:17; Heb 3:2). The difference is that according to Jesus' perfect obedience to the Father, he honors the Father in a way that an obedient son of the first century, not merely a servant, was expected to do (Heb 3:2–6).

Whereas the language of sonship emphasizes the relationship of God's people to the Father, other household terminology highlights the call to obedience and faithfulness of householders and those who serve the household. Variations of the term "servant" and "slave" are distinguished by plural and singular usage. Slaves and tenants of the household are given charge over the affairs of the house until the Lord's return (Matt 24:44–51; 25:18–30; Mark 13:34; Luke 12:32–40, 43–48; 19:11–27). All God's people are such servants and slaves, for they are members of his household and are empowered to serve God (1 Cor 7:22–23; Eph 6:9; Col 4:1; 1 Pet 2:16 –17; cf. Isa 56:6–7). Still, some in particular are singled out as such, or use this terminology about themselves so as to be distinguished as servants chosen and sent by God or Christ to be faithful to his message, rather than to suit the whims of people (Gal 1:10; Jam 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1; cf. Josh 14:7; Judg 2:8; Ps 89:3; 105:42).

Again, in Israel's faith and hope, the household concept is used to describe communities comprised of multiple individual households when all share a common relation noted for exemplifying right relationship with the Father. Patriarchs are more than blood ancestors—they are models of godly living and people to whom God has demonstrated his mercy. Abraham is the archetypical father of faith (Rom 4:12; Gal 3:6–7; Heb 11:8–12; cf. 4 Macc 16:20; 17:6). Jesus, though he is neither patriarch nor blood relation, calls many who are gathered to him brother, sister, or mother. He himself is one to whom multiple households are joined (Matt 10:24–25; 12:46–50; Mark 3:34–35; 10:28–29; Luke 8:19–21; 19:1–10), while others refuse him (Matt

23:37–39; Luke 13:34–35). Still other people would later be added to the community that gathers around Jesus (Mark 2:14; 10:46–52; Luke 8:3). Though the Gentiles were by race distinct from Israel and originally not set apart by God as an elect people, they are nevertheless included in the blessing to be given to the household of Abraham and ultimately welcomed even into the house of God through faith in Christ (Luke 2:29–32; Acts 13:46–48; Rom 9:22–25; cf. Gen 12:3; Isa 49:22–23; 56:6–8).

Finally, in Israel's faith and hope, the term "house" can designate either the place of the household's residing, its persons, or both. The identity of God's household, the individual household of Israel, is closely related to the place where he causes his name to dwell, his "house" (Matt 12:4; 21:13; Mark 2:26; 11:17; Luke 11:51; 19:46; Acts 7:47, but cf. Acts 7:48–49; see also Deut 12:5–12; 14:22–27; 16:1–12; Neh 1:6; Jer 7:12). The metaphorical building of a house could accompany or signify the gathering of a household or community (Prov 9:1–6). This was especially true in the case of the Christian community (Eph 2:19–22; 1 Pet 2:5 [cf. 4:17]). It is not surprising that the Christian community is described more than once in terms that evoke the Jerusalem temple, or "house" of God (1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16; 1 Tim 3:15; Heb 3:1–6).

Households and the Household Concept in the Fourth Gospel

Having described the first-century household and demonstrated how this understanding of households manifests itself in both biblical and non-biblical first-century narrative, we now turn our attention to the specific circumstances of households and the household concept in the Fourth Gospel, especially as this concerns Jesus' gathering a new household of God. Though the phrase "household of God" appears nowhere in the Fourth Gospel, recent scholarly literature has done

much to point to the Gospel's evident interest in a household theme.[34] Both everyday households, as well as households defined in relationship to God and the life-giving work of Jesus Christ, God's Son, are referenced throughout the Fourth Gospel, as we shall see.

The Fourth Gospel demonstrates an interest in the ancient household theme through the repeated mention of such everyday households. Everyday fathers are referenced (4:53; 6:42; 8:19; cf. 9:18–23; 18:13). Everyday husbands and wives are depicted (2:9–10; 4:16–18), and everyday children, brothers, and sisters are described (1:42; 4:5, 46–47, 50; 7:1–5, 10; 9:19–20; 11:1, 3, 5; cf. 1:45). Jesus' mother is highlighted (2:1, 3, 5, 12; 6:42; 19:25–27) and, though he never appears in the narrative, the name of Jesus' earthly adoptive father is invoked by those who seek to understand Jesus' origins (1:45; 6:42). Everyday household members outside the biological family unit are mentioned too. Servants (διακόνος, 2:4, 9; cf. 12:2) and slaves (δοῦλος, 4:51; 18:10, 18, 26) enter the narrative. Tasks that imply similar acts of service within the household context are either alluded to or narrated (e.g., the washing of feet, 13:6, 8; the giving of water to drink, 4:9[35]). Everyday "households" comprised of multiple households sharing a common ancestor emerge with particular clarity during Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman (4:12) and his debate with "the Jews" occurring during the Feast of Tabernacles (7:42;

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[34] Cf. James McCaffrey, *The House with Many Rooms: The Temple Theme of John 14:2–3* (Rome: Editrice Pontifico Istituto Biblico, 1988); Van der Watt, *Family*; Mary Coloe, *God Dwells with Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2001); and Alan R. Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus' Body: The Temple Theme in the Gospel of John* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002). Other studies based on unifying themes related to the Gospel's household theme include Vellanickal, *Divine Sonship*; Adeline Fehribach, *The Women in the Life of the Bridegroom: A Feminist-Historical Literary Analysis of the Female Characters in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1998); and Sjef Van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love in John* (BibInt 2; Leiden: Brill, 1993).

[35] In addition to the service rendered in giving water for another person to drink, the sharing of vessels required for such service implies an everyday household relationship at the tribal or national level. Regarding the translation of συγχράομαι as "co-using" (of vessels for food and drink), see Teresa Okure, *The Johannine Approach to Mission: A Contextual Study of John 4:1–42* (WUNT 2/31; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1988), 93–96, citing David Daube, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman: The Meaning of συγχράομαι," *JBL* 69 (1950): 137–47.

8:33, 39, 53, 56). Jesus' own countrymen (1:11)[36] and people of his homeland (4:44) are referenced. Similarly, everyday households in the Fourth Gospel can incorporate not only individual household units, but several households simultaneously: for example, Jerusalem and those called "the Jews" (1:19; 2:13; 4:20–22; 5:1; 7:2–3, 10; 10:22–24; 11:7–8, 54) and Samaria and the Samaritans (with each claiming a connection to the same father, 4:12; see also 4:9, 39–42). When it comes to the manner in which the Fourth Gospel uses the Greek vocable οἰκία in association with an everyday household (used to illustrate something about the household of faith), there is one case in which the vocable can signify either a place of residence or the members of the household themselves (8:35).[37]

Everyday households in the Fourth Gospel can be said to form the backdrop for the new community that is gathered through the life-giving work of Jesus. Jesus Christ himself is the bridge between the new community and the heavenly household.[38] The relationship between

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[36] See this chapter, nn. 53 and 54.

[37] Compare, for example, the translation of McCaffrey, *House*, 178, with that of BDAG, s.v. οἰκία, 1.a. The present study understands the emphasis in John 8:35 not to be one of location but of relationship, and so translates οἰκία as "household," not "house." For a similar understanding, see Coloe, *God Dwells*, 161, and her citation of Robert Gundry, "'In My Father's House Are Many Μοναί' (John 14:2)," *ZNW* 58 (1967): 71. The vocable could also function as a double entendre. See Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003), 1:752; and BDAG, s.v. οἰκία, 3.

[38] A good example of how everyday households form the backdrop for membership in the heavenly household can be seen in Jesus' healing of the royal official's son, the second sign of Jesus, in John 4:43–54. A royal official requests Jesus' healing for his son (4:47, 53) and believes Jesus when told that his son will live (4:50). Later, when servants of the household (4:51) bring word that the boy revived at precisely the moment Jesus spoke these words, the official is once again said to have believed, together with the members of his entire household (ἡ οἰκία αὐτοῦ ὅλη, 4:53). Though the household in question begins as an everyday household, through Jesus' sign the focus shifts to the words of Jesus as life-giving (cf. 5:24; 6:63) and to the new community, united by faith in Jesus, that such words effect. The express mention of this believing household at the end of the second sign of Jesus in Cana recalls the similar ending of Jesus' first sign, performed at the Cana wedding (2:11). Regarding the pattern of entire households believing as the result of hearing the Gospel proclamation that the Fourth Gospel shares with other New Testament passages, see Rudolph Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (ed. R. W. N. Hoare et al.; trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 208; Donald A. Carson, *The Gospel according to St. John* (Pillar New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991), 239; John Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah: The History, Literature and Theology of the Johannine Community* (2d ed.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 210; and Yu Ibuki, *Yohane fukuinshoh chuhkai* [Gospel of John Commentary] (Kommentar zum Johannesevangelium; Tokyo: Chizenshokan, 2004), 249. The gathering of a household through Jesus' gift of life, a theme echoed later in the Fourth Gospel, is in evidence here. For a comparison of Jesus' interactions with the

Father and Son is the heart of the heavenly household and the new community of those who believe in Jesus. This household is poignantly distinguished from Jesus' blood brothers and fellow Jews who do not accept Jesus as the One he testifies to be (cf. 4:44; 7:1–10; 8:37–42; 19:25–27).[39] Jesus himself and faith in Jesus as the One sent by the Father are the vehicles for people to be welcomed and gathered into the heavenly household (cf. 7:16–18, 28–29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42).

According to the faith and hope of God's people in the Fourth Gospel, the person and significance of the Father defines the household.[40] God is the ultimate Father. The Fourth Gospel contains twice the number of references to "father" as any of the synoptic Gospels, and almost all of these are in reference to (1) God, who is first and foremost the Father of Jesus Christ (1:14, 18; 2:16; 3:35; etc.) and (2) the Father of those who believe in Jesus' name (1:11–12; 20:17). Ultimately, physical descent from a father ancestor (cf. "our fathers," 4:19) is not the essential

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households of Capernaum and Bethany in John 11–12, see Mary Coloe, "Households of Faith (Jn 4:46–54; 11:1–44): A Metaphor for the Johannine Community," *Pacifica* 13 (2000): 329.

[39] As we shall see (in this dissertation's fourth chapter especially), the new household of those who believe in Jesus is emphasized most dramatically at the cross of Jesus. Jesus provides for a new household in his absence, comprised of both his mother and the beloved disciple. This new household is surprising when considered in light of the first-century custom of the brother of the deceased caring for a surviving mother. But the passage illustrates that faith, not ordinary kinship, is the standard for membership in the new household gathered through Jesus' death. Through Jesus' death, his own have now become his brothers and children of the heavenly Father (cf. 20:17; 21:23). Cf. Charles K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1960), 552; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John* (2 vols; AB 29; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966–70), 2:926–27; Mark W. G. Stibbe, *John as Storyteller: Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 163; Craig R. Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community* (2d ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 2002), 241. Bruce G. Schuchard, "The Wedding Feast at Cana and the Christological Monomania of St. John," in *All Theology Is Christology: Essays in Honor of David P. Scaer* (ed. Dean O. Wenthe et al.; Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 2000), 104, argues that the designation of Jesus' disciples as brothers at his first resurrection appearance is already foreshadowed at the cross, where, in Jesus' absence, the beloved disciple (not the brothers of Jesus) is chosen to care for his mother. See also 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 Press, 1992), 131 n. 30; and Martin Hengel, "The Interpretation of the Wine Miracle in Cana: John 2:1–11," in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology in Memory of George Bradford Caird* (ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright; Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 103.

[40] For a very helpful discussion of the emphasis within the Fourth Gospel on God the Father as head of the household, see Van der Watt, *Family,* 204–6.

matter; rather, relationship with "the Father" in Spirit and truth is essential (4:23–24). Though Jesus is never referred to as "father" in any of the Johannine corpus, his uniqueness and likeness to the Father before his incarnation (1:1–2, 18; 17:5, 24), as well as his ability to speak the words of God and perform the works of his Father during his earthly ministry (3:34–35; 5:17–18, 21; 10:30, 37; 14:7–11; 15:23; 20:28; cf. 8:58), are emphasized. Old Testament allusions throughout the Fourth Gospel drive the point home. The Prologue, for example, emphasizes that Jesus has come to "take up residence [ἐσκήνωσεν][41] among us" (1:14; cf. Rev 7:15; 21:3) and that "we have beheld his glory" (1:14). The verb σκηνόω may seem of little significance, but together with the evangelist's emphasis on the "glory" of the Word, who is "full of grace and truth" (1:14), the focus is on Yahweh's first dwelling among those who were a household to him (Exod 24:16; 25:9; 26:1–35; Num 9:17–22; Deut 12:5, 11; 16:2, 6, 11; 1 Kgs 6:13; Isa 8:18; cf. his promise to one day dwell among his new household again in Ezek 43:7, 9; Zech 8:3; and Rev 21:2–3; cf. 21:9). The word evokes a picture of theophany that is akin to that at Sinai (Exod 33:18–34:8)[42] and the tabernacle (Exod 40:34–38),[43] the preview of the glory revealed in the Jerusalem temple which the Fourth Gospel also associates with Jesus (1 Kgs 8:10–11; Isa 6:1 [LXX]; cf. John 12:37–41).[44] The heavenly Father, and Jesus who reveals the Father and gathers the Father's household, is opposed by another father and household, though the Fourth Gospel never suggests

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[41] See BDAG, s.v. σκηνόω.

[42] For the view that Exod 34 is echoed in the words of John 1:14–18, see especially Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (New Century Bible Commentary, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1972; repr., 1982), 95; Craig Evans, *Word and Glory: On the Exegetical and Theological Background of John's Prologue* (JSNTSupp 89; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 79 n. 2; Craig R. Koester, *The Dwelling of God: The Tabernacle in the Old Testament, Intertestamental Jewish Literature, and the New Testament* (CBQMS 22; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1989), 104; Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John: A Theological Commentary* (trans. John Vriend; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 57; and Kerr, *Temple*, 119–21.

[43] See, among others, Rudolph Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John* (ed. Serafin de Ausejo et al.; trans. Kevin Smyth et al.; 3 vols.; HTKNT 4; New York: Seabury, 1968–82), 1:269; McCaffrey, *House*, 239 n. 68; Koester, *Dwelling of God*, 102; Coloe, *God Dwells*, 23, 26; and Kerr, *Temple*, 122.

[44] Cf. Barrett, *Gospel*, 166; Schnackenburg, *Gospel*, 1:269; McCaffrey, *House*, 238–39; and Johan Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology* (JSNTSup 160; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 155–58.

that such opposition is between equals. John describes a household that contends with that of the Father and Son, a household with the devil as its father (8:44; cf. 6:70).

At the same time that Jesus is demonstrated to be one with the Father, he is distinguished from the Father and from the people of God by his status as the only Son of the Father.[45] In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is never referred to as "child" (τέκνον), as believers or followers of Christ sometimes are (1:12; 11:52), but rather as "son" (υἱός, as, e.g., in 1:34, 49; 3:17, 35–36; 5:19–26; 6:40; 10:36; 11:4, 27; 14:13; 17:1; 19:7; 20:31) or "one and only" (μονογενής, 1:14; cf. 3:16, 18). His sonship emphasizes his obedience to the Father and reception of all that the Father has entrusted to him and taught him[46] (3:35; 5:19–20, 26; 6:37; 8:28; 10:18, 29; 12:49–50; 13:3; 14:31). Moreover, Jesus' status as son of the household distinguishes him from those whose status is that of slaves or servants. He has a unique relationship with the Father. As son of the household, he sets slaves to sin free (8:34–35). His work of gathering a new household to the Father is emphasized through allusions to his status of "bridegroom," already indicated during

[45] Jesus elucidates the nature of his membership in the household of the Father in John 5. His status as "Son" of the Father is not to be understood primarily according to the customary messianic referent for the title, "Son of God." Rather, as Son of the Father, Jesus is both one with the Father (5:18) and subordinate to him, doing his will (5:19). A helpful discussion of the important theological issues involved in the Father/Son imagery (John 5:19– 30) following Jesus' healing of the paralytic is given by Michael Waldstein, "The Mission of Jesus and the Disciples in John," *Communio (US)* 17 (1990): 312–18. Cf. also John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 318; and Koester, *Symbolism,* 91–94.

[46] On the education of the son by the father as an indication of a family relationship, see Van der Watt, *Family,* 206. Jesus, in speaking of himself as one who is sent, invokes language that has been identified in recent scholarly study of the Fourth Gospel as appropriate for a member of a household. The sent one could be understood as an envoy and so a slave of the household (cf. especially Juan Peter Miranda, *Die Sendung Jesu im vierten Evangelium: Religions- und theologie-geschichtliche Untersuchungen zu den Sendungsformeln* [SBS 87; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1977]). Others have emphasized, especially in light of (1) Jesus' repeated mention of himself in the Fourth Gospel as Son of the Father, and (2) the close association between the sending theme of the Fourth Gospel and other themes related to sonship (obedience [4:34; 5:19; 6:38; 8:28–29, 35; 10:17; 12:49; 15:10], filial subordination [8:35; 15:15], honor of the Father [7:18–19; 8:49–50, 54] and participation in the Father's possessions [3:35; 13:3]), that the one sent by the Father is in fact the Father's son. See especially the treatment of the recent scholarly literature by Andreas Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples according to the Fourth Gospel: With Implications for the Fourth Gospel's Purpose and the Mission of the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), 115–21; and Ashton, *Understanding*, 318–20. As a result, it may be argued that the terms "son" and "sent one/envoy" in the Fourth Gospel are not necessarily to be conceived in mutually exclusive terms.

the wedding at Cana (2:1–11)[47] and more clearly linked to Jesus by the Baptist in John 3:29.[48] After the death and resurrection of the son, the members of the household of God are privileged to even be called Jesus' "brothers" (20:17). Those who receive Jesus are given to become children of God, and God is their father too (1:11–12; 3:3, 5, 16; 11:52; 20:17). The gathering of a new household is described as composed of all who are begotten of God (1:12–13) and are born "from above" (ἄνωθεν; 3:3, 7).[49] Entry into this new household cannot be attained apart from faith in Jesus' name, which results in the authority of a new nexus of relationships given by Jesus.[50]

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[47] Not long before the Baptist's reference to Jesus as bridegroom in the Fourth Gospel, an ordinary bridegroom at Cana is credited by the wedding steward for the new wine that the wedding guests enjoy (2:9–10). The irony is not lost on the reader, who knows that the wine is the result of Jesus' instructions to the servants of the household and that Jesus himself is in fact responsible for providing the wine (2:9). Dramatic irony results from the wedding steward's assumption that the wine was provided by "the bridegroom" and his reaction to the wine, which the reader knows has actually been provided by Jesus. Cf. Birger Olsson, *Structure and Meaning in the Fourth Gospel: A Text-Linguistic Analysis of John 2:1–11 and 4:1–42* (trans. Jean Gray; ConBNT 6; Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1974), 63; and R. Alan Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 131. For added commentary on the significance of the groom supplying wine at a wedding, see Bruce Malina and Richard Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 66. In conjunction with the wedding at Cana, Jesus' disciples see the glory of the Son, believe (2:11), and then dwell with Jesus and the rest of his household (Jesus' mother and brothers) in Capernaum (2:12). Regarding aspects of the episode that foreshadow the new household of God that Jesus will gather through his death, see Coloe, "Households of Faith," 328.

[48] For a helpful discussion, see Mathias Rissi, "Die Hochzeit in Kana Joh 2,1–11," in *Oikonomia: Heilsgeschichte als Thema der Theologie, Oscar Cullmann zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet* (ed. Felix Christ; Hamburg: Reich, 1967), 82–83. Those who see wedding imagery as a link between John 2:1–11 and 3:29 include Thomas L. Brodie, *The Gospel according to John: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 219–20; Rissi, "Hochzeit," 84; Koester, *Symbolism*, 186; and Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 103–5. Brown, *Gospel*, 1:156; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC 36; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 53; Francis Moloney, *The Gospel of John* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1998), 106; Van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love*, 76–77; Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 104; and Kruse, *John*, 121, argue that the disciples of Jesus are analogous to the Old Testament bride of Yahweh and see John the Baptist as one who facilitates the gathering of the bride to the bridegroom, Jesus.

[49] Various aspects of the passage all point the reader's attention to a multivalent sense of ἄνωθεν that suggests not only being born again but also being born *from above* by way of the Father's gift. See also John 3:31–32, which serves as a kind of commentary on John 3:5–15. Others who understand the primary sense of the multivalent term ἄνωθεν in Jesus' usage as "from above" include Schnackenburg, *Gospel*, 1:367–68; R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 155; Vellanickal, *Sonship*, 172; Dorothy Lee, *The Symbolic Narratives of the Fourth Gospel: The Interplay of Form and Meaning* (JSNTSup 95; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 49–52; Van der Watt, *Family*, 170–78; and Keener, *Gospel*, 1:537–39.

[50] Regarding the nature of the same as a gift that is given, see Ridderbos, *Gospel*, 46–47.

Elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus' mission, like the mission of those whom he sends, is elucidated by household imagery that describes slaves or the actions of slaves. Jesus is in actuality the disciples' teacher and lord; nevertheless, he demonstrates the nature of this lordship by taking on the form of a servant and washing his disciples' feet (13:2–10; cf. 13:15–16).[51] This action demonstrates the love of Jesus for his own, which would be most perfectly realized by his death on the cross (cf. 13:1), and symbolizes his welcome of his own into the household of the Father.[52] In turn, those who follow Jesus as servants (12:26) or slaves (13:16; 15:15, 20) are to do as their lord has done (though their similar action that imitates Jesus' washing of eschatological welcome is ongoing and so essentially different in significance from Jesus' once-and-for-all act of servanthood). They are not to be motivated by love of self and self-preservation (12:25), but are to love one another (13:34; 15:9–10, 12, 17) and to wash one another's feet (13:16–17).

In depicting a household according to the faith and hope of God's people, the Fourth Gospel also describes a household comprised of multiple households that gather around an ancestral Father or other major figure. Jesus is not only Son of the Father and Lord of his disciples; he is also Messiah and king of God's people. But it is important for the Fourth Gospel to distinguish in what manner this is to be understood. Jesus is not a king according to the everyday usage of that term (1:41, 49; 4:25–26; 6:15; 11:27; 18:33–37; 19:19–22; 20:31; cf. 10:16). His people, and so the households that are gathered to him and thus to the Father, are not comprised of one earthly nation or tribe. Jesus' kingdom is rather to be comprised of all who seek Jesus to receive him in faith. The household that he gathers comprises Jews (11:45; 12:11),

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[51] Matters pertaining to this portion of John 13 will be treated in Chapter 3.

[52] See John Christopher Thomas, *Footwashing in John Thirteen and the Johannine Community* (JSNTSup 61; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 31–40, 44–50; Arland Hultgren, "The Johannine Footwashing (13:1–11) as Symbol of Eschatological Hospitality," *NTS* 28 (1982): 541; and Mary Coloe, "Welcome into the Household of God: The Foot Washing in John 13," *CBQ* 66 (2004): 407–8, 411–15.

Samaritans (4:41–42), and Greeks (12:21).

Finally, we have seen how the term "house" can designate either the place where a household resides, the persons of the household, or both. In several portions of the Fourth Gospel, the close association between the people and place of a household are in evidence. The close association between the Greek vocables οἶκος and οἰκία is reflected in the neuter and masculine substantive forms of the word ἴδιος in the Prologue. In John 1:11, for example, we read that the true Light came to "the things of his own household,[53]" but "the people of his own household"[54] did not receive him. The emphasis is on the place and people of Jesus' earthly homeland, Israel. In the following chapter of the Fourth Gospel, a similar association between the place and people of a household emerges in the context of the Jerusalem temple (2:13–22). Regarding this text,

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[53] Possible meanings of the neuter substantive τὰ ἴδια in John 1:11a are (1) either fictive kinship or actual blood relations (people of one's household) or (2) home, either as a domicile or property/possession (cf. BDAG, s.v. ἴδιος, 4). The issue is complicated by whether the referent has more to do with what precedes verse 11 (either "the world" as a possession of Jesus, through whom it was created [1:10a], or "the world" as people who, though they were created through Jesus, did not recognize him [1:10b]), or else with what follows (Israel, either the home of Jesus during his earthly ministry or the people of promise [1:12–13]). For a detailed presentation of the problem, see Fernando F. Segovia, "John 1:1–18 as Entrée into Johannine Reality," in *Word, Theology, and Community in John* (ed. John Painter, R. Alan Culpepper, and Fernando F. Segovia; St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2002), 44. The problem is best solved by a consideration of the overall Gospel context. First, the neuter substantive indicates "home" or "the things of a household" elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel (10:4; 16:32; 19:27). John 16:32 and 19:27 particularly resemble John 1:11a, for in all three passages the vocable is used with the preposition εἰς. Together with literature from the Second Temple period (cf. Esth 5:10; 6:12; 3 Macc 7:8; *Ant.* 8.405, 416), these examples illustrate a use of the vocable to indicate physical movement to houses or homes. Only in John 15:19 does the neuter substantive clearly refer to the people of a household, but the masculine article of the variant reading (cf. $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$, 1241) indicates that the scribes were perplexed by this usage (the meaning of "home" or "property" would have probably been expected, and scribes were attempting to more faithfully render what they considered to be more correct Greek). Second, the Fourth Gospel clearly has an interest in demonstrating Jesus as rejected by the people of his homeland ("the Jews"; cf. 4:43–44) and by the members of his own family, for "even his own brothers did not believe in him" (7:5). No corresponding irony in the Fourth Gospel applies to the rejection of Jesus by the world, though it was created through him. Contrast Bultmann, *John*, 56; and Schnackenburg, *Gospel*, 1:256–61. Barrett, *Gospel*, 163, and Beasley-Murray, *John*, 12–13, acknowledge the possibility of an earlier form of the Prologue in which the reference to world as "property" might have been primary in John 1:11, yet conclude that in its present form within the Fourth Gospel the passage's focus is Israel, a people belonging to God (Isa 43:21). Brown, *Gospel*, 1:10; Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John* (rev. ed.; NICNT 4; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995), 85; and Ridderbos, *Gospel*, 44–45, emphasize the Prologue's continuity with the remainder of the Gospel and also consider the referent to John 1:11a to be Jesus' historic home, Israel. Ridderbos (p. 44) specifically translates τὰ ἴδια as "home."

[54] The Greek adjective ἴδιος is used as a masculine substantive in the Fourth Gospel to describe people in relationship to Jesus (1:11; 13:1). LSJ, s.v. ἴδιος, 1.4, identifies the masculine form of the substantive as "persons personally attached to one," including but not limited to persons who were "members of one's own family, relatives."

three points must be made. First, Jesus describes the temple in terms that demonstrate it to be more than a physical location; it is *his Father's* house (2:16; 2:19, 21). With these words, Jesus demonstrates that the temple is the place where the people of God, in association with Jesus the Son, gathered with the Father of household.[55] Second, in Jesus' first encounter with those called "the Jews,"[56] the buying and selling taking place in the temple are identified by Jesus as making the house of his Father into something alien, an οἶκον ἐμπορίου (2:17).[57] Especially in the Passover context, the making over of the house of the Father into something else suggests that the temple is no longer a true house for the household (cf. 1:14), the locus for the true Passover lamb (2:13, 23; cf. Exod 12:3).[58] Third, in John 2:21 there is a shift from "my Father's house" to the temple of Jesus' body. The body of Jesus both fulfills and transcends the temple as the place where the Father avails himself to the members of his household. A similar movement from the Jerusalem temple to the person of Jesus can be seen in John 14. Here, the term "house/ household" (οἰκία) is used by the Fourth Gospel to transition from a picture of Jesus going away to prepare a place for his disciples (14:3)[59] to an understanding of Jesus going away to come back

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[55]See Coloe, *God Dwells,* 73: "With these words Jesus claims a unique filial relationship with Israel's God." Coloe notes elsewhere (p. 161) that the phrase "house of my Father" would rarely have been used only in the sense of a physical structure, such as a building or tent. McCaffrey, *House,* 50, notes that the construction is never used to refer to the temple. See also Van der Watt, *Family,* 349; and Kerr, *Temple,* 79, 83–84.

[56]The difficulty in identifying the sense of the term has been discussed at length in recent scholarly study on the Fourth Gospel. For a detailed treatment of the topic, see especially Reimund Bieringer, Didier Pollefeyt, and Frederique Vandecasteele-Vanneuville, eds. *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster, 2001).

[57] The allusion may be to Zech 14:21. Some conduct of business and trade in association with the temple would have been necessary, but such conduct within the temple precinct is rejected by Jesus. Cf. Neh 13:15–22; J. Duncan M. Derrett, "The Zeal of the House and the Cleansing of the Temple," *DR* 95 (1977): 82; and Schuchard, *Scripture,* 24.

[58] That Jesus speaks against an economy within his father's house that is focused on sacrifice and the purchasing of sacrificial animals, rather than the offering of Jesus himself as Passover lamb, is also in evidence. Cf. Barrett, *Gospel,* 198; Jacob Neusner, "Money-Changers in the Temple: The Mishnah's Explanation," *NTS* 35 (1989): 287–90, as cited by Schuchard, *Scripture,* 28–29; and Jane Webster, *Ingesting Jesus: Eating and Drinking in the Gospel of John* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 47–48.

[59] Jesus' use of the word "place" (14:2) echoes an earlier reference to the Jerusalem temple (11:48). See McCaffrey, *House,* 185

and dwell within the believers themselves (14:23).[60] As John 2:21 indicates a shift from the temple to Jesus' body as the place of the Father's dwelling, in John 14 there is a further shift to incorporate not only Jesus but also the disciples themselves as members of "my Father's family."[61] In this way, the Fourth Gospel understands "the Father's house" to refer not only to a place, but to a nexus of relationships.[62] The use of the word to signify both a place and a community becomes fluid, and the relationship between both signifiers is highlighted.

In conclusion, the Fourth Gospel not only manifests the four aspects of first-century households identified above (cf. pp. 4–5), it presents Jesus Christ as the link between everyday households and the household of God. The present study is interested in the household of God and its relationship to the followers of Jesus, particularly as this relationship is highlighted in John 12:1–7 and is further developed in the Gospel's latter half.[63] Everyday household imagery in this portion of the Gospel will provide significant commentary on the nature of the household

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[60] See Coloe, *God Dwells,* 157.

[61] Kerr, *Temple,* 298.

[62] Ibid., 294, 296–99. Cf. Günter Fischer, *Die himmlischen Wohnungen: Untersuchungen zu Joh 14,2f* (Europäische Hochschulschriften 23; Bern: Lang, 1975), 241–85, as cited by D. François Tolmie, *Jesus' Farewell to the Disciples: John 13:1–17:26 in Narratological Perspective* (Biblical Interpretation Series 12; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 132 n. 125.

[63] The Fourth Gospel demonstrates an important new development in the narrative in the transition between John 12 and John 13, but a midpoint in the narrative of the Gospel can already be seen in the transition from John 10 to John 11. It is here that the present study understands the "latter" half of the Gospel to begin. Cf. Mathias Rissi, "Der Aufbau des vierten Evangeliums," *NTS* (1983): 48–54; Jeffrey Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A Rhetorical Investigation of the Implied Reader in the Fourth Gospel* (ed. Charles Talbert; SBLDS 82; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 66–71; Fernando Segovia, "The Journey(s) of the Word of God: A Reading of the Plot of the Fourth Gospel," *Semeia* 53 (1991): 23–54; H. Thyen, "Die Erzählung von den Bethanische Geschwistern (Jn 11:1–12:19) als 'Palimpset' über Synoptischen Texten," in *The Four Gospels, 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (ed. F. Van Segbroeck et al.; vol. 3; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 2022; Gunner Østentad, *Patterns of Redemption in the Fourth Gospel* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 1998), 163–64; Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 108. Such an understanding of the structure of John is based in part upon the Gospel's interest in the motif of the journey and the fact that Jesus' fourth and final journey to Jerusalem begins with the transition from John 10 to John 11. George Mlakuzhyil, *The Christocentric Literary Structure of the Fourth Gospel* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1987), 84, citing Rissi, "Aufbau," 50–51, summarizes four major points in favor of this framework: (1) the "hour" of Jesus arrives already in John 12:23; (2) Jesus is condemned to death by the Sanhedrin already in John 11:47–57; (3) the Jewish condemnation of Jesus is connected with the raising of Lazarus in John 11; (4) John 13 is linked to John 12 and John 11 through the mention of "the Passover" (cf. 11:55; 12:1; 13:1), which coincides with Jesus' passing over from this world to the Father (13:1). It is also to be noted that in John 11:8–11, Jesus returns to Judea ready to face death.

of God gathered by Jesus upon his death. As we shall see, the text leads its readers to understand their relationship to Jesus not only in individual terms, but also in a manner that highlights the dramatic restoration of a community, composed of Jesus' "brothers and sisters," through the death of its Lord.

The Scholarly Study of John 12:1–7

Despite the recent scholarly study of the Fourth Gospel that has traced the Gospel's interest in a household theme, John 12:1–7 has played an unjustifiably limited role in scholarly efforts to describe this theme. The reason for this limited role has much to do with the tools at the disposal of scholars of John 12:1–7 over the course of the last century. In order to highlight both what is helpful about this period of scholarship for elucidating John 12:1–7, as well as what has still been left largely unsaid or what has gone unnoticed, the present study will now survey the scholarly study of John 12:1–7 from 1900 until today.

Much of the scholarly study of John 12:1–7, especially the work carried out between 1900 and 1984, has already been chronicled.[64] Such study, however, has not always characterized itself in terms of the same interests. Two periods, or phases, in the study of John 12:1–7 involving two largely separate interests may be said to describe the last century's study of John 12:1–7: (1) an earlier period (i.e., the period mentioned above) in which the tendency of most scholarship was to focus on the question of the Gospel's possible relationship to the Synoptics; and (2) a more recent period in which the tendency of most scholarship has been to focus on the matter of reading the Gospel on its own terms. Each approach has made contributions to the study and understanding of John 12:1–7. Each approach has also involved certain identifiable

[64] See Anton Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas: Untersuchungen zu den johanneisch-lukanischen Parallelperikopen Joh 4.46–54/Lk 7.1–10—Joh 12.1–8/Lk 7.36–50; 10.38–42—Joh 20.19–29/Lk 24.36–49* (FB 50; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1984), 132–51.

shortcomings. To both the matter of such contributions and such shortcomings the present study therefore turns.

Earlier Study

Based on the findings of Anton Dauer, it can be demonstrated that from 1900 to 1984 the scholarly study of John 12:1–7 evolved significantly. Four basic periods of time involving four distinctive understandings of John 12:1–7 may be distinguished: (1) a period defined by a consensus that John 12:1–7 was dependent upon other written anointing stories of a synoptic kind; (2) a period increasingly defined by the conviction that John 12:1–7 was dependent upon an oral tradition on which Mark and/or Luke also depended; (3) a period defined by a consensus that John 12:1–7 was independent of the Synoptics; and (4) a period defined by a lack of any discernable consensus. It can be said that from 1900 to 1984 certainty gave way to uncertainty regarding John 12:1–7. We will now address the relevant features of these four periods.

The critical consensus of a first period in the last century's scholarly study of John 12:1–7 held that John's account of an anointing was directly dependent upon either a written form of Mark or Luke.[65] This period roughly lasted from the end of the nineteenth century until the mid-1930s. The focus of the scholarly study of this period was upon content which the Gospels conspicuously (even inexplicably) shared, namely, (1) Jesus is reclining at table[66] as someone's

[65] That is, either Mark 14:3–9 or Luke 7:36–50. Matt's account of an anointing (26:6–13), because it was understood to have been dependent upon a written form of Mark's account (14:3–9), was thus usually omitted from a consideration of John's use of written sources. Scholars typifying the scholarly consensus at that time, as featured by Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas,* 132–33, include P. Schmiedel, M. Goguel, B. W. Bacon, E. F. Scott, H. J. Holtzmann and W. Bauer, and J. Wellhausen. Wellhausen held that John was elucidating Luke's account of the anointing, already known to John's audience, by retelling Mark's account of it. Cf. Joseph Newbould Sanders, "Those Whom Jesus Loved," *NTS* 1 (1954–1955), 36; and Ismo Dunderberg, "Zur Literarkritik von Joh 12: 1–11," in *John and the Synoptics* (ed. Adelbert Deneaux; BETL 101; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 568–70.

[66] Matt 26:7 (ἀνακειμένου), Mark 14:3 (κατακειμένου), and Luke 7:36 (κατεκλίθη) describe the posture of Jesus. John 12:2 describes the posture (ἀνακειμένων) of those who are present at the meal with Jesus.

guest,[67] and a woman[68] somehow anoints Jesus with perfume;[69] and (2) someone present is offended that Jesus allows the anointing to take place,[70] but Jesus defends the woman's action.[71] In addition to such similarities shared especially by Mark, Matthew, and John,[72] the specific wording shared by each of these accounts was deemed striking.[73] Theories of direct literary dependence purportedly explained that which otherwise could not be explained. The strength of the consensus was such that Percival Gardner-Smith would write in 1938, "There is virtual unanimity in the view that St. John, the latest of the evangelists, was to some extent indebted to the work of his predecessors, and although his scheme was essentially original . . . yet he derived from St. Mark, or St. Mark and St. Luke, much of the material which he used in the construction of his own Gospel."[74]

As form criticism started to impact the study of John, however, the unanimity that had previously described matters began to erode, and a second stage in the early scholarly study of

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[67] Simon the Leper (Matt 26:6; Mark 14:3), Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36), and an unknown host associated with the community of Bethany (12:2).

[68] Specified as "sinful" (γυνὴ ἥτις ἦν ἐν τῇ πόλει ἁμαρτωλός) in Luke 7:37 and as Mary, the sister of Lazarus, in John 12:3. The woman is otherwise not described in either Matt or Mark.

[69] Μύρου (Matt 26:7; Mark 14:3; Luke 7:37; John 12:3).

[70] The "disciples" in Matt 26:8; "some" in Mark 14:4; Simon the Pharisee in Luke 7:39; Judas in John 12:4–6.

[71] Matt 26:10–13; Mark 14:6–9; Luke 7:44–47; John 12:7–8.

[72] E.g., the context of Passover (Matt 26:2; Mark 14:1–2; John 12:1) and the location at Bethany (Matt 26:6; Mark 14:3; John 12:1).

[73] See Percival Gardner-Smith, *Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), 45. John and Mark use the same phrase: μύρου νάρδου πιστικῆς (Mark 14:3; John 12:3). John describes the perfume as πολυτίμου, a word that resembles Mark's πολυτελοῦς (14:3) and Matt's βαρυτίμου (26:7). In describing the value of the perfume, John's account also features the same phrase as Mark's account (τριακοσίων δηναρίων [Mark 14:5; John 12:5]) mentioned by the woman's detractors, although the order of the words is transposed in each account. John records Jesus' reply as ἄφες αὐτήν (12:7), which is very close to Mark's ἄφετε αὐτήν (14:6). Finally, Jesus' final words in John 12:8 (τοὺς πτωχοὺς γὰρ πάντοτε ἔχετε μεθ' ἑαυτῶν ἐμὲ δὲ οὐ πάντοτε ἔχετε) are in almost exact agreement with Mark 14:7, although this passage may be a later addition by a copyist who recalled the similar statement in the Synoptics. See Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (corr. ed.; Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 1975), 236–37.

[74] Gardner-Smith, *Saint John*, vii.

John's Gospel emerged. With the publication of his *St. John and the Synoptic Gospels,* Gardner-Smith, in seminal terms, began to emphasize both the reality of oral tradition in the first century and the dissimilarities between Gospels.[75] He was primarily preoccupied with the way John might have received and arranged an oral tradition, a tradition dependent upon material that would have evolved independently into Mark 14:3–9, Luke 7:31–50, and Luke 10:39–42.[76] Even though Gardner-Smith did not attempt to reconstruct the original tradition behind John, he nevertheless viewed the oral tradition upon which Mark or Luke would have depended as historically normative for John.[77] Gardner-Smith viewed "inconsistencies" in John 12:1–7 as evidence that once-distinct traditions had now in John "coalesced" into something new.[78] Throughout this second period some continued to argue for John's dependence upon a written form of one or more of the Synoptics. Differences between John and the Synoptics were

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[75] Ibid., 47–48.

[76] Cf. Gardner-Smith's treatment of John 12:1–7 with Erwin R. Goodenough, "John: A Primitive Gospel," *JBL* 64 (1945): 154. Goodenough argued for a history of the oral tradition centered on a single event, a history that began with Luke and ended with Mark. Cf. Robert A. Holst, "The One Anointing of Jesus: Another Application of the Form-Critical Method," *JBL* 95 (1976): 435–36. H. W. Bartsch and J. Ernst (as cited by Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas,* 150) later traced the history of the tradition in the opposite order. Sanders, "Those Whom Jesus Loved," 35–36, 41, argued that Luke and John employed a tradition originating with the beloved disciple himself, yet that John's is a version "with as good or better a title to be accepted as closest to the facts." In contrast to Goodenough's argument in favor of a single anointing event resulting in a traceable trajectory in all four Gospels, see A. Legault, "An Application of the Form-Critique Method to the Anointings in Galilee and Bethany," *CBQ* 16 (1954): 143–45 (citing Pierre Benoit), who states in his translation of the Gospel of Matthew in the *Bible of Jerusalem* that the anointing at Bethany is "radically distinct" from the one referenced by Luke. He also describes how traditions surrounding both events circulated orally, undergoing transformations and ultimately influencing one another, and how the anointing episode as a self-contained unit would have been inserted into the framework of the Gospel narrative on the basis of thematic considerations. Cf. Brown, *Gospel,* 1:449–54; and Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas,* 146–47 (citing Dillon).

[77] Gardner-Smith, *Saint John,* 48. Though John is not said to be dependent on either Mark or Luke, Gardner-Smith concluded that John "has taken the general account of the meal from the story of Simon the Leper" and "introduced elements which belong to the picture of Martha and Mary and to the account of the meal in the house of Simon the Pharisee" while these stories were still circulating in oral form. Others who later reached similar conclusions include (as cited by Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas,* 141–45) E. Haenchen, R. H. Strachan, J. Roloff, and H. Schürmann. Cf. Charles H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 171–73.

[78] Gardner-Smith, *Saint John,* 47. For example, Gardner-Smith understood 12:7 as a reference only to a future anointing at the tomb of Jesus and thus an indication of inconsistency in John to be attributed to his confusion of Mary of Bethany (Luke 10:38–42) with Mary Magdalene (Luke 7:36–8:2; 23:55–24:11; Mark 16:1–8).

attributed to John's distinctive theological purposes.[79] Others saw the differences between John and the Synoptics as too great to allow for direct copying and wondered if John might have recalled either Luke or Mark from memory.[80] In either case, many continued to conclude that John had used some written form of either Mark or Luke, or both, as they attended to John's "uneven" assimilation of details from sources.[81] But others showed themselves to be very open to Gardner-Smith's suggestion of the more likely influence of an oral tradition.

Despite the fact that many continued to argue for John's dependence upon the Synoptics,[82] a third period pointing in the direction of a "consensus" opinion in favor of John's independence emerged in the 1960s.[83] Scholars noted not only the significant differences between Luke and the

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[79] Many argued that John's deviations from Mark demonstrated the existence of special *Traditionen* and *Tendenzen* even more important for an understanding of John. See Rudolph Schnackenburg and Maria Linden, "Der johanneische Bericht von der Salbung in Bethanien (Joh 12:1–8)," *MTZ* 1 (1950): 49; E. Kenneth Lee, "St. Mark and the Fourth Gospel," *NTS* 3 (1956–1957): 58; and George H. C. MacGregor, *The Gospel of John* (MNTC 4; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1928), 258. Cf. Barrett, *Gospel*, 341.

[80] See Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas,* 135–40 who cites J. Blinzler, E. Schweizer, J. Schniewind, and K. H. Rengstorff. Note the ambiguity of John's precise relationship with the Synoptics by those advocating John's alleged "acquaintance" with the written form of Mark or Luke and recollection of the synoptic accounts from memory. Dauer groups Schniewind and Rengstorff with scholars who consider John independent of the Synoptics but classifies Blinzler and Schweizer with those who advocate Johannine dependence on them. Cf. Cilliers Breytenbach, "*MNHMONEYEIN:* Das 'Sich-Erinnern' in Der Ur-Christlichen Überlieferung, Die Bethanien-episode (Mk 14:3–9/Jn 12:1–8) als Beispiel," in *John and the Synoptics* (ed. Adelbert Deneaux; BETL 101; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 553.

[81] John A. Bailey, *The Traditions Common to the Gospels of Luke and John* (NovTSup 7; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963), 3, revisiting the view of earlier source critics, concluded that "the only explanation of [Mary's wiping off of the perfume, etc.]" is that John carefully and purposefully combined the accounts of the anointing as they appear in Mark and Luke, though the combination is one of "striking unevenness." Those advocating literary dependence of John 12:1–8 on Luke after 1950 (see Dauer's citations, *Johannes und Lukas,* 134–39) include J. Schmitt, K. Weiß, B. H. Streeter, H. Drexler, J. M. Creed, and N. Perrin. Those within the same time period finding literary dependence of John upon Mark, or upon both Mark and Luke, are J. A. Bailey, H. M. Teeple, H. Strathmann, F. E. Williams, and R. Pesch.

[82] See, e.g., Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas,* 137–39, who cites L. Schenke, D. G. Boyd, W. G. Kümmel, J. Marsh, A. H. Maynard, R. C. Frei, and W. Schmithals. See also Lloyd R. Kittlaus, "Evidence from John 12 That the Author of John Knew the Gospel of Mark," *SBL Seminar Papers 1979* (ed. Paul J. Achtemeir, 2 vols.; SBLSP 16; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979), 1:121–22. For examples of studies during this period arguing for a definite literary relationship between the Gospels, see especially pp. 27–28.

[83] See Dwight Moody Smith, *John among the Gospels* (2d ed.; Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 45–84; and Robert Kysar, *The Fourth Evangelist and His Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975), 55: "The past decade [1965–1975] has witnessed the near demise of the proposition that the fourth evangelist was dependent upon one or more of the synoptic gospels." In addition to the works below, see also Dauer's reference (*Johannes und Lukas,* 144–48) to J. Becker, W. Munro, E. F. Glusman, and A. J. F. Klijn.

other Gospels,[84] but also the many differences that describe Matthew, Mark, and John. They noted, for example, that Matthew, Mark and John differ as regards (1) the setting associated with each anointing account,[85] (2) the people distinguished as present in each account,[86] and (3) the circumstances associated with the anointing itself.[87]

Two views conspicuously contributed to this development. A first group of scholars viewed John 12:1–7 as the result of the evangelist's use of nonsynoptic source material handed down in more or less complete form.[88] Rudolf Bultmann and Rudolph Schnackenburg, despite their different emphases, read John 12:1–7 in this manner.[89] A second group of scholars viewed

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[84] Dodd, *Historical Tradition,* 162, summarizes: "The dialogue . . . in Luke follows entirely different lines from those followed in the Marcan and Johannine pericopae." In Matt, Mark, and John the use of the perfume is criticized because of its "waste" by Mary (Matt 26:8; Mark 14:4) and the fact it is not sold and given to the poor (Matt 26:9; Mark 14:5; John 12:5). In Luke the Pharisee's displeasure arises from the woman's status as a "sinner" (7:37). In Matt, Mark, and John the use of the perfume by Jesus is interpreted by Jesus in association with his imminent death and burial (Matt 26:12; Mark 14:8; John 12:7), while in Luke the anointing is interpreted to reflect the love of the woman out of gratitude to Jesus that her many sins are forgiven (7:47).

[85] The anointing in John is associated with Jesus' arrival in Bethany "six days before the Passover" (12:1). Moreover, we are told that Jesus' arrival in Bethany, and thus the anointing there, took place after Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead (12:1). No such association between the family of Lazarus and the city of Bethany is made in either Mark or Matt, where the anointing seems to be associated instead with a time frame directly preceding the Passover (Matt 26:2; Mark 14:1–2).

[86] Unlike Mark and Matt's accounts in which Simon the leper is specified as the host of the gathering (Matt 26:6; Mark 14:3), John merely refers to the party responsible for the meal with the ambiguous third-person plural form of the verb, which is associated in the narrative with the city of Bethany (12:1). John specifies that both Lazarus and Martha are present at the meal (12:2) and the person performing the anointing is their sister Mary (12:3). He also singles out Judas Iskariot (12:4) as the party who takes offence at the anointing.

[87] Most notably, that Mary anoints (ἤλειψεν, 12:3; cf. κατέχεεν, Matt 26:7 and Mark 14:3; ἤλειφεν, Luke 7:38) the feet of Jesus (12:3) rather than his head (Matt 26:7; Mark 14:3) and wipes his feet with her hair (12:3). This anointing of Jesus' feet and wiping of them with the woman's hair invites comparison with the anointing in Luke (7:38); however in Luke the order of the anointing and wiping (of tears, not perfume) is reversed.

[88] Especially continental scholarship following in the wake of Bultmann's *Das Evangelium des Johannes,* first published in 1941.

[89] Bultmann, *John,* 413, writes that in 12:1–11 the evangelist "appears to recount the story of the anointing on the basis of a written source, which he edited and enlarged with 12:9–11." The primary editing that Bultmann allows is the insertion of the elaboration about Judas in verse 6. Cf. Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 2:366, 372. For both Bultmann, *John,* 414, and Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 2:371–72, this source would have been independent of the Synoptics yet "secondary" or historically normed by the traditions associated with the Synoptics. For both scholars the passion history as a source for the evangelist is an important consideration. For Bultmann, *John,* 392, the anointing is understood as comprising the transition to the passion history, whereas for Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 2:371 it is understood as part and parcel of that history. Others who examined the Gospel of John as a whole in order to distinguish the "Johannine" from possibly independent source material arrived at similar conclusions regarding John 12:1–7. See especially Robert Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs: A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source*

John 12:1–7 as the work of an evangelist who was a genuine author of the Gospel and not just an arranger of what had been passed down.[90] Such a reading of John 12:1–7 followed from the work of Gardner-Smith and is represented in the work of Charles H. Dodd.[91]

Slowly but surely, however, even this "consensus" opinion began, with the advance of a fourth and final period, to be questioned. The publication of Marie-Emile Boismard and A. Lamouille's *L'Évangile de Jean* in 1978 and Frans Neirynk's critique of it[92] one year later are important in this regard.[93] On the one hand, Boismard's inductive approach for establishing patterns of stylistic and theological uniformity in John led him to favor the previous consensus. He therefore argues in favor of an independent source for John 12:1–7, in what would have been the Gospel's earliest form. However, reading John's depiction of the anointing in light of the Synoptics leads him to conclude also that a second author of John had attempted to move the

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Underlying the Fourth Gospel (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 149, who writes, "This passage gives strong evidence of Johannine independence of the Synoptics. While it has an obvious linguistic relation to both Mk 14:3ff.=Mt 26:6 and Lk 7:36ff., any hypothesis of dependence must go to extraordinary lengths to explain both the differences between John and the synoptic parallels and the curious combination of only certain elements from each of them which John on this theory must have made." See also Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas,* 145 –47, who references W. Nicol and S. Temple.

[90] Cf. the scholarship in the largely English-speaking world following in the wake of Dodd, *Historical Tradition.*

[91] Dodd, *Historical Tradition,* 171–73. Others refused to make an unambiguous judgment on the relationship between John 12:1–8 and the Synoptics but preferred instead to bracket that question in the interest of describing, as Dodd would have emphasized, the theological purpose of each evangelist as an author. In this regard, see especially James K. Elliott, "The Anointing of Jesus," *ExpTim* 85 (1974): 105–7; and Francis J. Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man* (Biblioteca di Scienze Religiose 14; Rome: Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, 1976), 168–71. Although the present study differs from Dodd in that it does not understand the anointing at Bethany as arising from the same central "motif" (and thus historical event) as the anointing described by Luke (7:36–50; cf. *Historical Tradition,* 172), it does understand the anointing described by Matt, Mark, and John as parallel and accounts for their differences according to the theological and literary interests of each evangelist. For a detailed discussion of the topic, see Carson, *Gospel,* 425–27.

[92] Franz Neirynck, *Jean et les Synoptiques: Examen critique de l'exégèse de M.-E. Boismard* (BETL 49; Leuven: University Press, 1979).

[93] See Smith, *John among the Gospels,* 139–58.

first form of the text in the direction of greater conformity with the Synoptics.[94] This attempted *via media* between dependence and independence theories was a sign that the prior consensus of Johannine independence was no longer as firm as it had once been. Some would later even argue for the context of Luke's Gospel as the overriding factor in understanding Mary's action.[95]

Thus, the scholarly study of John 12:1–7 in the last century experienced an evolution involving first a consensus of one sort, then a lack of consensus, then a consensus of an opposite kind, then finally yet another lack of that consensus (a matter that can be said to describe Johannine studies in general). While the precise nature of the Gospel's relationship to the Synoptics continued to be probed and investigated by many, such uncertainty can also be said to have encouraged others in the last twenty-five years to attempt to understand John 12:1–7 more thoroughly on the Gospel's own terms. We focus next on this more recent and positive period of study.

Recent Study

The more recent scholarly study of John 12:1–7 has continued to evince an interest in the relationship of the Gospel of John to the Synoptics.[96] More important, however, this same period has shown itself to be far more interested in reading the Gospel of John on its own terms. That is

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[94] Boismard concluded that John 12:3a and 5 more closely resembled the final forms of Luke 7 and Mark 14. This would have produced the document he calls "John II B." Cf. Neirynck, *Jean et les Synoptiques,* 90; and Dunderberg, "Zur Literarkritik."

[95] For a detailed study of John 12:1–7 that arrived at conclusions similar to those of Boismard, see Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas*, 126–68, 204–6. The impact of Boismard's challenge to the consensus can be seen in the work of Maurits Sabbe, "The Footwashing of Jn 13 and Its Relation to the Synoptic Gospels," *ETL* 58 (1982): 299–301. Cf. Barnabas Lindars, *Gospel*, 412–18. Sabbe sees a link between the anointing in John 12:1–8 and the foot-washing episode of John 13. Though he understands the anointing and the foot washing as "two components of one symbolic action" and demonstrates that anointing accompanies washing in other biblical examples (Ruth 3:3; 2 Kgs 12:20; Matt 6:17; Luke 7:38, 44, 46), his perception that John's account of the anointing is unexplainable in its final form leads him to conclude that "the Johannine redaction of the anointing of Jesus by the woman in John 12:3 can only rightly be explained as an abbreviation of the text of Luke 7:38" (p. 299). He regards the anointing recorded in John 12:3 as nonsensical because it is not accompanied by the washing of feet.

[96] See especially the work of Neirynck and the influence of the Louvain school as evinced by Dunderberg, "Zur Literarkritik"; Breytenbach, "*MNHMONEYEIN*"; and Thyen, "Erzählung," 202 –50.

to say, more recent scholarly study of the Gospel of John has demonstrated an interest in reading the Gospel in terms of its final form,[97] in terms of the Gospel's own literary and theological interests, in terms of a full range of appropriate sociohistorical questions, in terms, then, of texts descriptive of an ethnic and/or religious heritage important to the Gospel.[98]

These more recent studies of John 12:1–7 may be categorized according to three basic groups. First, there are studies of John 12:1–7 that have continued to probe the question of John's relationship to the Synoptics, but in new ways that focus on the Gospel's relationship to texts descriptive of such an ethnic and/or religious heritage important to it. Of these, three in particular are exemplary. Till Arend Mohr's *Markus- und Johannespassion;*[99] J. F. Coakley's "The Anointing at Bethany"; [100] and Goran Blaskovic's *Johannes und Lukas.*[101] Second, there are

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[97] Any expansive reading of the Gospel must give primary consideration to the Gospel as it now stands. See Culpepper, *Anatomy,* 49: "In its present form, if not in its origin, the Gospel must be approached as a unity, a literary whole."

[98] For examples of scholarship from an earlier period that demonstrated a similar interest yet continued to explore the relationship of the anointing in the Fourth Gospel to other anointing episodes in the Synoptics, see especially A. Lemonnyer, "L'onction de Béthanie: Notes d'exégèse sur Jean 12:1–8," *RSR* 18 (1928): 105–17; David Daube, "The Anointing at Bethany and Jesus' Burial," *AThR* 32 (1950): 186–99; Barrett's reference to the Jewish observance of *Habdalah,* described in *m. Ber. 8.5*, in his *Gospel,* 342; and J. Duncan M. Derrett, "The Anointings at Bethany," in *Studia Evangelica, Vol. 2* (ed. Frank L. Cross; TUGAL 87; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), 174–82. Lemmonyer was dissatisfied with the source-critical "solution" for understanding John 12:1–8 as a conflation of Mark and Luke. The framework of his argument, which strives to explain the historical events behind the various anointing stories told in the Gospels, is undergirded by his conclusion that anointing with perfume was "common among the Jews" and provision of perfume for anointing of the head *and feet* would have been a "normal courtesy" (p. 106). Daube's interpretation of Jesus' words is ultimately founded upon historical considerations believed to have arisen from ordinary Jewish customs surrounding the death and burial of executed criminals (p. 187). His study has the advantage of highlighting the importance of funeral anointing for the first-century Mediterranean world. Derrett understands Jesus' words in John 12:7 as arising out of first-century Jewish concerns with purity and impurity. He argues that Jesus, in equating the anointing with the preparation of a corpse for burial, was in effect accepting the offering of the woman in a legally sanctioned way. His study makes a number of important contributions, describing not only a more complete range of cultural significance for perfume in the first century, but also its specific significance in the context of John 12 as "an offering" and the recognition that Jesus speaks about his own body as the replacement of the Jerusalem temple (pp. 175–81). See also Mary Coloe, "Anointing the Temple of God: John 12:1–9," in *Transcending Boundaries: Contemporary Readings of the New Testament* (ed. Rekha Channatu and Mary Coloe; Rome: LAS Publications, 2005), 105.

[99] Till Arend Mohr, *Markus- und Johannespassion: Redaktions und traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der Markinischen und Johanneischen Passionstradition* (ATANT 70; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1982).

[100] J. F. Coakley, "The Anointing at Bethany," *JBL* 107 (1988): 241–56.

studies that have dispensed with a focus upon synoptic comparisons and, in doing so, have modeled differing and important approaches to the challenge of John 12:1–7: Fréderick Manns's "Lecture symbolique de Jean 12:1–11";[102] Nuria Calduch Benages's "La Fragancia del Perfume en Jn 12:3";[103] and Chantal Reynier's "Le thème du parfum et l'avènement des figures en Jn 11:55–12:11."[104] Third are studies that have understood John 12:1–7 to be expressing an interest, however limited, in a household theme. Especially noteworthy are Herold Weiss's "Foot-Washing in the Johannine Community," Mary Coloe's "Anointing the Temple of God," and Margaret Beirne's treatment of Judas and Mary as a "gender pair" in her "Women and Men in the Fourth Gospel." Each of these representative studies from these three categories will now be briefly considered in turn.

Even in the midst of the deteriorating "consensus" noted above, Mohr's work resulted in a renewed interest in the case for the Gospel's independence from the Synoptics, especially from the Gospel of Luke. Mohr argues for the Gospel's dependence upon a source independent of the Synoptics and associated with other New Testament (2 Cor 2:16) and Old Testament (Isa 25:6–8 [LXX]) passages.[105] In this light, he perceives Jesus' anointing to be an anointing of joy rather than a merely functional anointing that would have accompanied a foot washing.[106] Crucial, then, to the sense of the narrative, argues Mohr, is the significance of the anointing.

A few years later, Coakley focused again on the sociocultural significance of the

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[101] Goran Blaskovic, *Johannes und Lukas: Eine Untersuchung zu den literarischen Beziehungen des Johannesevangeliums zum Lukasevangelium* (Dissertationen Theologische Reihe 84; St. Ottilien: EOS Verlage, 1999).

[102] Fréderick Manns, "Lecture symbolique de Jean 12:1–11," *SBFLA* 36 (1986): 85–110.

[103] Nuria Caluduch Benages, "La Fragancia del Perfume en Jn 12,3," *EstBib* 48 (1990): 243–65.

[104] Chantal Reynier, "Le Thème du Parfum et L'Avènement des Figures en Jn 11,55–12,11," *ScEs* 46 (1994): 203–20.

[105] Mohr, *Markus- und Johannespassion*, 132–33. The association with Isaiah is especially important for Mohr in view of the theme of resurrection found in this portion of Isaiah.

[106] Ibid., 133–34.

anointing of feet in a way that complemented Mohr's interpretation.[107] Coakley reads several elements of Jesus' anointing against the background of the first-century social and cultural world of the text. He identifies a "sixth day before the Passover" of John 12:1 with a preliminary week of self-purification required for pilgrims to Jerusalem at Passover.[108] He also cites eight references to the anointing of the feet in rabbinic and Greco-Roman literature,[109] suggesting that Mary's anointing "may be strictly 'unparalleled,' but it was not unthinkable." As to why Mary would have wiped off the ointment, Coakley focuses on the logic of wiping off *perfume* rather than oil, and so highlights John's mention of the fragrance of the perfume as significant for both Mary and Jesus.[110]

Blaskovic compares the anointing accounts in John and the Synoptics in a way that recalls Mohr's previous emphases.[111] He concludes that Luke and John were only related by mere "points of contact" (*Berührungspunkte*). His rhetorical analysis of the anointing accounts seeks to investigate literary patterns in individual Gospels[112] and to track the use of specific rhetorical forms that appear in them.[113] Blaskovic points to similarities between structures of Luke and John

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[107] See Coakley, "Anointing," 246–48. Like Mohr, Coakley argues that John's account "does not represent a garbled version of Luke's report" (p. 246). He even argues that the priority of John's eyewitness testimony was preferable to that of the Synoptics. See also B. P. Robinson, "The Anointing by Mary of Bethany (John 12)," *DRev* 115 (1997): 99–100.

[108] Coakley, "Anointing," 242.

[109] Ibid., 247–48.

[110] Ibid., 251–52. "It is not sufficient to insist . . . that since . . . the verb describing the action, properly means 'wipe *off*' Mary must have been, pointlessly, undoing her previous act. In the nature of the case not *all* the ointment could have been wiped off; some would have already had its effect."

[111] See Goran Blaskovic, *Johannes und Lukas*.

[112] See, e.g., Blaskovic, *Johannes und Lukas*, 101, for his comparison of the structure of the anointing narrative in Luke with other *symposia* in Luke's Gospel.

[113] Ibid., 103, 146. Blaskovic understands the accounts of Mark and John to have been originally constructed according to the form of a *chrie*, to which material would have been added over time. This formal similarity is perceived as indicating similarity of text type and therefore an indication of a literary relationship between accounts. Contrast this understanding of the relationship between John and Mark by their shared status as *chrie* with that of Burton Mack, "The Anointing of Jesus: Elaboration within a Chreia," in *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (ed. Burton Mack and Vernon K. Robbins; Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge Press, 1989), 90.

without resorting to conclusions regarding later ecclesiastical redaction that would deny the integrity of the text as it now stands. He too understands the anointing narrated by John to be full of meaning *in its present form.*[114]

Mohr, Coakley, and Blaskovic are ultimately concerned with the nature of the relationship between John 12:1–7 and the Synoptics, but Manns, Benages, and Reynier want to understand the anointing in light of the symbolic language of the Gospel of John as it would have been reflected in Jewish and Old Testament texts important for the John's first-century readers. Manns adopts a significantly symbolic reading of Jesus' anointing in John. Undertaking a symbolic analysis of John 12:7 in light of John 19:38–41,[115] he argues that the mention of nard in connection with the words of Jesus would have conjured up images of the restoration of paradise and temple, ushered in by the Messiah.[116] Understanding the "sixth day" of John 12:1 as symbolic, Manns proposes that the image of a "sixth day" was given to evoke the day of man's creation. He defends this association as the one most in keeping with the symbolism of νάρδος and οἰκία.[117] In this manner, he understands the symbolic language of John 12:1–8 primarily to be evoking the gift of life and new creation won through Christ's death.

In contrast to Manns, Benages highlights the foreshadowing of the death of Jesus and the

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[114] Blaskovic, *Johannes und Lukas,* 164, 172.

[115] See Manns, "Lecture symbolique," 97. Because of the funeral preparation of John 19:38–41, Manns concludes that translating the ἵνα as introducing a final clause is contradicted. He suggests that the ἵνα is a mistranslation of the Aramaic דע, meaning "because," and the verb τηρέω of this verse alludes to the Jewish tradition surrounding the pre-creation of paradise and the temple (or "the house") between "the two evenings." He therefore translates 12:7: "Leave her alone, because she preserved the nard (put in reserve since the creation of the world) for the day of my burial."

[116] Manns demonstrates that the Old Testament, Pseudepigrapha, and Targums associate νάρδος both with paradise/tree of life as well as the purification rituals and offering of sacrifices that took place in the temple. See Manns, "Lecture symbolique," 102. Reading with the Hebrew usage of בית, he argues that John's use of "house" would have corresponded to both "temple" and, as the place where God is present among his people, to a spiritual provision of being "in Christ."

[117] Ibid., 104–5. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, citing Alcuin, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels Collected out of the Works of the Fathers* (trans. John Henry Newman; vol. 4; Southampton: Saint Austin Press, 1997), 399.

prophetic announcement of his messianic royalty.[118] Like Manns, Benages finds the words of Jesus in John 12:7 ultimately to be defining for the significance of Mary's anointing. But according to Benages's exegesis, Jesus' words would have referred to a complete anointing already accomplished.[119] Benages highlights the Old Testament usage of the phrase in which the fragrance of sacrifice points to the presence of God on earth and to people as "fragrance carriers," returning to God what God has already given.[120] Benages interprets the anointing in terms of the grave of Jesus, as does John 12:7, yet acknowledges that the grave was not the end, as the context of the Gospel and the death-anointing of a living person implies.[121] Benages's interpretation establishes important boundaries for a symbolic reading of John 12:1–7. It highlights the literary context of the Gospel itself as that which either permits, or does not permit, a symbolic reading.

Chantal Reynier's treatment of the anointing in John understands John 12:1–7 to be the central portion of a longer text, beginning at John 11:55 and ending at John 12:11.[122] Her focus upon the significance of the fragrance in John 12:3 is similar to that of Benages. But Reynier argues that the fragrance is a sign that the beloved is present. It is an element in the text for identifying the beloved.[123] She interprets John's reference to the fragrance of the perfume in

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[118] Benages, "La Fragancia," 246.

[119] Ibid., 252: "Déjala que lo haya guardado para el día de mi sepultura."

[120] Ibid., 258: "Todos estos textos nos presentan al hombre como *osmóforo* (transportador) del perfume. Con sus sacrificios y ofrendas a Dios no hace sino devolver a Dios lo que Dios mismo le había ofrecido. De este modo, sus obras revelan la presencia de Dios en la tierra."

[121] Benages (ibid., 261) critiques Manns's symbolic reading of the anointing for failing to take into account the focus on death and grave inherent in Jesus' interpretation of the anointing: "Nosotros, sin embargo, creemos que negar la relación entre la unción de María y la sepultura de Jesús es ignorar la clave de interpretación del relato (cf. 12:7) en favor de una lectura simbólica que se aparta demasiado del texto evangélico."

[122] Reynier, "Le Thème," 205–7. Thus the anointing occurs as the heart of a pericope that begins and ends with conflict: the search for Jesus and the threat on his life.

[123] Consider Gen 27:27; Song 4:10–11; Reynier, "Le Thème," 213: "L'odeur agréable est signe d'une présence, bien plus c'est un élément déterminant pour reconnaître la personne aimée."

terms of similar references to perfume in the Song of Songs. She notes also that similar vocabulary is employed by John both in John 12:1–7 and John 19:38–42. Jesus is husband, shepherd, and king in keeping with the central figure of the beloved in the Song of Songs.[124] Mary is the model of a believing and loving humanity.

John 12:1–7 has played a limited part in the efforts of twentieth-century scholars to describe the Gospel's household-of-God theme, especially as this theme relates to the death of Jesus. McCaffrey, Van der Watt, and Kerr, though they have all three treated the Fourth Gospel household theme, have either ignored or hardly even mentioned John 12:1–7 in this context.[125] Nevertheless, some recent, shorter studies focusing more exclusively on the latter half of the Fourth Gospel have noted the theme, even in the anointing episode. Though none of these studies has adequately explored the relationship of the anointing to other passages in the latter portion of the Fourth Gospel that elucidate the significance of Jesus' death, they are helpful for the purposes of the present study.

Herold Weiss understands the foot washing (13:2–16) as a ceremony that prepares the disciples for martyrdom, announcing their imminent burial and preparing them for a vision of God as they "walk with washed feet in the temple of God."[126] He understands the anointing of Jesus at Bethany to have a related significance.[127] Even so, he never explores the role of John 12:1-7 in developing the Fourth Gospel's household theme.

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[124] Ibid., 217–18. See also Jocelyn McWhirter, *The Bridegroom Messiah and the People of God: Marriage in the Fourth Gospel* (SNTSMS 138; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 80–88.

[125] Though Van der Watt, *Family,* 262, briefly acknowledges the family of Lazarus to be a "physical family" where the members cared for each other, he does not acknowledge Mary's action to be symbolic of a household relationship. Kerr, *Temple,* 201–3, though he briefly considers the anointing as an act of worship, otherwise does not deal with John 12:1–7. McCaffrey, *House,* 29–30, 178, briefly considers the vocable οἰκία in John 12:3 as representative of the word's "material" or "spatial" sense and rejects the possibility that its primary meaning in the anointing episode could refer to either "family" or "household."

[126] Herold Weiss, "Foot Washing in the Johannine Community," *NovT* 21 (1979): 320.

[127] Ibid., 300, 312–14.

More recently, Mary Coloe has treated the anointing episode by comparing the body of Jesus to the tabernacle/temple of God and by understanding Mary's action in light of Moses' anointing of the tabernacle (Exod 40:9–16).[128] Her work is valuable for its emphasis upon Jesus as tabernacle/temple and his death/resurrection as the rebuilding of that temple, as anticipated in John 2:19–21. But her primary objective is to understand the significance of the anointing in light of John 2:19–21, with its corresponding focus on the rebuilding of the temple. John 2:19–21 ultimately provides her overriding hermeneutic for interpreting the entire Gospel of John.

Margaret Beirne has taken up an investigation of the anointing episode by identifying six "gender pairs" in the Fourth Gospel, one of which is comprised of Judas and Mary of Bethany.[129] She notes how Mary assumes the role of a servant in attending to Jesus' feet, and identifies this role as indicative of a household association on Mary's part.[130] She notes that Mary's exemplary role in John 12:1–7 is set in contrast to Judas's misunderstanding. This does not lead her to conclude that Mary or other women characters in John are intended "to emphasize the role of women within the Johannine community [or that] they separate women as a group."[131] Her study is helpful in highlighting John 12:1–7 as a text that enables the reader to identify with its characters. Still, the household theme is only incidental to her argument.

Weiss, Coloe, and Beirne have greatly contributed to the work of others who might pursue a reading of the anointing episode in light of the Gospel's household imagery, yet their interests ultimately lie elsewhere. No scholarly study has either highlighted the role of the anointing in developing the Gospel's household theme or considered what the anointing

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[128] See Coloe, "Anointing," 106–7.

[129] Margaret Beirne, *Women and Men in the Fourth Gospel: A Discipleship of Equals* (JSNTSup 242; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 140–69.

[130] Ibid., 149.

[131] Ibid., 26.

demonstrates as this theme relates to the death of Jesus.

So the more recent study of John 12:1–7 has had much to offer in the way of a fresh approach to the problem of John 12:1–7. We shall now consider the relative value of both the more recent and the earlier studies of John 12:1–7.

Contributions and Shortcomings of the Prior Study of John 12:1–7

Scholars of an earlier period who compared John 12:1–7 with similar synoptic accounts have made a variety of concrete contributions. These concern not only our understanding of Jesus' anointing in John but also its relationship both to the Synoptics and to the rest of the Fourth Gospel. These scholars' most important contribution was to highlight what the various Gospel accounts conspicuously—even inexplicably—share, as well as that which is unique to each of the Gospels. In this regard, the suggestion that certain ancient witnesses to John 12:1–7, or that John 12:1–7 itself, might have been impacted by other Gospel accounts, or by traditions lying behind them, has had a helpful role to play.[132] Emphasis on the history of the oral tradition has allowed scholars to wrestle with the question of whether any of the anointing accounts in the Synoptics might be considered parallel to that of John.[133] Good historical questions have been raised. Perhaps the most positive contribution, however, has come as scholars have accounted for the differences between John and the Synoptics in a way that emphasizes how the present form of the text relates especially to the literary and theological interest of John. This contribution has yielded a helpful picture for understanding John's selective narration of Jesus' story (20:30–31)

[132] Although several studies argue for the reciprocal influence of one gospel account on another in instances when no text-critical evidence for influence exists (e.g., F. C. Grant, "Was the Author of John Dependent on the Gospel of Luke?" *JBL* 56 [1937]: 290; Bultmann, *John,* 415 n. 1), Dodd has demonstrated that other synoptic accounts of an anointing of Jesus have likely influenced some ancient witnesses to John 12:1–8. See his *Historical Tradition,* 165–66.

[133] See especially Legault, "Application," 135–42. Although the present study does not attempt to reconstruct a history of the oral tradition as Legault and others have attempted, it does understand the account of an anointing in Luke to be historically distinct from that of the anointing at Bethany and thus not parallel to the anointing narrated by Matt, Mark, and John.

and the likely motivation behind his featuring the gospel of Jesus in the way that he has.[134]

Still, for all of these contributions, shortcomings inherent in merely comparing John 12:1–7 to the Synoptics are readily admitted even by those inclined to make such comparisons. First, despite the effort expended up to the present day, no consensus presently exists or seems likely to develop that will elucidate the most plausible history of a tradition, oral or otherwise, behind John 12:1–7. Literary relationships have been rather impossible to "prove."[135] Recent investigations have even indicated that the source-critical conclusions of the late 19th century

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[134] E.g., Bultmann, *John,* 414, demonstrates that John 12:1–8 is closely associated with the resurrection account of Lazarus by way of John 11:2. Dunderberg, "Zur Literarkritik," 562, compares John 11:55–57 with John 12:9–11 and concludes that John's depiction of the Jews coming to Jerusalem for the Passover bears resemblance to the description of the Greeks' later arrival in John 12:20–22. Lindars, *Gospel,* 415; and Sabbe, "The Footwashing in Jn 13," 299, argue in favor of a connection between John 12:1–7 and the foot-washing episode in John 13 in which table fellowship with Judas is again described. Sabbe especially notes many of the points of comparison between John 12:1–7 and John 13:1–30. These include an evening meal (δεῖπνον; 12:2; 13:2); the participle λαβών/λαβοῦσα, said of taking the perfume (12:3) and the towel (13:4); the repeated reference to the feet (τοὺς πόδας) to be anointed (12:3; cf. 11:2) or washed (13:5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14) and in both cases to be wiped (ἐκμάσσω, 12:3; cf. 11:2; 13:5); Judas protesting that the perfume could have been sold and given to the poor (12:5) or leaving supposedly to give to the poor (13:29), in both cases since he has the money box (τὸ γλωσσόκομον ἔχων, 12:6; ἐπεὶ τὸ γλωσσόκομον εἶχεν, 13:29). Though Sabbe helpfully explains the similarity of the Bethany episode and the foot washing as attributable to the washing and anointing of feet as "two components of one symbolic action," he concludes from this that Luke 7 underlies both accounts. He attributes the Passover references in both episodes (πρὸ ἓξ ἡμερῶν τοῦ πάσχα, 12:1; πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα, 13:1) to possible synoptic influence on John (p. 300). However, he does not note the similarity of the periphrastic participle (ἦν...ἀνακείμενων, 12:2; ἦν ἀνακείμενος, 13:23) used to describe those present with Jesus in both episodes because he concludes that the phrase in John 12:2 is evidence of Johannine redaction of Mark (p. 301). Also, his hypothesis of Johannine redaction of Luke and the association between foot anointing and foot washing in John 12 and 13 does not explain the points of comparison in the two episodes that concern the person of Judas.

[135] See Moloney, *John,* 357: "No doubt the Fourth Gospel depends on a tradition related to that of the Synoptics, but a direct literary dependence on either the Markan or Lukan accounts is difficult to prove"; and Fortna, *Gospel of Signs,* 149. German scholars likewise have questioned the helpfulness of such studies. See Josef Blank, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (4 vols.; Geistliche Schriftlesung 1a–3; Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1977–1981), 1/2:290, who writes: "Der Frage nach der gegenseitigen Beeinflusung und Anhängigkeit der verschiedenen Texte ist schwierig und umstritten." Recently Klaus Wengst, *Das Johannesevangelium* (ed. Ekkehard W. Stegemann et al; 2 vols.; HTKNT 4,1–2; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2000–2001), 2:46 n. 3, also concluded: "Die ausführliche Diskussion dieser Frage hat das Verstehen des vorliegenden johanneischen Textes öfter gehindert als gefördert." Regarding the limited consensus on the relationship between John 12:1–7 and the Synoptics, see Breytenbach, "*MNHMONEYEIN,*" 550. Most scholars today are prepared to say that John 12:1–7 is not dependent on the written form of an anointing in Luke. Beyond that agreement, however, little consensus on John's precise relationship to the synoptic anointing accounts can be found.

may well be coming full circle.[136] Second, the hermeneutical assumptions inherent in these studies have discouraged scholars in the past from reading the Gospel on its own terms. For many, the overriding impression that John's account of an anointing and wiping of Jesus' feet offers little in the way of an evident significance has handicapped their ability to see the text as meaningful in its present form.[137] In the end, the connections between John 12:1–7 and other portions of John that these very studies have identified remain unexplored.

More recent scholarly studies of John 12:1–7 have therefore contributed in concrete terms to these earlier studies of the anointing in John. One of their greatest contributions has come in pointing out that understanding the significance of Mary's anointing of Jesus in John presents a challenge to a 21st-century reader.[138] An action described in the text that seems opaque or "meaningless" for a reader today might not have been so for a reader of the first century. Studies of John 12:1–7 that have attempted to understand the text in either literary or sociohistorical terms have had the advantage of not *beginning* with the assumption that particular elements of the text are without meaning. They have instead allowed present-day readers to approach John 12:1–7 from a perspective informed by texts of likely importance to John's first-century readers.

A primary difficulty with the more recent study of John 12:1–7, however, has to do with the need for a greater sense of that which must guide the interpreter in assessing a text's potential

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[136] See Thyen, "Erzählung," 2024. Thyen's treatment of material in John related to the Bethany siblings assumes a relationship between John and the Synoptics akin to that conceived by 19th-century source critics such as H. J. Holtzmann.

[137] See Blaskovic, *Johannes und Lukas,* 164.

[138] I.e., the purity/impurity dynamic inherent in the sharing of a meal; the significance of a woman applying an abundant quantity of perfume to a male guest; the preparing of a corpse for burial with aromatic oil; the giving of alms to the poor in connection with the Passover celebration; pilgrimage to Jerusalem and ritual purification six days before the Passover; the loosing of hair by a woman as a sign of self-abasement; feet as a zone of purposeful action, etc.

for polyvalence. No clear or convincing standard for establishing which meanings of the text are worth considering and which are not has been in evidence.[139]

Present Opportunities for the Further Study of John 12:1–7

The more recent study of John 12:1–7 has offered both a fresh approach and an important contribution to the scholarly study of Jesus' anointing in John. No recent study of John 12:1–7 has been carried out with the scope and the interest of the present study. Neither has any recent investigation of John 12:1–7 offered a cogently articulated hermeneutical standard or guide for reading John 12:1–7 in terms of the final form of the Fourth Gospel, that is, in terms of John's own literary and theological interests. And though scholars have identified important themes running throughout the Fourth Gospel that reveal such interests, and though some have even touched upon how these themes emerge in the anointing episode, no one has considered John 12:1-7 in terms of a full range of appropriate sociohistorical questions. Nevertheless, a significant contribution to such an investigation, Craig Koester's *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel,* has been made of late. We now turn to the nature of Koester's contribution and the role it plays in the plan of the present study.

The Plan of the Present Study

Craig Koester's *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* presents a useful hermeneutic standard for investigating the Gospel's household theme. The present study will consider the importance

[139] Will this standard consist of a reconstructed history of events not elucidated in the text but which might possibly stand behind it, as suggested by the Synoptics (e.g., Daube)? Will it be largely defined by a single book or text "outside" the text in question (e.g., Song, in the study of Reynier), or the author's redaction or "midrash" of other texts (e.g., John's theological purposes in redacting the synoptic Gospels, according to advocates for literary dependence between Gospels)? Will the standard be a hermeneutical key construed by the wider literary context of the text under consideration (e.g., Coloe's emphasis upon Jesus as the fulfillment of the Jerusalem temple)? Will it be pieced together by analyzing the individual elements of the text and seeing where polyvalence overlaps (e.g., Manns)? Or will the hermeneutic for the text be found elsewhere?

of understanding the symbolic language of the Fourth Gospel that underlies this theme. It will then detail how Koester's threefold emphasis on literary, sociohistorical, and theological implications of the text benefits its own approach to John 12:1–7. Finally, recognizing the importance of scholars other than Koester who have contributed to understanding the Gospel according to its symbols, patterns of repetition, and the responses that its text evokes in its readers, this dissertation will describe an approach to understanding John 12:1–7 that highlights its important relationship to the latter half of the Gospel in general and the death of Jesus, in particular.

The study of the Gospel of John and of its symbols "takes us to a problem that lies at the heart of all theological reflection":[140] How are people to know and be gathered to God when God is "from above" and people are "from below"? "No one has ever seen God," declares the Gospel (1:18), for a cleft separates the human from the divine. Those who belong to the world are therefore incapable of comprehending the heavenly when the heavenly is present or expressed in unmediated terms. How are people to know and be gathered to God?

As the Gospel's story unfolds, its readers are given to know that people come to God and have fellowship with him through God's Son, Jesus. Jesus descends from above, crosses the chasm, enters this world, and takes onto himself this world's flesh and blood. He mediates God even as he bridges and reunites that which was formerly separated. It is at the Gospel's end, especially, that this bridging and reuniting work of Jesus takes place.[141]

The present nature of God's solution to this problem, however, is not without its difficulties. At the same time that Jesus has descended from above, come into the world, and

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[140] Koester, *Symbolism,* 1. For much of the introductory material that follows, see also ibid., 1–3.

[141] Though the present study understands the symbolism of John in the terms detailed by Koester and not by O. Cullmann, Jesus' principal role as "mediator" of "God's *entire* plan of salvation" is emphasized by Cullmann in his *Early Christian Worship* (trans. A. S. Todd and J. B. Torrance; Chicago: H. Regnery, 1953), 39.

taken on human flesh and blood, darkness continues to plague the world (cf. 3:19). The final (i.e., without remainder of any kind) implementation of God's solution to the human predicament, a solution that constitutes the final breach of the rupture between what is from above and below, has not yet come. In the interim, darkness continues to impede Jesus' mediation of the divine. God's very presence remains a "hidden" presence. It cannot be discerned "by appearances" (7:24). Faith is possible, but sight, at least for the present time, is not.

So "the Gospel presents the paradox that the divine is made known through what is earthly, and the universal is disclosed through what is particular."[142] That is to say, through Jesus the familiar and comprehensible (i.e., that which is of this world) becomes a vehicle for the divine. The Gospel's symbols bear a "tensive, dialectical quality that conveys transcendent reality without finally delimiting it."[143] Its testimony, given in symbolic terms, "is a vehicle for the Spirit's work; and it is through the Spirit that the testimony becomes effective, drawing readers to know the mystery that is God." But if God remains a mystery, then a defining hermeneutical standard or guide for comprehending his manner of conveying the heavenly by means of the earthly is as important now as it was for those of Jesus' day. Moreover, such a hermeneutical standard or guide is especially important for a study like this one, which sets out to understand the symbolism inherent in the Gospel's household theme.

Craig Koester's *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*

Koester has recently offered a hermeneutical standard or guide, not by focusing on John 12:1–7, but by focusing on the greater challenge of the symbolic language of all of the Fourth

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[142] Koester, *Symbolism,* 3.

[143] Ibid.

Gospel. Acknowledging that the Gospel's language cannot be treated adequately within the confines of any one discipline, Craig Koester has argued (as the present study has argued, and will argue) for a necessary approach to the Gospel involving careful consideration of the literary, sociohistorical, and theological issues important to it.

Literary Considerations Important to the Gospel. From a literary perspective, Koester builds upon the work of his many predecessors, "while giving renewed attention to the way we recognize symbols in the text, to the structure of the symbolism, and to its relationship to the literature of antiquity."[144] Each consideration proves to be an important one in the reading of the Gospel.

First, Koester defines Johannine symbolism. His analysis of elements in John's Gospel "that stand for something else" leads to a definition of a symbol in John as "an image, an action, or a person that is understood to have transcendent significance.[145] A symbol spans "the chasm between what is "from above' and what is 'from below' without collapsing the distinction."[146] Actions in John that function as symbols are said to include nonmiraculous actions as well as miraculous "signs." Because all symbols function similarly in the text regardless of their status, that is, because Jesus is at the heart of every symbol and every symbol says something about Jesus, Koester considers and gives equal time to all symbols. Some symbols are expressed in the form of metaphors or metaphorical statements.[147] Others are not, yet have something in common

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[144] Ibid., xi.

[145] Ibid., 4.

[146] Ibid., 5. Koester does not include abstract concepts (e.g., "life," "truth," or "freedom") in his definition of symbols because they "do not convey something of transcendent significance through something that can be perceived by the senses."

[147] In other words, one thing is spoken about in terms appropriate to another. The verbal expression of metaphors in John may occur in such a way that either both parts of the metaphor are present in a single sentence (e.g., "I am the bread of life") or an image is provided that becomes associated in the text with a particular referent (e.g., "out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water," where "living water" is understood to mean the Spirit [7:37–39]).

with metaphors.[148] As such, the symbol requires, in addition to an image and a referent, an interpreter to make the connection between the two. Ordinary images, actions, or personages in the text become symbolic when their interpreters perceive them as "[pointing] beyond themselves."[149]

Second, Koester describes how the reader is guided to recognize the presence of Johannine symbols. Textual elements of any part of John, either narrative or discourse, can be both symbolic and historical since the symbolic status of certain elements of John's Gospel in no way undercuts their claims to historical truth.[150] However, just because symbolism may be found in any part of John's Gospel does not mean that symbols are lurking everywhere. In every case, they can only be identified from their context.

Symbols that are easiest to recognize are expressed in the form of metaphors, since they are readily identifiable as incongruous when taken at face value. Sometimes characters in the narrative emphasize such incongruities (3:4; 4:11–12), making metaphors even easier to spot. The difficulty comes especially in identifying the symbolism of elements that are not central to

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[148] See Robert W. Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God: The Problem of Language in the New Testament and Contemporary Theology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 137: "Symbolism is metaphor with the primary term suppressed." See also Wai Yee Ng, *Water Symbolism in John: An Eschatological Interpretation* (Studies in Biblical Literature 15; New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 6–7, 28–30; David W. Wead, *The Literary Devices in John's Gospel* (Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt Kommissionsverlag, 1970), 73–74; Philip Wheelwright, *Metaphor and Reality* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1962), 92–99. Although Wead and Wheelwright see symbols as being formed from the repeated association of two ideas through the metaphorical process, Wheelwright distinguishes some symbols as less "stable" and perpetual than others. Contrast the strictly historical criterion for literary investigations as summarized by Ng, pp. 26–28 (citing Wead, pp. 12–29, 71–94) in which metaphor and symbol are essentially distinguished. Regarding the juxtaposition of familiar symbols in innovative ways to create new meaning for a variety of readers, see in addition to Koester, Ng, pp. 28–30; R. Wade Paschal Jr., "Sacramental Symbolism and Physical Imagery in the Gospel of John," *TynBul* (1981): 153; Wheelright, *Metaphor and Reality,* 78–86.

[149] Koester, *Symbolism,* 7, citing John Painter, "Johannine Symbols: A Case Study for Epistemology," *JTSA* 27 (1979): 33.

[150] See, e.g., Koester, *Symbolism,* 8: "Historically it seems certain that Jesus died on a cross, yet the cross became the primary symbol for the Christian faith."

the primary message of the text.[151] Such elements of the text might be interpreted as symbolic if a basis for this symbolism is given in the text (cf. 3:2, 3:19–21). Moreover, minor elements of a text may also "acquire symbolic overtones as part of a recurring cluster of images, or motif, that is related to core symbols elsewhere in the Gospel."[152] The symbolic nature of an action will often become apparent by the elements of incongruity that it exhibits.[153] Sometimes the symbolism implied by an action is reflected not only in the action itself, but also in the unusual choice of words used to describe it.[154] Finally, people in the Gospel may bear underlying traits that are shared with humanity either in general or specific groups.[155] Whether interpreting the significance of images, actions, or characters, the interpreter is encouraged to differentiate the almost certainly symbolic from that which is only possibly so.[156]

Third, Koester delineates the structure of Johannine symbolism.[157] Although Jesus has come from above in order to make known what he has heard from God, the divide separating God from man creates "interference" in every attempt at communication. The Gospel of John seeks to ensure that the basic message of Jesus is able to be heard by repeating similar ideas in as many different forms as possible. Although symbols may not always bear similar features, the

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[151] Ibid., 9. The example is given of Nicodemus being described as coming to Jesus "by night" (3:2). The detail seems insignificant when taken by itself, but the full symbolic force of the word emerges later when Jesus says, "the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (3:19–21).

[152] Ibid. Because Koester does not identify "household" as a motif, and since the association of the metaphor with core symbols elsewhere in the Gospel is difficult to demonstrate, the present study understands the concept not as a motif but as a theme.

[153] Mary's anointing of Jesus in John 12:1–7 is one such case.

[154] Koester, *Symbolism,* 11. Cf. John 13:4, 12 in light of John 10:17–18.

[155] Ibid., 12. Note, for example, that although the resurrection granted to Lazarus (11:43–44) is not the resurrection Jesus promised to all who believe, it is nevertheless described in such a way that it associates the historical Lazarus, who at Jesus' voice emerges from the tomb (11:44), with the dead who "will hear the voice of the Son of God . . . and live" (5:25; cf. 5:28–29).

[156] Ibid., 9.

[157] Cf. Koester's citation, *Symbolism,* 13, of Wayne Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," *JBL* 91 (1972): 48.

fundamental structure of all John's symbols is essentially the same: "The primary level of meaning concerns Christ; the secondary level concerns discipleship."[158] Regarding symbolic images, in some cases the image itself refers to Jesus while a particular aspect or effect of the image is applied to Jesus' followers.[159] In other cases the image is first applied to Jesus and second to his followers.[160] The same dual significance of Jesus' symbolic actions can likewise be demonstrated.[161]

Sociohistorical Considerations Important to the Gospel. Koester is concerned with the cultural context of John's symbols. He points out that John's symbols and the language with which they are conveyed are part of a cultural context, and understanding the Gospel's symbolism therefore means entering into that context.[162] When treating sociohistorical issues Koester challenges the notion that the community of John "was an introverted sect whose symbolic language would have been opaque to the uninitiated." He argues instead "that Johannine symbolism would have been accessible to a spectrum of readers, helping to foster a sense of Christian identity that was distinct from the world while motivating the Christian community to missionary engagement with the world."[163]

First, Koester describes what he calls the "dynamics" of Johannine symbolism. He

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[158] Koester, *Symbolism,* 13.

[159] E.g., the discourse on the vine and the branches, John 15:1–8.

[160] E.g., the image of the seed that falls to the ground and dies, applied first to Jesus (12:23–24) and secondly to his followers (12:25–26).

[161] A good example of this movement can be found in the episode of the foot washing in John 13. Koester, *Symbolism,* 14 n. 24, points out that although many interpreters have concluded that each interpretation of the foot washing reflects a different redactional level, the movement from Christology to discipleship in this pericope is of a piece with the rest of John. The structure to Johannine symbols that Koester identifies suggests that the anointing at Bethany is significant for two reasons: one, because it reflects something significant about *Jesus'* person and work, and two, because it also signifies something about the nature of what it means to follow Jesus.

[162] Ibid., 15. I.e., into the broad cultural matrix of the Greco-Roman world as well as the more particular ethnic and religious heritage that would have defined the first readers/hearers of the Gospel.

[163] Ibid., xi. See also p. 18 and George W. MacRae, "The Fourth Gospel and *Religionsgeschichte,*" *CBQ* 32 (1970): 14–15, 20–24.

demonstrates that the text of John evokes a cluster of associations for John's readership that arise from a wide variety of sources. One of these sources is the reader's own personal life experiences.[164] A second source is the reader's own particular ethnic and religious heritage, which for John's first-century readership would have consisted in texts such as the Jewish scriptures or Greek literature and philosophy. A third and most important source is the context of the Gospel of John itself. Associations arising from these various sources are evoked on both cognitive and affective levels. The text of the Gospel appropriates and transforms both cognitive and affective associations that readers bring to the text, ultimately defining them in terms related to Jesus and his crucifixion.[165]

Second, Koester offers a description of the spectrum of Johannine readers. Though many have argued that the Fourth Gospel constitutes a "closed system of metaphors" and "an enchanting barrier" that "advertises a treasure within and yet seems designed to make the treasure all but inaccessible" to newcomers,[166] Koester argues that "the final form of the Gospel presupposes a *spectrum* of readers who came from various backgrounds and approached the text from somewhat different points of view." It would have been "accessible to the less-informed readers yet sophisticated enough to engage those who were better informed."[167] Through these observations, as well as literary and historical studies of John that point to a varied readership that may have developed over time, Koester demonstrates the likelihood that John would have

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[164] Although the personal experiences of John's first-century readers are impossible to know with certainty today, this dynamic of John's symbolism is important for distinguishing associations brought to the text of the Fourth Gospel by *21st-century readers* from those brought to the text by the Gospel's *first-century readers.* So it is helpful for establishing the evangelist's theological and literary intentions.

[165] Koester, *Symbolism,* 16–17.

[166] Ibid., 18, citing Meeks, "Man from Heaven," 68; and David Rensberger, *Johannine Faith and Liberating Community* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988), 137. Contrast the model of an essentially closed community from the model of a "resocializing" community depicted by Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science,* 7–15. In the latter, though the language of John at times appears "diffuse, roundabout, and metaphorical," when read on its own terms it is "direct and forceful," "doing service in the construction of a new interpretation of reality" (15).

[167] Koester, *Symbolism,* 18.

been understandable by a Jewish, Samaritan, and Greco-Roman readership. His emphasis upon a spectrum of readers is an important one because "by asking how the Gospel could communicate with this spectrum of readers, we may better discern how it can continue to engage others along the reading spectrum, including the most diverse audience of all: those who read the Fourth Gospel today."[168]

Theological Considerations Important to the Gospel. In terms of theological emphases of the Fourth Gospel, Koester gives "special attention to the Johannine presentation of Jesus' death." He stresses "the centrality of the cross for understanding symbolic language throughout the Gospel."[169]

First, Koester reckons with the challenge of interpreting Johannine symbols in terms of the theological interest of the Gospel. Symbols are not to be unmasked as if they convey only one well-defined meaning. They possess an expansive, multifaceted character that, though able to speak to a wide variety of readers, nevertheless presents challenges to interpretation. So "interpreting a Johannine symbol involves identifying and explicating the various dimensions of meaning conveyed by the image,"[170] especially as this arises from the Gospel of John itself. Symbols can mean a number of things—yet they cannot mean just anything. The interpreter will identify false understandings of an image or action, as the *narrative* emphasizes these understandings. Often characters that speak out of ignorance or improper motives will be the key to making these kinds of determinations.[171] At other times, the distinction between true and false interpretations of a symbol will not be as readily obvious. Two criteria will ultimately determine

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[168] Ibid., 24.

[169] Ibid., xi.

[170] Ibid., 24.

[171] Judas' reaction to Mary's anointing represents a mistaken interpretation of her action that must be considered in determining the significance of the anointing in John 12:1–7.

which interpretations are viable and which are not: (1) the interpretation must make disciplined use of the literary context in which the symbol appears ("The symbol must be assessed in light of its immediate literary context, its development within the Gospel as a whole, and its relationship to other symbols in the Gospel"[172]); and (2) the interpretation must take into consideration the social and cultural setting in which the Gospel was composed.

Second, Koester reckons with the ever-present tension between the meaning of symbols and their mystery. Ultimately the Gospel of John becomes meaningful when its isolated parts are seen in relationship with one another in such a way that they integrate the associations brought to the text by its readers. Symbols are one means by which the evangelist brings potentially discordant elements into relationship with one another.[173] Still, even as symbols contribute to the overall coherence of the Gospel of John, they resist full explication.[174] Because of the chasm that separates that which is above from that which is below, there is always a distance between the two domains. "Symbolic language provides a way to span the distance," but it always does so "without collapsing the distance."[175] It might be said that through symbols the mystery of God is encountered but never fully comprehended. In the end, interpreters can identify a symbol's literary function, its sociohistorical context, and the ways it interacts with its readers but "verification can come only from God's side of the divide . . . . No one comes to know God in

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[172] Ibid., 26–27. Cf. pp. 76–77; James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean? Principles of Interpretation in a Post-Modern World* (2d ed.; St. Louis: Concordia, 1998), 158–63. In the case of symbolic actions, Koester emphasizes the role of discourse in the narrative to elucidate meaning. He also emphasizes allusions to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection appearing in connection with each of the symbolic actions that are narrated in the Gospel of John. "The interpretive relationship moves both ways: Jesus' death and resurrection disclose the significance of his earlier actions, and his earlier actions help readers discern the meaning of his passion" (p. 77).

[173] Ibid., 27. Cf. Voelz, *What Does This Mean?* 164. Jesus as the fulfillment/replacement of the Passover victim (1:29; 19:36) and the focus upon the salvation history of Israel resolves the tension between Jesus as one who dies "on behalf of the people" (11:49–50) and one who nevertheless willingly "lays down his life" (10:18).

[174] Cf. Koester, *Symbolism,* 28, citing Culpepper, *Anatomy,* 183: There is still "a residual mystery that escapes our intellects."

[175] Koester, *Symbolism,* 28.

faith unless he or she is 'drawn'; and from a Johannine perspective that must be done 'from above.'"[176]

The Value of Koester's *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* to the Present Study.

Koester does not focus on the Fourth Gospel's household imagery. Though he recognizes the possible perlocutionary function of symbols to promote unity and community among early readers of the Fourth Gospel,[177] he does not venture to take up the essentially different task of investigating household or family imagery as a main theme of this Gospel.[178] This is so primarily because of Koester's focus on "core symbols" (that is, primary symbols that recur, are found in the most significant contexts of the narrative, and contribute the most to the Gospel's message)[179] as an organizational strategy for his treatment of symbolism in the Fourth Gospel. Core symbols are based on images readily understood by the five senses, such as water, bread, and light.[180] By contrast, the Gospel's household theme does not revolve around any single overriding image but encompasses a nexus of imagery comprised of terms like "father," "mother," "son," "brothers," and "children." Koester does spend some time with the Gospel's supporting symbols, even symbols that are connected to the Gospel's household theme by the related topic of "community,"[181] but he does not attempt to conduct a comprehensive study of them. This leaves

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[176] Ibid., 31.

[177] Ibid., 247–86.

[178] Regarding the family imagery as the "main imagery" of the Gospel upon which a host of symbols is based, see Van der Watt, *Family,* 266.

[179] See Koester, *Symbolism,* 5.

[180] Ibid., 4.

[181] For example, in describing Jesus' cleansing of the temple (2:13–23) as a "symbolic action," Koester points out that the crucified and risen Jesus is the new place where the community of God is to be identified. The crucified and risen Jesus became the place where God made his name or glory to dwell and would serve as a unifying symbol for God's people as the Jerusalem temple had done, in earlier days (cf. ibid., 87–89). Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus about being born from above, Koester notes, reveals that the visible anchor point for faith and new birth is the cross (3:14–16; cf. ibid., 184). After Jesus heals the invalid at Bethsaida and defends his action even though it occurs on the Sabbath (5:18–20), Koester demonstrates that Jesus invokes the language of a

room for others to say more.[182] The present study will therefore supplement Koester's work and go where Koester has not gone.

The importance of Koester's contribution is not what he has to say regarding John 12:1–7 or the Gospel's household theme.[183] Rather, it is his elucidation of a necessary standard or guide for reading the Gospel and interpreting its symbols. The present study shall attempt to follow Koester's hermeneutic and apply it in its interpretation of John 12:1–7.[184]

What guides the reader and serves as a standard for interpreting John 12:1–7? First, Koester's hermeneutic focuses upon both the sociohistorical and narratological context of the Gospel's household imagery. Both are of fundamental importance for determining a symbol's theological significance. Second, Koester recognizes the universal significance of John's symbols and demonstrates that the narratological context of these symbols is fixed, but he admits that different readers are likely to interpret the symbolic language of the Fourth Gospel in different ways. Readers will understand the Gospel's symbols not only according to their own unique heritage, but even in accordance with their own individual experiences. Third, Koester interprets the Gospel's symbolic actions in accordance with the crucifixion of Jesus. As the

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household when Jesus refers to himself as a son who does his father's work (ibid., 92; 288–90). When Jesus washes the disciples' feet (13:2–10), Koester points out, he is bringing them into an abiding relationship with himself (ibid., 132.) The action points ahead to the crucifixion of Jesus, by which Jesus gathers "all people to himself" (12:32), an image that Koester uses to explain John's portrayal of Joseph and Nicodemus (cf 19:38–42; ibid., 229–30) and the community of faith signified by the mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple (19:25–27; ibid., 239–44).

[182] Koester recognizes that John's Gospel was written "in and for a community of faith" (ibid., 247). While he defends this suggestion in credible terms, he does not offer a comprehensive attempt at describing the Gospel's interest in communal matters.

[183] Ibid., 127–30. Koester isolates the symbolic action of the anointing as the primary symbol to be investigated from this text and analyzes (1) the literary and sociohistorical context of the anointing (thus, the likely associations brought to the text by the reader); and (2) the tripartite structure of the text and, thus, the perspective of Jesus, which the reader identifies as ultimately defining for the text. In interpreting the significance of the anointing for the person and work of Jesus, Koester notes that together with the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem that follows, John 12:1–7 points to Jesus as king.

[184] Because Koester's study focuses upon the development of core symbols and major motifs in the Gospel of John, his work is not focused upon the detailed analysis of individual passages such as John 12:1–7. The present study will utilize Koester's approach to understanding the symbols of the Fourth Gospel but adapt it for the specific task of elucidating the household theme in John 12:1–7.

climax of the Gospel of John, the crucifixion of Jesus is the key to unlocking not only the Gospel's symbolic actions but also many other symbols or symbolic themes.

How the Present Study Will Therefore Proceed

Others besides Koester have done much to point in the direction of a useful methodological procedure for analyzing the Gospel's evident interest in a household theme. Gail O'Day has pointed out the lasting impact of R. Alan Culpepper on all who undertake to understand the narrative of the Fourth Gospel.[185] In addition to Culpepper's relatively brief treatment of Johannine symbolism,[186] others besides Koester have put forward helpful insights for unlocking the significance of the figurative language in the Fourth Gospel.[187] Less central to the argument of the present study, yet no less crucial for interpreting the anointing episode from within the context of the Fourth Gospel, is Mark Stibbe's focus upon the Gospel's use of repetition.[188] Such an emphasis is especially helpful for understanding recurring "echoes"[189] of the household theme throughout the Fourth Gospel in general and echoes of the anointing episode in the latter portion of the Fourth Gospel (cf. 13:1–30; 19:38–42). Finally, recent investigations of the Fourth Gospel that focus on the response to the Gospel by its readers have highlighted the evident desire of the Gospel to lead its readers to affirm its values (cf. 20:30–

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[185] Gail O'Day, "'I Have Said These Things to You . . .': The Unsettled Place of Jesus' Discourses in Literary Approaches to the Fourth Gospel," in *Word, Theology, and Community in John* (ed. John Painter et al.; St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2002), 143.

[186] Culpepper, *Anatomy,* 180–98.

[187] Cf. Charles H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953); Wead, *Literary Devices*; and Ng, *Water Symbolism.*

[188] See Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, 29, 102–5; cf. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 73–75, 88–89; David R. Beck, *The Discipleship Paradigm: Readers and Anonymous Characters in the Fourth Gospel* (BibInt 27; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 51–53.

[189] Regarding the role fulfilled by narrative echoes of the Gospel of Luke that occur in the book of Acts, see Robert Tannehill, "The Composition of Acts 3–5: Narrative Development and Echo Effect," *SBL Seminar Papers 1984* (SBLSP 21; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984), 237–40.

31).[190] The Fourth Gospel, when read in light of its household theme, leads its readers—whether readers of the first-century or the present day—to identify with characters in the text who are depicted as people ultimately gathered to the household of God through Jesus' death.

So the present study will build on the work of others who have identified a household theme in the Gospel of John. It will not only investigate the nature of this theme in the anointing episode, but will also consider how the echoes of the anointing episode in the portion of the Gospel that follows elucidate the significance of Jesus' death. It will follow the example of others who have undertaken the task of defining the Gospel's figurative language, especially insofar as this language impacts the narrative for a variety of readers. In the end, it will put forth sociohistorical, literary, and theological considerations to demonstrate that John 12:1–7 depicts a household gathered by Jesus. This household anticipates the new household of God that Jesus gathers through his death.

With the hermeneutical standard of Koester as its guide, the present study will turn to the matter of offering a scholarly study of John 12:1–7. Focusing on both the narratological and sociohistorical context of the Bethany anointing, the chapters that follow will seek to establish the following:

- In chapter 2, it will seek to establish that even without reference to the greater literary and theological interest of the Fourth Gospel, a Greco-Roman reader of the first century, especially one acquainted with a Jewish worldview, would have related much of the suggestive detail of John 12:1–7 to the ancient theme of a household.

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[190] See especially Culpepper, *Anatomy,* 205–11, for his explanation of Rabinowitz's "ideal narrative audience." See also P. P. A. Kotzé, "John and Readers-Response," *Neot* 19 (1985): 50–56; Francis J. Moloney, *Belief in the Word: Reading the Fourth Gospel, John 1–4* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 18–21; Mark W. G. Stibbe, *John's Gospel* (ed. John Court; New Testament Readings; London: Routledge, 1994), 6–31; and Beirne, *Women and Men,* 26.

- In chapter 3, it will seek to establish that the narrative that follows John 12:1–7, especially John 13:2–30 and John 19:38–42, serves to recall John 12:1–7 and its interest in the ancient theme of a household.[191]
- In chapter 4, it will seek to establish that John 12:1–7 is the first in a series of six days (Nisan 10–Nisan 15) that culminated with the Jewish Passover celebration on Friday, the day on which all work is accomplished. The circumstances surrounding the first "day" of this week (Nisan 10) foreshadow especially the beginning (13:2–30) and the end (19:38–42) of the day of Jesus' crucifixion (John 13–19). Thus, John 12:1–7 depicts Jesus as one whose intention is to die in order that he might gather unto himself a new household of God.
- In chapter 5, it will offer summary conclusions. The significance of Jesus for the community gathered to him at Bethany will be specified. The Gospel's perlocutionary interest in including John 12:1–7 in its narrative will also be identified, in order that the same interest might inform any present-day reader's effort to find modern significance in the text.

Expectations of the Present Study

Plausibly argued, the present study is certain to offer an important, independent contribution

[191] Koester's contribution to the task of the present study, that is, his description of a hermeneutic for discerning a household of God gathered to Jesus in the anointing that anticipates a new household of God gathered to Jesus through his death, is further elucidated by Robert Tannehill, "Composition," 237–40. Tannehill identifies framing and foreshadowing features of Acts similar to those found in John 12–19 and understands these features of the text to (1) persuade the reader; (2) emphasize key themes (cf. Koester, *Symbolism,* 9); (3) associate the person of Jesus with that of his followers (cf. Koester's "primary" and "secondary" structure of Johannine symbols, *Symbolism,* 13); (4) hold the reader's interest by allowing him or her to form/revise expectations of events yet to occur in the narrative; (5) point to important developmental changes or distinctions to be made in the narrative; (6) preserve a sense of unity and purpose in spite of significant changes; and (7) encourage the interaction among characters and actions in the reader's own experience, including especially the reader's understanding of symbols that expand in meaning as the narrative develops. For the application of these insights to a specific portion of John's Gospel (i.e., John 18), see Stibbe, *John as Storyteller,* 29, 102–4.

to the scholarly study of the Gospel. No suggestion of a new theology for the Gospel *as a whole* will be offered. No new understanding of the literary devices of the Gospel *as a whole* will be suggested. Rather, the focus of the present study will be the extent to which the evangelist was both willing and able to select and arrange the material of his narrative in the service of an end that is both literary and theological in kind. The focus of the present study will be the high degree to which the anointing forms an integral part of the narrative of the Fourth Gospel, especially in the Gospel's latter half. It will be concluded that the evangelist selected and arranged the material in this latter portion of his Gospel so as to highlight the people gathered at Bethany in John 12:1–7 as members of a household that anticipates a new household gathered by Jesus upon his death. The "livelihood" of this household, that which gives birth to it, gathers its members, and preserves its community is intentionally related by the evangelist to the work of Jesus himself upon the cross, especially as this work is modeled and explained in Jesus' farewell discourse. Since the Gospel of John desires the reader to include him- or herself in this household, echoes of the anointing episode in the latter portion of the Gospel encourage the reader to imagine further scenarios in which he/she would also live as a member of God's household. Therefore, the role of the evangelist and of the beloved disciple to link the testimony of the cross to both first-century and modern-day readers so that "you also might believe" (19:35), will be considered. In all, the anointing episode plays a very important role in the development of the Fourth Gospel's household theme. John 12:1–7 depicts a community gathered by Jesus, which anticipates the new household that Jesus gathers through his death.

In order to begin a reading of the Bethany anointing episode that fully considers the significance of the Gospel's household theme in John 12:1–7, the present study will now consider the socio-historical context of John's depiction of the anointing. We turn our attention

to reading the anointing in light of texts that would have been of important religious or cultural significance for the Gospel's first-century readers.

CHAPTER TWO

JOHN 12:1–7 AND THE ANCIENT HOUSEHOLD THEME

The present chapter will begin to explain the key role that John 12:1–7 plays within the Fourth Gospel by investigating the text in light of the socio-historical context of the first-century Mediterranean world. Even without reference to the greater literary and theological interest of the Fourth Gospel, a first-century reader of the Mediterranean world, especially one acquainted with a specifically Jewish world view, would have related much of the suggestive detail of John 12:1–7 to the ancient theme of a household. That John 12:1–7 contributes to the Fourth Gospel's interest in a household theme is not readily apparent to a present-day reader. In order to consider the full range of possible associations available to a first-century reader, the present chapter will examine 12:1–7 verse by verse, identifying elements or groups of elements in each that have to do with a first-century understanding of "household."

John 12:1

John 12:1 begins with reference to the setting of the anointing, associating this with the person of Lazarus, resurrected at Bethany, and with the imminent arrival of the Passover. "Then,[1] on a sixth day before the Passover,[2] Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus, the man who had

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[1] The use of οὖν continues the narrative but shifts to the resumption of the story line focused upon Jesus as the agent of the action ended at John 11:54 (cf. 4:6 and 11:54). See BDAG, s.v. οὖν, 2.a; BDF, 234–35 (§ 451); V. S. Poythress, "The Use of the Intersentence Conjunctions De, Oun, Kai, and Asyndeton in the Gospel of John," *NovT* 26 (1984): 327–28; and R. Buth, "Οὖν, Δέ, Καί, and Asyndeton in John's Gospel," in *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis* (ed. D. A. Black; Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 147–48.

[2] Regarding the unusual phrase Πρὸ ἓξ ἡμερῶν τοῦ πάσχα, consult BDAG, s.v. ἡμέρα, 2.c; Stanley Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1999), 171; and BDF, 114 (§ 213). Bultmann,

died,[3] whom Jesus had raised from the dead,[4] was." The twofold emphasis involving (1) the resurrection of Lazarus and (2) the week preceding the Jewish sacrifice and consumption of the Passover in Jerusalem (cf. 11:55–57) constitutes an emphasis that would have likely evoked important associations with households for the Gospel's first-century readers.

The Resurrection of Lazarus: A Household Restored

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus comprise a single household (cf. 11:1–2), which, according to the patriarchal and androcentric orientation of the first century, would have perceived Lazarus to

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John, 404, translates "six days before the Passover," yet allows for the possibility that the evangelist is counting inclusively (cf. n. 5). For a discussion of the issue in connection with early Jewish chronologies, see Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology: Principles of Time Reckoning in the Ancient World and Problems of Chronology in the Bible* (rev. ed.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998), 78. $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$ reads πέντε, which was later corrected by a scribe who placed superior dots over the πέν-, and, having scraped out the -τε then wrote in ἕξ. For a description of the manuscript, see Gordon Fee, *Papyrus Bodmer II (P66): Its Textual Relationships and Scribal Characteristics* (SD 34; Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1968), 59. The exact number of days before the Passover, and so the precise day of the month of Nisan, appears to be the issue. The reference in this papyrus to Jesus' arrival five days before the Passover can be explained by a scribe attempting to be faithful to readers who might have been unfamiliar with an inclusive manner of reckoning the days. Similar scribal changes are in evidence elsewhere in John. In John 20:26, for example, the variant to "after eight days" reads "on the first day of another week," according to sy^{s}. Those who understand the evangelist's chronology of John 12:1 according to an inclusive manner of reckoning the days include J. N. Sanders and B. A. Mastin, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. John* (BNTC 4; London: Adam & Charles Black, 1968), 283; Frédéric Godet, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John* (3 vols.; trans. M. D. Cusin; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1892–1912), 3:48; and Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 104 (cf. n. 46).

[3] For a detailed treatment of the issues surrounding either the retention or omission of the reading ὁ τεθνηκώς, see Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas*, 153 n. 196. As listed by Dauer, $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$, A, D, Θ, Ψ, families 1 and 13, 33, $\mathfrak{M}$, $it^{b.d.f.ff2}$, lat, $sy^{s.h}$, ac, ac^{2}, bo support ὁ τεθνηκώς. ℵ, B, L, W, a few manuscripts of the Majority text, $it^{a.aur.c.e.r1}$, $sy^{p.pal}$, sa, and pbo lack it. Vogels includes the longer reading in his *Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine*; von Soden brackets it in his *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (see NA^{27}, 758). While it is conceivable that the longer reading may have been a gloss inserted by a scribe in order to associate the risen Lazarus in John 12 with the man called forth from the tomb in John 11:44 (cf. the readings available for 11:21, 39, 41; contrast 19:33), it is more likely that ὁ τεθνηκώς would have been omitted from the passage at a later time, due to the explanatory nature of ὃν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν Ἰησοῦς. As Fee, *Papyrus Bodmer II*, 99–122, explains, $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$ does not add explanatory glosses to names against the "neutral texts" of John's Gospel so as to explain a person's identity, although other opportunities to do so are easily identified (e.g., neither $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$ nor D are among the manuscripts that add Σίμωνος to describe Judas at 12:4). Though the majority of commentaries read with the text of NA^{27}, few, if any, defend this decision. Contrast Dauer, *Johannes und Lukas*, 379; Godet, *Commentary*, 3:51; and Fortna, *Gospel of Signs*, 149–50. The present study likewise argues in favor of retaining the reading. Regarding this translation of the substantival perfect participle, consult BDAG, s.v. θνήσκω, 1; cf. BDF, 177 (§ 345).

[4] Cf. the evangelist's threefold manner of describing his characters: John the Baptist (1:6), Nicodemus (3:1), Judas (12:4), and Thomas (20:24).

have been its head.[5] No mention is made in the text of the siblings' parents. There is no indication that any of them have children, are married, or cohabit with extended family. In the absence of a father who would have served as head of the household, Lazarus, the sisters' brother, would have been seen by a first-century reader as serving in this capacity (cf. 1 Macc 2:65).

Lazarus's illness and death, however, invite first-century readers to consider his household in a new light. The household changed in the course of the narrative of John 11 in two important ways. (1) The sisters are portrayed in a manner that reflects their status as survivors of the household: they send for Jesus (11:3), meet him outside the village (in Martha's case, unaccompanied; cf. 11:20–27) and are the focus of the mourners' attention, being accompanied by them to the tomb of Lazarus (11:32).[6] Their independence from all other characters in the narrative (except Jesus himself) has been noted by modern readers who have observed the Fourth Gospel's depiction of women in light of the literature of the first-century Mediterranean world.[7] (2) Jesus' role as provider of the household increases. His aid to the sisters in their time of need is requested with their reminder that he is a friend of the family (11:3; cf. 11). But this "friendship" is accompanied by a recognition that Jesus is also both "master" (11:3, 21, 27, 32, 39) and "teacher" (11:28). Ultimately, he grants life to Lazarus and the household of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, first introduced at the beginning of John 11, is restored.

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[5] Nothing in the text of John 11 suggests that Lazarus, Mary, and Martha make up a community defined by fictive, rather than actual kinship, and so resemble a celibate Essene community as suggested by Timothy Ling, *The Judean Poor and the Fourth Gospel* (SNTMS 136; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 177, 194. So as to emphasize Lazarus, Mary, and Martha as people embedded within a family structure, the evangelist repeatedly makes mention of their sibling relationships (11:1, 2, 3, 5, 19, 21, 23, 32) even when such specification appears redundant (11:28, 39).

[6] Regarding this behavior as unconventional for a woman of the first-century, see Fehribach, *Women,* 95.

[7] Representative of those who understand the evangelist to be portraying women in a positive manner that defies the prevailing convention of the day is Colleen M. Conway, *Men and Women in the Fourth Gospel: Gender and Johannine Characterization* (SBLDS 167; Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1999), 136; contrast Fehribach, *Women,* 20, who sees the evangelist as exploiting first-century social conventions in its depiction of women so as to communicate a theological message.

How would a first-century reader have likely interpreted these events? If two unmarried women such as Mary and Martha had lost their only male relative, they would have ceased to have existed as a household. A first-century reader would therefore have understood the independent actions of Mary and Martha depicted in John 11 as having been borne out of necessity. According to the patriarchal orientation of such readers, the sisters' behavior would have arisen out of a lack of a father, brothers, or sons to act on their behalf. In losing their brother, the sisters would have also lost their financial and social livelihood.[8] Jesus not only raises a man to new life; he restores an entire household that had perished.

Accordingly, the name of the family's hometown ("Bethany," or "House of the Poor," 12:1) indicates a household for those who would be otherwise bereft of household and so without financial or social means of their own.[9] The understanding of what it meant to be poor in the first-century Mediterranean world reveals an important insight into the name "Bethany." This first-century context suggests a reason for the repeated mention of the city's name in John 12:1.[10]

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[8] Regarding the status of women in the first-century Mediterranean world as embedded within families that were headed by men, see especially Kathleen E. Corley, *Private Women/Public Meals: Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 1993), 55–57; Tilborg, *Imaginative Love*, 171; Bruce Malina, *New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (3d ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 48, 158–59; and Pomeroy, *Godesses,* 150–63. A particular and important manifestation of the need for a male figure in an οἶκος in the Hellenistic world appears in the laws of inheritance that required single women to marry so as to retain ownership of property received upon the death of a father (see Andocides, "On the Mysteries," in *Speeches* 1.117–19). Limited freedom to dispose of property appears to have been granted to some women living during the period in question, but Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 57, conclude that "this custom was a rare exception in ancient Mediterranean societies, and of course, as with all Roman family law, necessarily applied only to Roman citizens."

[9] Bethany is one of many place names in the Fourth Gospel containing the Hebrew word for a household: "Beth-" (בית). A total of fifteen cities or specific locales are mentioned by name. Five of these are associated with the Hebrew word for house: Bethany ("House of the Poor" beyond the Jordan, 1:28; cf. 10:40), Bethsaida ("House of the Fisherman," 1:44; cf. 21:1–11), Bethlehem ("House of Bread," 7:42), Bethzatha/Bethesda ("House of Olives"/House of Outpouring" or "House of Mercy" 5:2) and the Bethany of our text. Cf. Jesus' allusion to Bethel ("House of God") in John 1:51 (cf. Gen 28:10–22).

[10] Perhaps more than any other Gospel, the Fourth Gospel, in specific instances as indicated by the text, invites its readers to understand Hebrew place names in a symbolic manner. Though the evangelist occasionally translates Hebrew or Aramaic into Greek (cf. 1:38, 41, 42; 9:7; 20:16), and for this reason it is often argued that many of John's first-century readers would not have understood the Semitic languages, a familiarity with these languages on the part of other readers is not precluded. Indeed, the evangelist also translates some place names in the opposite direction, from Greek to Aramaic (19:13, 17). The Fourth Gospel also describes a multilingual

For the first readers of the Fourth Gospel, "the poor" would not only have been members of a social class, that is, those who suffered from monetary privation, as the term is commonly used and understood today. Rather, the term was a designation that encompassed those who suffered from any kind of misfortune that would have required God's rescue, whether physical, financial, or social.[11] In the Synoptic Gospels, those said to be πτωχός suffer not merely from financial hardship; most often they are those who, according to a variety of circumstances (including, but not limited to physical illness, emotional distress, and financial need), now await eschatological rescue (cf. Matt 5:3; 11:5; 19:16–30; Mark 10:17–31; Luke 4:18–21; 6:20; 7:22; 14:15–24; 18:18–30). Even though the sisters do not seem to suffer from financial poverty at the time of their brother's death,[12] without their brother Lazarus, theirs would have been a household impoverished, the embodiment of those who were πτωχοί. Because their plight is the plight of the impoverished, and because Jesus is the savior of the poor, their hometown, Bethany, is indeed the "House of the Poor."[13] For this reason, Judas's feigned interest in the poor (12:4–6) is contrasted powerfully with that of Jesus who alone provides in necessary terms not just for Lazarus and his sisters but also for all of Bethany, the community of the poor. The setting and

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inscription over the cross which is said to have been offered in Greek, Aramaic, and Latin (19:20). This interest in other languages besides Greek suggests that, for at least some of the Gospel's first-century readers, Hebrew and/or Aramaic were not without possible meaning. More importantly, the evangelist himself appears to have been acquainted with both Hebrew and Aramaic, and the Fourth Gospel demonstrates on more than one occasion that its place names are to be understood symbolically (cf. 9:7; 19:17). It is therefore not unreasonable to suggest that, while not every place name in the Fourth Gospel is to be necessarily interpreted in this manner, in specific instances the Fourth Gospel certainly seems to feature its place names in support of a kind of emblematic signification.

[11] The Greek vocable, especially in the New Testament, and its Aramaic equivalent in the Qumran literature often refer to anyone who is in a position to depend on divine resources. Cf. BDAG, s.v., πτωχός; Ernst Bammel, "πτωχός," *TDNT* 6:892–97, 901. See also 1QH[a] VI, 3-6 and 1QM XIV, 7. Otto Betz, "Jesus and the Temple Scroll" in *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 77–78, considers the possibility that Bethany was a place of quarantine for lepers and other social outcasts who were unable to live within the city of Jerusalem. Bethany was east of Jerusalem, a location identical to the place of quarantine for the poor and unclean as prescribed by the Temple Scroll (11QT[a] XLVIII, 14–15). Cf. Ling, *Judean Poor*, 177.

[12] Burial in a family tomb (cf. 11:17, 38) suggests that the sisters were from a family of means. This status is reinforced later by the quantity and quality of the substance that Mary uses for the anointing (12:3).

[13] Compare John 1:28 with the emphasis upon another kind of foot service in John 1:27.

circumstance of the household of Lazarus therefore focuses upon Jesus who, also dying and rising, will complete and gather a household. What follows in the text elaborates on the theme.

A Household Gathers for an Imminent Passover

A second aspect of John 12:1 directly related to the ancient theme of a household has to do with the text's reference to the imminence of the Passover and to the customs that would have been associated with the celebration of the feast. Two points are important in this regard: (1) Passover was a festival at which households would have gathered for the sake of celebrating the rescue and establishment of the House of Israel, and (2) a sixth day before the Passover (Nisan 10),[14] the day upon which the Passover Lamb was known to have been set apart for slaughter by each household of the House of Israel (cf. Exod 12:3), would have served to define the beginning of a week during which households would have gathered at the Jerusalem temple for rites of self-purification (11:55–57).

Passover was a festival for and about households.[15] The ancient celebration of the feast

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[14] Unless specified otherwise, the present study will refer to days associated with Passover according to a chronology in which days are understood to begin and end at sunset, following the Jewish custom of the mid to late first century CE. For details regarding the custom, see further ch. 4, pp. 158–62. The month of Nisan, the time when Passover was observed, is referenced repeatedly in the Old Testament and elsewhere as the first month of the year (Esth 3:7; Josephus, *Ant.* 3.248; cf. Exod 12:1). Regarding its association with March and April, see Jeremiah Unterman and Paul J. Achtemeier, "Time," *HBD* 1152.

[15] Though the present study focuses especially on the individual households that would have celebrated the Passover feast together, the importance of Passover for corporate Israel as the household of Yahweh should not be overlooked. A helpful discussion of the issue is presented by Arthur Trumbull, *The Threshold Covenant* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), 204–18. Trumbull (pp. 211–12) writes that "according to Jewish traditions, it was on a Passover night when Jehovah entered into a cross-over covenant with Abraham on the boundary of his new possessions in Canaan (Gen 15:1–21). ...It was at the Passover season that the Israelites crossed the threshold of their new home in Canaan.... The protection of the Israelites against the Midianites, and the Assyrians, and the Medes and the Persians, and again the final overthrow of Babylon, all these events were said to have been at the Passover season.... These traditions would seem to show that the Passover covenant was deemed a cross-over covenant, and a covenant of welcome at the family and the national threshold....[Passover] was recognized as the rite of marriage between Jehovah and Israel; as the very Threshold Covenant had its origin in the rite of primitive marriage. That first Passover night was the night when Jehovah took to himself in covenant union the 'Virgin of Israel,' and became a Husband to her. From that time forward any recognition of, or affiliation with, another God, is called . . . 'adultery,' or 'fornication.' In this light it is that the prophets always speak of idolatry" (see Exod 34:12–16; Lev 17:7, 20:5–8; Num 15:39, 40; Deut 31:16; Judg 2:17, 8:27, 33; 2 Kgs 9:22, 23; 1 Chr 5:25; 2 Chr 21:11; Ps

was explained in terms that emphasized the selection of a lamb for individual households (cf. Exod 12:3–4, 27). Documents closer to the period of the first-century found an even greater place for the association between the Passover celebration and the individual household than what can be seen in Deuteronomy.[16] At the time of Philo, for example, the restriction of the meal to male adults at the temple was lifted, and the meal was celebrated once again in the midst of individual, Jewish households.[17] This focus on the participation of households and the pilgrimage of families to Jerusalem for the Passover is evident also in the New Testament (Luke 2:41–49) and is mentioned by Josephus.[18] Such an emphasis upon the family context and interest of the feast only would have increased for the Jews after the temple's demise.[19]

The gathering of Jewish households for the celebration of the Passover would have begun at the time marked by John 12:1, that is, on "a sixth day before the Passover." The day would have been important for two reasons: (1) Nisan 10 signaled the beginning of a week-long ritual observance of self-consecration at the temple (cf. 11:55–57) which for some may well have begun prior to Nisan 10, and (2) Nisan 10 had an anticipatory significance for Jewish households preparing themselves for the sacrifice and consumption of the Passover (cf. Exod 12:3).[20]

Nisan 10 defines the beginning of a week-long period that would have included the

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73:27; 106:38, 39; Isa 57:3; Jer 3:1–15, 20; 13:27; Ezek 6:9, 16:1–63, 20:30, 23:1–49, Hos 1:2, 2:2, 3:1, 4:12–19, 5:3,4; 6:6, 7, 10).

[16] See, e.g., Deut 16:7, which prescribes not only the slaughter but also the consuming of the Passover sacrifice within the sanctuary. Regarding the removal of the restriction of the ceremony to adult males and the enlargement of the sanctuary to the city of Jerusalem, see J. B. Segal, *The Hebrew Passover: From the Earliest Times to AD 70* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 240.

[17] See especially Philo, *Spec. Laws* 2.148.

[18] Josephus notes that women partook of the Passover meal together with their families, though menstruating women would have been barred from the feast as ritually unclean. See *J. W.* 6.423–26.

[19] Regarding the status of the Passover as a "family meal," especially after the destruction of the temple, see Paul Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 65.

[20] See further ch. 4, pp. 147–51.

activity of self-consecration by Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem. Such purification rituals would have required as much as a seven-day residence in the vicinity of Jerusalem by Jerusalem pilgrims to remove even the most severe form of ritual uncleanness: contact with a corpse or tomb accidentally made on the way to Jerusalem.[21] These rituals would have been required for all individual members of Jewish families.[22] While temporary residence in and around Jerusalem with blood relations was not a requirement of the festival, most Jerusalem pilgrims would have been accommodated by family or extended family relations, if living in the Jerusalem vicinity.

Nisan 10 marked also the day that adult males were first circumcised in Canaan in preparation for a first Passover there (Josh 4–5). At that time, the Lord demonstrated that "the reproach of Egypt" had been rolled back from the house of Israel (Josh 4:19–5:12, esp. 5:9).[23] Even if the Passover lamb was no longer set aside in the first century by Passover worshippers on Nisan 10, the date in the context of self-purification would have been an identifiable one to readers of the Fourth Gospel familiar with Jewish practices associated with the feast.

The day had an even greater significance for households arriving as pilgrims to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem. Specific references to Nisan 10 and to its anticipatory significance for households preparing for the Passover are to be found in Philo, Josephus, and the rabbis.[24] General knowledge of the practice among Greek-speaking Jews of the first century can also be demonstrated.[25] Among the Samaritans each household's selection of the lamb on Nisan 10 is a

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[21] Josephus (*J.W.* 6.290) affirms that the directive for Jerusalem pilgrims to arrive in the city one week ahead of time for ritual cleansing was indeed practiced by festival-goers in the second-temple period of the first-century.

[22] See Exod 19:10; Num 19:14–21. Cf. Num 9:6–7, 13–14; Acts 20:16, 21:17, 24–27; Josephus, *J.W.* 1.229. See also Segal, *Hebrew Passover*, 140–45.

[23] Parts of this passage were likely read in Jewish synagogues in the late first century. See Gale Yee, *Jewish Feasts and the Gospel of John* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1989), 55.

[24] For the reference to Philo, see Segal, *Hebrew Passover*, 31. See also Josephus, *Ant.* 2.311. Though it follows the period in question, see also the rabbinical literature (e.g., *m. Pesah.* 9:5).

[25] See, e.g., the work of the dramatist Ezekielos, cited by Segal, *Hebrew Passover*, 24.

practice observed even today.[26] Even as late as the third century CE, a week-long observance of the Christian Passover would have begun on Nisan 10, for on this day "Judas was paid for his betrayal" and "so it was as though Jesus had already been seized on that day, in fulfillment of the Pentateuchal requirement to take a lamb on the tenth day of the month and keep it until the fourteenth (Exod 12:3, 6)."[27] So a Passover "week" in John seems to correspond to an early-Christian observance in Egypt and Syria of a week-long fast begun on Nisan 10 and extending through the Christian Passover of Nisan 15.[28] "A sixth day before the Passover" evokes Nisan 10, the day that Jewish households would have set aside and kept a lamb in preparation for its eventual sacrifice and consumption on a subsequent "sixth day."[29]

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[26] Segal, *Hebrew Passover*, 253, citing J. E. H. Thomson, *The Samaritans: Their Testimony to the Religion of Israel* (London: Oliver & Boyd, 1919), 141.

[27] Paul F. Bradshaw, "The Origins of Easter," in *Passover and Easter: Origin and History to Modern Times* (ed. Paul F. Bradshaw and Lawrence A. Hoffman; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 88.

[28] Regarding the early-Christian observance of Passover and the accompanying fasts that would have eventually extended from around Nisan 10 to 16 in the third century, see the *Didascalia Apostolorum* 5.18–19.1. For commentary on its development, see also Benjamin Wisner Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1918), 420; Bradshaw, *Origins of Christian Worship,* 181; and Thomas J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year* (New York: Pueblo, 1986), 31; 168.

[29] Those who understand "a sixth day before the Passover" in John 12:1 as a reference to Nisan 10 include Hilgenfeld and Bauer, as cited by Godet, *Commentary,* 3:49; Bacon, *Fourth Gospel,* 420–21; M. Weise, "Passionswoche und Epiphaniewoche im Johannes-Evangelium: Ihre Bedeutung für Komposition und Konzeption des Vierten Evangeliums," KD 12 (1966): 51–53; Schuchard, *Scripture*, 137; and Charles Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1992), 183, who concludes that such an understanding of 12:1 "would fit the evangelist's Passover lamb symbolism." Stanley Porter, "Can Traditional Exegesis Enlighten Literary Analysis of the Fourth Gospel? An Examination of the Old Testament Fulfillment Motif and the Passover Theme," in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel* (ed. C. A. Evans and W. R. Stegner; JSNTSup 104; Sheffield, Eng.: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 416, writes: "The author makes sure that the reader understands Jesus' anointing as following on from Caiapahas's words and in anticipation of Jesus' death in Jerusalem, when he depicts Jesus as stating that the purpose of Mary's action was to prepare Jesus' body for burial (v. 7). Thus Jesus is further depicted as the Passover victim being prepared for sacrifice."

John 12:2

John 12:2 continues to describe the text's setting by focusing on the people and circumstances of the gathering: "Accordingly,[30] they made a dinner[31] for him there, and Martha was serving, and Lazarus was one of those who were reclining (at table) with him." The gathering is (1) centered on an evening meal and (2) is focused in John 12:2 on Martha and Lazarus in particular. It will become clear as the pericope progresses that though the gathering is comprised of multiple households (disciples and Jesus, family of Lazarus, Bethany community), the group would have been seen by first-century readers as constituting a single, greater household. In the midst of this greater household, Martha and Lazarus are singled out by the evangelist as conducting themselves in a manner expected for members of a household in Jesus' day.

A Dinner at Which Many Households Gather as One

Many households are gathered together in Bethany. Jesus is present with his disciples.[32] The family of Lazarus is present. Even the wider community of Bethany, a village comprised of multiple households, is represented (12:1). Therefore, "they" in v. 2 recalls not only the family of Lazarus but every other family of Bethany that would have been present.[33] Not just Lazarus and

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[30] Οὖν indicates a consequence of Jesus' arrival in Bethany in the form of a response on the part of the community there. For this use of the conjunction in John, see BDAG, s.v. οὖν, 1.a; and Buth, "Οὖν, Δέ, Καί," 148. See also the translation of Beasley-Murray, *John*, 202.

[31] Elsewhere in John's Gospel, δεῖπνον is only used of Jesus' final supper with his disciples (13:2, 4; 21:20). Regarding the translation "dinner," see BDAG, s.v. δεῖπνον, 2.

[32] Though Jesus' disciples are not explicitly mentioned in John 12:1–2, the presence of Judas in John 12:4–6 indicates that when Jesus arrives in Bethany they are present with him (cf. in similar terms 2:13–22; 6:1–3). Regarding Jesus and his disciples as constituting a household, see further this chapter, pp. 91–92.

[33] Note the evangelist's use of the indefinite plural in John 12:2. For a brief treatment of the indefinite plural, see Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 402–3. Use of the indefinite plural here encourages the reader to associate the preparing of the feast with the Bethany community in John 12:1, though the family of Lazarus is featured the most prominently in John 12:2. For a similar understanding of the text, see also Godet, *Commentary*, 3:50. Though many understand the location of the anointing in John 12:1–7 to be the home of Lazarus' family (see especially Blank, *Johannes*, 1/2:291), others, such as

his sisters but a greater "house of the poor" hosts the meal prepared for Jesus and is said to have made the meal for him (12:2).

Though no explicit mention is made in the text to suggest that the community described in these opening verses constitutes a single household, the specific setting for the episode involves an activity that typifies what a single household would have done: recline at table for an evening meal. Several aspects of the setting contribute to the implicit depiction of a single household rather than an assortment of guests gathered for a formal dinner: (1) No head of the household is mentioned; but Jesus is clearly the focus of the gathering, for the dinner is served in his honor. The lack of any specificity regarding a single host for the dinner emphasizes Jesus at the center of the gathering and the common activity of all other participants who would have prepared, served, or reclined at table. (2) The presence of Martha and Mary, together with the imminent Passover, suggests that the meal would have had the intimacy of a family gathering rather than the formal air of a banquet or symposium[34] at which men and women might have been more strictly segregated.[35] Both the "reclining at table"[36] and the circumstances of Jesus'

Ridderbos, *Gospel*, 414; and Sanders and Mastin, *Commentary*, 283, note that nothing in the text of John's Gospel explicitly identifies the house where the gathering takes place.

[34] At formal meals, the period following the serving of the meal that was dedicated to entertainment and conversation.

[35] For an overview of the issue see Corley, *Private Women*, 68. Some have concluded from a more exclusive study of later, third-century rabbinical texts that Jewish women were strictly segregated from meals at which men were present (e.g., Leonard Swidler, *Women in Judaism. The Status of Women in Formative Judaism* [Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1976], 125; and Leonie Archer, "The Role of Jewish Women in the Religion, Ritual and Cult of Greco-Roman Palestine," in *Images of Women in Antiquity* [ed. Cameron and Kuhrt; rev. ed.; London: Routledge, 1993], 273–87). But the Jewish custom of including women and children at family gatherings such as the Passover meal is emphasized by Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 60 and Corley, *Private Women*, 69–71. Such customs may have conceivably caused Jewish women to appear "sexually promiscuous" in the eyes of their non-Jewish Greco-Roman counterparts.

[36] For a more detailed explanation about the customary posture for dining which was practiced throughout the Mediterranean world, see D. E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist: The Banquet in the Early Christian World* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 18. Regarding especially the reclining of Jewish households at the time of the Passover, see Cathleen Corley, *Private Women*, 69; G. H. R. Horsely, 'Reclining at the Passover Meal,' *NewDocs* 2 (1982): 75. See also John 6:11; 13:23, 28. For later rabbinical teaching on the subject, see *m. Pesah.* 10; and *b. Pesah.* 108a.

prior visit to Bethany (11:17–44) indicate that this δεῖπνον would have been a celebratory or festive dinner.[37] A shared meal would have been understood by the peoples of the first-century Mediterranean world as a sign of mutual fellowship, acceptance, and community reflecting a common bond akin to the attachment between members of a family.[38] Through the meal, existing relationships between individuals would have been strengthened.[39] Thus altough no clear indication of a single household is made explicit, the Bethany community, comprised of multiple households preparing and serving an evening meal and reclining at table with Jesus would have been viewed by a first-century reader as a community resembling an even greater household.

Lazarus and Martha: First-Century Members of a Household at Table

Accompanying the focus on Jesus as the center of the gathering, two members of a family whose identity and relationship to Jesus has already been featured in John 11 are featured again in John 12:2: Lazarus and Martha. Special attention is therefore to be paid to the role that these two characters play in John 12:1–7.

As Martha serves at table, the household to which she belongs is featured doing what would have been customary in Jesus' day. Indeed, "meals in antiquity were rather strictly and hierarchically regulated and to wait at the table in a household was a task for those at the bottom, i.e., slaves or women"[40] (cf. 1 Tim 5:9–10). Therefore, and because an ordinary household in

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[37] See also John 13:2–4, 30. Regarding the evening setting of the δεῖπνον elsewhere in literature of the period, see especially Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (2d ed.; 2 vols.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1988), 1:252; and Smith, *Symposium,* 21–22.

[38] Regarding the sharing of a meal together as a way of establishing or maintaining bonds of kinship in the first-century Mediterranean world, see Smith *Symposium*, 10; and Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary,* 207–8; Bruce Malina, "Mediterranean Sacrifice: Dimensions of Domestic and Political Religion," *BTB* 26 (1996): 28.

[39] As for the bond of love between Jesus and the family of Lazarus already described in John 11, see especially John 11:3, 5, and 36.

[40] See Turid Karlsen Seim, "Roles of Women in the Gospel of John," in Aspects on the Johannine Literature: Papers Presented at a Conference of Scandinavian New Testament Exegetes at Uppsala, June 16–19, 1986 (ed., Lars

Jesus' day would likely not have owned slaves, the gathering at Bethany draws on the women of the community to serve their honored guest.[41] Though the significance of Martha's table service is variously interpreted in modern scholarship,[42] a first-century reader would not necessarily have seen it as symbolic. Martha's action is best understood as service for those at table, at an informal dinner, and it would have been an appropriate occupation for a member of the household.

Likewise, Lazarus too, as "one of those who were reclining at table with him," is featured doing nothing more than what would have been customary, especially for male members of a first-century household. Indeed, while the sharing of a meal in the Mediterranean world of the first century would not have erased all forms of social stratification, it would have concretely represented a kind of social parity for those partaking of it together. It was considered proper table etiquette for all who were reclining together at table to be treated equally, despite their differences in rank. For this reason, it is significant that the anointing episode, at which the

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Hartman and Birger Ollson; ConBNT 18; Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell International, 1987), 73. A. Lemonnyer notes (1) that the rabbinical prohibition against a man being served by women of any age would have come considerably later than the period of the Fourth Gospel, and (2) in any case, this prohibition did not extend to women serving within the context of the household. See his "L'onction de Béthanie: Notes d'exégèse sur Jean 12:1–8," *RSR* 18 (1928): 109.

[41] According to the general perception of what would have constituted a household in the first-century Mediterranean world, households extended beyond blood relations to include servants or slaves. The classic definition of an οἶκος, originating with the legislation under Drakon, king of Athens (7th c. BCE), extended to slaves. For a detailed discussion of the issue, see K. Kapparis, "Women and Family in Athenian Law," n.p. [cited 14 September 2006]. Online: http://www.chs.harvard.edu/discussion_series.sec/athenian_law.ssp/athenian_law_lectures_2.pg.

[42] It is significant that unlike John 11, where Martha's primary household association is repeatedly described in terms of her sibling relationship with Lazarus and Mary (e.g., 11:1, 5, 28, 39), here her household identity is described more directly in association with Jesus. Regarding those who see in this presentation of Martha connotations associated with specific ministerial offices, see, e.g., Martin Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus* (JSNTSup 71; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 212–13; Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 330; and Sandra M. Schneiders, *Written,* 107–8. Those who understand Martha's service mainly in connection with her "confession" in John 11:40 and thus see her as symbolic of a more general discipleship, include Fehribach, *Women,* 110; and Seim, "Roles of Women," 72–73. For R. G. Maccini, *Her Testimony Is True: Women as Witnesses according to John* (JSNTSup 125; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 177–78, Martha's activity is not symbolic, either for a particular ministerial office or for a more general attitude of discipleship.

resurrected Lazarus and the cross-bound Jesus recline together, is the first time in the Gospel of John that Jesus himself is explicitly depicted as eating with anyone.[43] The dead man now living (12:1) reclines at table with the living man about to die (12:7).

John 12:3

An action both customary and extraordinary then follows in John 12:3: "Then Mary took[44] a (Roman) pound of perfume,[45] of genuine[46] precious spikenard,[47] anointed Jesus' feet, and

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[43] Though it might be argued that Jesus eats at the wedding feast in John 2:1–11, at Cana the focus is upon Jesus' provision of wine, rather than his reception of food and drink. John 4:31–38 describes a scene where Jesus rebuffs the food offered to him by his disciples. John 6:1–15 describes Jesus' provision for, rather than his eating together with, a multitude.

[44] The participle λαβοῦσα is idiomatic (pleonastic). See BDF, 216 (§ 419).

[45] No precise word exists in the English language for this Greek vocable. Since perfume in Jesus' day was oil rather than alcohol based, it is perhaps best explained as "fragrant oil." An emphasis on the fragrant, rather than the healing or hygienic properties of this oil are foremost in Jn 12:1–7, thus we translate "perfume" rather than "ointment" (cf. Exod 30:25; Song 1:3, 4:14; Jer 25:10 [LXX]).

[46] See BDAG, s.v. πιστικός; and BDF, 62 (§ 113.2). The meaning of this word is variously translated either as "genuine," derived from the noun πίστις, or as the Greek form of the Latin *spicatum*, or as the transliterated word for "pistachio tree" (in Aramaic, פיסתקא), or as the name of the East-Indian plant Nardostachys Jatamansi (picçita). Though the former option is somewhat problematic since there is no indication that the word would have been understood to mean this at the time the Gospel of John was written, the present study translates according to this sense.

[47] The present study concludes that "spikenard" (νάρδος) would have occurred in the received text and translates accordingly. Regarding the presence of the variant reading, cf. Reuben Swanson, ed., *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus–John* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 169. Νάρδου is omitted in the original hand of $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$, D, and the majority of Old Latin witnesses yet is retained in all other witnesses, as it is in the corrected $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$. It should be noted, however, that in D, in addition to the omission of νάρδου, the order of μύρου and πιστικῆς is reversed from what is found in the other manuscripts. This results in λείτραν πιστικῆς μύρου πολυτίμου. Though the variant reading in the original hand of $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$ could be explained by parablepsis with μύρου, the inverted order of πιστικῆς μύρου in D and the Old Latin has forced scholars to explain this variant reading by focusing either on (1) possible literary relationships between the Gospels or (2) the vocable πιστικῆς as a Greek transliteration of Aramaic. C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 163, summarizes the former possibilities by stressing the variant reading as either (1) original, in which case Matthew and John do not have a literary relationship with Mark and $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$ later added in—though imperfectly—what was needed so as to harmonize with Mark or (2) secondary, with the omission in Codex Bezae of νάρδου in John and reconfiguration of πιστικῆς πολυτελοῦς in Mark constituting assimilation to Matthew. A second explanation centers upon the possible transliteration of the Aramaic name for the perfume into Greek. If πιστικῆς is understood to refer not to the modifier "genuine" but rather to a type or trade name of the perfume that was unfamiliar to later scribes and translators, the addition—not omission—of νάρδου is accounted for. Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3d ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 224–25 suggests that D and the Old Latin manuscripts contain a phonetic rendering of the Aramaic פיסתקא, the word for pistachio nut or tree, which when used as a modifier of μύρου would refer to *myrobalanum*, the main ingredient for nard perfume. The use of *unguentum pistici* in the Old Latin would be a precise parallel of the Aramaic *mura pistaqa*, a term which might have been unfamiliar to the Latin translator and rendered as the adjective πιστικός or *pistici*, meaning "genuine." Barrett,

wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume." Foot service was a customary activity in the first-century households of Jesus' day. The extraordinary manner with which Mary anoints Jesus' feet at the supper at Bethany relates to the household theme in two important respects: (1) Mary's anointing, though analogous to the customary washing of feet as a gesture of hospitality and welcome to a first-century Mediterranean household, nevertheless deviates from this more every-day, public convention of attending to feet. (2) Her anointing emphasizes instead an extraordinary use of perfume which, for readers of the first century, would have been a reflection of her deep reverence for Jesus and would have signified a household relationship between herself and Jesus.

A Household Anointing Both Customary and Extraordinary

Mary's application of perfume to Jesus' feet should first be understood in the context of what was customary for people performing foot service upon others in the first-century Mediterranean world.[48] After all, in preparation for a household meal, foot service among the

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Gospel, 343 recognizes this possibility, yet concludes that John's use of πιστικός, meaning "genuine" and modifying νάρδου stems from the evangelist's own ignorance of the term's original meaning and his dependence on Mark. Fee, *Papyrus Bodmer II,* 74, seems to place slightly more emphasis on the shorter, "Western" readings, judging that the corrected $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$ of John 12:3 "if not necessarily secondary, [is] probably in the interest of preserving an 'easier' or full text" which Fee judges to be typical of the corrector. The present study finds the missing vocable in $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$ is easiest to explain as a result of parablepsis due to homoeoteleuton with μύρου. Also, the tendency of Codex Bezae to harmonize Mark to Matthew seems compelling reason to assume that something similar is happening here. Though they deal neither with the likelihood of parablepsis in $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$ nor assimilation to Matthew in the case of Codex Bezae, a recent examination of the textual issues involved in either the inclusion or omission of νάρδος may be found in Philip E. Esler and Ronald Piper, *Lazarus, Mary and Martha: Social-Scientific Approaches to the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2006), 165–77.

[48] Therefore, the present study will not attempt to interpret the anointing in John 12:3 in the context of either (1) occasions in which aromatic oil or perfume would have been mostly self-applied, or (2) the Synoptic Gospel accounts of an anointing at Bethany (Matt 26:7; Mark 14:3). For a reading of John 12:3 that compares Mary's anointing of Jesus to the eschatological self-anointing narrated in LXX Isaiah 25:6–8, see Mohr, *Markus- und Johannespassion,* 132–34 (cf. 2 Sam 12:20–23; 14:2; Jdt 16:7; Matt 6:17). Understanding Mary to be fulfilling a sacerdotal role indicative of a women's apostolate in the early church is Elizabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, xiv; and Tina Beattie, "A Discipleship of Love," *The Month* 30 (1997): 171–75. By way of contrast, the present study will emphasize the manner of Mary's foot service as extraordinary. This foot anointing is not likely to have been regarded as a "commonplace" gesture that would have supplanted "a more radical" anointing of Jesus' head. In support of this understanding of the anointing, see Reynier, "Le Thème," 208–9.

peoples of the first century was quite expected and consisted in either guests washing their own feet (with water provided by the host), or a slave or woman of the household performing the task after the guests' entrance to the house and prior to the meal (cf. Luke 7:44). Occasionally the foot washing was followed by the application of aromatic oil.[49] On rare occasions, foot washing might have been undertaken "by a loved one" of the household, but these would have been "in cases of deep love or extreme devotion."[50] Though this attention to feet would have simply been a matter of good hygiene, in the domestic setting it was customarily a courtesy provided by a host so as to welcome a guest to the fellowship of the household.[51]

Mary's act also *deviates* from the more customary in several important respects: (1) Mary's is not a foot washing, but a foot anointing, carried out not before but either during or after the meal had been eaten (12:2–3);[52] (2) Mary uses a full Roman pound of perfume on Jesus' feet, much more than ever would have been ordinarily used for practical purposes following a foot washing;[53] and (3) Mary wipes off the perfume with her hair, despite the fact that even the public loosing of a woman's hair, let alone the use of it for wiping perfume from a man's feet, might have been an action considered self-abasing for a Jewish woman of the first century. Such anomalies suggest that the anointing is to be understood symbolically, as an extraordinary action which signifies something beyond the practical, everyday significance of an ordinary foot

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[49] Regarding the ordinary customs surrounding foot washing in the first century, see Thomas, *Footwashing*.

[50] Ibid., 42.

[51] See, e.g., Hultgren, "Johannine Footwashing," 541. See also ch. 3, pp. 116–17 and 120–22.

[52] In distinction from the washing and occasional anointing of feet before the meal, which would have been customary. The use of the imperfect in John 12:2 would seem to indicate that the meal was already underway when the anointing took place.

[53] A Roman pound would have equaled approximately 12 ounces, or 327.45 grams. John's usual method of indicating amounts or measurement is by introducing the number of pounds, hours, stadia, etc. with the comparative particle ὡς (compare, e.g., 1:39; 6:10, 19; 11:18; 19:14, 39; 21:8). That he makes λίτραν the object of the verb and the head noun of what follows suggests that λίτραν is more than a mere measurement; it is an entity which itself is of special significance or emphasis.

anointing. As these three extraordinary features of the anointing are examined in closer detail, the significance of the anointing will begin to emerge. The reader is first invited to understand the anointing in association with the interaction between Mary and Jesus, an interaction based not on discourse but narrated actions. For a first-century reader such actions could have been understood in a variety of ways. But underlying almost any likely interpretation of a first-century reader would have been some association with the household concept prevalent at that time.

The Gospel narrates first a foot anointing that is out of the ordinary because it occurs independent of a foot washing. The customary matter of washing a guest's feet before the meal has presumably already occurred;[54] and the anointing takes place once the guests are reclining at table and the meal has already begun. The peculiar timing of this foot anointing has been noted in recent, scholarly study of the anointing,[55] though precisely what the timing alone would have signified is not clear. All the reader knows for sure is that more is going on than merely a demonstration of hospitality or the practice of good personal hygiene, as would have been the case had the text told of a customary foot washing. The narrative simply states the fact of Mary's anointing with an economy of descriptive detail; it does not elaborate on the significance of the action. This forces the reader to make tentative guesses as to the significance of the anointing. For a reader of the first-century Mediterranean world, the prospect of a woman applying aromatic oil to the feet of a man already reclining at table could have been strongly suggestive of

[54] Regarding the custom of washing feet before a meal, see Luke 7:44.

[55] Evidence that a foot anointing with perfume in the midst of a meal would have been contrary to convention can be found in Petronius, *Satyricon,* 70. Scholars of the Fourth Gospel who have noted the unique significance of an anointing that occurs independently of a washing in of John include Bultmann, *John*, 415; Weiss, "Foot Washing," 313 –14; and M. Sabbe, "Footwashing," 299. Sabbe considers the anointing in John 12 in conjunction with the footwashing in John 13 and describes both actions as "two components of one symbolic action." Thomas, *Footwashing,* 48, though he treats the anointing of feet as if it would have occurred in connection with foot washing, does not consider the significance of applying perfume to the feet as an independent action.

a romantic encounter.[56] It could also have demonstrated Mary's devotion, the devotion of one who is a faithful servant or slave, to one who has already been welcomed by the household as the guest of honor.[57] As other descriptive details in the text emerge, Mary's action takes on even more possible connotations. The unconventional timing of the anointing demonstrates it to be symbolic of something, but the gospel's readers are left with no clear indication as to what the anointing signifies regarding Mary and her relationship to Jesus.

The second extraordinary feature of the anointing is the amount and quality of the perfume that Mary uses for the anointing, a detail suggesting that Mary conducts herself as if Jesus were now the head of her household. A Roman pound (λίτρα) would have been much more than what was needed for the task of anointing one person in the customary manner. Spikenard,[58] which originated in India and was imported to Mesopotamia, would have been a precious commodity. A first-century reader would not have been surprised by Judas's reaction to Mary's use of the perfume.[59] Together, both the quality and quantity of the perfume constitute an astonishing financial expense on the part of Mary's household. In light of Mary's gender, these would have been an expense comparable to the value of a dowry.[60] Since a woman's dowry would have been

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[56] Cf. Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists,* 12.78 and Corley, *Private Women,* 78. Among those who perceive the anointing of John 12:1-7 in these terms see Craig Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel: Issues and Commentary* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2001), 177; Morris, *Gospel,* 512; Corley, *Private Women,* 105; and van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love,* 196 and 198.

[57] See Homer, *Od.* 19.308; Plutarach, *Pomp.* 73.6–7.

[58] For a detailed study of spikenard (νάρδος) based on the Septuagint, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, and rabbinical literature, see F. Manns, "Lecture symbolique," 95–101. Manns notes especially the association between spikenard and the tree of life in Paradise, and incense used for sacrifice in the Jerusalem temple. Spikenard is believed to have been indigenous to East India and was imported to the Middle East, which would have accounted for its great value. See Michael Zohary, *Plant Life from the Bible* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 205.

[59] The value of the perfume, 300 denarii (12:4), would have been the rough equivalent of a year's wages for an average day laborer in the time of Jesus.

[60] For other examples of the value of aromatic oil in antiquity, see 2 Kgs 20:13, Isa 39:2; Ezek 27:17. Regarding the implicit economic considerations of Mary's action, see especially Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12–21,* (NAC 25B; ed. E. Ray Clendenen; Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2002), 38; Keener, *Gospel,* 2:864. For an explanation of the dowry custom as it would have existed after the first century, see also Julius Preuss, *Biblical and*

her insurance against financial insolvency should a husband later die or divorce her, Mary's disposal of this property implies an extraordinary sufficiency as mistress of the household.[61] Her giving over of this property to Jesus implies that Jesus, not Lazarus, is now head of her household.[62] Readers know Mary to be a sister living in the house of her brother and understand that she is not an actual bride or wife of Jesus. But the unexpected feature of the anointing, when viewed in the context of the first-century Mediterranean world, highlights Mary as one beloved by Jesus, and so one who is lovingly devoted to Jesus. The focus on the perfume as a costly and valuable family treasure results in the anointing symbolizing Mary as a symbolic bride of Jesus. The reader must continue reading to the end of the pericope to see whether or not this imagery continues to be supported in the narrative.

A final extraordinary feature of the anointing comes with what Mary does once she has applied the perfume to Jesus' feet: she wipes it off with her hair. Both Mary's action of wiping the perfume from Jesus' feet, as well as the use of her hair, would have been considered quite out of the ordinary by a reader of the first century. Both actions indicated that Mary is behaving like a servant or slave, although the reader knows her to be neither.

Precisely how the image of Mary anointing Jesus' feet and wiping his feet with her hair is to be understood in its first-century context is a matter of dispute. Some commentators try to make sense of the wiping by understanding it outside a focus on the text's socio-historical

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Talmudic Medicine (trans. and ed. Fred Rosner; New York: Sanhedrin Press, 1978), 372–74: "The *Mishnah* decrees that, as part of the dowry, a husband must pay his wife ten *denars* for her *kuppa,* the perfume basket, *kuppa shel besamim*... According to Rabbi Judah ben Baba, since the destruction of Jerusalem, as a sign of national mourning, women should no longer use [nard]; for this *folium* is considered to be 'expensive oil,' *shemen tob*." Regarding the specific connotations of wife/bride and husband/ bridegroom implicit in Mary's action, see Fehribach, *Women,* 100–101.

[61] Cf. 1 Tim 5:14. Regarding the management of household funds by women in the first-century Mediterranean world, see Osiek and Macdonald, *A Woman's Place*, 151, citing Plutarch, *Advice to the Bride and Groom* 140C, 141D, 141F, 142B.

[62] Cf. Epictetus, *Diatr.*, 2.10.7.

context.[63] Others seek to understand Mary's action in light of its likely significance for the Gospel's first-century readers, shifting their focus away from the reason for Mary's wiping off the perfume to how her behavior would have likely been received and understood, yet they focus exclusively on the somewhat ambiguous image of Mary's loosened hair. Loosened hair[64] for a woman of Jesus' day could have either signified that a woman was young and unmarried[65] or that she was mourning the death of a loved one.[66] In unambiguous ritual contexts, a woman's unbound hair could also indicate devotion, humility, and thankful veneration to a deity.[67] Each of these interpretations highlights various important aspects of the narrative: Mary certainly appears to be unmarried, her behavior will later be associated by Jesus with his own burial preparation, and the reader, who knows Jesus to be God (cf. 1:1, 18), would understand if her gesture would be more fitting for a god than an ordinary man. The problem with each of these interpretations

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[63] For example, some scholars understand Mary's wiping action to be a realistic attempt to use up excess perfume resulting from this generous offering (and thus an indication of the lavish quantity of perfume used). Cf. Lemonnyer, "L'onction de Béthanie: Notes d'exégèse sur Jean 12:1–8,"108 (quoting Lagrange); Reynier, "Le Thème," 211. Others suggest that Mary's use of her hair to wipe off the perfume, and so remove it, offers prophetic announcement of Jesus' imminent resurrection. See R. H. Lightfoot, *St. John's Gospel: A Commentary* (ed. C. F. Evans; Oxford: Clarendon, 1956), 237–38. Some who understand the wiping off of the perfume as a prophetic announcement of Jesus' burial see the action as performed unconsciously by Mary. Cf. Benedetto Prete, "Un'aporia Giovannea: Il Testo di Giovanni 12,3," *RivB* 25 (1977): 372–73; and Charles Giblin, "Mary's Anointing for Jesus' Burial-Resurrection (John 12:1–8)," *NTS* 73 (1992): 560–64. Still others understand the wiping as symbolic of Mary's love for Jesus and her desire to attach the fragrance of the soon-departed Lord to herself. Coakley, "Anointing," 252, cites the following interpretation by Theodore of Mopsuestia: "For it was as if the woman planned this so as to attach the fragrance of our Lord's flesh to her body. For she took care that she should always be with him: she did this in her love so that if she should come to be separated from him, by this she could suppose he was with her still." The majority of modern commentators fail to engage the question at all and simply explain away the matter of Mary's wiping by claiming the description of the wiping to be the result of textual corruption. See especially Legault, "Application," 131–41.

[64] The above terminology includes either the unbinding of braided hair or removing of the veil, both of which would have had to take place for Mary to wipe Jesus' feet.

[65] For the emphasis upon loosened hair as a sign of an unmarried woman, see Coakley, "Anointing," 250 n. 51; Fehribach, *Women,* 90–1; Charles H. Cosgrove, "A Woman's Unbound Hair in the Greco-Roman World, with Special Reference to the Story of the 'Sinful Woman' in Luke 7:36–50,' *JBL* 124 (2005): 681–82. The later rabbinical view is summed up in Preuss, *Talmudic Medicine,* 365–66. See, however, the critique of this interpretation for understanding the anointing in the Fourth Gospel by B. P. Robinson, "Anointing," 101.

[66] Regarding this particular custom of the bereaved, see Lev 10:6; van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love,* 198; and Cosgrove, "Unbound Hair," 683–84. Though Mary's loosened hair does not yet appear to the reader to indicate bereavement on her part, Jesus' interpretation of her action in 12:7 demonstrates that it will.

[67] See Cosgrove, "Unbound Hair," 679–81.

for understanding John 12:3, however, is that they address neither (1) the socio-historical significance of Mary's *wiping* Jesus' feet with her hair or (2) the specific circumstances for the anointing that are detailed in the text.

The significance of wiping with one's hair and the circumstances of the anointing suggest that Mary, though she is clearly neither a slave nor a prostitute, nevertheless presents herself to Jesus in a manner befitting a slave and thus in a manner that would have ordinarily been self-abasing for a woman of the first century. A woman of the first century might have had unbound hair for any variety of reasons. But a woman with unbound hair who is not only in the company of men reclining at table, but even uses that hair to wipe off perfume that she has just applied to one man's feet, no matter how informal the gathering, suggests she is intentionally behaving in a manner that resembles the conduct of a servant or slave.[68] In this specific context Mary is readily identifiable as one who presents herself in abject humility to Jesus. Though the action in itself does not necessarily focus on Jesus as symbolic head of Mary's household (as one whose feet are anointed by Mary, Jesus could more easily be seen as a guest of that household), that no other guest is similarly anointed indicates at the very least that Jesus is being singled out as a guest of honor. More importantly, the manner of Mary's anointing can not be separated from her giving of the perfume itself. Both actions are motivated by the same life-giving work of Jesus. As

[68] Regarding the negative connotations of unbound hair for women as early as the first century see Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome* (London: Duckworth, 1982), 176. Those who specifically understand Mary to be behaving as a prostitute include B. P. Robinson, "Anointing," 100–3; and J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Anointings at Bethany," 175. Note especially Robinson's mention (p. 101) of the Middle Assyrian Laws that required "all women to be veiled, except for prostitutes, who were specifically forbidden to be so." Regarding the wiping of another person with one's hair as an action becoming a slave, Van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love,* 198, cites an episode from Petronius, *Satyrica* 27, in which Trimalchio dips his hands in a basin of water and wipes them using the hair of a eunuch as evidence that the gesture would have been a fitting one for a slave. The depiction of Jesus in John 13:2–4, girded with a towel with which he wipes the disciples' feet (ἐκμάσσω), also matches the comportment of a slave or servant, though in different terms.

symbolic servant of Jesus, Mary's action emphasizes once again the household imagery that we have seen associated with the anointing episode.

Ultimately, we find that Mary's anointing of Jesus at first symbolizes her action as the beloved bride of Jesus even as it simultaneously appears to be an action appropriate for a servant or slave. Mary is simultaneously rich and poor. She is both blessed and impoverished. She displays a startling sense of confidence befitting a mistress of the household even as her veneration of Jesus displays self-effacing and humble devotion to her Lord. The images of symbolic bride and servant of Jesus are held together in tension. But one thing is clear: by her actions, Mary has offered herself to Jesus. She now leaves it up to him to determine the nature of her resulting relationship, either with him or his household. Though Mary has presented/offered herself to Jesus in a manner that invites more than one specific household relationship, we read on to discover what, if any validation of such relationships the text holds in store.

A Household Anointing Significant for the Household of Israel

A house filled with the fragrance of the perfume would have evoked important associations for a first-century reader with a specifically Jewish world view. Three associations are particularly important for elucidating the household context: (1) Though a pleasant fragrance would have been universally viewed as that which was either an inducement to, or the reflection of an attraction between lover and beloved, (2) the term "fragrance," especially in conjunction with the perfume "nard," (12:3), is a featured one in Song of Songs (LXX), which especially Jewish households would have associated with the household of the shepherd king and his beloved; and (3) Jewish households in particular would have associated a house filled with the fragrance of the perfume with God's house in Jerusalem (the place of his presence and of sacrifice), for Israel itself was God's House. Each of these associations will elucidate features of

the anointing episode that might have been related by its first-century readers to a household theme.

Throughout the first-century world, a pleasant fragrance was either a reflection of or an inducement to an attraction between people,[69] and this was apparent also in Jewish scriptures in use by the middle of the first century. Perfume could be applied as an inducement to a favorable encounter between men and women (cf. Ruth 3:3; Est 2:12–14; Jdt 10:3, 13; 111:23; cf. Prov 7:17). It could be used metaphorically or poetically to describe the attraction already existing between lover and the beloved (Song 1:3; 4:14). Its fragrance could be associated especially with the king of Israel, in describing his regal and majestic bearing on the day of his wedding (Ps 45:8).

This emphasis on a fragrance in the context of a king and his beloved is especially brought out in the Song of Songs (LXX), and this combination of a king, his beloved, and the fragrance of perfume (νάρδος) offers a point of comparison between the Song and the anointing episode in the Fourth Gospel. In the Song the term "fragrance" appears repeatedly in conjunction with the perfume "nard" (see, e.g., Song 1:3, 4, 12; 2:13; 4:10, 11; 7:9, 13–14; cf. Jer 25:10), as it does also here in John 12:3. The connection between John 12:3 and Song 1:12 (LXX) is especially apparent. Here the nard of the beloved is said to give off its fragrance in the presence of the reclining king.[70] Mary's extravagance, which we have noted above implies an extraordinary sufficiency on her part, is borne out of a devotion that is fit tribute for a king. A Jewish household may well have associated the "fragrance" of her anointing with the household of the

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[69] Cf. Homer, *Il.* 14.159–74.

[70] Reynier, "Le Thème," sees the allusion to Song of Songs in John 12:3 to be "undeniable." Cf. M. Cambe, "L'influence du Cantique des Cantiques sur le Nouveau Testament," *RThom* 62 (1962): 5–25; F. Manns, "Le Targume de Cantique de Cantique: Introduction et traduction du codex Vatican Urbanati 1," *LASBF* 41 (1991) 235. More recently, see also McWhirter, *Bridegroom Messiah*, 80–88.

shepherd-king and his beloved in the Song.[71] Though it is impossible to say for certain, the use of Song of Songs at the feast of Passover in later Jewish tradition may reflect an earlier custom known also to the readers of the Fourth Gospel, in which the relationship between the beloved and her king depicted in the Song came to be applied to Yahweh and the house of Israel at the time of the Exodus.[72]

Jewish households in particular would also have associated such a fragrance with the fragrance of God's House in Jerusalem (the place of His presence and of sacrifice), the reason that Israel itself was also "God's House."[73] Some scholars conclude that the latter part of v. 3 is merely a personal observation on the part of the evangelist, an appropriate addition for an eyewitness, and not symbolic.[74] Yet, a "house filled" in the context of the fragrance of an

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[71] The Septuagint repeats the word "perfume" (μύρον) three times in Song 1:3 and speaks of the fragrance (ὀσμή) of the shepherd-king's perfume/name as that after which "we will run." Regarding Song 1:12, see above. Reynier, "Le Thème," 213, argues for fragrance in LXX as both a sign of the presence of and an element for identifying one who is loved (cf. Gen 27:27; Song 4:10–1): "L'odeur agréable est signe d'une présence, bien plus c'est un élément déterminant pour reconnaître la personne aimée." She then interprets John's reference to a fragrance (pp. 217–18) in terms of similar references in the Song of Songs, and notes that vocabulary employed by John both in 12:1–7 and 19:38–42 resembles what is found in the Song. Jesus is variously depicted in the Fourth Gospel as husband/bridegroom (3:29), shepherd (10:11–18), and king (1:49) in keeping with the central figure of the beloved in the Song of Songs. Often when Jesus' identity as bridegroom, shepherd, or king is highlighted by John, the abundance of the life he gives to the members of his household is also symbolized. See John 2:7–10 (3:39); 4:14 (16–18); 6:11–15; 10:9–11; 12:3; 19:39–40.

[72] No conclusive evidence exists that late first-century Jews or Jewish Christians recalled Song of Songs in their celebration of Passover. Nevertheless, Safrai concludes from early rabbinical literature that the practice went back at least to the beginning of the second century. See his "House and Family," in *Jewish People of the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural, Religious Life and Institutions* (ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 759. The association of the Song with Passover that would later become clear seems to bear out the conclusion of Trumbull, *Threshold Covenant,* 214, regarding Israel as the bride of Yahweh as depicted in the Old Testament prophets: "It seems to be in recognition of the truth that the Egyptian Passover was the rite of marriage between Jehovah and Israel that the Song of Songs, the epithalamium of the Hebrew Scriptures, is always read in the synagogue at the Passover service. This idea of the relation of Jehovah and Israel runs through the entire Old Testament, and shows itself in the Jewish ritual of today."

[73] Cf. Gen 8:20–21; Lev 3:1–16; Num 15:3–14; Ezek 20:41–44; Eph 5:2; Phil 4:18. Regarding the association between the fragrance of the perfume at Bethany and the fragrance associated with God's House/Place of God's Presence, see especially early Jewish apocalyptic literature such as 1 En. 25:3–6 (cf. Targum Canticles 4:13–14). Though the fragrance of nard is associated with the Garden of Eden, it is specifically associated with the tree of life and is depicted as filling the eschatological holy dwelling of Yahweh.

[74] For this understanding of the text, see especially Brook Foss Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes* (ed. A. Westcott; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1908), 111; and Sanders and Mastin, *Commentary,* 284.

offering to God would have been a significant matter to a reader of John familiar with the Old Testament.[75] Two aspects of the text will both be considered below. (1) The fragrance of the perfume now attached to Mary's person; and (2) the image resulting from a superabundant fragrance that fills the entire house.

The fragrance now attached to Mary's person is significant.[76] Mention of a "fragrance" (ὀσμή) in the context of Mary's gift to one whom the reader knows to be God (1:1, 18) would not likely have escaped the notice of the gospel's first-century readers. Though aromatic substances such as incense were used throughout the Mediterranean world in ritual sacrifice,[77] the unique and repeated association of "pleasing fragrance" with burnt offerings in the Old Testament emphasized God's reception of his Household at his House.[78] The metaphor extends back even to the sacrifice Noah offered in thanksgiving for his family's rescue from the flood (Gen 8:20–21). It is found most commonly in association with burnt offerings sacrificed where Yahweh was known to dwell, beginning with the sanctuary of the camp at Sinai (Exod 29:18; cf. Lev 1:9;

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[75] Contrast Mary's offering directed to Jesus (whom the reader knows to be God; 1:1; 10:30; cf. 20:28), in thanksgiving for his resurrection of Lazarus (11:39–44) with those of the festival pilgrims in the Jerusalem temple, where sacrifices of ritual purification were being offered to Yahweh by the Household of Israel (11:55–57). Later, Judas will complain not about how Mary has attended to the Lord's feet, but that the perfume was not used for alms to be distributed to the poor. The Passover context (12:1; 13:29) suggests the distribution of alms that would occur at the temple on the night of Passover (see p. 152). The manner of Mary's anointing and wiping the perfume from Jesus' feet demonstrate that her action is far from ordinary and not merely to be interpreted at face value.

[76] The result of May's wiping action is that the fragrance of the perfume is now attached both to her and to Jesus. See Benages, "La Fragancia," 251: "María ungió los pies de Jesús con tanto perfume que tuvo que secarlos con sus cabellos. Los cabellos de María recogen el perfume de los pies de Jesús, y ella se siente envuelta en su fragancia. A partir de este momento, el perfume de Jesús es también el perfume de María."

[77] Cf., e.g., Plutarch, *Arist.* 21.3. See also especially Ezek 16:18, in which the offering of the incense of Yahweh to other gods is used by the prophet so as to depict idolatry. Regarding the various uses of incense throughout the Mediterranean world of the first century, see E. G. Cuthbert and F. Atchley, *A History of the Use of Incense in Divine Worship* (London: Longman, Green & Co., 1909), 76. For an in-depth study of the religious uses for aromatic oil, see Cynthia Wright Shelmerdine, *The Perfume Industry of Mycenaean Pylos* (Göteborg: Paul Åströms Förlag, 1985), 123–27.

[78] Though the fragrant oil of cereal offerings associates incense or spices with sacrifices that resulted in a "pleasing fragrance" (ὀσμῆ εὐωδίας) to the Lord even in the Pentateuch (Lev 2:2; 6:15), later Jewish literature more commonly depicts incense oblations as offerings which themselves are said to give a similarly pleasing fragrance to the Lord. As such, they could either be offered independently (Jub 3:27; 7:5) or in association with a burnt offering (Jub 32:6).

8:18; Num 15:1–14). This pleasing fragrance is ultimately applied to the eschatological House of Israel, gathered and accepted not according to its deeds but for the sake of the Lord's name (Ezek 20:41–44). But what God receives as a pleasing fragrance is not what his people give to him; it is what he has provided first to them.[79] This understanding of "fragrance" which becomes apparent in the Old Testament context of sacrifice is also revealed by the apostle Paul. Because Jesus' offering is a sacrifice which God receives as a pleasing fragrance (προσφόραν καὶ θυσίαν τῷ θεῷ εἰς ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας), the children of God (Eph 5:1), as members of his household and imitators of Jesus, give offerings which are similarly "a pleasing fragrance" and "sacrifice which is pleasing and acceptable" to God (Phil 4:18; cf. Eph 5:2; 2 Cor 2:15–16). According to this context, the imagery of John 12:3, depicting Mary pouring out expensive perfume in thankful devotion to Jesus, highlights the perfume as an offering and suggests a household association that is brought out more clearly later on in the text.

The Gospel's manner of relating the superabundance of the perfume also evokes the theme of the presence of the Lord. In the Fourth Gospel, the fragrance permeates not only the central room where the guests were gathered but the entire house. While the detail certainly emphasizes again the abundance of the perfume, the passive form ἐπληρώθη suggests an even greater significance related to certain Old Testament epiphanies connected with both House and Household of God (Isa 6:4; Ezek 10:4 [LXX]; cf. Ezek 43:5; 44:4).[80] In the Septuagint the

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[79] The people of God are depicted in a manner that Benages, "La Fragrancia," 258, refers to as "fragrance carriers" (that is, they return to God what God has first given to them): "Todos estos textos nos presentan al hombre como *osmóforo* (transportador) del perfume. Con sus sacrificios y ofrendas a Dios no hace sino devolver a Dios lo que Dios mismo le había ofrecido. De este modo, sus obras revelan la presencia de Dios en la tierra. El perfume de sus sacrificios y de su corazón son fragancia de vida divina que se difunde por el mundo."

[80] Though several examples could be offered, the calling of Isaiah in LXX Isa 6:1–10 seems especially appropriate, since this self-revelation is explicitly mentioned later in John 12 by the evangelist. God appears to Isaiah near the incense altar in front of the Most Holy Place. An epiphany of sorts is described in which "the house," (that is, the temple or οἶκος/dwelling place of God) "is filled with smoke" (6:3). In John 12:40 we read that what Isaiah actually saw and wrote about in Isa 6 was Jesus' "glory." Regarding the use of similar language to describe an epiphany outside the canon of the Old Testament, see also *Jos. Asen.* 17:3, 6.

connection to John 12:3 is brought out most vividly by the divine epiphany witnessed by Isaiah in the Lord's house, for the house is said to be filled both by the glory of Yahweh (Isa 6:1) and the cloud of smoke from the incense offering (Isa 6:4). Elsewhere in the Old Testament, in both the Old Greek and Hebrew, though the glory of the Lord (כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה) fills the entire earth (Isa 6:3; Ps 72:19; cf. Num 14:21), the filling of the dwelling place of the Lord is associated with the divine presence (Exod 40:34–35; 1 Kgs 8:11; 2 Chron 5:14; 7:1–2). Both the Hebrew and Greek words for household, בַּיִת and οἰκία, can refer to either a building or a group of people. Though the vocable οἰκία in John 12:3 refers to an architectural space, the Old Testament context of a house filled suggests that this detail of the οἰκία filling with the fragrance of the perfume says something about the presence of God for those gathered at Bethany as well.[81]

So a house filled with the fragrance of the perfume would have evoked important Old Testament associations for first-century readers, especially those acquainted with a specifically Jewish world view. Jesus is depicted in the anointing episode in the midst of a community, gathered by the resurrection of Lazarus, in a manner reminiscent of Yahweh and the House of Israel. Israel had encountered her Lord both at the tabernacle and the Jerusalem temple. Associations between the imagery related both to the anointing in John and the Song of Songs develop the idea of Jesus as bridegroom. What continues in the text elaborates on this household theme by way of contrast with the disciple Judas.

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[81] See also John 11:20, 31. The place in the house depicted in our text would likely have been that house's central location. It would likely have been either (1) a multi-purpose room serving as the house's main center of activity (see S. Safre, "Home and Family," 732–33) or (2) a central courtyard (see Moxnes, *Putting Jesus*, 41). The filling of all corners of the house would mean that all members of the household received the fragrance. Cf. Blank, *Johannes*, 1/2:293. Edwyn Clement Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel* (London: Faber & Faber, 1947), 415, understands the detail in John to be the evangelist's description of Jesus' words in Mark 14:9 and cites the possibility that the phrase evokes the rabbinical maxim that "good ointment reaches from the innermost chamber to the hall; a good man moves from one end of the world to the other."

John 12:4–6

The evangelist next turns his attention in John 12:4–6 to a conflict present in the anointing episode in order to further develop the household theme: "But[82] Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, the one who was about to betray[83] him, said,[84] 'For what reason was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?' (But[85] he did not say this because the poor mattered to him, rather, [he said this] because he was a thief[86] and, because he had[87] the

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[82] The manuscript evidence is split three ways: $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$, ℵ, B, W, 579, a few Majority text manuscripts and bo read δέ; L, 33, 1241, a few Majority text manuscripts, and several Old Latin and Coptic manuscripts offer no conjunction; A, D, Θ, Ψ, minuscule families 1 and 13, Majority text manuscripts and sy^h read οὖν. The Gospel is noted for asyndeton, especially where we find use of the historical present (see BDF, 241 [§ 462], citing Winer-Moulton). The only other place that δέ occurs in introducing a new speaker or speech with λέγει is in John 6:20. It should be noted, however, that the conjunction καί is frequently used in such cases (see, e.g., 1:43; 2:4; 20:2, 19), and in both John 6:20 and John 12:4 context suggests that the conjunction be understood as adversative. The same manuscripts that use the conjunction οὖν also switch the position of Judas' name with "one of his disciples." The external evidence ($\mathfrak{P}^{66}$, ℵ, B, W, etc.) favors the placement of Judas' name before the explanation of his identity. This order is also preferred by John (e.g., 6:71; 11:16; 12:1; 18:13, 24; 19:38, 39; 20:24; 21:2). These same manuscripts include Judas' father's name. Distinguishing this Judas as "of Simon" is common in John where Judas the betrayer is to be distinguished from "Judas not Iskariot" (14:22), but it is not consistently carried out (cf. especially 18:2–5, where Judas is introduced without this title). So the present study prefers the reading in which the more common "of Simon" does not occur. The reading with οὖν is rejected because it is found in these same manuscripts. Regarding the translation of δέ, see Levinsohn, *Discourse,* 72: "If δέ is to be used, not only must the sentence contain something distinctive . . . it must also represent a new step or development in the author's story or argument." See also Buth, "Οὖν, Δέ, Καί, and Asyndeton," 152.

[83] The present tense of the infinitive of παραδίδωμι focuses on the evangelist's perceived connection between Judas and the action, depicting the betrayal as an action of Judas, which was almost a "part of him" (cf. 6:71; 18:2). See Voelz, *Greek Grammar,* 66 and 112–13.

[84] Note the use of the historical present. The grammatical construction highlights the disruption that Judas' words cause, coming from his contrasting character.

[85] The evangelist's adversative use of δέ in John 12:6 is a good example of the conjunction introducing parenthetical or background information. See Poythress, "Intersentence Conjunctions," 312–40.

[86] That is, he behaved as a thief or shared in the attributes of a thief. See Wallace, *Greek Grammar,* 41–43 and 256–70. Wallace describes the rules for establishing the proper relationship between the subject (whether stated or implied) and predicate nominative in sentences such as John 12:6. He concludes that an indefinite meaning is poorly attested for anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominates, as in John 12:6. He writes (p. 43), "When only *one* nominative substantive [is articular, is a proper name, or is a stated or implied pronoun] the semantic relationship will be that of particular (subject) to class (predicate nominative)." This appears to rule out κλέπτης sharing the same referent as the implied subject of the verb, and thus from being definite. It suggests a qualitative sense for the predicate nominative.

[87] Swanson, *Manuscripts,* 169. Cf. the use of the imperfect of ἔχω in a causal clause in John 2:25 and 13:29. The close connection between the wording of John 13:29 and John 12:6, and the lack of any similar Johannine usage elsewhere indicates that the use of the participle is causal.

treasurer's box,[88] he used to pilfer[89] what was put into it.[90])"

Judas' complaint establishes a false dichotomy. Ultimately, it pits the interests of two households, each of which is gathered for the sake of the Passover, against one another. That is to say, it pits the interest of Jesus' household and those who are gathered with his household at Bethany, against the poor of the House of Israel, gathered in Jerusalem. This false dichotomy, resulting when Judas's words are taken at face value, hides a more important and fundamental contrast between households: the contrast between the household of Jesus and another household to which Judas bears true allegiance. In order to highlight such matters, the present study will investigate (1) the role that the perfume plays for these followers of Jesus over against Judas' own misunderstanding; and (2) Judas' relationship to those already introduced in John 12:1–3.

Appropriate Household Offering or Precious Resource Wasted?

The perfume is worth 300 denarii (12:5), which would have approximated one year's salary for the average day laborer.[91] The specific sum of 300 denarii would have emphasized either the magnitude of the offering, and so the gift to which the offering was responding, or else the value of a precious resource wasted. It should be pointed out that Judas does not take issue with the manner in which Mary applies the perfume to Jesus, as extraordinary as this manner of application is. Rather, he is upset that such a valuable commodity has been wasted. The present

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[88] See BDAG and MM, s.v., γλωσσόκομον. Moulton and Milligan write that, although it is an "out-of-the-way-looking word," the term is nevertheless in the "vernacular" of John (cf. 12:6 and 13:29). Originally used with reference to the receptacle for the mouth-pieces of reed instruments, it came to be associated with a box or basket which could be used as a case or container for anything. Cf. 2 Chr 24:8–11 LXX, where the word is used for the treasury box into which the collection of the "tax of Moses" was placed.

[89] Regarding the precise meaning of the verb, see Bultmann, *John;* 415, quoting Bauer: "Κλέπης shows that βαστάζειν must be understood in the frequently attested sense of pilfer, steal."

[90] See BDAG, s.v. βάλλω, 3.b. The verb is used in the Synoptics to refer to financial contributions to the temple treasury. See, e.g., Mark 12:41–44; Luke 21:1–4.

[91] The sudden monetary assessment of the perfume offered to Jesus is not unique. See also the anointing at Bethany narrated in Mark 14:3–9.

study will investigate (1) the household allegiances that first become apparent when Judas's words are taken at face value and (2) the household relationships that result once Judas's words are understood to be a deception.

A first-century reader might not have been completely unsympathetic to Judas's words and the concern that they would have voiced when these words are taken at face value. Such a concern would have focused on the perfume as possible alms for the poor of the household of Israel and Mary's waste of it. Gifts to the poor constituted one of the three "righteous deeds" for the House of Israel (Matt 6:1–18; cf. Acts 10:1–8).[92] Almsgiving was an institution in Jesus' day that provided for the poor of Israel who were without an immediate household. In the context of the imminent celebration of Passover (12:1) tithes would have been brought by households to Jerusalem so as to be distributed to the poor (12:5–6, 8; cf. 13:29; Acts 24:17–18; cf. Acts 20:16). The ordinances in the Pentateuch that establish the custom of bringing tithes at Passover specifically describe the poor as those who are without a household of their own, i.e., Levites, foreigners, the fatherless and widows (Deut 14:22–29; 26:12–15).[93] Assuming that Judas intends to distribute the proceeds from the perfume to the poor of the House of Israel at Passover and that Mary subverts this intention by her impetuous act, the anointing would appear to have been a squandering of household funds.

Ultimately, however, Judas's words must not be taken at face value, but in light of his status as betrayer and thief for whom the poor of the household do not matter (12:6). First-century readers disinclined by the text to share Judas's understanding of Jesus and his household

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[92] During the feast of Passover, households made various exchanges of money and property. These included both offerings (Exod 23:15; 34:20, 23; Lev 23:9–14; Deut 16:16–17; cf. Deut 14:23; 26:1–15; Tob 1:7) and the half-shekel tax (Exod 30:12-13; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.312; cf. Matt 17:24–26; *m. Šheqal.* 1:3). Both were associated with attendance at the Jerusalem temple.

[93] Though by the first century the distribution of land did not follow the original biblical provisions, meaning that priests and Levites could have been wealthy land owners. See Safrai, "Religion in Everyday Life," in *Jewish People,* 2:824.

would have been encouraged to see Mary's use of the perfume as an appropriate gift of thanks given in response to Jesus' gift of life offered to the poor of the household of Bethany.[94] This is so primarily because (1) Mary's gift is directed to Jesus in thanksgiving for his resurrection of her brother Lazarus (see e.g., conjunctions used in 12:1–2); and (2) Mary gives her gift at roughly the same time that festival goers at the Jerusalem temple (narrated immediately prior to the anointing episode; cf. 11:55–57) offer sacrifices for ritual purification to Yahweh by the house of Israel.

Judas does not successfully set the household gathered at Bethany against the poor who are gathered at the Jerusalem temple, for the evangelist adds narrative details that clarify the actual circumstances. Rather, it is Judas himself who becomes increasingly opposed to the household of Jesus and aligned with forces outside this household. It is to this conflict "behind the scenes" that we now turn.

One Who Belongs to the Household Betrays the Household

John 12:4 references Judas with the reminder that he is one belonging to the household of Jesus. Though no members of Jesus' physical family are mentioned in this text and the first three verses have merely described Jesus as the guest of honor at a feast hosted by the Bethany community, John 12:4, with its mention of Jesus' disciples, injects explicit reference to a group of people that would have resembled a household for a first-century reader. Judas is described as "one of [Jesus'] disciples" (12:4). The teacher-disciple relationship of the first century has been understood in the recent, scholarly study of the Fourth Gospel as belonging to the relationships

[94] Because Jesus' gift of life is so intimately bound up with the giving of glory to the Father through Jesus' death on the cross, a symbolic interpretation of the number 300 is not impossible. The Hebrew/Aramaic character that represents the number is the tau (ת), which in Greek is T, the same Greek character that would have been used in the first century to symbolize the cross of Christ. See Manns, "Lecture Symbolique," 105.

enjoyed by the members of a household.[95] As not only Jesus' "disciple" but also one of "the Twelve" chosen by Jesus, Judas belonged to a kind of "inner circle" within this community and so occupied a place of importance within Jesus' household. That he was also the treasurer of the household (12:6) indicates that he was one of the most trusted members of this household's inner circle.[96]

However, Judas is also described by the evangelist both as (1) betrayer (12:4) and as (2) one who shares in the attributes of a thief (12:6), both of which highlight his opposition to the household of Jesus and allegiance to another household. No sooner is Judas introduced in the anointing pericope as one belonging to the household than is his imminent betrayal highlighted: he is "one of Jesus' disciples who was about to betray him" (12:4; cf. 6:69–71).[97] Betrayal by one of one's own would have brought great shame upon the members of a household in Jesus' day.[98] Judas's status as a thief derives from his pilfering of the treasurer's box, the purse shared by the entire group of those gathered around Jesus (12:6). In an age when material goods were perceived as limited,[99] such action not only reflected upon Judas's character but also would have

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[95] See for example, Andreas Köstenberger, "Jesus as Rabbi," *BBR* 8 (1998): 97–128. In order to express the nature of this relationship, some employ the term "fictive kinship." See especially Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary,* 48. The present study, by contrast, utilizes "household" as a theological concept and so focuses not only upon what might be considered kinship relationships between members of a household, but also upon the relationship between those dwelling together in a common space. See Moxnes, *Putting Jesus,* 28–29. For examples of how this understanding of the teacher-disciple relationship manifests itself in terms of household imagery in the Gospel of John, see Van der Watt, *Family,* 265. See further ch. 3, pp. 106–7.

[96] Sanders and Mastin, *Commentary,* 285, note that the use of a common treasury as a supreme example of mutual trust can also be found in documents from the Qumran community.

[97] Regarding Judas as a contrast to, rather than representative of Jesus' disciples, see especially Blank, *Johannes,* 1/2:293: "Judas dürfte bei Johannes kaum als Sprecher der ganzen Tischgesellschaft oder des Jüngerkreises vorgestellt sein, sondern als der bekannte Gegenspieler Jesu, der in seinen Worten auch die Meinung der 'Welt' über einen solchen verschwenderischen Luxus zum Ausdruck bringt. Durch die Bezeichnung 'einer seiner Jünger' wird er deutlich von den andern unterschieden; erst recht durch den Zusatz, dass es sich um den künftigen Verräter Jesu handle."

[98] Regarding the socio-historical significance of betrayal for people of the first century, see Keener, *Gospel,* 2:864; 913.

[99] See Malina, *New Testament World,* 105; Halvor Moxnes, *The Economy of the Kingdom: Social Conflict and Economic Relations in Luke's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 116.

been perceived as undermining Jesus' household. Because the focus of peoples of the first-century Mediterranean world would have typically had to do with the national, the ethnic, the communal, and the familial—not the individualistic—Judas's betrayal and thievery would not likely have been understood as a course of action that he either carried out independently or pursued on his own behalf and for merely his own benefit. Rather, his actions suggest his allegiance to another household.[100] Thievery within a household has been demonstrated to reflect a ruptured social condition for people of the first-century Mediterranean world.[101] Judas, though belonging to Jesus' household, has an inclination aligned with the world outside that household.[102]

So even though Judas' words "For what reason was this perfume not sold . . . and given to the poor?" (12:5) suggest at first his allegiance to the household of Jesus and Judas's sympathy toward the poor for whom Passover alms are gathered, John 12:5–6 indicate otherwise. This contrast between Judas and the others at the supper is elaborated further by a focus upon Judas's misunderstanding of the perfume's purpose.

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[100] Regarding the nature of this household as depicted in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel, see further this chapter, pp. 109–11.

[101] Judas's behavior, that of a household member stealing from its own, is termed "negative reciprocity" by scholars investigating the socio-historical context of the Gospels. Regarding negative reciprocity as a condition reflecting social rupture and the conduct of distinct social groupings for group-oriented people of ancient times, cf. Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (New York: de Gruyter, 1972), 196; Walter Donlan, "Political Reciprocity in Dark Age Greece: Odysseus and His *Hetairoi*," *Reciprocity in Ancient Greece* (ed. Christopher Gill, Norman Postlethwaite, and Richard Seaford; New York: Oxford University, 1998), 51; Moxnes, *Economy of the Kingdom*, 116–17.

[102] Though the evangelist highlights the association between Judas and the money, he does not intend to provide a moral lesson about the dangers of greed. He highlights instead the eschatological battle between God and the powers which are hostile to God. Regarding this understanding of "buying and selling," see Rev 13:16. Refer also to Bertil Gärtner, *Iscariot* (BibSer 29, trans. Victor Gruhn; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 16–21. See further ch. 3, pp. 110–11.

John 12:7

The anointing episode closes in John 12:7 with Jesus' last word on the significance of the anointing, and in so doing it offers a final and definitive interpretation of Mary's action within a household context. Jesus' response to Judas's complaint affirms Mary's anointing and demonstrates Judas to be in the wrong: "Jesus said, 'Let[103] her keep[104] it for the day[105] of my

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[103] Movement toward less difficult Greek is apparent among Koine manuscripts. Therefore, the more difficult reading of NT[27] is to be preferred. Regarding the use of ἵνα, see Barrett, *Gospel,* 345; Henry Alford, *The Greek Testament: With a Critically Revised Text, A Digest of Various Readings, Marginal References to Verbal Idiomatic Usage, Prolegomena, and a Critical and Exegetical Commentary* (4 vols; Chicago: Moody Press, 1958), 1:831–32; Max Zerwick, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (trans. Mary Grosvenor; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1993), 324; Westcott, *Gospel,* 113; J. A. Kleist, "A Note on the Greek Text of John 12:7," *CJ* 21 (1925): 48; David Daube, "The Anointing at Bethany and Jesus' Burial," *AThR* 32 (1950): 190. However, these scholars fall into one of two camps: either (1) they argue that ἵνα with the subjunctive would have caused ἄφες to be translated as an auxiliary verb and translate "Let her keep it," a construction more commonly found in later Koine Greek (Barrett, Alford, and Zerwick), or (2) they take ἵνα as introducing an ordinary final clause and translate "Leave her alone, in order that she might keep it" (Wescott, Kleist, and Daube). The difficulty with either approach is that the pronoun αὐτό refers to the perfume. This appears to result in Mary keeping the perfume as if some were unused at the time of the anointing and saved for a future event, which the context (12:3–6) renders implausible. Some scholars seek to resolve the textual difficulty by examining other signifiers not directly related to the ἵνα itself (see this page, n. 104). Daube concludes that the evangelist took over a tradition that was not cognizant of the burial preparation later described in John 19. Kleist suggests a solution that exploits the discourse time and post-resurrection perspective of John's readers. He expounds on Westcott's statement that "the idiom by which the speaker throws himself into the past and regards what is done as still a purpose is common to all languages" and translates the clause introduced by the ἵνα according to what he calls "future ascertainment": "Let her alone in order that she might have kept it . . . ." The present study understands this paradoxical meaning in light of the Gospel's emphasis upon two final days, "a sixth day before the Passover" and the day of Jesus' death. Rather than selling the perfume, that the proceeds might be given to the poor, all are urged to change nothing, in order that the perfume might be "kept" in anticipation of Jesus' final preparation for burial.

[104] Zerwick, *Grammatical Analysis,* 324; and Riesenfeld, "τηρέω," *TDNT* 7:140–46, understand "keep" to mean "observe [the rite]." Barrett, *Gospel,* 345; and Daube, "Anointing," 191, wonder if the choice of the verb alludes to some sort of "remembering."

[105] It is often noted in the scholarly study of John that Jesus is not depicted as having been anointed for burial in this manner following his death. See especially Daube, "Anointing," 190, whose interpretation of Jesus' words is founded (1) upon his reconstruction of the tradition existing behind the text and (2) upon historical considerations arising from ordinary Jewish customs surrounding the death and burial of executed criminals. Believing that the scandal of such customs would have been unbearable to the believers, Daube concludes that Mark's account more obviously depicts a proleptic anointing of Jesus intended to assuage this disgrace. He understands John's Gospel as the result of an editor's work upon a "proto-Markan version" of the anointing. However, since Mary does not perform a later funeral anointing, Daube must then conclude that τηρέω in John 12:7 denotes "remember" rather than "keep." He therefore admits "it seems here less natural and is probably to be rejected." Daube's study has the advantage of highlighting the importance of funeral anointing for the people of first-century Palestine. But his exclusive emphasis on Mary's anointing in John as an adumbration of a future anointing does not square easily with Judas' words (12:5) and so must be carefully considered in light of the narrative of the Gospel and the household theme that emerges in its latter half.

burial preparation.'"[106] Jesus' closing words point again to the presence of a household theme in two important aspects: (1) several features of ancient funerary practice as the activity of first-century households would have been evoked both by Jesus' words and by the evangelist's depiction of the anointing; and (2) Mary's membership in a new household of God about to be gathered by Jesus, at his death, would have also been suggested by Jesus' manner of embracing her unwitting participation in his burial preparation.

Anointing As an Act of Burial Preparation Practiced by First-Century Households

Several features of the anointing, while appropriate for a household's observance of the Passover connect also with customs that would have surrounded the mourning rituals of a first-century Mediterranean household: (1) Mary's application of aromatic oil to the feet of Jesus recalls the burial preparation undertaken by households in Jesus' day; (2) the setting of an evening meal parallels that of the funerary banquet of a household; (3) Mary's loosened hair is appropriate for a woman who is grieving the loss of a close family member; and (4) the offering of perfume or other aromatic substance by members of a household is a tribute to the deceased common in the first-century Mediterranean world. Each of these features will now be considered in turn.

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[106] D and sy^{s} omit John 12:8. $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, Λ, and a few Majority text manuscripts omit the latter half of the verse, which Metzger, *A Textual Commentary,* 236–37 explains as the result of parablepsis. Regarding the reading of D and sy^{s}, see also Holst, "Anointing of Jesus," 445; and Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 2:369. These scholars view the harmonization of this reading with either Matthew or Mark as questionable. It may have been omitted because it seemed too dismissive toward the poor. See, however, Bultmann, *John,* 416; Brown, *Gospel,* 449; Fortna, *Gospel of Signs,* 151; and Dodd, *Historical Tradition,* 165–66, who view the reading as a late scribal addition and emphasize the verse's similarities, not differences, with the synoptic accounts. Dodd gives four reasons for considering the verse as a harmonization: (1) the combination of Codex Bezae and the Sinaitic Syriac has often preserved a very ancient form of the text; (2) the additional words agree closely with the text of Matthew, omitting the Marcan καὶ ὅταν θέλητε δύνασθε αὐτοῖς εὖ ποιῆσαι, which Matthew also omits; (3) the plurals, ἔχετε, ἑαυτῶν, fit the Matthean (and Marcan) plural ἄφετε, but not the Johannine ἄφες; and (4) the words are added at the end, with not very clear logical connection, instead of forming an organic step in the argument, as they do in Mark and Matthew. The present study is in agreement with Dodd and will therefore disregard John 12:8 from consideration in its investigation of the anointing.

Burial preparation in Jesus' day consisted first in washing the body of the deceased with water and anointing it with perfume, a task undertaken either by the family of the deceased or by those acting in the capacity of family.[107] After the first century, the rabbis prescribed a laying out of the body at home, washing it, anointing it once with oil, and then rinsing it with a bath. A second anointing was then performed in order to perfume the body.[108] But a focus upon burial preparation as a household custom for the people of ancient Palestine is evident throughout the Old Testament.[109] The same holds true for Jewish literature of the first century CE.[110] It is mentioned frequently in the Greco-Roman literature of the first century as well.[111] Burial preparation either began immediately at the place of death or in the home.[112] When blood relatives did not perform the burial, communities resembling families surrounding the deceased would have taken on these responsibilities.[113]

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[107] Regarding the Qumran community as a group that conducted community burials ordinarily observed by the family of the deceased, see Rachel Hachlili, *Jewish Funerary Customs, Rites, and Practices in the Second Temple Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 20.

[108] See Safrai, "House and Family," 776, who emphasizes that this practice would have been widespread at the end of the first century.

[109] See, e.g., Gen 25:9; 35:29; 49:29–33; 50:1–26; Judg 16:31; Amos 6:10.

[110] Hachlili, *Funerary Customs,* 479–80, observes, "Funerary ceremonies and rites upon death were crucial, and were administered to the dead by their relatives. The family indeed played the prominent part in the funeral, and most of the routine rites its members conducted in various stages were similar to Greek customs.... The family was responsible for the funeral, the coffins, women keeners, and pipers."

[111] Regarding the involvement of kinswomen in burial preparation as practiced by Greeks, see Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses*, 43–44; regarding the Roman practice, see Kathleen Corley, *Women and the Historical Jesus: Feminist Myths of Christian Origins* (Santa Rosa, Ca.: Polebridge, 2002), 111. J. M. C. Toynbee, *Death and Burial in the Roman World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), 43–44, describes the involvement of the Roman household in funerary rites: "When death was imminent relations and close friends gathered round the dying person's bed . . . . The nearest relative present gave the last kiss . . . . The same relative then closed the departed's eyes...after which all the near relatives called upon the dead by name . . . and lamented him or her, a process that continued at intervals until the body was disposed of by cremation or inhumation."

[112] The focus on the dwelling of the household as the place where death preparation occurred is asserted by L. Y. Rahmani, "Ancient Jerusalem's Funerary Customs and Tombs, Part 3," *BA* (1981): 44.

[113] Acts 9:36–39 describes the burial preparation of Tabitha by a community of Christian "widows." Regarding the custom of disciples for their masters, see Andreas Köstenberger, "Jesus as Rabbi," 123. Regarding other widespread practices throughout the Greco-Roman world, see also Toynbee, *Death and Burial*, 54–55.

Funeral preparation in the context of a meal would have also recalled the funerary banquet, a feast at which the unity of the surviving family was preserved and the deceased remembered. These meals, depending on the context, were observed by the family of the deceased either at the tomb at the time of interment, immediately following the funeral at the home of the immediate family, or on anniversary or festival days at which time the death of the family member would have been remembered.[114] Jesus' interpretation of Mary's anointing as a funeral anointing changes the atmosphere of the supper from a predominantly joyous celebration of Lazarus' resurrection to a sober foreshadowing of Jesus' own death. The nature of the meal for a first-century reader is such that in both instances Mary is depicted as an intimate member of Jesus' family. Funerary meals offered the surviving members of a household a chance to venerate their dead and receive mutual encouragement from one another in the face of their loss. With a focus on the meal as funerary banquet Mary's action still reflects the loving devotion that she offers her Lord, only now she venerates him in thanksgiving for all he has done, for he has died. Receiving a meal together the community is still bound together in table fellowship, only now it receives mutual encouragement and strength for the head of the household is no longer with them as he had been before (cf. 12:8).

Jesus' interpretation of Mary's action depicts Mary as a person belonging to his household when it references her loosened hair. A woman's loosened hair was no immediate indication of a lack of propriety. In certain contexts, it would have indicated that she was

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[114] For a more detailed description of the funerary banquet (*perideipnon*), see Smith, *Symposium,* 40. In a Jewish context, the meal would have been eaten by the mourners following the burial at the home of the deceased. Among Romans, the *silicernium* would have been eaten at the grave on the same day as the burial (see especially Toynbee, *Death and Burial,* 50–51). Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 212, describe the Roman practice of remembering the deceased by sharing a meal together in the tomb (*refrigerium*).

grieving the loss of a beloved member of her household.[115] Highlighted, then, is Mary's personal relationship to Jesus. Though she has offered herself to Jesus in a manner that resembles the conduct of a slave, Jesus receives her and those present with her as if they were family preparing his body for burial.

The perfume used in the anointing would have called to mind the gathering of a household, because perfume was a tribute to the deceased common to the households of the first-century Mediterranean world. In ancient Greece, aromatic offerings were customarily given as grave gifts.[116] A similar custom likely prevailed throughout Palestine. In the vicinity of Bethany especially, alabaster jars that may have contained aromatic oil have been discovered in tombs through archeological excavation.[117] Elsewhere, in the Roman context of cremation, aromatic oil was customarily added to the funeral pyre as an offering to the deceased.[118] Not only was perfume applied as a part of the process of burial preparation, perfume was poured out and spices scattered both at the tomb and upon the funeral pyre by members of the household. The image of the fragrance-filled house would have comported well not only with a household feast of joyous celebration, but also with a household engaged in mourning rituals on behalf of a deceased loved one.

Therefore, several features of ancient funerary practice as the activity of a first-century household would have been evoked both by Jesus' words and by the evangelist's depiction of the

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[115] See Lev 10:6. Regarding loosened, disheveled, or torn hair as a part of the mourning ritual within a Greco-Roman context, see van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love,* 198; Pomeroy, *Goddesses,* 44; Toynbee, *Death and Burial,* 45; and Cosgrove, "Unbound Hair," 682–83.

[116] Cf. Plutarch, *Arist.* 21.3; and Aeschylus, *Pers.* 615–18. For an example of how the custom is reflected in the Pseudepigrapha, see *Apoc. Mos.* 40:6. Regarding the influence of Greek culture on this aspect of Jewish mourning ritual, see Corely, *Women,* 116; and Hachlili, *Funerary Customs,* 376.

[117] See Sylvester John Saller, *Excavations at Bethany: 1949–1953* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Press, 1957), 52; and Hachlili, *Funerary Customs,* 383–85.

[118] See, e.g., *Iliad,* 23.170. See Shelmerdine, *Perfume Industry,* 126; and Cuthbert and Atchley, *History,* 58–59.

anointing. Mary, a member of Jesus' household, while offering Jesus thanks, prepares his body also for burial. His is a household that simultaneously celebrates life as it unwittingly prepares for his impending death.

Mary and Those with Her as the Household of Jesus

John 12:3–6 implies that all of the perfume was expended on Jesus and that nothing would have been left to be preserved for a later time.[119] Jesus' words in John 12:7 can therefore hardly mean that Judas should allow Mary to keep some of the perfume for another day.[120] Rather, Mary's manner of observing the moment is seen by Jesus as having both anticipatory and relational significance.[121] Jesus' response to Judas highlights the action of Mary as the action of one belonging to himself. His interpretation of the anointing dissolves the force of Judas's rebuke and resolves the competing bride/slave imagery in the mind of the reader. Jesus embraces Mary as his own, that is, as a person acting in her capacity as a member of his household. She has performed his preparation for burial unawares. He has welcomed this and her role in it.

At the same time, Jesus' response offers also the specter of imminent death and loss. Jesus, the focus of those who are gathered together at Bethany, predicts his own death and burial. Such a prediction would have been a matter of great foreboding for the members of his household and his followers gathered to him at Bethany. Without Jesus, especially according to the world view of John's first-century readers, his household would have ceased to exist.

So even without reference to the greater literary and theological interest of the Fourth Gospel, a first-century reader of the Mediterranean world, especially one acquainted with a

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[119] Note especially the idiomatic use of the participle (λαβοῦσα) with the accusative noun (λίτραν) together with the aorist form of the main verb (ἤλειψεν).

[120] For similar conclusions, see especially Beasley-Murray, *John,* 209; and Lightfoot, *Gospel,* 249.

[121] The enigmatic aspect of this symbolism highlights the relationship between two twenty-four hour periods of time: the day described by John 12 and the day described by John 13–19. See further ch. 4, pp. 147–58.

specifically Jewish world view, would have related much of the suggestive detail of John 12:1–7 to the ancient theme of a household. Such a reader would have readily seen that John 12:1–7 is especially focused on Jesus' followers as a community that anticipates his household.

Summary

The goal set for Chapter Two was to demonstrate that a first-century reader would have related much of the suggestive detail of John 12:1–7 to the ancient household theme. Though Jesus' interpretation of the anointing is the climactic moment of the text and elucidates the defining household significance for Mary's anointing, several images from John 12:1–7 could have evoked the household theme for first-century readers of the Fourth Gospel.

From the opening verses of John 12:1–7 several households are in evidence. The first household referenced in the text is the household of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. Theirs is a household that has been restored by Jesus (12:1), the cause for celebration at the return of Jesus to Bethany. The Passover context insures that not only the family of Lazarus, but other households (of Jesus [12:1], the families of Bethany who are present [12:2]) are gathered as well. The events as they are narrated occur on a sixth day before that festival, the day that individual households of Israel used to gather to select the Passover lamb.

But even though several households are evident from the outset of this passage, other features of the passage immediately emphasize the oneness of the community that is present. The Bethany community, together with the household of Lazarus, collaborates to prepare a meal for Jesus (12:1). Then they recline at table to eat a meal together. Lazarus and Martha, two individuals whom the reader is not inclined to associate with the household of Jesus, are depicted in close association with him: Martha serves and Lazarus reclines at table with the Lord. No

single household head, and so no head of the household, is singled out. But Jesus is clearly the guest of honor and so occupies the primary position of importance in the narrative.

Mary's anointing, because it is performed in a manner that is contrary to convention, is understood by the reader to be symbolic. It is here that the lines separating the household of Jesus and the household of Lazarus begin to blur. Though it is not clear at first exactly what the anointing is intended to signify, the quality and quantity of the perfume indicate a treasure of great value, suggesting that Mary is mistress of her own household affairs and presents herself as a symbolic bride of Jesus. At the same time, the manner of the anointing is so self-effacing as to suggest that Mary is not a kinswoman of Jesus at all, but rather a servant, even a slave of Jesus, who venerates him out of an abject humility. The two images exist side by side in the reader's mind, and the resulting tension cries out for resolution which does not come until the end of the pericope, with the words of Jesus in John 12:7.

Imagery that the evangelist uses to describe the fragrance of the perfume, together with the complaint of Judas, highlights associations that readers acquainted with a Jewish worldview would have been inclined to make about the anointing. Though the bride/slave tension inherent in Mary's role continues to reverberate in the text, other aspects of John 12:3–5 invite the reader to understand this imagery of the text in light of Israel's offerings and almsgivings in the Jerusalem temple. Judas's complaint, though intended to establish a false dichotomy between Mary's gift to Jesus and the offerings of the House of Israel for the poor at the Jerusalem temple, does not accomplish this purpose. In light of his hidden thievery, Judas's complaint actually highlights Mary's action as the proper sort of offering.

Jesus has the last word on the anointing, and especially considering the Passover context of the pericope, this constitutes the most important part of the passage. Jesus associates the

anointing with his own burial preparation, and as he does so, he declares Mary to be his own kinswoman, a member of his household (12:7). Though her lavish gift to Jesus is one that is made in an extraordinarily self-effacing manner, Jesus compares it to the loving act of an intimate household member, and in so doing, elevates Mary and points to her action as the epitome of faithful discipleship. By association, those who are members of the household to which Mary belongs are now all associated with Jesus' household. That these events take place on what would have traditionally been understood to be Nisan 10 means that they coincided with the selection of the Passover lamb by members of the household of Jesus. Mary's progression in status from slave to kinswoman of Jesus in the text of John 12:3–7 anticipates the new household of God that Jesus would gather through his death and parallels the Old Testament "household of Israel" released from the "house of bondage" in Egypt through the Exodus event.

There are ample allusions to the ancient household theme in this pericope based on the socio-historical context of the passage. In order to understand the key role that the anointing episode plays in the Fourth Gospel, we now turn our attention to the narrative context of the passage, specifically two passages in which narrative echoes of John 12:1–7 can be found: John 13:2–30 and 19:38–42.

CHAPTER THREE

JOHN 12:1–7 AND ITS ECHOES (JOHN 13:2–30 AND 19:38–42)

The present chapter will develop the role that John 12:1–7 plays within the Fourth Gospel by investigating the context that follows it in the second half of the Gospel (11:1—21:25[1]). This chapter will demonstrate that the narrative that follows John 12:1–7, especially John 13:2–30 and 19:38–42, recalls John 12:1–7 and its interest in the ancient theme of a household.

The immediate literary context of John 12:1–7 has often been noted in the scholarly study of the Gospel of John; it remains outside the scope of the present study.[2] Relationships between John 12:1–7 and the resurrection of Lazarus in John 11[3] as well as associations between Jesus' anointing at Bethany and Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem in John 12[4] have been observed by others. But the relationship between John 12:1–7 and the portion of the text beginning with John

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[1] Regarding the structure of the Fourth Gospel, see ch. 1, p. 25 n. 63.

[2] Some scholars tend to distinguish what they term "the public work of Jesus" from Jesus' self-revelation to his own in John 13 and following. For just such an emphasis, see, e.g., Bultmann, *John,* 392. Bultmann admits that John 10:40–12:33 forms a transition to John 13, but he understands this portion of the Gospel primarily as "the conclusion and the result of the public work of Jesus." For a similar emphasis, cf. Morris, *Gospel,* 507; and Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 451. Others understand the anointing at Bethany as a part of a transition or "bridge" narrative between the public work of Jesus and his passion. See, e.g., Godet, *Commentary,* 3:46; Sanders and Mastin, *Commentary,* 281 n. 2; and Borchert, *John 12–21,* 30. The present study acknowledges associations between the anointing episode and the material that precedes it (especially John 11). But it will investigate the anointing so as to relate it with what follows.

[3] Cf. Alfred F. Loisy, *Quatrième Évangile* (Paris: Picard, 1903), 360–61; Blank, *Evangelium,* 1/2: 291–92; Dorothy Lee, *Symbolic Narratives,* 188–226; John Suggit, "The Raising of Lazarus," *ExpTim* 95 (1983–84): 106–108; Brodie, *Gospel,* 406–407; and Fehribach, *Women,* 83–111.

[4] Cf. Bultmann, *John,* 392–93; Beasley-Murray, *John,* 206–8; Francis J. Moloney, *Signs and Shadows: Reading John 5–12* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 178–79; Coloe, "Anointing," 113–14; and Koester, *Symbolism,* 130.

13 has escaped the notice of most scholarly studies of John 12:1–7[5] and so will be the focus of this chapter. Two passages from this latter portion of the Fourth Gospel, John 13:2–30[6] and 19:39–42, exhibit an especially close association to John 12:1–7 and will therefore be considered together.[7]

As the household theme recurs in John 13:2–30 and 19:38–42, a narrative "echo" is created.[8] The present study will trace the echo in these two passages verse by verse. The scope of any similarities, and the extent to which the evangelist selected and arranged the material for a specific theological message, will be evaluated. Ultimately, the present study will demonstrate that John 12:1–7, with its interest in a household theme that recurs throughout the Fourth Gospel, has been constructed so that it might foreshadow Jesus' establishment of a new household of God through his suffering and death on the cross.

John 13:2–30

Consensus exists among scholars today that the beginning of this chapter initiates an important new development in the narrative of the Gospel of John.[9] Though the present study affirms this conclusion, certain features of John 13:2–30 also bear remarkable similarity to the

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[5] Lindars, *Gospel,* 412–18, proves to be an exception to the general rule. He sees John 12:1–7 as evidence that this episode once served as an introduction to the foot washing. But his interest in the relationship between the anointing at Bethany in John 12 and the foot washing in John 13 is primarily in order to elucidate the likely history of the tradition behind the text. See further this chapter, p. 105.

[6] Regarding the different views concerning the history of the text of John 13, see the often cited contribution of Fernando Segovia, *Love Relationships in the Johannine Tradition: Agapē/Agapan in 1 John and the Fourth Gospel* (SBLDS 58; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982), 82–96; and D. Francois Tolmie, *Jesus' Farewell to the Disciples: John 13:1–17:26 in Narratological Perspective* (BibInt 12; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 1–7. The present study will consider John 13:2–30 on its own terms as a unity.

[7] Koester's contention that symbolic actions in the Gospel of John must be interpreted in light of Jesus' crucifixion (*Symbolism,* 127) is born out by the association between the anointing of Jesus in John 12:1–7 and the final day of Jesus' "hour," the day of his crucifixion. See further ch. 4, pp. 147–56.

[8] For a sustained definition of a narrative echo and an example drawn from the book of Acts, see Tannehill, "Narrative Development," 229. Regarding the phenomenon in the Fourth Gospel, see also Stibbe, *John as Storyteller,* 29.

[9] E.g., Raymond Brown describes John 13 as the beginning of what he calls "the Book of Glory." See his *Gospel,* 1:cxxxviii–cxxxix.

text of John 12:1–7, especially in matters related to the Gospel's household theme. In the past, some scholarly studies have undertaken similar comparisons of John 12:1–7 and 13:2–30. When these studies have attempted to account for similarities between the two passages,[10] they have either (1) suggested a relationship based on a redactor's use of anointing episodes in the Synoptics (Mark 14:3–9; Matt 26:6–13; and especially Luke 7:36–50)[11] or (2) focused rather exclusively on the historical roles of women within the Johannine community of the first century.[12] While such studies have yielded some valuable insights into the Fourth Gospel and the historical circumstances that may have accompanied its composition, similarities that go beyond such matters suggest a theological interest on the part of the evangelist that is of fundamental importance for understanding many key components of the Gospel's narrative. The present study will undertake a comparison of John 12:1–7 and John 13:2–30 to better understand these similarities. General similarities in structure between passages will be briefly outlined. To survey the range and importance of these similarities in light of recent scholarly study of the Fourth Gospel, each verse of John 13:2–30 will now be examined.

John 13:2

The occasion of John 13 bears a remarkable resemblance to the earlier occasion at Bethany:[13] (1) here, as at Bethany, a household gathers for an evening meal;[14] (2) again, the

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[10] Culpepper, *Gospel and Letters*, 202–3, merely makes mention of some similarities between the anointing in John 12 and the foot washing in John 13, but offers no attempt to explain them.

[11] Cf. especially Sabbe, "The Footwashing," 298–305; Lindars, *Gospel,* 415–16; and Weiss, "Foot Washing," 312–14.

[12] Cf. Maccini, *Testimony,* 172–76; Scott, *Sophia,* 209–11; Seim, "Roles of Women," 73; and Giblin, "Mary's Anointing," 560–61.

[13] These similarities will evoke a response on the part of the reader as he or she "connects the recurrent images, actions or themes into a whole" (Stibbe, *John as Storyteller,* 29). Such possible responses will be considered in chapter 5 of the dissertation, pp. 198–200.

[14] John 12:1 and 13:2 (cf. 21:20) constitute the only two places in the entire Gospel of John where an evening meal (δεῖπνον) is eaten. See ch. 2, p. 70; Barrett, *Gospel,* 343; and Beirne, *Women and Men,* 143.

occasion has to do with the celebration of Passover (see the extended discussion of this matter below in the chapters to follow), and for that reason the presence, especially now, of a household is in view; (3) for a second time, the suggestion is that Judas belongs to this household; and (4) Judas is again described as one who is about to betray the household. Judas, son of the household of Simon and disciple of Jesus (6:69; 13:18), is now demonstrated to be in league with the devil and will later become a place of dwelling for Satan himself (cf. 13:27). Each of these similarities will be individually considered.

First, as at Bethany, the evening meal described in John 13:2 is of vital importance to the significance of the verses that follow. As the present study has already demonstrated,[15] eating a meal together would have been understood by the peoples of the first-century Mediterranean world as a sign of mutual fellowship, acceptance, and community, reflecting a common bond akin to that which existed between members of a household. The dinner is therefore important both for what it says about the people gathered as well as what these people do once they have gathered together for the dinner.

Who are the people gathered together in John 13? Unlike the family of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, those gathered (we shall see) do not constitute a more usual household, but the narrative of John 13 in particular and the Fourth Gospel as a whole depict them as a household gathered to Jesus. Two points should be emphasized. First, the prior narrative of the Fourth Gospel, including the anointing episode, has repeatedly depicted the followers of Jesus in terms that emphasize their encounter with Jesus in a household context. Their attachment to Jesus may (1) result partly out of ordinary household relationships with those who have already encountered Jesus (1:40–42; 4:50–53) and (2) coincide with the isolation that results from

[15] Cf. ch. 2, pp. 70–72.

broken family relationships (4:16–18; 9:18–33; 11:21–22). This narrative context underlies Jesus' dealings with his followers throughout the Fourth Gospel and so necessarily colors the circumstances in John 13. Second, once the evening meal is underway, those present in the narrative with Jesus in John 13:2–30 will be referred to as Jesus' "disciples," a reference that continues throughout John 13–19 (15:8; 16:17, 29; 18:1–2, 15–19, 25; 19:26–27, 38)[16] regarding those whom Jesus on a previous occasion in the Fourth Gospel has described in household terms (8:31–36).[17] So although those present in John 13 are not members of a nuclear family, according to the narrative context of the Fourth Gospel and in keeping with ancient convention they can nevertheless be said to constitute a household.

What do the people gathered for a meal in John 13 do? The main focus of the chapter will be on Jesus washing his disciples' feet. Three aspects of the meal first mentioned in John 13:2 are worth noting. First, a genitive-absolute construction referring to the mealtime setting (δείπνου γινομένου) begins John 13:2 and modifies a main verb (ἐγείρεται) that will not emerge in the narrative until John 13:4. Together with Judas's imminent betrayal of Jesus (13:2) and Jesus' own authority and control over the events that follow despite his arrest, trial, and crucifixion (13:3), this participial clause specifying a mealtime setting modifies the verb that follows. Thus,

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[16] This term in the Fourth Gospel is not limited to "the twelve" (cf. 6:66; 19:38). Moreover, though women are neither explicitly mentioned at the dinner nor referenced in the Fourth Gospel as "disciples" of Jesus (cf. J. Ramsey Michaels, "John 12:1–11," *Int* 43 [1989]: 289; the confusion on the part of Jesus' "disciples" that Jesus would be "speaking with a woman" [4:27]; and the distinction made between Mary Magdalene and "the disciples" during Jesus' resurrection appearances [20:18]), Mary Magdalene accompanies Jesus' relatives at the foot of the cross. This indicates that women outside of Jesus' family would have been numbered among his followers and would have accompanied him on his fourth and final journey to Jerusalem.

[17] In John 8:31–36 Jesus corrects the assumption of the Jews that have believed in him that theirs is a primary household affiliation with Abraham. By contrasting the status of sons and slaves in the context of Abraham (8:35; cf. 8:32) Jesus appears to be invoking the contrast between Ishmael, the son of the slave woman who did not remain in the household of Abraham, and Isaac, the son of Sarah who did. For a similar contrast invoked by Paul, cf. Gal 4:30–31; see also Barrett, *Gospel,* 345–46. Jesus, the son of the household who sets people free from their slavery (8:36; cf. 8:31–32), inserts himself in Isaac's place as the son who establishes the only household identity that really matters (cf. 8:38). Regarding Jesus as one to whom multiple households are joined and thus a focus for a larger household analogous to that of Abraham, see ch. 1, pp. 14–15 and 22–23.

it indicates that the foot washing took place not before the meal (as would have been the norm) but during it (hence, "while dinner was happening").[18] Second, as will be noted again below, the explicit description of Jesus' posture at table both precedes and follows the foot washing proper (13:4, 12). By enclosing the foot washing within these two portions of narrative, the evangelist subtly reminds the reader again of its mealtime setting. Finally, the evangelist, as if to highlight the meal in connection with both the foot washing and Judas's betrayal, will include Jesus' explicit reference to food and to those who are eating in the narrative that follows the foot washing (13:18, 26). As it was in the case of the anointing at Bethany, the intimacy established here by the evening meal highlights the action of Judas as all the more disloyal and deceptive.[19] The manner in which the evangelist describes the scene suggests that the meal is not just an incidental backdrop to the events described in John 13, but integral to what takes place.

Thus, the evening meal is an important aspect of the setting of John 13 that resembles the anointing at Bethany. Not only does it emphasize again the household relationship of those gathered together with Jesus, it also provides important commentary on the foot service in question, both in John 12 and John 13.

A second aspect of John 13:2–30 that invites comparison to John 12:1–7 concerns the time reference of the δεῖπνον. We shall see in the chapters that follow that the context is still the Passover. It will be argued below that the evening meal in question in John 13:1 was in fact the Passover meal that would have been celebrated at night in the evening and early morning of Nisan 15. Much of what applies to the household gathered for an evening meal at Bethany on a sixth day before the Passover applies also to the household gathered to Jesus in association with

[18] Regarding the temporal nuance of genitive absolutes, cf. Wallace, *Greek Grammar,* 655.

[19] Jesus uses foot imagery to describe Judas's disloyalty by citing Ps 41:10, alluding to the nature of Judas's treachery, despite Judas's table fellowship with the household of Jesus, as "a lifting up of the heel."

the "end" of that Passover. Jewish households in particular would have gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the rescue of the House of Israel at the culmination of the Passover feast (cf. Exod 12:3–4, 27). Though blood relations are not explicitly mentioned in John 13, the Passover context and the reference to the mother of Jesus at the cross (19:25–27) make it likely that some relatives would have been present, as they would have been at Bethany.[20]

A third point of contact between John 12:1–7 and John 13:2–30 has to do with the presence of Judas and his membership in the household gathered to Jesus. The reader will recall that Judas has already been designated one of "the Twelve" whom Jesus has called (6:70). Not only is he a member of Jesus' inner circle, but the finances of the household have been entrusted to him (12:6; see below, 13:29). By highlighting Judas and his imminent betrayal of Jesus here, the evangelist reminds the reader of similar language from the episode at Bethany in which Judas was reintroduced as "one of [Jesus'] disciples, the one who was about to betray him" (12:4). The Fourth Gospel, as will be demonstrated below, also expands the treatment of Judas in John 13. The greater focus on Judas and his imminent betrayal in John 13 accompanies a similar focus on the death of Jesus and his return to the Father. The contrast between Jesus' welcome of Judas and Judas's betrayal underscores the love of Jesus for his own, which he symbolizes in the foot washing. Jesus' loving and self-effacing self-sacrifice coincides with the refusal of his own to receive it (cf. 1:11).

A fourth and final similarity concerns the description of Judas as one who is about to betray the household. Though Judas is still a member of the household of Jesus, there is now another household with which he is seemingly aligned: the household of the devil (see further 13:27 below). Judas's estrangement from Jesus and his alignment with this other household will

[20] See Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (trans. Norman Perrin; London: SCM Press, 1966), 46–7.

lead inevitably to his betrayal of Jesus.[21]

Though the association between Judas and the household of Satan is not apparent in John 12:1–7, Judas's affiliation with thieves, that is, those who work to take what belongs to the household and to disrupt its economy (12:6), foreshadows his future work to undermine the household of Jesus and align himself elsewhere. As the present study has already demonstrated,[22] a first-century reader in the Mediterranean world would likely have understood a thief, no matter his official household membership, to be allied to a household other than the one that he was plundering. In John 13 it now becomes clear that this household is of the devil. The earlier narrative of the Fourth Gospel emphasizes this household association. First, Jesus has already explicitly predicted that Judas's allegiance outside his own household would result in membership in the household of Satan (6:70–71). Second, not only has Jesus openly described the false leaders[23] of Israel as "thieves and robbers" (10:1, 8) whose job it is to "steal, kill, and destroy" (10:10), but he has also identified the work of Satan in similar terms, that is, lying and killing (8:44). Those whom Jesus claims to be children of the devil, those whom the Fourth Gospel refers to as "the Jews," are often portrayed as antagonists of Jesus and are associated with those who occupy positions of leadership in Israel and plot to have Jesus arrested and killed ("Pharisees" [1:24; cf. 1:19; 9:13–41; 11:46–57] and "chief priests" [11:47–57; 12:10–11; 18:35; 19:5–7, 14–15]; cf. Judas's eventual association with both in 18:3).[24]

By the time the reader reaches John 13, there can be little doubt regarding the association

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[21] The importance of this pattern for the overall structure of John 13 and its message has been noted by others. See especially Talbert, *Reading John,* 189–90; and Francis J. Moloney, "A Sacramental Reading of John 13:1–38," *CBQ* 53 (1991): 246.

[22] See ch. 2, pp. 91–93.

[23] Regarding shepherds as leaders, see 2 Sam 5:2, 7:7; Ps 78:70–71; Eze 34:1–16; Zech 11:4–17; Jud 11:19; and 2 Esd 5:18.

[24] See Gärtner, *Iskariot,* 25.

between Judas and Satan. This time, instead of being called "one of the Twelve" or "one of [Jesus'] disciples," Judas is explicitly described as one who does the bidding of the devil in opposition to the household of Jesus. Judas is in league with the devil (cf.17:12). It is difficult to tell where Judas's intentions end and the devil's begin (cf. 6:70–71).[25] But here, as at Bethany, Judas is still depicted as a disciple of Jesus (indeed, a disciple chosen by Jesus; cf. below 13:10), and so he is a disciple about to betray both Jesus and Jesus' household. The explicit alliance between Judas and the household of the devil in this portion of the narrative indicates that an important development in the Gospel story has taken place.

So four similarities between John 12:1–7 and John 13:2–30 are already evident in John 13:2, namely, (1) a dinner, (2) the Passover, and (3) Judas (4) as one about to betray Jesus. Such links extend beyond mere repetition. They again reflect developments in the text of the Fourth Gospel anticipating the accomplishment of Jesus that will come with his suffering and death on the cross.

John 13:3–5

Concrete thoughts and actions of Jesus are highlighted in John 13:3–5 that both evoke and interpret aspects of the household gathered to Jesus already narrated in John 12. First, the reader encounters two aspects of Jesus' action as Son in the household of the Father that provide similar commentary on the household theme: (1) Jesus is again depicted as householder as he acknowledges his unique identity as Son of the Father and that the affairs of the heavenly family (Father and Son) have been made his own, and (2) Jesus performs the foot washing fully aware,

[25] A variant reading for the text of John 13:2 is Ἰούδα, the genitive for "Judas" (cf. Luke 3:30). This indicates ambiguity in the transmission of the text over whether the text should read "heart of Judas" (A, D, Θ, $f^{1.13}$, 33, 𝔐, a, e, f, q, sy) or simply "the heart" ($\mathfrak{P}^{66}$, ℵ*, B, [W, 579] L, Ψ, 070, 1241), a term that could refer either to the heart of the devil or the heart of Judas. For a discussion of the issues at stake, see Bultmann, *John,* 464 n. 2; Metzger, *Textual Commentary,* 204; and Carson, *Gospel,* 461–62.

again, of his imminent departure, a departure in which he will leave his own and return to God. Second, various additional details of the foot washing call to mind the anointing and the household gathered at Bethany. Despite the ordinary significance and purpose of washing feet, Jesus' action is again extraordinary in a manner that, though different from the anointing at Bethany, nevertheless invites comparison with the prior action.

The foot-washing narrative provides additional commentary on the Gospel's household theme by referencing Jesus' knowledge of his unique identity as the Son of the Father.[26] This relationship is important for the members of Jesus' household and for the significance of events that follow.[27] Any conception of Jesus' household must ultimately take into account not only the

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[26] Scholars have debated how Jesus' relationship to God as "Son" would have been understood by first-century readers of the Gospel of John. Ashton, *Understanding,* 318, notes the importance of distinguishing "Son" in the Gospel of John from the Messianic title "Son of God." Once Jesus' self-designation as "Son" is no longer seen as exclusively Messianic, the question may then be asked: would the term have expressed a certain function that Jesus fills (i.e., Jesus as "Son" of the Father carries out God's will)? Or would it have demonstrated Jesus' affinity with the Father (Jesus as Son of the Father reveals God)? Scholars have often emphasized one or the other. Those who have understood Jesus' role in John as functional have tended to highlight the Son as the faithful servant sent by the Father, the envoy or representative of God. Robert Kysar, *The Fourth Evangelist and His Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975), 202, listed J. A. T. Robinson, J. Riedle, and H. Schlier among those who interpret Jesus primarily in terms of his function, or work. Since the publication of Kysar's book, Juan Peter Miranda again examined the Son as envoy of the Father in the Fourth Gospel in his *Die Sendung Jesu.* Miranda concluded that the Father-Son relationship does not express identity between the sender and the one sent, but rather congruence in action (p. 90). By contrast, interpretations that have focused on Jesus' identity with the Father have more strongly emphasized Jesus as revealer and God incarnate. This interpretation emphasized Jesus' statement that to see him is to see the Father (cf. 14:9). Miranda identified K. H. Rengstorf, R, Bultmann, W. G. Kümmel, and F. M. Braun as scholars who have essentially argued in favor of this latter model (pp. 10–11). Other recent scholarship (e.g., Jan Bühner, *Der Gesandte und sein Weg im 4. Evangelium: Die kultur- und religionsgeschichtliche Entwicklung* [WUNT 2/2; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1977]; and Köstenberger, *Missions of Jesus,* 11) has approached the issue as a "both/and" rather than an "either/or" proposition. Whether Jesus is essentially "son" or "envoy/slave" sent by the Father, he is in any case a member of the household. Ashton emphasized the former. He considered the possibility that the beloved son of Mark 12:6, sent by the Father, best explains how the Fourth Gospel presents Jesus as Son: "Important are (1) the special status of the son within the owner's household; and (2) the general circumstances which would make his mission—as a son, indeed, an only son—not just an adventitious conjunction, but a natural consequence of his privileged position" (p. 320). G. M. Beasley-Murray summarized the latter position: Jesus as servant or slave of the Father. "The messenger was commonly a slave. Such a person, however, belonged to the house of the master, and the honor and esteem in which the household was held was represented by the slave.... The messenger was identified with his master's 'house' and the 'house' was an extension of the master's personality, so that in his messenger, the sender himself acted" (*Gospel of Life: Theology in the Fourth Gospel* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991], 18). John 13:3 demonstrates that the foot washing occurs in the context of the heavenly household, that in the foot washing the Father's work is being entrusted to Jesus, and that this foot washing is the first step in Jesus' journey back to God, a journey that culminates in the cross.

[27]Waldstein, "Mission of Jesus," 312-13, focuses on the heavenly component of the household of Jesus that remains in the background of Gospel narratives when Jesus is the primary focus: "Contact with Jesus is never an

Father's love for the Son (cf. 1:18; 3:35; 5:20; 10:17; 17:26) but also the affairs of the heavenly family that the Father entrusts to the Son by giving "all things" into his hands (cf. 3:34–35). Jesus speaks what the Father has given, taught, and shown him to speak (3:34; 8:28, 38; 12:49–50; 14:10; 15:15; 17:8; 17:14). He performs the work of the Father (10:37), work that he has seen the Father doing (cf. 5:17, 19–21) and which has been given him by the Father to accomplish (10:18; 14:31). Though the Father remains the focus of the heavenly household as the "unsent sender"[28] of Jesus, Jesus is the focus for this household on earth as he carries out the will of the Father.

The foot washing also recalls and elucidates the significance of the narrative in John 12:1–7 and the household gathered at Bethany by its focus upon Jesus' imminent "departure." Just as the anointing at Bethany occurs in the shadow of Jesus' impending death and burial (12:7; cf. 12:8), the foot washing occurs with Jesus' departure to God in view (13:3), an event that Jesus later associates most immediately with his death (16:16–22). As a result, the anointing and foot washing are related and have important ramifications for the household gathered to Jesus. First, the focus in John 13:3–5 on the overall journey of Jesus from the Father and back again informs the more immediate journey begun in John 11–12.[29] The work commended to Jesus by the Father will culminate in his death and return to the Father (14:5–6; 14:28; 16:10, 17; 16:28; 17:11, 13; 20:17–18). Though Jesus leaves for Judea to restore the household of Lazarus and so reveal the glory of God (11:41), his journey to Bethany leads ultimately to Jerusalem and the cross, where

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endpoint in John....The figure of Jesus makes sense when in hearing him you hear the Father, when in looking at him you see the Father and worship him." Cf. Ernst Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the light of Chapter 17* (trans. Gerhard Krodel; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968), 11.

[28] Cf. James McPolin, "Mission in the Fourth Gospel," *ITQ* 36 (1969): 114, as cited by Köstenberger, *Missions of Jesus,* 8 n. 13.

[29] For a reading of the Fourth Gospel in light of the journey motif, see especially Fernando Segovia, "Journey(s)," 23.

he will "gather the scattered children of God" (11:52). Lazarus's illness is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God might be glorified through it (11:4). Similar language is used elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel regarding the death of Jesus (12:23–24). Second, the imminent departure of Jesus and return to the Father indicates the completion of Jesus' work, a matter that coincides with the day of Jesus' burial preparation (19:38–42; cf. 12:7). This is merely anticipated in John 12:1–7 but is demonstrably underway in John 13 with its focus on the arrival of Jesus' hour (cf. below 13:1). Though the return to the Father alludes not only to Jesus' death but also to his resurrection and ascension (cf. 20:17), it is at his death that Jesus will declare all things accomplished (19:30). Both the concrete manner of Jesus' death and the figurative language that he uses to describe this "end" are a source of considerable sadness and shock for the members of his household (13:1–2, 33; cf. 16:6, 20). But his departure is not forced on him by the world. Rather, it is a part of the Father's plan and will bring into being the very place that the household of Jesus will ultimately come to call "home" (cf. 14:3).[30]

Other details provided in John 13:3–5 provide more immediate points of comparison with the anointing. Jesus' act, like Mary's, is focused on feet, and so is to be interpreted in light of the conventions associated with the washing and anointing of feet for people of the first-century Mediterranean world. Two customary aspects of foot washing for readers of this period are especially important for the investigation of John 13. First, first-century readers would have likely been familiar with ritual or cultic foot washing, in which the feet were washed prior to

[30] Ernst Haenchen, "'Der Vater, der Mich gesandt hat,'" *NTS* 9 (1963): 215, contrasts Jesus' obedience to his Father with his reluctance to comply with the request of his "brothers" in John 7:6 in connection with the theme of his "hour" (ὥρα) or "time" (καιρός): "Jesus ist in keiner Weise von menschlichen Motiven abhängig, sondern nur von den Weisungen des Vaters; das macht der Evangelist hier mit diesem Satz klar, dem in vii. 6 der ähnliche Satz entspricht: 'Meine Zeit (καιρός) ist noch nicht da.' Auch die Aufforderungen seiner nächsten Verwandten können ihn nicht bewegen." Regarding the mission of Jesus and his disciples to bring people "home" to God, see Josef Kuhl, *Die Sendung Jesu und der Kirche nach dem Johannes-Evangelium* (Studia Istituti Missiologici Societatis Verbi Divini 11; St. Augustin: Steyler, 1967), 231: "Die Sendung Jesu und seiner Jünger zielt auf die Heimholung des Menschen zu Gott, auf die personale Gotteinigung, wozu als Voraussetzung der Glaubensanschluß an den Gottgesandten, den Sohn Gottes, gefordert wird."

entering a holy place or temple. Examples of such ritual purification can be found in both Jewish and Hellenistic literature from the period.[31] Second, foot washing would have also been customary throughout the Mediterranean world in domestic settings, both for personal hygiene and for demonstrating hospitality.[32] Jesus' association with the heavenly household (13:3), which encompasses both the domestic "place" of the Father (14:2) and temple (2:16–17), leads the reader to anticipate a foot washing that is a customary expression of either hospitality or purification in connection with the heavenly household.[33] The present study will return to this topic after more extensive analysis of the passage.

Various similarities between John 12 and 13 suggest that what takes place would again have been both ordinary and extraordinary for a first-century household.[34] Much of what happens in both passages would have reflected customary concerns and practices. First, the focus in both passages is on foot service, an especially important concern for visitors and guests to households

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[31] See the Temple Scroll, 11QT XLV–LI; David Tripp, "Meanings of the Foot Washing: John 13 and Oxyrhyncus Papyrus 840," *ExpTim* 103 (1992): 238; Thomas, *Footwashing,* 27–31; 43–44; and Jerome Neyrey, "The Foot Washing in John 13:6–11: Transformation Ritual or Ceremony?" in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (ed. L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarborough; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1995), 198–213. Though the washing of hands and feet is mentioned in the Old Testament as the means of consecrating those who were to be priests (cf. Exod 30:19–21; 40:30–32) and Weiss, "Foot Washing," 300, 304–5, submits P. Oxy. 840 as evidence that the washing of feet would have been a requirement for entrance to the Jerusalem temple during the second-temple period, little is known about the specifics of ritual purification for those entering the Jerusalem temple in Jesus' day.

[32] That is, foot washing would have functioned as a process that changed an outsider's status from that of a "stranger" to a "guest" of the household. See Bruce Malina, *The Social World of Jesus and the Gospels* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 228. Unlike a self-administered foot washing, which might be undertaken for hygienic reasons, having one's feet washed involved the welcoming household in an act considered appropriate only for the lowliest members of the household.

[33] See especially Coloe, "Welcome," 407–8; 411–15. Kerr rejects the argument of Hultgren in favor of the foot washing as an expression of eschatological welcome having "soteriological significance" ("Johannine Footwashing," 541) and concludes that the foot washing should not be so interpreted. But he never argues against the viability of the foot washing as an expression of eschatological hospitality. See Kerr, *Temple,* 285–87.

[34] In addition to the features of the text that especially recall the household theme, the overall structure and wording of John 12:3 and 13:5 are strikingly similar. Both Mary and Jesus perform foot service with something that the reader does not expect them to have, and which the evangelist distinguishes with the pleonastic use of the aorist participle "to take" (λαβοῦσα/λαβών; cf. 18:3). Though Mary wipes off perfume with her hair and Jesus dries the disciples' feet with his towel, the same Greek vocable, ἐκμάσσω, is used in both instances (and in these instances alone in the Fourth Gospel) to describe the wiping. Finally, the wiping is narrated in almost identical fashion; only the phrase "Jesus' feet" is substituted with "the disciples' feet."

of Jesus' day. Second, the person attending to feet in John 13 dons a slave's towel.[35] This action would have paralleled Mary's loosing of her hair, even though the latter action is not separately described by the text, but is assumed in John 12:3. Third, the foot service itself is accompanied by a "wiping" of the feet. As with the wiping of the excess perfume with Mary's hair, so also the wiping of the disciples' feet with the slave's towel—in either case this action would have been customary for servants or slaves of the household. But the foot service in question also takes place in terms that would have been contrary to the conventional practice of first-century households. First, both here and at Bethany, foot service proceeds only once the evening meal has already begun (see "while dinner was happening . . . he rose from the dinner," 13:2–4; and "and Martha was serving, and Lazarus was one of those who were reclining [at table] with him," 12:2). Second, the person attending to feet in both instances carries out his or her task in a manner that would have been considered extraordinarily self-effacing by those present at the meal. Jesus leaves his position at the table, "lays down" his garments, and dons the servant's towel.[36] Unlike Mary, he performs the foot washing on those who are his social inferiors. But like Mary, Jesus carries out his task in a manner that would have likely identified him as a slave. This manifests the extent of Jesus' love, for he is not only recognized by the disciples as "teacher and Lord" (13:14), but he has already been identified in the passage as the Son of the Father about to embark on his journey back to God (13:2). This is truly no ordinary foot washing.

Is the symbolic significance of this foot washing to be understood primarily according to a domestic setting, that is, as a washing of welcome to Jesus' household? Or is it primarily to be interpreted in a cultic or religious setting, as a washing that consecrates the disciples prior to

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[35] See Hoskyns, *Fourth Gospel,* 437; Barrett, *Gospel,* 440.

[36] Features that distinguish John 13:3–5 from John 12:3 include verbs that recall the actions of the Good Shepherd who "lays down" his life only so that he can "take it up" again (cf. 10:11, 15, 17–18).

their entrance to the place of God's presence? In light of Jesus as one with the Father (10:30), the two emphases are not mutually exclusive. According to the first-century understanding of consecration at the temple, washing was not undertaken in order to remove dirt so much as it was to insure that all, especially those gathered to worship in God's presence, were in their proper place.[37] McCaffery[38] has also distinguished a two-tiered meaning of the term "household," in which the tabernacle and Jerusalem temple were a kind of model for God's heavenly dwelling in the Old Testament (cf. Exod 25:40; 26:30), in Philo (Mos. 2.74–76), and at Qumran (1QS II, 7–8). But two factors already argue against an understanding of the foot washing as merely a purificatory wash,[39] with more becoming apparent later on.[40] First, the unconventional nature of the foot washing demonstrates it to have symbolic significance that points ahead to events that have not yet unfolded in the narrative (13:7). Jesus' imminent departure will eventually result in his own being welcomed to the household of his Father (cf. 14:2–3), but Jesus' disciples cannot yet understand this (e.g., 14:5). This is why Peter is not able to recognize what Jesus is doing *now* (13:7). By contrast, the disciples are twice said to be "[already] clean" (13:10; 15:3), and in the latter instance, this cleansing is attributed to the words, not the foot washing, of Jesus. Second, most of the imagery in this early portion of John 13 (Jesus' attire as a slave, an evening meal eaten in a Passover context, the setting and surroundings as Jesus and his disciples recline at table together, etc.) is appropriate for a domestic—not cultic—setting. So at the outset the foot washing seems at least to signify both household welcome and temple consecration. Together,

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[37] Cf. Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 94–95.

[38] See McCaffrey, *House,* 54–62.

[39] Specific matters related to John 13:8 and the variant reading in 13:10 will be treated in greater detail in this chapter, pp. 118–20.

[40] See further this chapter, pp. 118–21.

the ordinary and the extraordinary aspects of the foot washing work together to produce a picture of a symbolic foot washing that is interpreted by the dialogue in the narrative that follows it.

John 13:6–11

In subsequent verses, Jesus explicitly interacts with individuals present at the meal in a way that both recalls John 12:1–7 and offers important points of contrast. A disciple's misunderstanding (13:8–9) and Jesus' explanation of what has just taken place (13:8) recall John 12:1–7 and further develop the household theme in association with Jesus' death. One important point of contrast between the anointing in John 12 and the washing in John 13 is that, unlike Mary's anointing, receiving *Jesus'* foot service is necessary for those who are to have a part with him (13:8). Both the similarities and contrasts between passages will now be considered.

In John 12 and John 13, a member of the household misunderstands and objects to the foot service offered. In John 13, the household member in question is Simon Peter. Peter, like Judas, has already been introduced in the narrative as one of "the Twelve" (6:66–70). And though Peter's protest precedes Jesus' washing of his own feet (13:6), the detail in the previous verse—that Jesus had already begun to wash the disciples' feet (13:5)—indicates that Peter, like Judas in John 12, interrupts foot service already underway. His reaction, like that of Judas (12:5), allows Jesus to elaborate on the meaning of the action that has just begun.[41]

The differences between Peter in John 13 and Judas in John 12 become quickly apparent; but, as with the anointing at Bethany, the household associations inherent in the foot service rendered emerge more clearly with Jesus' response in John 13 to those who would interrupt it:

[41] Francis J. Moloney, "A Sacramental Reading," 237–56; and Coloe, "Welcome," 400–15, argue in favor the structural unity of John 13:1–38. Moloney (p. 242) notes that John 13:36–38 closely matches similar prophecies of the future betrayal by Judas (in 13:10–11and 21–22), leading him to conclude that "an analysis of the plot, the rhetoric, and the characters of the narrative may show close thematic and literary relationships between the prophecies of the betrayal of Judas and the denials of Peter." Nonetheless, Peter's address of Jesus as "Lord" (13:6; cf. 4:49; 6:68; 11:27) and enthusiasm to be washed so as to receive a part in Jesus (13:9; cf. 13:36–38) distinguish his misunderstanding of the foot washing from Judas's duplicity in light of the anointing.

"Unless I wash you, you have no μέρος with me" (13:8). Jesus' response to Peter has been variously interpreted by scholars, usually in ways that focus on either the sacraments in the life of the church or the symbolic language from the Synoptic Gospels that highlight the foot washing as a means to fellowship with Jesus.[42] Reading John 13:8 in light of John 13:10 reveals a picture of the washing as one indicative of welcome into Jesus' household.

First, the once-and-for-all nature of washing through which his disciples might "have a μέρος" with Jesus emphasizes the foot washing as an emblematic action that anticipates a once-and-for-all work of Jesus occurring in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel.[43] Rather than understanding the foot washing primarily as a symbol for an action to be repeated in the lives of Jesus' disciples, the foot washing first points ahead to Jesus' accomplishment on the cross, when both eschatological cleansing and welcome will be afforded to Jesus' own. Both cleansing and welcome are afforded in the church's "now" through the blessing of baptism. At the same time,

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[42] The question is not unrelated to the problem of the variant readings at John 13:10, according to some of which the words "except for the feet" have been omitted (see further this chapter, p. 120 n. 44). Interpretations of the foot washing include the following: (1) Moloney, *John,* 375, understands the textual variant "except for the feet" to have been originally absent from John 13:10 and so read Jesus' words in John 13:8 in light of Romans 6:3, that is, as a reference to the rite of Holy Baptism. Thomas, *Footwashing,* 13–14 n. 2, surveys the pertinent scholarly literature. (2) Others understand John 13:8 in such a way that the foot washing symbolizes the forgiveness of sins. In addition to the works listed by Thomas, *Footwashing,* 14–15 n. 1, see also J. Schneider, "μέρος," *TDNT* 4:597, who understands the foot washing as symbolizing fellowship with Jesus that leads ultimately to a share in the first resurrection (Rev 20:6) and the tree of life (Rev 22:19). (3) Still others understand the wording of 13:8, in the context of a last meal of Jesus with his disciples, to be pointing to the Eucharist. Oscar Cullmann, *Christian Worship* (trans. A. Stewart Todd and James B. Torrance; SBT; London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1953), 107, understands the evening meal in John to be the same meal at which Jesus instituted the Last Supper in the Synoptic Gospels. Again, Thomas, *Footwashing,* 13, gives a detailed summary of such scholarship. (4) J. A. T. Robinson, "The Significance of the Footwashing," in *Neotestamentica et Patristica: Eine Freundesgabe, Herrn Professor Dr. Oscar Cullmann zu seinem 60. Geburtstag überreicht* (ed. W. C. van Unnik; NovTSup 6; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962), 144–47, differs from these other readings by understanding the significance of Jesus' words in John 13:8 in light of Mark 10:32–45 (cf. Luke 22:24–27). To have a share with Jesus, according to Robinson, means to share in the "baptism" Jesus is about to undergo (regarding "drinking the cup of Christ" as sharing in his suffering, see *Mart. Pol.* 14:2; cf. John 18:11). The present study understands John 13:8 as a necessary washing that accompanies the state of being already clean to which Jesus refers in John 13:10 (cf. this chapter, p. 120). The Fourth Gospel understands the word of Jesus as that which makes clean (15:3) and Jesus' departure/death as that which gathers a new household of God (see further ch. 4, pp. 168–76). Jesus' explanation why he need not wash Peter's head and hands (yet must wash Peter's feet, [13:8, 10]) accords well with the practice of foot washing as a gesture of hospitality which would have been prevalent in his day.

[43] The distinction is explained in detail by Neyrey, "Foot Washing," 199–205.

Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet might have served as a point of contrast to the ongoing ritual purification that Israel underwent to enter the former house of God (the Jerusalem temple) during the Passover feast, whatever form that rite would have taken (11:55–57).

Second, according to the longer version of John 13:10 as represented in NA[27],[44] the receiving of a μέρος was accomplished by a necessary foot washing that accompanied a prior washing and state of being wholly clean. Such would have been the case for a guest being welcomed into a household of the first-century. Only feet would have needed to have been washed. Again, the emphasis is on both eschatological cleansing and welcome.

Third, though the necessary washing of John 13:10 (νίπτω) has no obvious difference in meaning from the prior washing associated with a state of being wholly clean (λούω), νίπτω may be distinguished as the vocable used for the washing deemed necessary by Jesus in John 13:8 as well as the washing that led to healing in John 9:7–14. Though it is not immediately clear how one type of washing (νίπτω) is to be differentiated from the other (λούω), the usual translation of the latter vocable according to its middle form (with reference to "bathing")[45] offers a likely explanation. Again, this translation and its contribution to Jesus' symbolic language ("One who has bathed has no need to be washed, except for the feet, but is wholly clean") conforms to the usual circumstances associated with welcome to the household. The foot washing was not offered only for cleansing, but to foreshadow the welcome of the guest into the household through the self-effacing action of one of its members.

Fourth, the likely nuance of the "share" (μέρος) mentioned in John 13:8 is not material

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[44] For a discussion of the text-critical issues at stake, see Metzger, *Textual Commentary,* 204; and Barrett, *Gospel,* 441–42. The present study reads with the text of NA[27] at John 13:10 as the more difficult reading and so closest to the original, believing a scribe dropped the reference to feet because of the difficulty of reconciling it with καθαρὸς ὅλος.

[45] See BDAG, s.v. λούω, 2.

inheritance but "place."[46] According to the immediate context of the Gospel of John, a context in which Jesus is about to depart and in departing prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house (14:1–3), the foot washing seems best understood as a symbolic act of hospitality that anticipates Jesus' welcome of his disciples into the heavenly household when he dies. Disciples who submit to his washing enjoy a place with him, and ultimately, upon Jesus' death, with God the Father (see further pp. 187–90, below). The foot washing occurs in the context of a narrative that will climax at the cross (cf. 13:1 below). In the Fourth Gospel, the cross is the means for Jesus to be lifted up (12:32–33), that is, to return to the Father, God Himself (cf. 20:17). According to this understanding of the foot washing, the work required to establish the "place" (14:2) with Jesus that his disciples will enjoy is foreshadowed by the washing in John 13 and is ultimately accomplished with Jesus' death.[47]

So the interruption of foot service already underway in John 12 and John 13 provides yet another remarkable similarity between the anointing and foot washing episodes. The consequences of these interruptions and what they demonstrate about the events described also reveal critical differences between episodes. Jesus' reply to Peter in John 13 demonstrates that his washing is necessary for all who would have a place with him. It reveals yet again that his washing foreshadows an eschatological welcome to the house of his Father that will come with Jesus' suffering and death on the cross.

John 13:12–17

Beginning with John 13:12, the narrative shifts from its emphasis on the foot washing as a

[46] See BDAG, s.v. μέρος, 2.

[47] The division of Jesus' clothes at his crucifixion (19:23–24), at which each of the soldiers receives a μέρος, invites comparison with Jesus' language with Peter at the foot washing (13:8). As the present study will later demonstrate, the cross becomes the climax of the Fourth Gospel where Jesus' departure, his death, and his drawing together a household coincide. Coloe, "Welcome," 412, writes, "For the disciples, foot washing is a proleptic experience of the welcome into the Father's household that will be accomplished at the cross."

symbolic foreshadowing of Jesus' death, and the significance of this death for the gathering of a household, and more noticeably emphasizes the foot washing as an example (ὑπόδειγμα) that the members of Jesus' household are to follow (13:15).[48] Jesus' desire is that his followers model what he has signified and take part in what he has accomplished in the foot washing (13:14–15). Though the foot washing is preceded and followed by reference to the "head" of the household (cf. "Father" [13:3]; "God" [13:3]; "the one who sent me" [13:20]), Jesus now shifts the focus of his household identity from slave to lord (13:14). His status as lord of the household has important ramifications both for the significance of the foot washing and for how his own are to respond to it.

Jesus "takes up" his garments and resumes his place with his followers by reclining at table (13:12).[49] Here his return to a reclining position at table instead of the "raised" position from which he has washed the disciples' feet (cf. 13:4) reflects a shift in the focus of the narrative. Whereas John 13:6–11 centers on the image of those washed receiving a "place" with Jesus (13:8), that is, their being ultimately welcomed into the heavenly household through Jesus' death and resurrection (Jesus as washer of feet and slave), John 13:12–17 is concerned with the outcome of that washing for Jesus' own as they follow his example (Jesus as teacher and lord). In other words, the text moves from an emphasis upon Christology/soteriology to an emphasis upon discipleship/parenesis. Both continuity and discontinuity/development with the earlier portion of John 13 are in evidence as Jesus rejoins the disciples reclining at table. The foot

[48] Various conclusions regarding the history of John 13:1–17 have resulted from this change of emphasis in the narrative. Though many find this new section of John 13 to mark a fundamental shift in emphasis, others see the focus on discipleship that follows typical of Jesus' teaching as it is narrated by the Fourth Gospel. For the latter conclusion, see especially Barrett, *Gospel,* 436; Talbert, *Reading John,* 194; and Koester, *Symbolism,* 14.

[49] The word used to describe Jesus' posture at table (ἀνέπεσεν) has already been used by the evangelist to describe the posture of those present on the occasion of an earlier Passover at which Jesus multiplied loaves of bread and fish to feed a multitude (cf. 6:10). It will also be used subsequently in association with the beloved disciple (cf. 13:25; 21:20).

washing as a symbolic action that anticipates Jesus' welcome of his own into a new household of God is the central image that continues throughout the text. But the disparity between Jesus as teacher and lord who washes the feet of his disciples/servants in the earlier passage and the shared status of all members of the household who are to wash one another's feet in the latter constitutes an obvious difference between the two portions of the narrative. Points of comparison and contrast will now be considered.

The contrast between passages begins with Jesus' emphasis upon his foot washing as that which he has done as the disciples' teacher and lord.[50] Though the Father is ultimately the head of the heavenly household, Jesus is the immediate focus for the disciples' household identity on earth.[51] As such, he defines the nature of the household's life together as a single community. The foot washing that he has performed as its teacher and lord is for this reason to be an example for the members of the household.[52] By way of contrast, no one, save Jesus himself, is elevated above the group as a likely candidate for washing feet. Rather, Jesus' injunction to all members of his household is that they are to wash "one another" (13:14). The once-and-for-all quality of the earlier foot washing performed by Jesus is now to be followed by a foot washing that is to be ongoing for the members of Jesus' household,[53] though the precise nature of that ongoing activity (confession/absolution? ceremonial foot washing? something else?) is not elaborated. As those

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[50] The definite article, both in John 13:13 and 14, is monadic, distinguishing Jesus not only as "teacher" and "lord" but as "the Teacher" and "the Lord." See Wallace, *Greek Grammar,* 223–24.

[51] See ch. 1, pp. 11 and 18–20.

[52] Jesus ultimately answers his own question in John 13:12 ("Do you recognize what I have done to/for you?") with the reply in John 13:15 ("I have given you an example, so that what I have done you might continue doing"). Though the Greek vocable ὑπόδειγμα appears nowhere else in the Fourth Gospel, elsewhere in the New Testament its positive references include those who demonstrate an exemplary faith in the face of trial or persecution (e.g., James 5:10; cf. LXX 2 Macc 6:28; 4 Macc 17:23; Sir 44:16).

[53] Note especially the contrast between the aorist (ἐποίησα) and the present tense form ποιῆτε in John 13:15. The former describes perfected or completed action, whereas the latter refers to action that will be ongoing in the future.

sent by Jesus, the disciples' lives are to be emblematic of Jesus' own life. They are to follow his self-sacrificing example, so that others might see "Jesus" in their lives and so be drawn to the one who welcomes all by laying down his life. Because this mutual foot washing performed by Jesus' disciples is to be regular and ongoing, it more closely resembles Neyrey's "ceremony" than it does "ritual transformation."[54] Now the foot washing is more easily compared to the consecration that prepared Israelites for entrance to the Jerusalem temple.

At the same time that development in the narrative occurs in the movement from Jesus as son/slave of the household to Jesus as the disciples' teacher and lord, the central image of the foot washing maintains continuity between John 13:6–11 and John 13:12–20.[55] This continuity emphasizes correspondence between the role of Jesus and that of his followers. It is a correspondence that is reflected again in this portion of the narrative when Jesus speaks of his disciples in a way that he has spoken about himself on other occasions. They, like he, have been sent (13:16; cf. 20:12). Though the disciples are "servants" of their lord, the context of the later narrative indicates that this relationship is not primarily intended to denote the disciples' humble or inferior status in relation to Jesus. Rather, the servant/lord relationship defines a relationship with Jesus by which his own are able to identify with him in his suffering and death (15:20). The laying down of one's life is not an exercise in futility. It is the ultimate manifestation of love (15:12–13). Jesus himself as teacher and lord provides the example of this love through the foot washing. Though the ongoing foot washing of Jesus' followers essentially differs from that of Jesus, Jesus' manner of welcoming his own into his household is to serve as the model for their

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[54] See his "Transformation Ritual or Ceremony?" 198–213.

[55] The structure of traditional rabbinic teaching also suggests continuity between these two sections of text. David Daube, *New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (London: University of London Press, 1956), 182–83, understands the two portions of text to reflect a pattern often employed by the rabbis to illustrate a point, that of "mystifying gesture—question—interpretation."

own interaction with one another. Their foot service, performed on one another, reflects the household relationship that Jesus establishes.[56]

Because Jesus' own are to follow his example as teacher and lord in performing foot service in the same manner that he has done, once again the significance of the passage is to be understood in light of Jesus and his followers constituting a household. The mutual foot service of Jesus' own as an outcome and response to Jesus' washing of feet is an important element of the text for understanding the significance of Mary's foot anointing, narrated in John 12.

John 13:18–28

Following upon the foot washing and Jesus' explanation of its significance is a portion of discourse touching upon the imminent betrayal of the household as it occurs through Judas.[57] As in John 12:1–7, the specific makeup of the household in John 13 is elucidated by the actions and words of various representative characters (in this case, Peter, Judas, and the beloved disciple). Again, as the relationship between Jesus and these individuals is explored, various points of comparison and contrast will emerge between the two episodes. Since many of these are also found in the narrative preceding the foot washing, they will constitute a further development of ideas already introduced regarding John 13:2–3.

First, in John 13:18, Jesus reminds his disciples that he knows the ones whom he has

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[56] Jesus' washing of his own is a once-and-for-all washing of eschatological welcome that anticipates what he will accomplish through his death. The disciples' washing of each other, by contrast, is ongoing and so essentially different from that of Jesus. Still, their washing flows from Jesus' example and so confirms what Jesus has accomplished. In both instances the foot washing is an action that symbolizes welcome into the household, but the former action resembles a ritual of status transformation, the latter a ceremony that confirms what has already taken place. Neyrey, "Transformation Ritual or Ceremony?" 198–213, interprets the foot washing of Jesus as a ritual of status transformation in light of John 13:10. His social-scientific investigation of John 13:6–20 is helpful for a better understanding of the relationship between the foot washing of Jesus (13:6-11) and the mutual foot washing of Jesus' own (13:12–20).

[57] Echoes in the narrative surrounding the person of Judas argue against Sabbe's thesis that Luke 7 underlies John 12:1–8 and 13:2–30 and accounts for the similarities between these passages. Contrast his "Footwashing in Jn 13," 299. Cf. ch. 1 of this dissertation, n. 134.

chosen. This emphasis on choosing his disciples has important consequences for the members of his household. A rabbi did not customarily choose his disciples in Jesus' day; the opposite would have been the case.[58] Rather, Jesus' election of his disciples is reminiscent of God's election of his OT people (Deut 14:2; cf. Deut 4:7; 7:6; 10:15). As Jesus has restored a household by raising Lazarus, an event that precipitates the gathering for a meal and foot service, so here Jesus gathers with his chosen ones whom he "knows" (13:18) for yet another meal and still more foot service. A new household of God foreshadowed by those gathered together in John 12:1–7 is again anticipated by the community of disciples and the fellowship they share at table with Jesus in John 13. The depiction of the disciples as members of Jesus' household, echoing John 12:1–7, reintroduces what the Gospel of John has already demonstrated about the disciples in John 1–2 and what Jesus has already stated regarding the Twelve in John 6:70–71. He has chosen them. They are members of his household.

Second, though the nature of the "filling up" differs from that described at the anointing at Bethany (12:3), a "filling up" nevertheless takes place that bears significance for the members of the household (13:18). At first glance, a single Greek vocable like πληρόω seems scarcely to justify drawing an association between the two passages. Closer examination of the latter half of the Gospel of John in general and the psalm that Jesus cites in John 13:18 in particular results in an association between John 12:3 and the latter portion of the Fourth Gospel that appears much more plausible.

With the exception of John 3:29, the filling up of the house in John 12:3 is the first instance in the Fourth Gospel where a "filling up" of any kind is said to have occurred.[59] It is

[58] See Köstenberger, "Jesus as Rabbi," 120.

[59] In John 3:29, John the Baptist, having heard the voice of the "bridegroom," now declares his joy to be filled up. Though the same Greek vocable occurs in John 7:8, it is negative. Jesus was not apprehended because his time was not yet "filled up." Others who see an important association between the use of the verb in the anointing

followed by a series of Old Testament citations said to have been "filled up" in connection with events associated with the end of Jesus' public ministry (12:38), his farewell words to his disciples (13:18; 15:25), and crucifixion (19:24; 36). This "filling up" of the Scriptures and words of Jesus (18:9) coincides with an identical portion of narrative that is enclosed at its beginning by the proleptic anointing of Jesus for burial (12:1–7) and at its end by his actual burial (19:38–42).[60] The verb is chosen by the evangelist in John 12:3 in order to denote the great abundance of the anointing, which Jesus interprets as an action that portends his imminent death and burial (12:7). John's manner of citing the OT in these latter chapters of his Gospel suggests an association especially between John 12:3 and that which follows it.

To be sure, John's manner of citing Psalm 41:10 (40:10 LXX) in John 13:18 seems especially important to the connection of John 13 to John 12:1–7. The picture of a traitor feigning table fellowship with those he is about to betray is a scene strikingly similar to the one depicted in John 12:4. In both John 12:4–7 and here (see 13:29–30 below) Jesus is one whose concern is contrasted with that of the poor (cf. πτωχόν, Ps 40:2 LXX) against whom his enemy "speak[s] vanities/falsehood" in person (John 12:5–6; Ps 41:6 [40:7 LXX]). In both the Psalm and the Fourth Gospel, the picture of one who gathers wickedness to himself and then goes "outside" (John 13:30; Ps 41:6 [40:7 LXX]) applies well to Judas.[61] Both the fulfillment motif in the latter portion of the Fourth Gospel and John's reference to Ps 41(40) in John 13:18 contribute to an association between John 12 and 13, making the "filling up" that Jesus describes important for his household.

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episode and passive voice usages of πληρόω in the latter portion of the Fourth Gospel include Reynier, "Le Thème," 216–18.

[60] See the treatment of John 19:38–42 in this chapter, pp. 133–42. Cf. Porter, "Traditional Exegesis," 401–2.

[61] Bertil Gärtner, *Iskariot,* 10–11, has also noted how well the subject matter of Ps 41(40) corresponds to the specific circumstances associated with Judas and Jesus.

Third, John 13:18–28 indicates also that Judas, who has enjoyed the table fellowship of Jesus' household but at the same time is "known" ahead of time by Jesus as betrayer (13:21), will betray the same table and household (13:26). As has already been noted, the very activity that signifies the intimacy of household fellowship, the sharing of a dinner together, highlights Judas' treachery and underlines his opposition to the household. On a literary level, the repeated mention of Judas' betrayal in a mealtime setting moves the action of the Gospel increasingly towards the actualization of Jesus' betrayal and builds tension in the narrative as the reader anticipates the response of the household to this intensifying conflict. It clarifies the earlier pronouncement of Jesus in the context of another meal near Passover (6:70–71; cf. 6:4). John begins and ends the entire narrative of John 13:2–30 with references to Judas and his gradual estrangement from Jesus' household (13:2, 29–30). The foot washing proper is sandwiched between references to Jesus' betrayer (13:2, 10–11).That Jesus himself notes the irony of Judas's table fellowship (13:18) indicates again his foreknowledge of the events about to take place (cf. 13:2). His lordship, in spite of the events taking place, is uppermost. Again, the implication is that all who suffer persecution and betrayal, especially at the hands of those who occupy the household, will be vindicated (cf. Ps 41:12–14 [40:11–13]). Yet these developments in the narrative take place in essentially the same circumstances in which they are found during the anointing episode of John 12:1–7: imminent betrayal by one of Jesus' own household, in the context of a shared meal.

A fourth point not explicitly found in John 12:1–7 yet serving as commentary for those gathered as Jesus' household concerns those who will receive those sent by Jesus (his own). They also receive both Jesus and the Father who sent Jesus (13:20). The household relationship between Jesus and his followers is emphasized in two important ways. (1) Jesus sends his

disciples in a manner comparable to the way that he, as Son of God, has been sent by the Father (cf. 17:18; 20:21).[62] Though the Father/Son relationship is not explicit in John 13:20, the sending motif is directly linked to the work that the Father entrusts to the Son elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel (cf. 5:36). (2) Those receiving the ones Jesus has sent receive both Jesus and the Father who sent Jesus. The language of "receiving" Jesus is an important theological term for the Fourth Gospel. It is another way of describing inclusion in the household of God as a gift focused on Jesus Christ, God's Son and Word (cf. especially 1:12; 3:27; 5:43; 12:48; 17:8), and on the Spirit, whom Christ gives (cf. 14:17; 20:22). Thus, John 13:20 indicates that a household relationship analogous to the one between Jesus and his Father will be enjoyed also by Jesus, his followers whom he will send, and those who receive Jesus' followers. The identification of the Father with Jesus and Jesus with his followers marks an important development in the household theme, as the indwelling of the Father and the Son with the believer, developed later in the discourse (14:23; cf. 17:23), is anticipated.

Finally, the nature of the relationship of a beloved member of Jesus' household reclining at table with him is again featured (13:23–25; cf. 12:2). Though this is the first time that a person

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[62] Different Greek vocables are used to describe the sending in the Fourth Gospel, principally ἀποστέλλω and πέμπω. Some (cf. Karl H. Rengstorff, "ἀποστέλλω," *TDNT* 1:404–6; Josef Kuhl, *Die Sendung Jesu und der Kirche nach dem Johannes-Evangelium* [St. Augustin: Steyler Verlag, 1967], 53–55; and Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology,* 166–200) see in the distinction a subtle differentiation in usage, at least in some portions of the Fourth Gospel, that reflects a wider semantic difference. According to this understanding, ἀποστέλλω accompanies instances where Jesus' concern is to ground his authority in God as the one responsible for his word and works and guarantees their truth (5:36), whereas πέμπω is used in situations when Jesus emphasizes the Father's participation in his work through the act of sending (4:34). The overlapping semantic fields of these terms and their apparent interchangeability both in John and outside the Fourth Gospel, however (cf., e.g., John 20:23 and 17:18; Thucydides' *Historiae,* as cited by Köstenberger, *Mission of Jesus,* 97–101), make the argument in favor of a Johannine distinction in meaning difficult to sustain. The equivalence of the Father's commissioning of Jesus to Jesus sending his disciples in John 20:21, which Jesus stresses with the Greek adverb καθώς (καθὼς ἀπέσταλκεν με ὁ πατήρ, καγὼ πέμπω ὑμάς; cf. 3:14; 15:9; 17:14, 18, 21–23; 1 John 2:18; 4:17), suggests little differentiation in meaning. For a detailed critique of Rengstorff, see Köstenberger, *Missions of Jesus,* 97–111. Rather than emphasizing a contrast between ἀποστέλλω and πέμπω, a contrast might instead be drawn between the household of God (the Father, the one he sends, and those who receive the testimony of the one sent) and the household of "the Jews" (not merely those who are Jewish, but those who try to oppose Jesus through those whom they themselves send; cf. 1:19, 22, 24; 5:33; 7:32).

specifically declared to be a disciple loved by Jesus enters the text, the family of Lazarus has already been described this way in the Fourth Gospel (11:5; cf. 11:36), and similar terminology has been used in John 13 to denote those who are said to be Jesus' own (13:1).[63] A clear connection between Lazarus and the beloved disciple that results in the reader identifying the unnamed disciple with Lazarus is missing in the text.[64] The present literary context suggests a special relationship of some kind with the one named "the beloved disciple." Though Lazarus (as one who is resurrected; 11:44; cf. 20:8–9) and the beloved disciple (who resides in the bosom of one who himself resides in the bosom of the Father, 13:23; cf. 1:18) are both comparable to Jesus, the person of the beloved disciple is distinguished from Lazarus, for his is a closeness to Jesus bearing important ramifications for the Gospel. The Gospel is the fruit of his testimony (cf. 21:24 and further Chapter 4 below). Nevertheless, Lazarus, beloved by Jesus (11:5), and the beloved disciple are linked in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel, by their position at table with Jesus.[65] The resulting narrative echo suggests a relationship between John 12:1–7 and John 13:2–30 that will be further elucidated by the accomplishment of Jesus when he suffers and dies on the cross.

John 13:29–30

Though the scene described in association with the foot washing will continue, in John 13:30 Judas departs. The meal and the mention of Judas in John 13:2 and an apparent end to the meal and Judas's departure in John 13:30 form an inclusio. Each indicates both an important point of beginning and a closing to this portion of the text. Several similarities with John 12:1–7

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[63] Both Greek vocables φιλέω and ἀγαπάω have already been applied to Lazarus and his family (11:5, 36).

[64]Some, however, have made this connection. See especially the scholars named by Gustav Stählin, "φιλέω," *TDNT* 9:132 n. 180; Vernard Eller, *The Beloved Disciple: His Name, His Story, His Thought* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 53–73; F. W. Baltz, *Lazarus and the Fourth Gospel Community* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 1996), as cited by Beirne, *Women and Men,* 186; and Stibbe, *John as Storyteller,* 79.

[65] Cf. the similarly anonymous figure in the Essene community, the Teacher of Righteousness; and Raymond F. Collins, "The Representative Figures of the Fourth Gospel—II," *DR* 95 (1976): 130.

may be noted.

First, Judas is again identified as the keeper of the treasury box (13:29) and so the overseer of the household's funds and offerings in much the same way as in John 12:6. At Bethany, John mentions Judas's status as treasurer in connection with Judas's feigned interest in providing for the poor at the approaching Passover (12:6; cf. 12:1). Here, John again mentions Judas's function within the household in association with the treasury box and a gift to the poor. And once again, Judas's status as treasurer is revealed in connection with his imminent betrayal. Such matters highlight the degree of Judas's deception, considering the position within the household that has been entrusted to him. While his role as treasurer of the household is contrasted with Mary's role as Jesus' bereaved in John 12:6–7, here the focus is on a fundamental contrast between Judas and Jesus.

Second, John 13:29 associates Judas with the collection of alms to be distributed at the feast to "the poor." This association aligns Judas with the funds that would have been brought by households to Jerusalem to be distributed to the πτωχοί of the household of Israel. Both at Bethany (12:4–6) and again here before Judas's departure, the true motivation for Judas's actions has nothing to do with providing for "the poor," either in the day-to-day care of the poor of Jesus' household or in the bringing of tithes or offerings to the House of Israel at the Passover. Here, however, even though the disciples misunderstand Judas's reason for leaving and assume he is being dispatched by Jesus that he might "buy what is needed for the feast" or else "give something to the poor" (13:29), Judas's betrayal of Jesus paradoxically leads to provision for the household.

The emphasis on what Judas accomplishes on behalf of the household will emerge as two types of dramatic irony are identified. On one level, the disciples do not know what Judas is up

to, even though Judas, Jesus, and the reader know that Judas leaves not to bring an offering to the Jerusalem temple but to betray Jesus. On another level, Judas does not really know what Jesus is up to, even though Jesus and the reader know that Judas's betrayal is allowed so as to fulfill Scripture (13:18), to further Jesus' return to the Father (13:3), and to prepare a "place" in the household of the Father (14:2). At Bethany, Jesus has the last word with Judas (12:7); here, Jesus remains in control of both Judas and the devil until Judas's departure (13:30). Though never referred to as a son of the Devil, as are "the Jews" (8:44), Judas is later mentioned by Jesus as one who is a "son of destruction" (17:12; cf. Ps 41:9; 2 Thess 2:3).[66] Jesus' dispatch of Judas furthers the handing over of Jesus to the Jewish authorities (18: 2–5, 12; 19:14–16) and his glorification of the Father on the cross (13:31). It also demonstrates how Jesus preserves his own from the actions of the "thief" (12:6) who comes to "steal, slaughter, and destroy" (10:10).

Summary

So a first narrative echo of John 12:1–7 occurs with Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet at a second evening meal also associated with the Passover in John 13:2–30. Through the foot washing, Jesus points to and prepares his own for the time of his death as a time of eschatological welcome. That which Jesus requires in turn of his disciples is related to yet distinct from the once-and-for-all service that Jesus will provide. The similarity between Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet (12:3) and Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet (13:3–4) suggests an association between Mary's household in John 12:1–7 and that of Jesus' disciples in John 13:2–30. Judas' identity as the betrayer is again featured, but now reaches a critical level as Judas leaves the household behind. One called "the beloved disciple" reclines at table as Lazarus had done before him. As one who exemplifies what it means to belong to Jesus as householder, he

[66] See Gärtner, *Iscariot,* 26–28, for the possibility that the "son of destruction" would have been known to readers of the Fourth Gospel as "son of Beliar" (Belial).

will later emerge as the one who has 'written these things' (20:30–31). The similarities between the anointing and the foot washing are too numerous to be accidental. The repetition and development of Judas in the narrative argues against Luke 7 as a text that unites the foot washing by Jesus and anointing by Mary. Rather, the evangelist seems to have structured the account of the anointing to anticipate what is to be featured in John 13. The subject matter of John 13:2–30 and the manner of its presentation can be said to work together. They both recall the anointing and the household theme that have already been encountered in the text of the Fourth Gospel and elaborate on the household theme as it relates to the death of Jesus.

John 19:38–42

John 13:2–30 is not the only episode in the Fourth Gospel that provides a narrative echo of the anointing. The burial of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus in John 19:38–42 plays an important role also in complementing the significance of the anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany in John 12:1–7. Much of the recent scholarship that has addressed the matter of a possible association between John 12:1–7 and 19:38–42 has mainly focused on the significance of Jesus' words in John 12:7. It has endeavored to understand the literary relationship between individual Gospel accounts and the nature of the relationship between the anointing at Bethany and Jesus' preparation for burial by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Though scholars vary widely in their conclusions regarding whether or not John 12:1–7 is based on the same tradition that underlies similar anointing episodes in the Synoptics, most highlight the unique emphasis in the Fourth Gospel on the anointing at Bethany as an anticipation of a final preparation for a burial that had not yet occurred.[67]

[67] Though Jesus' words in Matt, Mark, and John are in all cases somewhat ambiguous and open to interpretation, in Matt (26:12) and Mark (14:8) Jesus, in responding to the complaint of those who accuse the woman of wasting the perfume, focuses on her act of anointing as that which has prepared him for burial. Moreover, following the crucifixion accounts in the Synoptics, Matt (27:59–60) and Mark (15:46–16:1) (cf. Luke (23:53–56)

More recently, investigations have approached the Gospel of John synchronically, demonstrating a particular interest in the thematic similarities between John 12:1–7 and John 19:38–42.[68] None of these more recent studies, however, has attended to the development of a household theme that both passages have in common. For example, none have noted that both the anointing of Jesus by Mary and the preparation of Jesus' body for burial by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus possess similar "axes of communication."[69] In the Bethany episode, Mary is the "sender," Jesus the "receiver," and anointing is itself the object in question. At the tomb, Joseph and Nicodemus are the senders, Jesus the receiver, and proper burial preparation is the object. In both episodes, followers of Jesus (Mary at Bethany and Joseph/Nicodemus at the tomb) are also the subjects, with service to Jesus as the object. Conflict at Bethany is supplied by the opponent Judas (12:4–6), and at the tomb by those who are "the Jews" (19:38). That Judas and "the Jews" share an affiliation with Satan is highlighted elsewhere (8:44; 13:2, 27). Further examination of the passage will reveal not only that John 19:38–42 recalls John 12:1–7 but that it also offers significant development to the Fourth Gospel's interest in a household theme.

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mention only that Jesus was wrapped in a linen cloth by Joseph. They do not describe a pre-burial anointing or application of spices by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. This difference has led some to emphasize the distinction between the Synoptics and the Gospel of John. In John 12:7, Jesus responds to Judas's complaint in a manner similar to his response to the woman's detractors in Matt and Mark, yet here he does not emphasize the act of anointing so much as Mary's keeping of the perfume for the day of his own burial preparation. Barrett, *Gospel,* 408–14, argues that the underlying tradition utilized by John came to him by way of Mark and Luke, even though John's narration of Jesus' burial preparation by Joseph and Nicodemus later on would have created a "confused narrative." Barrett then concludes that this "confusion" is evident in John 12:7 (that is, Jesus' command to allow the woman to keep the perfume for the day of his burial preparation), yet he interprets such confusion as evidence that John is striving to remain faithful to a Marcan source. See also Coloe, "Anointing," 117–18; and Keener, *Gospel,* 2:865. By contrast, Bultmann, *John,* 413–16, does not understand the meaning of John 12:7 to be essentially distinct from that of either Matt 26:12 or Mark 14:8, though he concludes that John is using a written source which would have been distinct from that utilized by the Synoptics. For a similar emphasis on the essential similarity of the Johannine and Synoptic accounts that highlights the evangelist as author, rather than redactor, see Dodd, *Historical Tradition,* 167–72.

[68] See Reynier, "Le Thème," 220; Jean-Marie Auwers, "La Nuit de Nicodème (John 3:2; 19:39) Ou l'Ombre du Langage," *RB* 97 (1990): 495–96; Beirne, *Women and Men,* 163–65; and Hartwig Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium,* (HNT 6; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 754.

[69] For another comparison of such deep structures within the Fourth Gospel, see Stibbe's reference to Greimas's model of narrative performances, *John as Storyteller,* 102–4.

John 19:38

The account of Jesus' burial in the Fourth Gospel begins, as it does in the Synoptics, with the introduction of Joseph of Arimathea. But unlike the Synoptics, here the Fourth Gospel does not explicitly identify Joseph as a leader of the Jews (contrast Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50–51).[70] Instead, it highlights Joseph as a member of Jesus' household (19:38). Joseph is "a disciple of Jesus," yet one who is a hidden disciple "for fear of the Jews." Implicit associations between Joseph and "the Jews" remain in the narrative. First, the reference to Joseph's hidden discipleship recalls the Jews already described in the Fourth Gospel who are reluctant to confess their faith in Jesus for fear of "being put out of the synagogue" (12:42). Second, Joseph's request for Jesus' body suggests an association between himself and "the Jews" who make a similar request (19:31).[71] Third, Joseph's appearance together with Nicodemus below (19:39), who has already been introduced in the Fourth Gospel as "leader of the Jews" (3:1) and as "one of" the "chief priests and Pharisees" (7:45), will underline the Jewish context. Together with Nicodemus, Joseph prepares Jesus' body for burial in a manner that is in accordance with "the custom of the Jews" (19:40). It is significant, however, that Joseph is never explicitly identified in the Fourth Gospel as either "one of the Jews" or a leader of Israel, as Nicodemus has been. Ultimately, his status as a hidden disciple of Jesus and his fear of "the Jews" distinguishes him from his Jewish colleagues.

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[70] Mary T. Brien, "Latecomers to the Light: A Reflection on the 'Emergence' of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus John 19:38-42," *NTR* 17 (2004): 50, writes, "The reader is meant to put on hold the little information given on him in the synoptic tradition, that he is 'a rich man' (Matt 27:57), that 'he owned a new tomb' (Matt 27:60), that 'he was a prominent member of the Council,' who was 'waiting for the kingdom of God' (Mark 15:43), that 'he took courage' (Mark 15:44), that 'he brought some linen cloth,' that 'he rolled a stone in front of the tomb' (Mark 15:46), that 'he was a good and upright man who had not consented to their ("the Jews") decision and action' (Luke 23:50–51)."

[71] Auwers, "La Nuit," 498, likewise demonstrates the parallels between John 19:31–32a and 19:38 that include the similar requests for the body of Jesus in both passages. Yet he fails to explore the likely reasons for, or effects of, such parallels.

Therefore, those with Jesus here and below are set again against the backdrop of another community that the Gospel simply refers to as "the Jews" (cf. 2:18; 5:10, 18; 6:41, 52; 7:1, etc.; contrast 12:1–7 and 11:45–54). The comparison between Joseph and the community of "the Jews" is hard to miss. Joseph's request to Pilate to be allowed to remove the body of Jesus follows upon an earlier request by "the Jews" that the bones of the three criminals be broken and their bodies removed (19:31). The Greek verbs occurring in John 19:31, ἐρωτάω and αἴρω, are repeated here (19:38) together with a second encounter with Pilate, this time between the Procurator and Joseph. But the request for the removal of Jesus' body by "the Jews" in 19:31 distinguishes their reception of Jesus from that of his disciple Joseph. "The Jews" want the body removed because of the approaching Sabbath (19:31) and petition Pilate to be allowed to hasten the death of a criminal whose unburied corpse is liable to pollute the land.[72] Jesus, it is soon discovered, does not give up his life because he is compelled to do so, but lays it down and takes it up of his own accord (19:33; cf. 10:17–18). The soldiers have no need to break Jesus' legs, for he has already died. Joseph, in receiving Jesus' body from Pilate, is similarly motivated to haste because of the approaching Sabbath (19:38). But in receiving the body he causes himself to become ritually unclean and thus bars himself from Sabbath worship or any other human community (19:38; contrast 11:55–57). Despite the similarities in John 19:31 and 19:38, a first-century reader would likely have perceived Joseph to have been a follower of Jesus who moved consciously to improve on what "the Jews" had already tried to accomplish: proper removal of Jesus' body before the Sabbath.

Is the evangelist casting Joseph in the role of one who belongs to the household of Jesus, according to both his actions and his status as a secret disciple? It would not have been unusual

[72] See Deut 21:22–23. Cf. Raymond E. Brown, *Death of the Messiah* (2 vols.; Anchor Bible Reference Library; N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984), 2:1174.

for a representative of the Sanhedrin to receive the bodies of convicted criminals and assume the responsibility for their disposal, most frequently in mass graves outside the city of Jerusalem that existed for this purpose.[73] Were Joseph's approach to Pilate simply a request of a Sanhedrin member on behalf of this Jewish ruling body, it would be unlikely that any further connection with the household theme would apply. Joseph's identity as a disciple of Jesus, however, and the deliberate contrast on the part of the evangelist between Joseph and those referred to in the text as "the Jews," suggest that more is about to happen than the burial of an ordinary criminal at the request of one of the Jewish leaders. Joseph, on the eve of the Sabbath and at the beginning of the week-long celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, is about to involve himself in one of the most self-defiling actions: the preparation of a corpse for burial. Not only does the careful attention to Jesus' burial signify a household context for Joseph,[74] but such an act would have caused him to become ritually unclean and barred him from communion with any members of the Jewish community during the Passover. As a secret disciple of Jesus who claims Jesus' body and carefully prepares it for burial, Joseph thus distinguishes himself from those referred to in the text as "the Jews." As one who has become ritually unclean in the context of the feast of the Jews (19:31, 42), he aligns himself with the household of Jesus.

John 19:39–40

Joseph is not alone. Though formerly referred to as a Pharisaic "leader of the Jews" and "teacher of Israel" (3:1, 10; cf. 7:50), here, attending to Jesus together with Joseph, a "disciple of Jesus," is Nicodemus (19:39). In much the same way that Nicodemus's association with Joseph causes the reader to see Joseph in a Jewish context, the association between the two men presents

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[73] Ibid., 2:1209–11.

[74] Regarding the involvement of the household in the funerary rites for Jewish, Greek, and Roman contexts, see ch. 2, pp. 95–98.

Nicodemus in the context of those who are hidden disciples of Jesus (19:38) and so a member of Jesus' household. As was argued above in the case of Joseph, the lavishness of the burial ("about one hundred [Roman] pounds," 19:39) does not square with the historical circumstances surrounding the ordinary burial of a condemned criminal. Nicodemus helps prepare Jesus' body for an honorable burial. In so doing, he conducts himself in a manner befitting a member of a household.

This is the third and final appearance of Nicodemus in the Fourth Gospel (19:39), which, unlike Nicodemus's earlier two appearances, follows upon the anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany. In order to assess the significance of Nicodemus for the household theme in John 19:38–42, it will be important briefly to (1) consider other instances in which Nicodemus has appeared in the Fourth Gospel and (2) compare/contrast the burial preparation described in John 19:39–40 with the anointing of Jesus' feet carried out by Mary of Bethany.

It is only natural to consider earlier episodes in which Nicodemus appears, for the evangelist himself encourages just such an association by reminding the reader of Nicodemus's first encounter with Jesus (19:39; cf. 7:50).[75] The dialogue in question between Nicodemus and Jesus occurs in John 3:1–21, and this is followed by an episode in which Nicodemus appears in the company of "the chief priests and Pharisees" in John 7:45–52. In both of these earlier sections of narrative, the matter of Jesus' and Nicodemus's origins is foremost. In John 3 the discussion centers on the heavenly origin of Jesus (3:13; cf. 3:2) and the necessity for Nicodemus

[75] The motif of people coming to Jesus (ἔρχεται πρὸς [Ἰησοῦν]) is used elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel to designate those who are about to follow Jesus as believers (6:44; cf. 1:47; 3:21; 4:30, 40; 5:40; 6:5, 35, 37, 44, 45, 65; 7:37; 10:41; 11:29; contrast 1:29). This is the manner in which the evangelist describes Nicodemus's encounter with Jesus, though Nicodemus is said to come to Jesus "at night" (3:2; 19:39). At the burial of Jesus the evangelist's mention that Nicodemus came to Jesus first "at night" (19:39) echoes a similar analepsis found earlier where it is said that Nicodemus came to Jesus "earlier" (7:50). In repeatedly mentioning that Nicodemus came to Jesus, "earlier" and "at night," the evangelist is likely describing an encounter between Jesus and Nicodemus that, though it did not initially result in faith, would ultimately bear fruit.

to be born "from above" (3:3, 5), that is, of water and the Spirit (3:5). In John 7, Nicodemus's interlocutors stress the opposite. They believe Jesus to be an imposter with Galilean origins (7:52). Ironically, they accuse Nicodemus of association with this imposter, wondering if both have roots in the same homeland. With this change in emphasis between John 3 and John 7 the narrative begins to suggest a subtle association between Nicodemus and Jesus. Moreover, though Nicodemus is "one of them" (that is, one of the chief priests and Pharisees, 7:50; cf. 7:45), in the later narrative he is set in opposition to the Pharisees who repeatedly speak with one voice (7:45, 47–49, 52). He can be seen gradually moving from an alignment with the Jews to the household of Jesus.

It is especially in John 19:39–42, however, particularly as Jesus' final preparation for burial recalls his first in John 12:1–7, that Nicodemus appears as a member of Jesus' household. Though the burial preparation here is undertaken by both Joseph and Nicodemus (19:40–42), the preparation and bringing of the spices is associated with Nicodemus alone (19:39–40), making Nicodemus the focus in the narrative most readily comparable to Mary (12:3). Verbal and thematic similarities with John 12:1–7 abound. Again, in John 19:39, the appraisal of the substance applied to Jesus is given according to the measurement of a Roman pound (*litra*), and the mixture of myrrh and aloes is applied in extraordinary and extravagant terms, equaling 100 pounds of spices (19:39–40). So again, in John 19:40 the suggestion is one of a lavish offering of fragrant spices. No explanation is given as to why Nicodemus takes part in this burial, and so the reader is left to ponder this question.[76] Still, the association between the burial preparation of Nicodemus and the related action of Mary of Bethany strongly suggests a household role for

[76] Regarding the necessary reader response to the character of Nicodemus, see Jouette M. Bassler, "Nicodemus in the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 108 (1989): 635–46.

Nicodemus, despite the ambiguity that accompanies his character in the narrative.[77]

In the third and final appearance of Nicodemus in the Fourth Gospel it can be said that he is doing what members of Jesus' household would have customarily done.[78] When taken together with the development of Nicodemus's character evident in John 7:50–2 and the suspicions of those who consider both his own and Jesus' origins to be one and the same (7:52), it can again be concluded that Jesus and his followers constitute a household.

John 19:41–42

In any discussion about the Fourth Gospel's interest in a household theme in John 19:38–42, the location of Jesus' burial should be pointed out. The evangelist specifies that Jesus is buried by Joseph and Nicodemus in a garden near the place where he had been crucified and that in the garden was "a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid" (19:41). In specifying a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid, and which was located in a garden, the evangelist establishes other associations for his readers that serve further to underline the Gospel's interest in a household theme.

Of all four Gospels, only the Gospel of John mentions that Jesus' tomb was in a garden. The garden evokes a nuptial theme shared with John 12:1–7. As has been noted above (see ch. 2, pp. 90–92), the depiction of the anointing at Bethany and the corresponding focus on an

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[77] According to this reading, Nicodemus is understood to be portrayed favorably by the evangelist as a follower of Jesus, though his actions demonstrate that he does not yet fully understand the significance of Jesus' death. Others who arrive at a similar conclusion include Brown, *Gospel,* 2:959–60; Painter, *Quest,* 198–99; Donald Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1991), 132–33; and D. Moody Smith, *The Theology of the Gospel of John* (New Testament Theology 4; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 43. Scholars who tend to focus on Nicodemus and see him in an even more favorable light, as one with a "mature faith" because of a "journey of faith" from what he demonstrated during his initial encounter with Jesus in John 3, include Beirne, *Women and Men,* 96–99; and Auwers, "La Nuit," 493, 500–501.

[78] Auwers, "La Nuit," 500, concludes that the movement in the text from "taking up" the body of Jesus (ἄρῃ, 19:38) to "receiving" his body (ἔλαβον, 19:40) suggests an echo of the Prologue, where those who are given the authority to become children of God (and so members of the household of God) are said to "receive" Jesus (ἔλαβον, 1:11–12a). The same verb is used elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel in a way that cannot signify receiving Jesus in faith (e.g., 19:1), making the conclusion tenuous.

extraordinary quantity and quality of perfume applied in the context of an evening meal further a nuptial theme not unlike the one depicted in the Song of Songs (1:12–14). While a garden is not depicted in John 12:1–7, the fragrance of the perfume detailed in John 12:3 is a central feature of the Song that recurs in conjunction with the nuptial motif and the image of a lush garden that gives off its fragrances (cf. especially Song 1:12–14; 2:12–13; 4:12–16; 5:1; 6:2; 8:13). An equivalent interest in the Song's manner of construing certain nuptial themes is therefore in evidence both in John 12:1–7 and in the present passage.

The accompanying indication that Jesus was not buried in a mass grave but in a "new" tomb, in a place stressed by the evangelist as a tomb in which no one "had ever been laid" (19:41),[79] is also important. The reality and use of a new tomb (new households use new tombs) is consistent with John 12:1–7 and with the establishment of a new household secured by means of the suffering and death of Jesus. In the OT, burial in the tomb of one's "fathers" is a recurring motif for the kings of Israel especially (1 Kgs 14:3; 15:24; 22:51; 2 Kgs 8:24; 12:22; 13:9 [LXX]; 14:20; 15:7, 38; 2 Chr 21:1; 25:28; 26:23; 35:24). In Jesus' day—for those who could afford them—tombs were likewise reserved for members of the same household. Following a death, the tomb would become a place of gathering for family members to commemorate the deceased. The evangelist of the Fourth Gospel does not specify that the tomb was owned by Joseph (contrast Matt 27:60), highlighting Jesus as householder and his death as that which gives rise to the new household to be gathered to the Father (cf. 20: 17). That Joseph and Nicodemus now prepare Jesus' body for burial and lay him in a new tomb continues an ancient custom of identifying the progenitor of a household with mention of his original tomb (Gen 25:9–10; cf. 49:30; 50:13). The location of Jesus' burial is therefore entirely consistent with the suggestion

[79] Auwers, "La Nuit," 495.

that with Jesus' death a new household is wrought. The irony, however, is that, like Mary before them, neither Joseph nor Nicodemus yet comprehend this. Why it is that Jesus truly deserves the lavish honor they offer him is lost on them.[80]

Summary

Deep structural similarities between the anointing at Bethany and the burial preparation of Jesus in John 19:38–42 already suggest a comparison between passages which is born out by their subject matter. Joseph, explicitly referred to as a "disciple" of Jesus (19:38), and Nicodemus, who together with Joseph attends to Jesus' body as a member of Jesus' household (19:39–40), are clearly analogous not only to the disciples of Jesus gathered at Bethany (12:4) but also to Mary, whose similar action distinguishes her as a person belonging to the household of Jesus (12:7). Both John 12:1–7 and John 19:38–42 have to do with burial preparation, though Mary's action anticipates (12:7) the burial preparation of Jesus undertaken by Joseph and Nicodemus (19:40) at the cross. In both a lavish supply of fragrant substance is applied to Jesus' body. In both, honor and devotion to Jesus are expressed in extraordinary fashion. In both, nuptial allusions emerge. At Bethany the establishing of a new household through the death of Jesus on the cross is anticipated; after the death of Jesus, the establishing of this new household is confirmed.

Conclusion

Not only the foot washing narrated in John 13:2–30, but also the burial of Jesus described in John 19:38–42 recall the anointing of Jesus in John 12:1–7. As has been demonstrated, all

[80] Brown, *Death*, 2:1268, stresses the regal nature of Jesus' interment, but notes how Joseph and Nicodemus are gathered into a community of confessing disciples upon Jesus' death: "In 19:38–42 Joseph and Nicodemus have gained the courage to glorify Jesus publicly by a regal gift of spices and by the place in which they bury him. This is the fulfillment of Jesus' own words: 'When I am lifted up from the earth, *I shall draw all to myself* (12:31–34). Joseph and Nicodemus are the first two drawn from among those who had hitherto not publicly adhered to Jesus as believers must." Cf. Auwers, "La Nuit," 501.

three passages are intricately bound up with the interest of the Fourth Gospel in a household theme. So as to determine the significance of these relationships and thus the unique role that the anointing episode plays in the development of the household theme, the present study will now turn to the Gospel's manner in its second half especially of associating Jesus' establishment of a new household with his suffering and death on the cross.

CHAPTER FOUR

JOHN 12:1–7 AND THE "END" OF A FINAL WEEK

Having demonstrated that Jesus' washing of his disciple's feet (John 13) and his preparation for burial (John 19:38–42) recall his anointing by Mary (John 12:1–7) and the interest of this narrative in a household theme, the present chapter will determine what significance such repetition might have for the overall Gospel narrative. Specifically, it will demonstrate that John 12:1–7, foreshadowing especially the beginning (John 13:2–30) and the end (John 19:38–42) of the day of Jesus' crucifixion (John 13–19), advances in key terms the Fourth Gospel's interest in Jesus gathering unto himself a new household of God through his death.

John 12–19: The Beginning and the End of a Final Week

The Fourth Gospel defines a final six-day period, which commences with Mary's anointing of Jesus at Bethany and ends with Jesus' death. Precisely how a first-century reader likely understood this six-day period requires an examination of issues pertaining to the first-century measurement of time, especially in relation to the Jewish observance of Passover.

Six Days Counted Inclusively

As has been argued previously, the Fourth Gospel assumes an ancient convention by which the passage of days was reckoned inclusively.[1] This practice stands in contrast to the current one.

[1] Regarding the difference between inclusive and non-inclusive reckoning of time, see ch. 2 n. 2. Finegan, *Handbook,* 78, demonstrates that the custom of counting inclusively existed outside of Palestine from at least the first century BCE to second century CE among the Egyptians. In *OxyP* 1:160–61 and other texts originating "at least

This was the "default mode" for people of Jesus' day, as the evidence of the New Testament (cf. Acts 10:3, 9, 23-24, 30), and other first-century texts (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.317; 7.365) demonstrates. The Fourth Gospel conforms to this practice.

The clearest evidence of an inclusive reckoning of days not only in John but also elsewhere in the NT comes with Jesus' reference to a resurrection that will take place "in three days" (2:20–21; cf. 19:31–20:1; see also Matt 27:40 and Mark 15:29).[2] According to the narrative of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus dies on Friday, the day before the Sabbath (cf. 19:31), and appears to Mary and the disciples risen on Sunday, the morning of the first day of the week (20:1). Though such a period of time constitutes not much more than one and a half days according to the method of enumerating days by 24-hour periods in use today, in Jesus' day this same span comprised three days: one full day sandwiched between any part of two other days at the beginning and end of the interval.

Support for another example of an inclusive reckoning of time occurs in connection with a narrative unique to the Fourth Gospel: Jesus' resurrection appearance to Thomas (20:26–29). According to John, a period of "eight days" (ἡμέρας ὀκτὼ, 20:26) described the passage of time from Jesus' first appearance to his disciples to his appearance to Thomas (20:26). That first-century readers would have understood the "eight days" to signify a period exactly one week after Jesus' first resurrection appearance is supported by a variant reading found in the Old Syriac (Syrus Sinaiticus)[3] and is reflected in at least one modern English translation of the

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as early as the Ptolemies," periods of months and years were counted inclusively and set in reference to the reign of individual monarchs. See further pp. 70–71.

[2] Other prepositions besides ἐν are used to convey a similar sense elsewhere. See μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας (Matt 27:63; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34); and διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν (Matt 26:61 and Mark 14:58).

[3] Again, see ch. 2 n. 2. See also the use of the same expression in the previous note. See further Louw and Nida, *Semantic Domains,* 1:631, 652 (67.17, 67.182).

passage.[4]

Elsewhere, the Fourth Gospel's usage provides additional instances that suggest an inclusive reckoning of time. An inclusive understanding of the "third day" of John 2:1, for example, results in a reference to a period of roughly two days by the modern reckoning.[5] When considered in light of the previous narrative (cf. the days enumerated in 1:19, 29, 35, 43), these last two days conclude a six-day interval.[6] Scholars have discovered a resemblance between this grouping at the beginning of the Gospel with a similar six-day interval at the Gospel's end.[7]

The "two days" of John 4:43 (cf. 4:40) as well as the "four days" of John 11:17 (cf. 11:39) are also suggestive. The latter text reads that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for "four days" by the time Jesus and his disciples reached Bethany, despite the fact that Lazarus was already dead when Jesus and his disciples left for Judea (11:11–14). The proximity of Bethany

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[4] NIV translates "a week later." See Brown, *Gospel,* 2:1025; and Borchert, *John 12–21,* 313. Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 3:331, writes by way of elaboration, "According to the old method of reckoning which includes the beginning and end of a period, the eight days culminate at this point. . . . In [the evangelist's] day, the Christian Sunday has already established itself, probably for the celebration of the Lord's Supper (cf. Acts 20:7; *Did* 14:1)." Esler and Piper, *Lazarus, Mary and Martha,* 63–64, conclude that "a sixth day before the Passover" would have been Sunday, the same day of the week that Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene (20:1) and his disciples (20:19), because "John is closely and deliberately linking the critical events in the beginnings of the new movement of Christ-followers with 'the first day of the week,' when Jesus was raised." If, according to this thesis, the eight-day period of John 20:26 is also a Sunday as noted by Brown, Borchert, and Schnackenburg, then "a sixth day before the Passover," falling on a Saturday/Sunday, would result in a celebration of Passover on the following Friday, not Saturday, as is usually proposed.

[5] Keener, *Gospel,* 1:497, notes the common idiom of the "third day" to indicate "the day after tomorrow." See also Bultmann, *John,* 114 n. 3; Barrett, *Gospel,* 190; and Olsson, *Structure,* 21.

[6] Some have argued on the basis of either a variant reading in John 1:41 or the lateness of the day in John 1:39 and the activity in John 1:47 that another day should be added to the sequence. Those arguing in favor of counting seven days, not six, in the sequence include Morris, *Gospel,* 138–39; and Carson, *Gospel,* 167–68.

[7] Some compare the first six-day interval in the Fourth Gospel to the Sinai account of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (cf. Exod 19–24) in which Moses is called to ascend Mt. Sinai. In the targumic account the six-day sequence is a part of an eight-day time frame which is also comparable to the final week of the Fourth Gospel (cf. 12:1–20:1; 20:26). See Olsson, *Structure,* 21–25. Olsson cites Jean Potin, *La fête juive de la Pentecôte: Études des textes liturgiques* (2 vols.; LD 65/1–2; Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1971), 314–16; Aristide Serra, "Le tradizioni della teofania sinaitica nel Targum dello pseudo-Jonathan Es. 19:24 e in Giov. 1:19–2:12," *Marianum* 33 (1971): 1–39; and J. A. Grassi, "The Wedding at Cana (John 2:1–11): A Pentecostal Meditation," *NovT* 14 (1972): 131–36. Cf. Steve Booth, *Selected Peak Marking Features in the Gospel of John* (Theology and Religion 178; New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 39–42. Scholars who highlight the similarities between a six-day period at the beginning of the Gospel and a similar six-day period at its end include Westcott, *Gospel,* 110; Barrett, *Gospel,* 190; Sanders and Mastin, *Commentary,* 283; Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 104–5, 113 n. 50; and Brodie, *Gospel,* 406.

beyond the Jordan (10:40; cf. 1:28) to Jerusalem made a two- to three-day trip entirely possible. With the exception of Jesus' reference to his own resurrection in John 2:20–22, every time reference mentioned above (2:1; 4:43; 11:17; 20:26) occurs in what may be considered transitional material, as is the time reference in John 12:1. The fact that all of these time references occur in verses that link events in the narrative to one another suggests that the usage underlying all of them is the same, reflecting the custom of the evangelist. The present study proposes that the ancient custom of the inclusive counting of days may be utilized to understand the specific time referent in John 12:1.

Day 1 (Nisan 10), the Day of Anointing; Day 6 (Nisan 15), the Day of Jesus' Death

Returning to John 12:1, we read that Jesus arrived in Bethany "on a sixth day before the Passover."[8] Based on an inclusive reckoning of days, this time reference results in an interval of four full days sandwiched between either part or all of days 1 and 6 on both ends of the span. The last day of the series is referred to as "the Passover." Is it possible not only to specify the length of time in question, but also to determine approximately when this six-day "week" began and ended?

First, in order to determine the evangelist's likely referent for "Passover" in John 12:1 (that is, whether the term refers to Nisan 14, Nisan 15, or something else), we will consider Passover according to (1) the general first-century context and (2) the specific circumstances reflected in the Fourth Gospel. Then, in order to relate the chronology of John 12:1 to the remainder of the Fourth Gospel, we will revisit the question of whether the evangelist understands Jesus to die on Nisan 14 or Nisan 15.

[8] Regarding the translation of the Greek idiom πρὸ ἓξ ἡμερῶν τοῦ πάσχα and text-critical issues associated with John 12:1, see again pp. 67–68.

Leaving aside for the moment the matter of the precise date of Jesus' passion, it may be surmised that a first-century reader familiar with the practice of Passover identified the time period in John 12:1 as a six-day period that concluded with the eating of the Passover meal on Nisan 15. Regarding the first-century context of the feast designated "Passover," three points are relevant: (1) Though the sacrifice of the Passover lamb was an important aspect of Israel's celebration of the Passover, the eating of the lamb was the climactic focus of the feast, especially in a household context. Jewish households of the first century ate the Passover together in individual groups, within the city of Jerusalem, yet outside the temple precincts.[9] In the meal Israel's covenant relationship with Yahweh had first been confirmed; in the first century CE, this same relationship was actively remembered in all of Israel's households. It is inconceivable that the "Passover" could have referred only to a day that preceded the reception of the Passover meal and not the day of the meal itself. (2) Whether to date "the Passover" of John 12:1 to either Nisan 14 or Nisan 15 seems to be related to understanding what time of day festival days[10] began and ended, and on which day the meal—not the sacrifice—occurred.[11] (3) The eating of the Passover

[9] See Philo, *Spec. Laws* 2, 27.145–48. Contrast the Passover celebration prior to the second temple period, in which the Passover meal was eaten by heads of households within the temple sanctuary (cf. Deut 16:7). What Segal, *Hebrew Passover,* 165, writes regarding the celebration of the Passover in Israel's earliest history could have been written about the Passover celebration in the New Testament era: "The eating of the victim's flesh by the members of the household together was a definite act of communion. In Israel the solemn declaration of a covenant was formally confirmed by a meal." A corresponding focus upon the Passover meal marking the beginning of festal celebration can be seen even before the destruction of the Jerusalem temple (cf. Jub 49:2, 22–23).

[10] Ordinary days might also have been reckoned similarly by readers of the Fourth Gospel, but festival days especially so. See further pp. 159–63.

[11] As long as the dating of Passover follows an understanding of the day beginning and ending at sunrise, Nisan 14 is the preferred dating for both the Passover sacrifice and meal (see Exod 12:6–8 [cf. 18]; Lev 23:5; Num 9:3–5; 28:16; "on the 15th day of the first month, the morrow of the Passover," 33:3; "on the morrow of the Passover they ate unleavened bread," Josh 5:10–11; 2 Chron 35:1, 18; Ezra 6:19; Ezek 45:21; cf. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27* [AB 3B; ed. W. F. Albright, D. N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 2001], 1967–68). Much other Jewish literature from the Second Temple period, either because it seeks to explain the Exodus account or because it is itself based on an understanding of the day beginning at sunrise, reflects the same trend. Philo assumes Passover to have been celebrated on Nisan 14 (*Moses* 2, 41.224; 42.228; *Spec. Laws* 2, 27.149). The author of the Temple Scroll, found at Qumran, does so as well (11QT[a] 17.7–11), although the calendar at Qumran does not follow the official lunar calendar of the temple authorities in Jerusalem extant in the first century CE. As festival days became more

meal, and not the sacrifice of the lamb, linked the Jewish celebration of Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and by the middle of the first century CE, the terms "Passover" and "the Feast of Unleavened Bread" could be used interchangeably.[12] Under these circumstances, and assuming that the Fourth Gospel understands festival days to begin at sundown (see further below), "Passover" for first-century Jews referred to a period most closely tied to the eating of the Passover meal on Nisan 15.

What about the narrative context of the Fourth Gospel? A similar emphasis on "Passover," both as the culmination of preparatory activity for "the feast" and the feast itself, can be

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widely acknowledged to begin and end at sunset (regardless of the division of days according to civil calendars; exactly when this happened remains unclear), the Passover meal became more uniformly dated to Nisan 15, not 14. The Book of Jubilees, even though it favors a solar calendar, nevertheless directs that "the Passover," sacrificed on Nisan 14, be eaten on "the evening of the fifteenth, from the time of sunset. For on this night there was the beginning of the feast and there was the beginning of joy" (49:1–2). Though an understanding of the Passover meal dated to Nisan 15 is not well-established until the second century CE, evidence exists that the shift to a sundown-to-sundown day began much earlier (again, see pp. 159–63). Though the documents in question date to the period following the first century CE, the rabbis, for their part, consistently associate "Passover" with Nisan 15 (note the distinction between "the fourteenth" and "the Festival" in the Mishnah (e.g., *m. Pesah* 1.3). The association with Nisan 15 is made explicit in the Targumic texts, where Exodus 12:8 reads, "They shall eat the flesh that night of that fifteenth of Nisan until midnight" (Tg. Ps-J.). For a detailed investigation into the development of the Jewish calendar, see Julian Morgenstern, "Supplementary Studies in the Calendars of Ancient Israel," *HUCA* 10 (1935): 6–22. The early Christian Passover of the second century occurred following a period of fasting and vigil during the Jewish observances on Nisan 14, with the Passover meal received on Nisan 15. See Bacon, *Fourth Gospel,* 420; K. Hanhart, "'About the Tenth Hour . . .' on Nisan 15 (Jn 1:35–40)," in *L'Évangile de Jean: Sources, rédaction, théologie* (ed. Marinus De Jonge; BETL 44; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1977), 338–40; and Bradshaw, *Origins of Christian Worship,* 181, citing Talley, *Liturgical Year*, 4.

[12] The use of the term "Passover" to denote the feast of Unleavened Bread is already evident in Chronicles, where this terminology is used to describe the celebration of the feast during the reign of Josiah (2 Chron 35:1, 16, 18–19; contrast 35:17). See Cullen I. K. Story, "The Bearing of Old Testament Terminology on the Johannine Chronology of the Final Passion of Jesus," *NovT* 31 (1989): 316. The Synoptic Gospels demonstrate that "Passover" could be substituted with "the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread" (Matt 26:17; Luke 22:1; Acts 12:3–4; cf. Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7). See Talley, *Origins*, 1: "In the New Testament period, Passover can refer to the whole complex of the spring festival, both the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and references to the latter feast can include Passover." Cf. BDAG, s.v. πάσχα, 1; Joachim Jeremias, "πάσχα," *TDNT* 5:898–99. Though Segal, *Hebrew Passover,* 235, theorizes the priority of Unleavened Bread over against Passover for sectarian Jews whom he believes highlighted the former because of their use of a solar calendar, other first-century texts unassociated with either Qumran or early Christianity demonstrate a tendency to either equate Passover with Unleavened Bread or not mention "Passover" as a separate festival at all. For example, Pseudo-Philo 13:4 mentions keeping "the festival day" of Unleavened Bread, but does not mention Passover in the list of "appointed times." Josephus generally either limits "Passover" to the name of the sacrifice yet refers to the feast associated with the sacrifice as the Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Ant.* 3.248; 11.109–110), or equates the Feast of Unleavened Bread with "Passover" (cf. *Ant.* 14.21; 17.213). The only place that Josephus treats Passover and Unleavened Bread as separate entities or feasts is when he describes the institution of them under Moses (cf. *Ant.* 2.311–17).

identified. In most cases, "Passover" can be understood to encompass more than the events of a single day and so refers to events beginning on Nisan 15, not to Nisan 14.[13] First, the manner in which "Passover" is used in the Fourth Gospel demonstrates that it often refers to more than a single feast day. For example, Jesus travels to Jerusalem while the Jewish Passover is near (2:13), and during his stay there people are said to believe in him because of the signs that he was performing (ἐποίει) ἐν τῷ πάσχα (2:23; cf. 18:39). It is unlikely under these circumstances that the Gospel intends to describe Jesus performing a series of signs on a single day. Second, unlike the Synoptic Gospels, the Fourth Gospel makes no mention of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Could it be that the Fourth Gospel means to exclude any reference to Unleavened Bread or the festival observances associated with that it? This need not be the case. In John 6, in the context of "Passover" (6:4), Jesus speaks of himself as the "bread of life," bread that is far better than the bread supplied for Israel by Moses during the wilderness wanderings (6:31–33). Even though the Fourth Gospel may not speak explicitly of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it may well invoke the imagery of this feast, bread and manna, under the heading "Passover."[14]

So considering both the first-century context and the immediate context of the narrative of the Fourth Gospel, this dissertation proposes that "a sixth day before the Passover" (12:1) is best understood as initiating a six-day-long preliminary "week," which ended with the eating of the

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[13] Πάσχα appears 10 times in the Fourth Gospel (2:13, 23; 6:4; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:28, 39; 19:14). First-century readers familiar with Jewish customs and observances would recognize the term as referring either to the Passover meal itself (John 18:28; cf. Matt 26:18–19; Mark 14:16), or to the day of the meal and the week-long feast that this day initiated (John 2:13, 23; 6:4; 11:55; 13:1; 18:39; 19:14). Some manuscripts omit the reference in John 6:4. See also the Gospel's use of ἑορτή to refer to "Passover" in John 2:23, 4:45; 6:4; 11:56; and 13:1. In John 12:12, 20; and 13:29 "feast" appears without explicit association with Passover. Whether or not the term in John 5:1 refers to Passover is debated. All usages of the term in John 7 refer to the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2, 8, 10, 11, 14, and 37).

[14] See Norvel Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1951), 662. Segal, *Hebrew Passover,* 36, wonders if references to Unleavened Bread in the Fourth Gospel may have been omitted so as to focus on the significance of events leading up to the feast of Unleavened Bread in their *Passover* context, i.e., according to purification rites and other practices leading up to the sacrificing and eating of the Passover lamb (cf. 2:13–22; 11:55–57; 12:1). It is impossible to know for certain why the evangelist does not use such terminology.

Passover lamb on Nisan 15 and the start of a week-long Jewish feast referred to outside the narrative world of the Fourth Gospel as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Events occurring on "a sixth day before the Passover," it has been argued,[15] emphasize the selection of the Passover lamb on the tenth day of the month (Exod 12:3), an association that would have been made by first-century readers of the Fourth Gospel and meaningful for the Gospel's interest in developing its household theme. It remains, however, to establish how any of this may relate to the Fourth Gospel's manner of locating the death of Jesus therein.

Despite the majority of current scholarship that understands Jesus' death in the Fourth Gospel to occur on Nisan 14, a sizeable number of scholars continue to argue in favor of Nisan 15.[16] The present study proposes that Jesus dies on a day that coincides with both the eating of the Passover lamb on Nisan 15 and the completion of all work on a Friday, the day before the Jewish Sabbath. The greater context of John 12:1–7 justifies such a conclusion. Indeed, in the narrative that follows and has to do with Jesus' last meal with his disciples and his arrest, trial, and crucifixion, Jesus' death on Nisan 15 reflects the evangelist's theological interest in demonstrating Jesus to be the Passover lamb. An adequate challenge to the Nisan 14 dating has been offered by others.[17] It suffices in brief to offer a sketch of that here.

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[15] See pp. 66–69.

[16] Most scholars conclude that, according to the witness of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus was crucified on Nisan 14. One or more of the following reasons are usually given by way of explanation: (1) John 13 does not appear to narrate a Passover meal; (2) the Pharisees' reluctance to enter the praetorium in order that they not become ritually unclean and so not be able to eat the Passover (18:28) demonstrates that the Passover meal had not yet occurred; (3) the hour of Jesus' sentencing (19:14) places his crucifixion at approximately the same hour that the Passover lamb would have been slaughtered at the temple; and (4) the expression παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα (19:14) refers specifically to a day that would have preceded the Passover, not the Friday of "Passover week." A significant minority has taken exception to this dating nonetheless, resulting in the conclusion that Nisan 15 remains a viable date for the Passover in John. See further pp. 152–54.

[17] See especially Geldenhuys, *Luke,* 649–70; Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words*, 41–62; Story, "Old Testament Terminology," 316–24; John Hamilton, "The Chronology of the Crucifixion and the Passover," *Churchman* 106 (1992): 323–38; B. D. Smith, "The Chronology of the Last Supper," *WTJ* 53 (1991): 29–45; Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 451–57; and Blomberg, *Historical Reliability*, 184–86, 193–94, 237–39, 246–47, 254; cf. Carson, *Gospel,* 455–58, 475, 587–90, 603–5, 622–23. The present study will contend that the Gospel's depiction of Jesus as the antitype of

First, it will be established later in this chapter that John 13:1 does not speak to a death of Jesus on Nisan 14. Although John 13:2–30 never mentions the eating of the Passover, features of the meal and dialogue as narrated point in this direction. It is a meal, which, like the Passover meal, was eaten inside the city of Jerusalem (18:1), at night (Jn 13:30),[18] at a time associated with the hour that the poor were welcomed to the temple for the distribution of alms (cf. Jn 13:29-30).[19] In light of the fulfillment theme of the Fourth Gospel, the eating of the Passover lamb could have been suppressed by the evangelist in John 13 so as to highlight elsewhere Jesus himself as the fulfillment and replacement of the Jewish Passover.[20]

Second, the reluctance of Jewish leaders to enter the praetorium lest they become ritually unclean and not "eat the Passover" (18:29) also does not speak to the death of Jesus on Nisan 14. The application of Jewish purity laws at the time of Jesus cannot be known with certainty. Still, there are indications that the type of impurity feared by the Jewish leaders was of a temporary kind and would have barred them not from eating the Passover lamb after nightfall Thursday but from participation in the festival offerings that would have continued up until nightfall Friday.[21]

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the Exodus tradition and Jesus himself as "Passover" fulfilled and superceded argues favorably for Nisan 15, not 14, as the day of his crucifixion. Cf. Porter, "Traditional Exegesis," 419 n. 6, summarizing B. H. Grigsby, "The Cross as an Expiatory Sacrifice in the Fourth Gospel," *JSNT* 15 (1982): 54–56, and concluding that the Passover theme is essentially unaltered by the various chronologies proposed. See also J. K. Howard, "Passover and Eucharist in the Fourth Gospel," *SJT* 20 (1967): 329–37.

[18] The association is made by Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words,* 44–46 , citing A. Oepke, "Ursprung und ursprünglicher Sinn des Abendmahls, im Lichte der neuesten Forschung [III]," *Allgemeine Evangelischlutherische Kirchenweitung* 59 (1926): col. 58.

[19] Cf. Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words,* 53–54, 82; and Barrett, *Gospel,* 448. Jeremias' conclusion regarding the giving of alms on the same night as the eating of the Passover meal is based on Josephus's claim that the temple was opened in the early morning hours of Nisan 15 (*Ant.* 18.29).

[20] As the Fourth Gospel narrates the approach of Jesus to Jerusalem it does not describe Jesus actually entering the city. It does not tell us of Jesus going into the temple upon his arrival. And, though describing the scene of the Last Supper (cf. John 13:21–36 with Mark 14:18–19; and John 18:1 with Mark 14:26), it does not focus our attention upon the eating of the paschal meal at that supper. Jesus is the place of the Passover sacrifice, the sacrifice itself, and the meal, wrapped up in one. See Story, "Johannine Chronology," 317.

[21] Although no one disputes that the dwellings of Gentiles were considered unclean in Jesus' day (cf. Acts 10:28), controversy exists concerning whether or not the impurity at issue in John 18:28 concerned corpse impurity lasting seven days (possibly contracted by merely entering Gentile dwellings where it was believed that aborted

Both the day's festival offerings and its Passover lamb could be rendered by the Hebrew or Aramaic term פֶּסַח (cf. 2 Chron 5:7–9). Thus, John 18:29 may not refer to an event occurring on the morning of Nisan 14, but on Nisan 15. "Eat the Passover" (φάγωσιν τὸ πάσχα), an admittedly unusual designation for eating the festival offerings of Passover week, is best explained as double entendre, a device that John uses repeatedly throughout the Fourth Gospel.[22] In this instance, a historical consideration (the natural Jewish impulse not to enter the house of a Gentile for fear of incurring ritual impurity and so the inability to "eat" the sacrificial offerings of Passover week)[23] also underlines a theological irony (the Jewish leaders scrupulously avoid anything that gets in the way of eating the Passover, yet unwittingly participate in the slaughter of the true Passover Lamb, that others might eat his flesh and live; cf. 6:53–54).[24]

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fetuses were buried; cf. *m. Ohal.* 18:7), and so preventing the eating of a Passover meal after sundown, or a lesser form of impurity that would have disqualified worshippers from entering the temple on Nisan 15, and so sacrificing or eating offerings associated with such worship ceremonies later that same day. The controversy surrounds the interpretation of later rabbinical documents such as *m. Ohal.* 1:1-3, 18:7-10 and *m. Pesah.* 7.6 and 8.8. Restrictions applying even to what might be considered the most rigorous interpretation of *m. Ohal.* 18:7 make it unlikely that mere entrance to an area such as the praetorium would have resulted in a seven-day period of uncleanness for Jews. Although lesser impurity that passes at evening could be contracted through indirect association with a corpse, seven-day corpse impurity seems to have been limited to direct contact with a corpse (cf. Num 19:11) or contact with a utensil that had touched a corpse (*m. Ohal.* 1:1-3). See Segal, *Hebrew Passover*, 199; Barrett, *Gospel,* 532–33; and Brown, *Gospel,* 2:845–46. Regarding John's earlier emphasis (2:13-25) not only upon the Passover lamb but on other animals present in the temple at Passover that would have been utilized during the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread beginning on Nisan 15, see Webster, *Ingesting Jesus,* 46; and Bruce Chilton, "The Whip of Ropes ([ΩΣ] ΦΡΑΓΕΛΛΙΟΝ ΕΚ ΣΧΟΙΝΙΩΝ) in John 2:15," in *Jesus in Context: Temple, Purity, and Restoration* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 448; repr. from *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (JSNTSup 48; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991).

[22] Regarding the Fourth Gospel's extended use of double entendre, see Wead, *Literary Devices,* 30–46. The double entendre in question in John 18:28 would conform to Wead's classification of a double meaning arising from a semitic original, פֶּסַח. Cf. BDB, s.v. פֶּסַח, 2.

[23] The ordinary sense of eating the πάσχα, however, would have referred to the "Passover meal," not the "offerings of Passover week." Those who interpret πάσχα as the feast offerings of Passover week and not the Passover meal resulting from the sacrifice of the Passover lamb include Theodor Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament* (trans. John Moore Trout; 3 vols.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel, 1953), 3:296–98; C. C. Torrey, "The Date of the Crucifixion according to the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 50 (1931): 227–41; Geldenhuys, *Luke,* 662; Carson, *Gospel,* 588–89; and Blomberg, *Historical Reliability,* 238–39.

[24] The present study finds it difficult to accept the thesis of Story ("Johannine Chronology," 318) and Hamilton (*Chronology,* 333), that, although the customary time for the eating of the Passover lamb had come and gone, the Jewish leadership had not yet eaten the Passover lamb, yet still intended to do so. Though the possibility is remotely conceivable, as Brown, *Death,* 1:745, points out, several hours later the trial is still going on and "the Jews" are still present.

Third, the argument that παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα (19:14) must refer to the day before Nisan 15 does not take into consideration either the established Aramaic or early Syriac uses of the language for "Friday." Already by the first century, the Fourth Gospel uses παρασκεύη in just this way in both John 19:14 and 19:31.[25] By contrast, no first-century documents contain any reference to the day before the Passover as παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα. As we have argued above,[26] πάσχα often refers to more than a single feast day in the Fourth Gospel, and that seems to be the case here as well. The construction is best understood as "the Friday of Passover week."

Therefore, John and the Synoptics are in agreement with each other as to the day of Jesus' last supper with his disciples, his arrest, trial, and crucifixion. Each of the Gospels has its own unique contribution to offer. But an eating of the Passover followed by the death of Jesus is in evidence in all four Gospels.[27]

To be sure, Jesus' death on the day of Passover, that is, on Nisan 15, proves to be of great significance. First-century readers would have commemorated the day of Jesus' death on the same day that they ate the Passover lamb. But the specifically paschal nature of the meal scene in

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[25] Torrey, "Date of the Crucifixion," 241; Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words,* 80–81. Cf. LSJ, s.v. παρασκευή, III. Because the events of Nisan 15 preceded a day upon which an offering of first fruits at the temple would have permitted the purchase and consumption of the new harvest (Lev. 23:11), the Sabbath that follows upon the death of Jesus is therefore "great" (John 19:31). See Barrett, *Gospel,* 555.

[26] See pp. 150–51.

[27] Though evidence of the custom postdates the composition of the Fourth Gospel, early Christian liturgies at Jerusalem and Constantinople associated the Saturday evening/Sunday with the anointing at Bethany following a Synoptic chronology of the death of Jesus on Nisan 15. This "Synoptic" understanding of the Fourth Gospel prevails, even though the Jerusalem liturgy utilizes readings from the Fourth Gospel account of Lazarus's resurrection and Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet. The Jerusalem liturgy reflects a later practice and in no way determines the meaning of John 12:1 by itself. Nevertheless, the understanding of "a sixth day before the Passover" was consistently aligned with Nisan 10 in the early church, evident in the liturgy, and John 12:1–7 soon came into use as the appointed lesson for the Saturday before Holy Week. See Talley, *Origins,* 176–89. Talley cites a Jerusalem pilgrim from the late fourth century who explains the reason behind the anointing account in John as the lection for the Saturday before Holy Week in the Armenian lectionaries: "[On the Saturday before Holy Week] a presbyter announces Easter. He mounts a platform, and reads the Gospel passage which begins, 'When Jesus came to Bethany six days before the Passover.' After this reading, with its announcement of Easter, comes the dismissal. They do it on this day because the Gospel describes what took place in Bethany 'six days before the Passover,' and it is six days from this Saturday to the Thursday night on which the Lord was arrested after the Supper."

John 13 is suppressed, it would seem, so that Jesus' identity as true Passover lamb (cf. 1:29, 36) might be made prominent in the narrative of his death, as a Passover to be eaten with bones unbroken (cf. Exod 12:10 [LXX], 46; Num 9:12).[28]

That Jesus was also anointed by Mary "on a sixth day before Passover" (12:1), that is, on Nisan 10, the day on which the Passover lamb was known to have been selected and set apart for the Passover feast, is also meaningful.[29] The foot anointing at Bethany may not seem immediately relevant to the selecting of the lamb of sacrifice on Nisan 10. Yet Jesus' interpretation of Mary's action as an event that foretells his own death and burial (12:7) indicates otherwise. Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem (12:12–15) and the arrival of his "hour" (12:23) "on

[28] See especially Schuchard, *Scripture,* 136. Dodd. *Interpretation,* 230–38, understands "Lamb of God" primarily as a messianic title, and the reference to unbroken bones in John 19:36 to be a free citation of Ps 33:21 LXX (34). Others, such as Adolf Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Johannes: Wie er spricht, denkt und glaubt* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1948), 46–47, have tried to explain the significance of the Lamb of God in light of the continual burnt offering to be sacrificed at the entrance to the sanctuary (the Jewish *tamid* offering; cf. Exod 29:38–42; Num 28:1–8; Dan 8:11–13). Still others, such as Barrett, *Gospel,* 176–77, see in the reference to a Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world a possible reference to the suffering servant of Isa 53, who is said in Isa 53:12 to have born the sins "of many."

[29] Still, several scholars conclude that the time reference in John 12:1 has no symbolic importance, focusing instead on other historical or narratological issues. Godet, *Commentary,* 48–49, even though he admits Passover would have begun on Nisan 15, nevertheless counts backward from Nisan 14 so as to conclude that the evangelist is only specifying the time when Jesus arrived in Bethany. See also Bultmann, *John,* 414 n. 5; Ernst Haenchen, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John* (2 vols; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 2:84; Moloney, *John,* 356; and Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 412 n. 99. Thyen, *Johannesevangelium,* 548, reconstructs six days out of the narrative of the Fourth Gospel: 1st day, the anointing of Jesus (12:1–11); 2nd day, Jesus' triumphal entry (12:12–50); 3rd day, last supper; (13:1–30); 4th day, the discourse of Jesus after John 13:31 (13:31–17:26); 5th day, Jesus' arrest (18:1–27); 6th day, Jesus' crucifixion (18:28–19:42). Others devise schemes that do not take the Passover context into account. Loisy, *Quatrième Évangile,* 361, is primarily concerned with the day of the week that Jesus would have arrived in Bethany. He chooses Nisan 13 as "Passover" and counts back six days to arrive at Nisan 8 so as to conclude that the evangelist means to highlight the anointing on the Friday night/Saturday before Passover week. Barrett, *Gospel,* 342–43, counts back six days from Nisan 15, but considers the point in question to be the evangelist's concern with the Jewish *Habdalah* ceremony on this same Saturday, though he fails to explain what association the *Habdalah* ceremony had with Passover and admits, "John himself shows not the smallest knowledge of or interest in the *Habdalah* ceremony, and may well have been unaware of its existence" (p. 343). These studies and others like them neither consider why the Fourth Gospel points out the day of the week Jesus arrived in Bethany in relation to Passover, nor posit why a meaningless time reference would have been inserted at this particular point in the narrative.

the next morning" (12:12) of the same day (that is, on Nisan 10[30]) serve also to identify Jesus as true Passover sacrifice made ready[31] (cf. 1:29, 36; 19:28–29; 36).

Passover and a Sixth Day of Work Completed

Passover is not the only day of cultic significance that the Fourth Gospel depicts in relation to Jesus' death: Jesus dies on a Friday, the day before the Jewish Sabbath (19:31). For readers of the Fourth Gospel, what was the significance of the paschal death of Jesus on the day before the Sabbath?[32]

Readers familiar with their own Jewish heritage may well have recalled the traditions surrounding the narrative of Genesis as reflected in the work of Philo, who provided commentary on the Pentateuch. Though the relationship between Passover and creation was later developed by the rabbis especially,[33] as early as Philo, Passover/the Feast of Unleavened Bread was being interpreted in light of the creation. For Philo, the timing of the spring-time observance of

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[30] Regarding the understanding of when a festival day begins and ends in the Fourth Gospel, see further pp. 159–61.

[31] Cf. Weise, "Passionswache," 52–53.

[32] Some scholars argue that with the time reference the evangelist is alluding to Exod 24:16, understanding the glory of Jesus revealed on the Passover six days later in John to be highlighted. See Francis T. Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel* (SBT 40; Naperville, Ill.: Allenson, 1963), 72; Manns, "Lecture Symbolique," 104; and Keener, *Gospel,* 2:862. Despite the tradition associated with the Transfiguration in Mark ("after six days," Mark 9:2) it may be questioned how obvious the allusion would have been for most of the Gospel's readers in a pericope that neglects to mention a mountain, a voice from a cloud, or even the revealed glory of Jesus. Coloe, "Anointing," 111, argues that the six days of John 12:1 alludes to the Sabbath injunction of Exod 35:2, since the remainder of Exodus takes up the construction of the tabernacle and its anointing with perfume. Coloe's conclusion fails to take into account the significance of a sixth day *before the Passover* for readers of the Fourth Gospel.

[33] Though the Targums date to a much later period, and it is difficult to say with certainty to what extent the familiar six-day creation account would have been applied to Passover in the first century, Talley, *Liturgical Year,* 3, writes regarding the likely Jewish observance of Passover in the first century, "Two other themes further enriched the Passover early in the common era, but precise dating is impossible. The Palestinian Targum on Exodus contains a 'Poem of the Four Nights,' which assigns four events to Passover: the creation of the world, the binding (*akedah*) of Isaac, the deliverance from Egypt, and the coming of the Messiah. These, as we shall see, had significant impact on the Christian themeology of Pascha." See also pp. 11 and 48–50. He adds, "The association of Passover with creation points to the cosmic importance attached to the Exodus; the event that constituted Israel was seen as the constitution of the world itself as well. In much of Israel's tradition, Nisan was treated as the first month of the year, and therefore the month in which creation occurred. . . . As the Targum reveals, the great spring festival in Nisan was regularly perceived as the celebration of creation, and this association with the paschal date is seen also in early Christian usage" (pp. 49–50). Cf. Segal, *Hebrew Passover,* 29; Bradshaw, "Easter," 89–90.

Passover bore much in common with the themes of creation.[34] In the Fourth Gospel the person and accomplishment of Jesus touches on both Passover and creation.[35] Six days, when read in light of the chronology of Jesus' death on the day before the Sabbath (a Friday, the day when the Son accomplishes the work that is given to him by the Father to do; cf. 19:30–31), bear a close resemblance to the six days of creation, after which Yahweh, having made all things, takes his Sabbath rest (Gen 2:1).[36] Jews of Jesus' day worked six days, followed by the consecration of the seventh day for Sabbath rest (Gen 2:2–3; Exod 20:8–11; Lev 23:3).

Therefore, there is significance in the fact that reference to the beginning of a final week in John 12:1 points to Jesus' passion as the Son's involvement in the life-giving work of the Father (5:16–17, 21), and stressing the completion and fulfillment of this work through Jesus' crucifixion (19:30). When related to Passover, it is especially meaningful that the final working day of the week is a day on which all is accomplished by Jesus (19:30).[37] In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus has come to accomplish the work that the Father has given him to do (4:34; cf. 19:30).

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[34] See Philo's commentary on Exod 12:2 (*QE* 1.1): "[The Father] wishes [the season of Passover] to be (the beginning) of creation for the world, and the beginning of months and years for the race. Now the season in which the world was created as anyone will ascertain in truth . . . was the season of spring, since it is at this time that all things in common blossom and grow, and the earth produces its perfected fruits. And, as I said, nothing was imperfect in the first creation of the universe. . . . Wherefore He thought it proper that the same season (should be) a memorial both of the creation of the world and of [time]. . . . For at the command of the Lord, wherever it was arranged that they should change their dwelling from Egypt, being persuaded by clear words, He prescribed the first month as the time of migration." Cf. *Spec. Laws* 2, 28.160.

[35] Creation themes are particularly in evidence in the Fourth Gospel as early as its opening verses (1:1–3, 10) and, following Jesus' death and resurrection, as late as his parting gift of the Holy Spirit (20:22; cf. ἐνεφύσησεν in Gen 2:7 LXX).

[36] Christian exegetes have seen evidence of the creation theme in John 12:1 since the time of the Fathers. Alcuin, as cited by Thomas Aquinas (*Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels Collected out of the Works of the Fathers* [trans. John Henry Neumann; 4 vols; South Bend, Ind.: Saint Austin, 1977; repr., Oxford: Parker, 1841–1845], 399), relates the creation theme to John 12:1 and the mention of Passover, writing, "Mystically, that He came to Bethany six days before the Passover, means that He who made all things in six days, who created man on the sixth, in the sixth age of the world, the sixth day, the sixth hour, came to redeem mankind." More recently others have come to similar conclusions. See Westcott, *Gospel,* 110; Manns, "Lecture Symbolique," 104–5; and Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 104–6, 112–15 nn. 43, 48–50, 66.

[37] Brodie, *Gospel,* 61, describes the relationship between Sabbath observance and festivals in the Fourth Gospel: "It is very difficult to discuss feasts in John without also discussing Sabbath . . . and the interwovenness of

In the context of one of the Gospel's Sabbath controversies, Jesus states that his accomplishing/completing his work testifies that the Father has sent him (5:36; cf. 5:16). His death on this Passover therefore brings his work on the Father's behalf to completion and reveals (we shall see) Jesus' household association both with the Father and with his own. Upon Jesus' death, all that God had mandated regarding a former house of Israel—including the Jewish Passover and all that it signified (slaughter of the lamb on behalf of the household [Exod 12:6], life-preserving meal shared by the household [Exod 12:1–4, 8; cf. John 6:4, 54–57], exodus of the household [Exod 19:1], preservation of the household through the provision of daily bread [Exod 16:4, 15], and entrance into a new land of promise [Josh 5:10–12])—is fulfilled and superseded by Jesus Christ himself.[38]

Summing up, according to the Fourth Gospel Jesus dies on a day that coincides with the eating of the Passover lamb on Nisan 15 and the completion of all work on a Friday, the day before the Jewish Sabbath. John 12:1–7 establishes the structure of a six-day period that begins with Jesus' anointing on Nisan 10 (John 12) and ends with his death and burial on Nisan 15 (John 13–19). John 12–19 encompasses the beginning and end of a final "week," a week that ended with the death of Jesus.

John 13:2–30 and John 19:38–42: The Beginning and the End of a Final Day

As the present study has demonstrated, the anointing episode in John 12:1–7 is narrated in order to create two "echo narratives," one in John 13:2–30 and another in John 19:38–42.

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feasts with the notion of Sabbath highlights a basic feature of the feasts themselves: they are an extension of Sabbath, or resting in God, and thus of the gospel's central idea of abiding union."

[38] For a helpful discussion regarding the depiction of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel as the antitype of the Exodus tradition and perfect paschal lamb, see Howard, "Passover and Eucharist," 329–37. John's reference to "a sixth day before the Passover" is ultimately more concerned with establishing Jesus as the replacement/fulfillment of traditions or institutions associated with Passover than it is in giving the precise dating of either his arrival in Bethany or crucifixion.

Though the foot washing and burial episodes are not particularly similar either thematically or structurally, they do bear thematic similarities to the anointing episode. Among these similarities, those reflecting the Gospel's interest in a household theme are especially prominent. The final week anticipated in John 12:1 is one way that the evangelist uses time to structure the latter portion of his Gospel, but it is not the only way. Not only does the latter portion specify a final week in the life of Jesus, "echoes" of the anointing episode also mark the beginning and the end of a final day that is significant for what the Gospel wants to communicate about the death of Jesus. It will be necessary to investigate both (1) the first-century cultural understanding of the beginning and end of festival days and (2) the way in which this understanding manifests itself in the text of the Fourth Gospel.

When, according to the Fourth Gospel, did a calendar day begin/end?[39] Would a day begin at midnight, daybreak, or dusk? Most agree that according to the cultic life of Israel a first-century day began at dusk.[40] Overall, however, several methods for marking the beginning and end of a day existed by the middle of the first century.

According to the Roman legal and priestly calendar, days began and ended at midnight. The hour of day was counted from either midnight or noon.[41] However, the Babylonians and "common people" throughout the Mediterranean world typically considered the day to begin at

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[39] The present study understands "day" to refer to the beginning and end of the calendrical day, that is, the 24-hour period used to determine the days of the month.

[40] See De Vaux, *Ancient Israel,* 180–83; Morgenstern, "Supplementary Studies," 15; Safrai, *Jewish People,* 2:861–62; Yee, *Jewish Feasts,* 28; William Propp, *Exodus 1–18* (AB 2; ed. W. F. Albright and D. N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1999), 389–406; Culpepper, *Gospel and Letters,* 199; Finegan, *Handbook,* 356; and Keener, *Gospel,* 1:471. Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27,* 1965, sees the sunset to sunset division of days occurring only after the destruction of the temple in 70 CE.

[41] Finegan, *Handbook,* 7, 10–11; Norman Walker, "The Reckoning of Hours in the Fourth Gospel," *NovT* 4 (1960): 69.

sunrise, and so counted hours beginning at dawn.[42] While Jews in the Diaspora tended to follow the civic calendars of cities or nation-states where they resided in order to maintain their day-to-day affairs, religious matters followed a different schedule. The marking of events related to Israel's cultic life coexisted alongside the civil reckoning of the day, which prevailed in circumstances not directly related to Jewish festivals or the Sabbath.[43]

The cultic reckoning of days was particularly evident on festival and Sabbath occasions (cf. Neh 13:19–22; Mark 1:29–32; Lk 4:38–40; 23:54; John 19:31–42). Though already in evidence in the New Testament, the trend appears most vividly in later literature, especially in connection with the rabbinical tradition (cf. the many references to "nightfall" or "when darkness approaches" in *m. Šabb.* 1:3, 10; 2:7, etc.). It should come as no surprise then that, especially regarding the Jewish celebration of Passover, the Fourth Gospel assumes the ancient convention according to which festival days began or ended with the setting of the sun. This convention coexisted with a reckoning of daylight hours that followed either the Roman or Babylonian system.[44] As this dissertation will explore subsequently, the Jewish cultic day is particularly

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[42] Finegan., *Handbook,* 7; cf. Walker, "Reckoning," 4, though the latter refers to this system of reckoning confusingly as "the Jewish reckoning."

[43] Finegan, *Handbook,* 8, though he concludes that the Synoptic Gospels and Acts appear usually to reckon days beginning in the morning (Matt 28:1; Mark 11:11), admits that the Jewish cultic calendar is undeniably in evidence elsewhere in the Synoptics (cf. Mark 1:32; Luke 4:40); Propp, *Exodus,* 386, describes how even today traditional Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists superimpose a religious lunar calendar upon a civic solar calendar, utilizing both simultaneously.

[44] The question of how the beginning and end of a day would have been configured according to the cultic or religious calendar of Israel is a separate question from the specific times of day to which certain hours or watches would have referred. No conclusive evidence exists regarding the reckoning of the Gospel's daylight hours. See Barrett, *Gospel,* 231: "It is impossible to settle with complete certainty the method of enumerating the hours employed by John." The difficulty is compounded by the imprecision of the Greek terms for various times of day (e.g., the reference in John 20:19 [ὀψσίας] need not necessarily refer to a time after nightfall; see BDAG, s.v. ὀψίας, 2). Some scholars consider the hourly references in John to be symbolic. See, e.g., J. Edgar Bruns, "The Use of Time in the Fourth Gospel," *NTS* 13 (1966–1967): 285–90. Westcott, *Gospel,* 282; Walker, "Reckoning," 69–73; Culpepper, *Anatomy,* 219; and Finegan, *Handbook,* 10–11, argue in favor of the Roman reckoning of time as the likely interpretation for first-century readers of the Fourth Gospel. Most scholars (e.g., Bultmann, *John,* 100; Barrett, *Gospel,* 181; Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words,* 45, 47; Morris, *Gospel,* 138; Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 153; Keener, *Gospel,* 1:470) are more inclined to favor the Babylonian or common understanding for marking the hours of the day, at

evident in the Fourth Gospel's treatment of the aftermath of the crucifixion in John 19:31–42 and 20:1 (cf. Appendix One).

Both John 12 and 13 begin with the eating of a δεῖπνον (12:2; 13:2), and John 13 in particular continues with clear indications of the day's progress. It has already been argued above that the Greek vocable refers to a meal to be received in the evening.[45] In the foot washing account, this meal is described as continuing on into the remaining hours of the night (13:30).[46]

The farewell discourse is followed by the account of Jesus' betrayal, trial, passion, and death in John 18 and 19, and here the reader receives specific time indicators demonstrating that the 24-hour period beginning with the evening meal continues to the end of John 19. Those accompanying Judas bring "lanterns and torches" (18:3), indicating that the nighttime setting of John 13:30 is extended. At the time of Peter's denial, the distinctive sound of a cock crowing (18:27) reflects the early morning hour. Not long after this, the evangelist explicitly states that at the time Jesus was taken from Caiaphas to Pilate, "it was early in the morning"[47] (18:28). Then, following an exchange between Jesus and Pilate, Pilate brings Jesus out to the Stone Pavement, and at the moment of Jesus' sentencing the evangelist tells us that it was around the "sixth hour," that is, sometime late in the morning (19:14).[48]

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least when the cultic day was not the issue. The present study favors the latter view. Regarding the Roman reckoning as usually being limited to legal contracts (e.g., noon was VI [not XII] on their sundials), see Morris, *Gospel,* 138.

[45] See pp. 70–72 and 108–9.

[46] Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words*, 44.

[47] Specified by Danker "as the fourth watch of the night . . . it is the time from three to six o'clock." Cf. BDAG, s.v. πρωΐ.

[48] Morris, *Gospel,* 708–9 is probably closest to the truth when he writes that the apparent inconsistency with Mark (where Jesus is said to be crucified at "the third hour" or 9:00 AM) results from insisting on a degree of chronological precision that could not have been achieved in the days before wristwatches. His conclusion that "in neither Mark nor John is the hour to be regarded as more than an approximation" is borne out by the qualifying "about" (ὡς) in John. Jesus' sentencing at the sixth hour is an unlikely allusion to his slaughter at the hour that the Passover lambs were being slaughtered in the temple on Nisan 14. If the Fourth Gospel had intended to make such an allusion regardless of the historical chronology of the event, the insertion of a time reference either at the moment

The time indicators continue even after the death of Jesus. Upon his death, "the Jews" express their concern that the bodies not remain on the cross during the approaching Sabbath (19:31). Their apprehension over leaving the bodies can be elucidated by Deuteronomy 21:23. Here it is recorded that all those hung on a tree are under a curse, and those not burying the deceased that same day are guilty of desecrating the land. The haste of the Jews in making their request (before all of the criminals have apparently died; cf. 19:31), and the dispatch with which Nicodemus and Joseph attend to the burial preparation suggest that time is of the essence. The facility of the garden tomb for completing the burial before the Sabbath (19:42) indicates that as John 19 comes to a close the day was waxing late as evening approached (19:41–42).

For these reasons, John 13:2–30 and 19:38–42, in addition to the other important functions they serve, highlight episodes that mark the beginning and end of a final day in the Fourth Gospel, the day of Jesus' death. The Gospel, which ordinarily narrates brief episodes depicting Jesus' encounters with individual people, is noteworthy for what it accomplishes in John 13–19. Here the narrative slows down and tells a story in its entirety, from beginning (the beginning of the day) to end (the end of the day, right before nightfall). The narrative is structured by the foot washing being placed at its beginning and the burial preparation scene at its end. This configuration results in a section of narrative that brings closure to the interest of the anointing at Bethany, even as the anointing anticipates and elucidates the significance of what follows.

John 13:1: A Key Turning Point for the Beginning and End of a Final Week

The present study will now turn its attention to a verse not yet investigated, though its importance for the foot washing scene is critical. In key terms this passage directs the reader's attention to the suggestion of an all-important beginning and end and how they relate to each

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of Jesus' crucifixion, or the hour of his death, would have served its purpose much better. Cf. Dodd, *Interpretation,* 234; and Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 456–57, who make a similar argument.

other. Most commentators recognize John 13:1 as a key passage for understanding the narrative that follows in John 13–19. The verse is widely recognized as a passage that sums up either the immediate significance of the foot washing narrated in John 13,[49] the import of the work of Jesus to be narrated in John 13–19,[50] or both.[51] What is often overlooked, however, is the role of John 13:1 to transition between the events narrated in John 12 and the new beginning that commences at John 13:2.[52]

The difficulty of John 13:1 arises from several elements within the sentence that have puzzled scholars attempting to decipher the syntax of the verse. Five elements in particular have posed difficulties: (1) The proper translation of the conjunction δέ and the nature of the transition that it facilitates; (2) a prepositional phrase (πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα), fronted for the sake of emphasis, whose adverbial function is difficult to establish; (3/4) two predicate position participles and the construction that each introduces: εἰδὼς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἦλθεν αὐτοῦ ἡ ὥρα ἵνα μεταβῇ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου πρὸς τὸν πατέρα and ἀγαπήσας τοὺς ἰδίους τοὺς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ;

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[49] W. K. Grossouw, "A Note on John 13:1–3," *NovT* 8 (1966): 128, stresses the significance of the main verb in John 13:1 for what it says about the foot washing in particular. Carson, *Gospel,* 460–61, highlights the time referent as introducing "the foot washing only, and not the discourses that follow the meal."

[50] Lightfoot, *St. John,* 260, considers that "the first verse of ch. 13 may be regarded as a sort of headline for the remainder of this gospel." Brown, *Gospel,* 2:560–61, 563, understands John 13:1 as an "introduction" to John 13–21, which he refers to as "the Book of Glory." By "introduction" he seems to mean a kind of summary statement; he separates this introduction to the Book of Glory as a whole from the introduction to the foot washing proper, which he sees beginning at John 13:2. Gerhard Meier, *Johannes-Evangelium* (2 vols.; Bibel-Kommentar 7; Stuttgart: Hänssler, 1984), 2:62, refers to John 13:1 as a "heading" (Überschrift) over the entire section of narrative that follows.

[51] Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 3:16, sees John 13:1 as "the heading of the whole of the second main part of the gospel and the introduction to the washing of the feet"; cf. Thomas, *Footwashing,* 80; and Thyen, *Johannesevangelium*, 583.

[52] See Fernando F. Segovia, "John 13:1–20: The Footwashing in the Johannine Tradition," *ZNW* 73 (1982): 40. J. N. Suggit, "John 13:1-20: The Mystery of the Incarnation and of the Eucharist," *Neo* 19 (1985): 65, compares the reference to Passover in John 13:1 to the similar construction in John 12:1: "13:1 therefore resembles 12:1, where the anointing is similarly set in a paschal context and also needs to be understood against the background of the cross. In both cases the implication is that now in Jesus the true meaning of 'the Passover of the Jews' has been declared"; Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 451, also notes the transitional and not the merely introductory aspect of John 13:1: "13:1 forms a clear transition to a new section of the Gospel. Chs. 11 and 12 increasing [sic] lead into the Passion narrative, especially from 12:23 on, and here the narrative reaches the meal on the evening prior to the day of Jesus' death."

and (5) a main verb, ἠγάπησεν, at the very end of this long sentence, and so opposite the fronted prepositional phrase referred to above.

The themes of John 13:1 (departing this world, Jesus' love for his own, Jesus showing his own the full extent of his love) are subsequently developed in connection with the foot washing, the farewell discourse, and the passion narrative. Several aspects of especially the first part of John 13:1, however, serve also to link the passage to what precedes it.

First, and most importantly, the arrival of Jesus' hour to depart this world and to return to the Father has already been described at length in John 12 (cf. 12:23, 27), where the glorification of the Father's name (12:28) is interpreted in terms of Jesus' being lifted up from the earth (12:32). Scholars have often noted the similarity of these verses, but have rarely considered the possibility of a more direct connection between them.

Second, "before the feast of the Passover" bears a striking resemblance to "on a sixth day before the Passover" in John 12:1. Together with John 12:1, it differs from every other mention of an imminent Passover in the Fourth Gospel (cf. 2:13, 6:4; 11:55)[53] in several significant ways. Unlike these prior references to Passover, the references in both John 12:1 and 13:1 do not elaborate that this Passover is "of the Jews." They do not specify that the events concerned take place "near" the Passover, but rather "before" it. And neither reference explicitly describes Passover in the context of an ascent. The distinguishing usage in John 12:1 and 13:1 does not necessarily mean that both references to a period before the Passover have the same referent; but it may be argued that parallel usage would likely accompany two time distinctions that referred to the same thing. If, as some have argued, "before the feast of Passover" in John 13:1 modifies

[53] The reference to τὸ πάσχα in John 18:28 is to a festival meal, not a festival *per se*, and so is bracketed from the discussion. Other uses of the Greek vocable occur at John 2:23; 18:39; and 19:14.

the participle εἰδώς that immediately follows rather than the main verb ἠγάπησεν[54] (see further below), then "before the feast of the Passover" may well be given to recall John 12:1.

Third, the Gospel's first explicit mention of Jesus' love for his own occurs in John 11 in connection with Lazarus and his household (11:3, 5). The same household is featured in the events and circumstances of the chapter that follows, depicting events occurring on Nisan 10 (12:1).[55] This reference to those beloved by Jesus, repeated in John 13:1, demonstrates that the text first recalls and summarizes what has preceded it before turning to the events that will follow.

It has been argued above that days associated with Jewish festivals in the Fourth Gospel began at sundown, and the day begun with the anointing at Bethany in John 12:1–7 continues into "the morrow" (12:12) of the rest of John 12 as a complement to the one noted above in John 13–19. If this argument holds true, then John 13:1 serves nicely first to recall the day that began the "week" before turning to its treatment of the day that ended the "week." In just such a way, this dissertation understands John 13:1 to be a key linking passage and turning point for the beginning and end of the Gospel's final week, a passage that directs the reader's attention to the desired relationship of John 12 (Nisan 10) with John 13–19 (Nisan 15).[56]

The transitioning function of John 13:1 both highlights its opening prepositional phrase (πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα) and offers an explanation of how to accurately translate its time reference according to the complex structure of the sentence. On Nisan 10, Jesus already "knew

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[54] Bultmann, *John,* 463–64, is perhaps the most well-known of those who do not admit that the time reference could sensibly modify the main verb ἠγάπησεν. Cf. Zahn, *Evangelium,* 3:288–90; Walter Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HNT 6; 3d ed.; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1933), 162, cited by Geldenhuys, *Luke,* 658; Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words,* 80; and Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 452.

[55] Regarding the family of Lazarus as representative of a household that Jesus loved and the significance of this for John 13:1, see especially pp. 197–99.

[56] This insight originally came from this dissertation's supervisor, Dr. Bruce G. Schuchard. Cf. Geldenhuys, *Luke,* 657; Zahn, *Evangelium,* 3:289.

that his hour to depart this world to the Father had come" (12:23) and "had loved his own who were in the world." So the reference in John 13:1 to a period of time before the Passover feast points back to Nisan 10 and the events associated with that day. The love of Jesus for his own that is given εἰς τέλος takes place, then, not "before the feast of the Passover" but on it and with it (cf. the similarity of 19:28 esp.; see further below).

Therefore, Jesus' love εἰς τέλος applies not only, or even primarily, to the foot washing. Jesus neither washes the feet of his own "to the end" (that is, "finally/ ultimately"), nor does his washing of the disciples' feet constitute the supreme proof of his love for them. A better way to interpret the passage is to see the references to Jesus' love, first in the aorist participle ἀγαπήσας and then in the aorist main verb ἠγάπησεν, as expressing the continuity of his love from a period "before the Passover" (ἀγαπήσας) to a period that coincides with the Passover (ἠγάπησεν). The time reference "before the Passover" limits Jesus' foreknowledge (εἰδώς)[57] and the main verb "loved" (ἠγάπησεν) refers to the events that are about to be described in John 13–20.[58] To translate accordingly highlights the properties of the text as a bridge or hinge from a period before the Passover to the Passover day itself, that is, from Nisan 10 to Nisan 15: "So Jesus, because he knew before the feast of the Passover that his hour had come to cross over from this

[57] Bultmann, *John,* 463–64, solves the grammatical and logical complexities of the verse by hypothesizing an insertion of redacted material into John 13:1. An alternative, and much simpler, solution would be to understand the reference to the feast to modify the participle εἰδώς, and to translate accordingly. Cf. Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 452.

[58] Cf. Geldenhuys, *Luke,* 657, who understands the second anarthrous participle to be a substantive. Others convey the same idea in two separate sentences: "Before the feast of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to cross over from this world to the Father. Because he had loved his own who were in the world, he (now) loved them to the end." See the several English and Dutch New Testament translations listed by Geldenhuys, *Luke,* 658–59, including *The Twentieth Century New Testament, Knox Translation, Weymouth's Translation,* and *The Moffatt New Testament.* Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 452, allows that "the sentence construction is unclear," yet concludes that "the reference to the feast is clearly not intended to date Jesus' love for his disciples to the time before the Passover but to point to Jesus' foreknowledge of what awaits him at the Passover."

world to the Father, [and] because he had loved his own who were in the world, [now] loved them to the end" (or "showed them the full extent of his love"[59]).

Because John 13:1 functions as a hinge that links John 12 to the remainder of the Gospel narrative, it not only recalls Nisan 10 and establishes a clear connection with the events of John 12 but serves also as a link to what follows in the narrative, beginning with John 13:2. The foot washing proper and the events of Nisan 15 begin with John 13:2 and are anchored in time to an evening meal. At the meal, Jesus' foreknowledge of his imminent departure (13:3) is again emphasized, this time featuring that which he is about to do as the Son of God the Father, with all that the Father has given him to accomplish his mission.

The foot washing will be a symbolic expression of Jesus' love for his own (13:2–11), love that will serve as a point of departure for the love that the disciples are to share with one another (13:12–17; cf. 13:34; 15:12; 1 John 4:7, 11). As a radical expression of the master's love for his own, however, Jesus' action is no mere offering of an example for them to follow, but instead is given chiefly to anticipate the moment at which Jesus will accomplish all things at the cross. Thus "the full extent of his love" refers not only or even primarily to the foot washing, but to the events of the entire day that are about to be narrated. At the moment of his death, occurring near the close of day (19:31), Jesus will utter τετέλεσται (19:30) to announce that his love, already mentioned in John 13:1, has been fulfilled to the utmost (εἰς τέλος; cf. 19:28). So, beginning with John 13:2, the τέλος follows. Jesus, who has loved his own previously, now shows his own the full extent of his love.

[59] See NIV. Bauer, *Johannesevangelium,* 162, translates simultaneously with both "bis zuletzt" and "bis zur Vollendung." Others who understand the expression to convey a nuance of both time and degree ("to the end" and "to the utmost"), not just one meaning or the other, include Barrett, *Gospel,* 438; Morris, *Gospel,* 545 n. 9, and Culpepper, *Anatomy,* 165.

John 19:25–27: The Full Extent of Jesus' Love in Evidence

The significance of Jesus' death is elucidated by an event recorded only in the Fourth Gospel, which concerns the household of Jesus and occurs in John 19:25–27. The verses depict aspects of both the earthly household from which Jesus has come (esp. his mother and aunt, 19:25) and those who have been Jesus' "own" since previously they followed Jesus in faith (19:27; cf., e.g., 2:11–12). They tell of events that occurred at the climactic moment of Jesus' death on the cross that all might be "accomplished."[60] Therefore, the present study now will examine John 19:25–27 in order to better understand the contribution that it makes to the significance of the household theme in the latter portion of the Fourth Gospel. This will cast light on John 12:1–7 in particular, and its own interest in the household theme which the present study has already demonstrated.

Although in the past commentators have voiced varied opinions regarding the theological significance of the episode,[61] the symbolic potential of the passage is widely recognized today. The range of interpretations[62] for how this symbolism is to be understood, however, depends on a variety of conclusions regarding the following issues: (1) The resemblance of Jesus' words in John 19:26–27 to an adoption formula,[63] a last testament,[64] a revelatory formula,[65] or some

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[60] Cf. Beirne, *Women and Men,* 171–72. For a more detailed explanation of why the events in this pericope may be particularly significant for understanding the message of the Fourth Gospel, see Paul Minear, *John, the Martyr's Gospel* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1984), 145.

[61] Those who understand the pericope to be nothing more than a narrative that exemplifies Jesus' filial devotion toward his mother include Dodd, *Interpretation,* 428; Ernst Haenchen, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John* (2 vols.; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 2:193; and Morris, *Gospel,* 716–18.

[62] For a detailed survey of various interpretations, see Brown, *Gospel,* 923–25; and Fehribach, *Women,* 24–25; 127–28.

[63] Cf. Barrett, *Gospel,* 552; and Koester, *Symbolism,* 241.

[64] Brown, *Gospel,* 2:907, seems to favor understanding the words of Jesus as a "direct commission" or "charge." Cf. Stauffer, *Jesus,* 133; Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 3:278; A. H. Maynard, "The Role of Peter in the Fourth Gospel," *NTS* 30 (1984): 539; Beasely-Murray, *John,* 349; Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 614; and Keener, *Gospel,* 2:1144.

[65] Cf. Raymond F. Collins, "The Representative Figures of the Fourth Gospel–II," *DRev* 94 (1976): 121; John Rena, "Women in the Gospel of John," *EgT* 17 (1986): 135; and Minear, *Martyr's Gospel,* 144–45.

combination of these;[66] (2) whether the spotlight is ultimately on the mother of Jesus,[67] the beloved disciple,[68] or both at the same time;[69] and (3) the proper translation of εἰς τὰ ἴδια in John 19:27.[70] Underlying all three of these issues is how the reader would have understood the seemingly ordinary aspects of the episode and the manner in which this would have related to the Fourth Gospel's use of symbolism.[71] The primary interest of the present study is in the

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[66] Anton Dauer, "Das Wort des Gekreuyzigten an seine Mutter und den 'Jünger den er liebte': Eine traditionsgeschichtliche und theologische Untersuchung zu Joh 19:25–27," *BZ* 12 (1968): 80–81, refers to the form in question as a "revelation" (*Offenbarung*) that contains an adoption formula. Others recognize Jesus' words as revelatory at the same time that they effect a new relationship that may be either the result of adoption or a last testament. Brown, *Death,* 2:1021, though he emphasizes revelation, describes what Jesus does as "an act of empowerment that both reveals and makes come about a new relationship." Cf. Beirne, *Women and Men,* 179–80. Culpepper, *Gospel and Letters,* 233, utilizes the terminology of speech-act theory to describe a similar phenomenon: "At the cross, when Jesus' hour has come, Jesus employs a revelatory formula ('Behold') and performative language. Like a marriage declaration, his pronouncement actually accomplishes or effects the new relationship that it declares." Cf. Lee, *Flesh,* 154. Barrett, *Gospel,* 552, emphasizes adoption, but admits that this adoption "means the creation of a new relationship; the formula reveals what the new relationship is to be." Stibbe, *John as Storyteller,* 152–53, concludes that Jesus' words create the effect of a final testament, which the evangelist wants the reader to understand as a "metaphor for spiritual adoption."

[67] See Brown, *Gospel,* 2:923–26; Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 3:277–79; J. Grassi, "The Role of Jesus' Mother in John's Gospel: A Reappraisal," *CBQ* 48 (1986): 73; Lee, *Flesh,* 152–57.

[68] Dauer, "Das Wort," 81; Schuchard, *Scripture,* 131 n. 30; José Antonio Caballero, "El Discípulo Amado en el Evangelio de Juan," *EstBib* 60 (2002): 330.

[69] See especially Beirne, Men and Women, 170–94. Ben Witherington, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus: A Study of Jesus' Attitudes to Women and Their Roles as Reflected in His Earthly Life* (SNTSMS 51; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 96–97, writes that "The Evangelist intends the scene to be balanced between attention given to the beloved disciple and attention given to Jesus' mother," yet he emphasizes that the mother of Jesus is included in the fold of the beloved disciple, not the other way around. Cf. Koester, *Symbolism,* 243.

[70] That is, does the word ἴδια refer principally to something that belongs to the beloved disciple, or, does it refer more specifically to the home of the beloved disciple? For an emphasis on the former, see especially J. Duncan M. Derrett, *The Victim: The Johannine Passion Narrative Reexamined* (Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire, Eng.: Drinkwater, 1993), 32; Ignace de la Potterie, *La passion de Jésus selon l'évangile de Jean* (Lire la Bible 73; Paris: Cerf, 1986), 163, cited by F. Neirynck, "Short Note on John 19:26–27," *ETL* 71 (1995): 431 n. 8; Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 3:279; and Caballero, "El Discípulo Amado," 330. Scholars who specifically emphasize the home of the beloved disciple in their exegesis of the passage include J. H. Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John* (ed. A. H. McNeile; 2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1929), 2:367; Dauer, "Das Wort," 85; and F. Neirynck, "ΕΙΣ ΤΑ ΙΔΙΑ: Jn 19:27 (et 16:32)," *ETL* 54 (1979), 365.

[71] Brown, *Gospel,* 2:923, identifies both a "non-theological" and "deeper" meaning in the episode, but favors the latter. See also Lee, *Flesh,* 152–57, who identifies both "literal" ("flesh") and a metaphorical ("glory") meanings in the symbolic episodes of the Fourth Gospel and wants to interpret Mary's role in a way that "goes beyond without contradicting her human motherhood." Koester, *Symbolism,* 239–44, individually considers the mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple as unique persons before considering their representative function (pp. 241–42), reflecting his emphasis on Johannine symbols as spanning "the chasm between what is 'from above' and what is 'from below' without collapsing the distinction" (p. 4). Regarding the mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple, he ultimately concludes that their significance in John 19:25–27 does not ultimately lie in aspects of their unique identities, but rather that it is "in their relationship with one another that they represent the church" (p. 243).

theological significance of events at the cross in light of the first-century household theme and the manner in which this theme is developed elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel. Therefore, what John 19:25–27 tells us about the death of Jesus, and what, if any, significance this has for the Gospel's household theme as represented in John 12:1–7 especially, will be the focus.

At the foot of the cross, upon Jesus' death, we see what may be called a "previous household." It is, first of all, a household that has existed on the basis of fairly ordinary and relatively close blood relations. This household is composed of Jesus, his mother, and the sister of his mother (19:25).[72] The mother of Jesus is reintroduced to the narrative in John 19:25 in the same manner that she first appeared in the only other text in which she appears in the Fourth Gospel, at the wedding of Cana (2:1–11). She is never mentioned by name, but is always described according to her household relationship with Jesus (cf. 2:3, 5). While two additional women are also depicted as present at the foot of the cross and names are offered to identify them (Mary, [the wife] of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene),[73] the sister of Jesus' mother, like the mother of Jesus herself, is nameless. That such a household was present at Jesus' death is to be expected. The Passover setting suggests that members of Jesus' family would have already been in Jerusalem for the purpose of celebrating the feast (cf. 7:9–10). Because they are in attendance for the feast, they are likewise present in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus' arrest and trial. Any family members available would have been expected to stand as witnesses to Jesus' death.[74] But

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[72] Fehribach, *Women,* 134, draws analogies between the scenes at Cana (2:1–11) and the cross, noting, "The sister's presence indicates that the scene is a family affair, just as was the wedding at Cana."

[73] Brown, *Death,* 2:1014, treats the possibility of 2, 3, or 4 women present at the cross. Together with Maccini, *Testimony,* 186–87, he concludes that 4 women are probably being described. Cf. Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 104. It is possible that Mary of Clopas would have been wife of the brother of Jesus' putative father Joseph, and so a more distant relation to Jesus. Cf. Richard Bauckham, "The Relatives of Jesus," *Them* 21 (1992): 19.

[74] Regarding the witness of close family members, see Maccini, *Testimony,* 202. Witherington, *Women,* 94; and Keener, *Gospel,* 2:1141, mention the likelihood that relatives and close friends of the condemned would have been permitted to gather as onlookers to an execution. Keener specifies that especially women would have likely gone unmolested in such circumstances. Grassi, "Jesus' Mother," 74–77, also emphasizes the mother of Jesus as

Jesus' brothers (2:12; 7:3, 5, 10) are conspicuously absent. Thus, a previous household of Jesus, as represented especially in the persons of Jesus, his mother, and his aunt—but not his brothers—is present at the time of Jesus' death, and the reader is left to ponder what this means.

Readers today will readily understand Jesus' mother (and to a lesser extent, his mother's sister) to have been a member of Jesus' immediate family. However, first-century readers especially would have also associated these (and those with them, including the beloved disciple) with an even larger community of persons, namely, those identified in the narrative as "the Jews" (1:19; 2:6, 13, 18, 20; 3:1, etc.) who together claimed Abraham as their "father" (8:33, 37, 39, 53).[75] The association would have been made and would have been important for at least three reasons. First, as this dissertation has already demonstrated,[76] in both the biblical and nonbiblical literature of the first century (the Fourth Gospel included) the household concept was utilized to describe communities composed of multiple households sharing a common ancestor. Second, both Jesus' mother especially and others in her company are self-evidently depicted in the Fourth Gospel as persons belonging to this larger community, the household of Israel (cf., e.g., at the wedding of Cana, to which Jesus and his mother were invited, water jars for the Jewish rites of purification are conspicuous, 2:5; those referred to as "Jews" complain that "this Jesus" is "the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know," 6:42; and Jesus' own Jewish identity is stated explicitly by the Samaritan woman, 4:9–10). Third, all this reflects the Fourth Gospel's interest in a Jesus who "came to his own home, and his own people received him not" (1:11 RSV).

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witness to Jesus' death, but overreaches in concluding that her presence at the cross makes her "the most important witness" of Jesus' love for his own. The witness of the beloved disciple (19:35–37) is the one explicitly mentioned in this connection.

[75] Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 103.

[76] See pp. 9–10, 14–15, and 22.

The presence of Jesus' mother at the cross first identifies her as one of Jesus' own (1:11a), but then also sets her and those with her in contrast with those of the household of Israel who have not received Jesus in faith (1:11b–13). To his own, the promise of the Christ was given (4:22). Sadly, his own people received him not. Even the concord of Jesus' mother and brothers narrated at the close of the Cana episode (2:12) is clearly interrupted when Jesus' own brothers reject him (cf. 7:3, 5, 10). In keeping with the increasingly bitter debates between Jesus and those called "the Jews" (2:20; 5:16–18; 6:41–44, 52; 8:48, 52, 57–59; 10:31–33; 11:54), what Pilate notes is demonstrated to be true, namely, that Jesus' own nation and people has handed him over to the Romans for execution (18:35). In contrast to the brothers of Jesus and the many Jews who have not received him, his mother and those with her are those who have and will.[77] Jesus' mother in particular stands with the crucified son and not with his brothers on this Passover. She will be singled out as Jesus addresses her and not any of the other women (γύναι, 19:26) that especially she might represent both the members of Jesus' immediate family and those who yet will receive him still.[78]

Thus, at the same time that a former or previous household is represented at the cross, a new household of God is brought into being through the death of Jesus. The present study has demonstrated how a new household to be gathered by Jesus has already been anticipated in the

[77] See Ethelbert Stauffer, *Jesus and His Story* (London: SCM Press, 1960), 113: "Mary's presence at Golgotha is an act of confession. She confesses that she belongs to the community of the accursed one. That means cutting herself off from James and his brothers who still hold aloof from Jesus. In the Palestine of antiquity that means for a woman complete lack of a home and of protection—at the very moment when, having already lost her husband, she is also losing her son, the son with whom she has especially close ties."

[78] See also the analogous figure of the woman/mother in Rev 12:1–17, who is mother of both the Messiah and Christians, to whom the mother of Jesus has often been compared. Cf. Edwin Clement Hoskyns, "Genesis I-III and St. John's Gospel," *JTS* 21 (1920): 212; Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 103–4, 109–10 n. 28; Keener, *Gospel,* 2:1143 and 2 John 1, 13.

text of the Fourth Gospel.[79] The nature of that household, and that this household is gathered upon the death of Jesus, is borne out by several details in the text.

The close association between the new household and the death of Jesus is highlighted by the final "testament" of Jesus spoken in John 19:26–27. Jesus' words form a two-part revelation formula that resembles similar expressions narrated elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel.[80] Yet because they are spoken not long before his death they more closely resemble the testament of a dying head of household who transfers the care of the household from himself to another[81] rather than an adoption formula that emphasizes only a new household relationship.[82] This last testament of Jesus points to a new two-part reality with consequences for both mother and son. By dying, Jesus brings about a new household in which his mother would receive the disciple as her own son and the disciple would care for Jesus' mother as his own. Mother and son are made one, so that others like them might also be one in the resulting household of both the Father and the Son (17:11, 20–24).

For this reason, the risen Jesus later names not his mother, nor the beloved disciple, but all his followers his "brothers" (20:17; cf. 21:23), saying, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (20:17).[83] As the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel has already indicated, all followers of Jesus who receive Jesus in faith are given "to become children of God" (1:12). So we see that Jesus has died for his own in order that they might become the

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[79] See, e.g., pp. 99–100, above.

[80] Typified by the messenger seeing someone and saying, "Behold!" and, after that, a description of the revealed person's role in salvation history. See M. de Goedt, "Un schème de révélation dans la Quatrième Évangile," *NTS* 8 (1961–62): 145–49. In addition to the scene between Jesus, the mother of Jesus, and the beloved disciple at the foot of the cross, see also John 1:29–34, 35–39, and 47–51.

[81] See Stauffer, *Jesus,* 133; Brown, *Gospel,* 2:907, Schnackenburg, *Gospel,* 3:278; Beasley-Murray, *John,* 349; Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 614; and Keener, *Gospel,* 2:1144.

[82] Cf. the prior discussion, pp. 168–69.

[83] The conclusion is widely recognized. See Culpepper, *Anatomy,* 134; Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 104; Lee, *Flesh,* 154–55; and Beirne, *Women and Men,* 194.

household of God. The significance of this new household, not only for mother and son, but for all believers, including the Gospel's readers, is further informed by the sociohistorical and literary context of Jesus' entrusting his mother to the disciple's care.

Contrary to the usual custom of Jesus' day according to which a younger sibling or relative of the deceased would have cared for the bereaved at the death of a son, Jesus instructs the beloved disciple to serve in his stead as "son" of Jesus' mother as she is to be "mother" to him.[84] Thus, like the circumstances surrounding the anointing at Bethany (12:17) and the foot washing at the Last Supper (13:2–30), Jesus' last testament at the cross was at once both customary and extraordinary for the Gospel's first-century readers. It was customary because the care of aged parents, particularly this mother, would have been an even greater concern for the children in the first century than it would be for most families today.[85] But Jesus' action is also unexpected, because he has already been depicted as having brothers who might have cared for his mother (cf. 7:2–10). The theological significance of what unfolds is therefore highlighted in the text. More is at stake than the mere providing of a surviving caregiver. The reader is left to consider why the beloved disciple is chosen for this task, and what the result of this choice might be. If the mother of Jesus represents those members of Jesus' household who either already have or will receive Jesus in faith, as we have argued above, then—as one entrusted to the beloved disciple—she embodies those whose care has been assured even in Jesus' absence.[86]

Thus, like the mother of Jesus, the beloved disciple is also singled out, that he and she might be both alike and distinct from one another, as each is given a distinguishing charge from

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[84] Schuchard, "Wedding Feast," 104, 110 n. 30.

[85] Regarding filial piety in the ancient world, see Keener, *Gospel,* 2:1144.

[86] For a similar conclusion, see Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary,* 270.

the Son. Like her, the disciple is anonymous. Like her, he has been one of Jesus' followers.[87] He is designated one "whom Jesus loves" as are all who believe in Jesus and are loved as Jesus' "own" (13:1; cf. 11:3, 5, 35; 15:9, 12–13). Nevertheless, his is also a distinguishing capacity, even over against the rest of Jesus' disciples,[88] for only he, it seems, has followed Jesus to the cross.[89] This nearness to Jesus at the hour of his crucifixion is reminiscent of a proximity to Jesus already narrated (13:23–25), which is unique to this disciple. Thus, Jesus instructs his mother to regard not one of his blood brothers (7:2–10) but this disciple as son in Jesus' stead. Likewise, the beloved disciple, despite the fact that he likely already has an ordinary mother, is singled out to receive Jesus' mother as his own. The disciple's status as a unique individual singled out by Jesus to serve in his stead suggests a profound theological significance to his future role as caretaker.

Therefore, the beloved disciple acts to take responsibility for the care of the household which has been entrusted to him by Jesus by receiving the mother of Jesus as his own ("and from that hour the disciple took her to his own home," 19:27). As one who has been "close" to Jesus, (ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ, 13:23; cf. 13:25; 21:20; and the relationship enjoyed by the "one-and-only" with the Father εἰς τὸν κόλπον, 1:18), as one who enjoyed an insider's knowledge (21:20) and as the

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[87] This does not mean that those called "disciples" are identical to those that the Fourth Gospel demonstrates to be followers of Jesus. Regarding the ordinary first-century understanding of a disciple, seemingly reflected in the Fourth Gospel, see p. 107. Regarding the mother of Jesus as one who exemplifies discipleship, see Koester, *Symbolism,* 241–42.

[88] The presence of Jesus' disciples at his death would have been expected by first-century readers of the Fourth Gospel, as it would have been for members of Jesus' immediate family. The crucifixion of a convicted criminal would have endangered their lives, however, as the denial of Peter (18:15–18; 25–27) makes clear. Regarding the responsibilities of disciples for their teacher at the time of his death, see Andreas Köstenberger, "Jesus as Rabbi," 123, citing M. Aberbach, "Relations between Master and Disciple," in *Essays Presented to Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie* (London: Socino, 1967), 6: "The death of a teacher was a major disaster for his students. It was a matter of course for disciples to attend their master's funeral or even to bury him themselves."

[89] A contrast between the beloved disciple and Peter in particular will be reflected throughout the remainder of the Fourth Gospel. See Raymond F. Collins, "From John to the Beloved Disciple: An Essay on Johannine Characters," *Int* 49 (1995): 367. Though it is likely that an earlier references in the Fourth Gospel to "another disciple" (18:15–16) refers to the beloved disciple, the present study will focus on explicit references only.

tradent from whom the Fourth Gospel has come (19:35; 21:24), his is the unique role of caring for the rest of the beloved. The death of the Son gathers believers into a new household of God, and the testimony of the beloved disciple is the means for even the Gospel's present-day readers to be gathered to this household as well.

Thus, Jesus shows his own the full extent of his love by dying, that he might both gather unto himself and provide for the care of a new and beloved household of God. Not only does he gather a new household, his death effects a new household which is upheld and nurtured by the beloved disciple. In this death, by which Jesus demonstrates that he has accomplished all that was given to him by the Father to do (τετέλεσται, 19:36), Jesus demonstrates the full extent of his love to those who are his own (εἰς τέλος ἠγάπησεν αὐτούς, 13:1).

From a previous household a new household is gathered and provision is made for its enduring care. Contrary to the usual custom of Jesus' day according to which a younger sibling or relative of the deceased would have cared for the bereaved at the death of a son, Jesus instructs the beloved disciple to serve in his stead as the caretaker of the new household that results upon his death. This means that the beloved disciple is to be "son" to Jesus' mother; she is to be "mother" to him. The beloved disciple acts to take responsibility for the care of the household which has been entrusted to him by Jesus by making that household his own. So Jesus shows his own the full extent of his love by dying, that he might both gather unto himself and provide for the care of a new and beloved household of God. Jesus' earthly life comes to a close in a manner that evokes the evangelist's words at the beginning of that day: His death becomes the way that he would ultimately demonstrate to his own the full extent of his love for them (13:1).

John 12:1–7: A Beginning That Foreshadows the End

And so it may be said that foreshadowing both the beginning (John 13:2–30) and the end (19:38–42) of the day of Jesus' crucifixion (John 13–19), John 12:1–7 advances in key terms the Fourth Gospel's interest in a Jesus who has come, that dying he might gather unto himself a new household of God. The importance of John 12:1–7 as a passage that foreshadows the end can now be summarized. The significance of the day that Jesus died as a final day of accomplishment will be emphasized in the process.

That Mary's anointing of Jesus on Nisan 10 is declared by Jesus to be a funeral anointing is a matter of great significance. Nisan 10, we have seen,[90] was a time previously associated with the selection of a Passover lamb by each of Israel's households (cf. Exod 12:3). In Jesus' day, each household of the greater household of Israel gathered in Jerusalem on Nisan 10 to prepare for the celebration of the Passover, the ritual remembrance of a paradigmatic event indicative of Israel's hope for a glorious future. By referencing his preparation for burial on Nisan 10, Jesus points to two realities. First, he himself is the Passover lamb (1:29, 36; 19:36) around whom a new household of God will gather. Second, those preparing him for burial on this day anticipate a household to be gathered to him, at his death on the cross, as a new household of God (19:25–27).

It is also of great significance that Jesus died on the last of a six-day period that preceded the Sabbath, a day associated by first-century readers with the end and completion of God's work (cf. John 4:34; 13:1; 17:4; 19:30) and life for the first human members of God's household (Gen 1:24-2:3). The importance of this chronology for the household theme of the Fourth Gospel should not be overlooked. It is no accident that the Fourth Gospel sandwiches Jesus' declaration

[90] See pp. 66–69.

that he has accomplished his mission (19:30) between the evangelist's repeated observations that the day on which Jesus died was the Friday of Passover week, the day before the Sabbath (19:14, 31). Mary's anointing of Jesus in John 12:1–7 is offered in thanksgiving for Jesus' restoration of the household of Lazarus. It also is given to anticipate the day of Jesus' dying that he might gather unto himself a new household of God. The death of Jesus takes place on day six, the day that the creative work of God was first "finished" and a first household of God came into being (Gen 1:26–27). So a sixth day before the Passover, a day of giving thanks for the restoration of household, anticipates a final sixth day of Passover in which Jesus finishes the work given to him by the Father to do on the day before the Sabbath (19:14, 31), all for the sake of the household.

Though repetitions that link the death of Jesus to numerous portions of the Gospel narrative are easily found,[91] only the anointing at Bethany is narrated in order to produce echoes in the narrative that link the circumstances of John 12:1–7 with events that occur at both the beginning (13:2–30) and the end (19:38–42) of the day of Jesus' death (John 13–19). The day of Jesus' anointing at Bethany is therefore of great importance in understanding the significance of the day of Jesus' death, and *vice versa*.

At the moment of his death, Jesus brings together those of his former household so as to gather a new household. The beloved disciple is now to care for the new household, gathered at the death of Jesus, in Jesus' absence. As the one whose testimony forms the basis of the Fourth Gospel, the beloved disciple now becomes the link between the household of God and the reader. Though the reader may not have witnessed Jesus in the flesh as the Gospel-writer has, the beloved disciple, as one who bears witness to the death of Jesus (19:35), now brings testimony of

[91]For example, the mother of Jesus enters the narrative in only two places in the Fourth Gospel, the wedding at Cana (2:1–12) and the crucifixion (19:25–27). Together with the emphasis in both sections of narrative on an appointed time (see the "hour" of Jesus, 2:4; and the time associated with Jesus' instructions to the beloved disciple that coincides with Jesus' own death, 19:27) and Jesus' address of his mother as "Woman" (2:4; 19:26), these two events are linked in the narrative.

these events to the reader, so that he or she might also believe and have life (19:35; cf. 1 John 1:1–4).

Repetition in the latter portion of the Gospel, beginning with the anointing at Bethany, foreshadows the events of the day of Jesus' death in a manner unlike any other repetition of the Fourth Gospel that culminates at the cross. Together with the multifaceted development and commentary on the Gospel's household theme that such repetition elicits, it may be concluded that John 12:1–7 advances in key terms the Fourth Gospel's interest in a Jesus who has come that, dying, he might gather unto himself a new household of God.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has set out to demonstrate that John 12:1–7 depicts Jesus as one whose intention is to die in order that he might gather unto himself a new household of God. The Fourth Gospel's symbolic use of the household theme, together with its use of repetition, paints a picture of those gathered at Bethany as a community that foreshadows the new household of God Jesus gathers to himself through his death on the cross.

We began by defining the household concept and suggesting that the significance of the anointing at Bethany might be better understood by relating the text of John 12:1–7 to both the wider context of the Fourth Gospel and other documents of the first-century Mediterranean world exemplifying the household theme. We demonstrated that prior scholarly study of the Bethany anointing has, until recently, focused exclusively on its relationship to similar passages in the Synoptics and not on the latter half of the Fourth Gospel. We then described a hermeneutic that is especially helpful for interpreting metaphorical imagery, presented by Craig Koester in his *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel.* We resolved to understand symbolic actions such as the Bethany anointing—and the household imagery of the Fourth Gospel in general—as Koester does: in light of the narratological and applicable sociohistorical context of John 12:1–7. While we defined the sociohistorical context according to the world described by texts contemporaneous to the Fourth Gospel (that is, those that can be confidently dated to a period immediately before and around the first century CE), we discovered that two passages of the

Fourth Gospel bear striking similarities to John 12:1–7 and are therefore especially helpful for understanding the narratological context of the passage: John 13:2–30 and 19:38–42.

In Chapter 2 we focused first on the anointing episode and its sociohistorical background. We discovered that, even without reference to the greater literary and theological interest of the Fourth Gospel, a first-century reader of the Mediterranean world would have related much of the suggestive detail of John 12:1–7 to the ancient theme of a household. Several features of the text lead to this conclusion. The very mention of Lazarus in John 12:1 evokes the household already described at length in John 11, a household of a brother and two sisters restored through the life-giving work of Jesus (11:44). The Jewish Passover is imminent (11:55–57; 12:1); in anticipation of the Passover feast and the Passover lamb about to be sacrificed and eaten, households are already gathering in and around Jerusalem (12:12, 20). Those present for the occasion recline at table together for an evening meal (12:2), actions that were typical for members of a household. Mary anoints Jesus' feet in an extraordinary manner (12:3), yet her action reflects a customary household practice that was familiar to first-century readers. The result of the anointing, a house "filled with the fragrance of perfume" (12:3), evoked for the Gospel's Jewish readers the image of the Jerusalem temple and offerings rendered by the House of Israel to God. Judas intrudes upon the scene as a member of Jesus' household (12:4) and in so doing is depicted as a man with an inclination aligned with the world outside that household. His increasingly hostile relationship with Jesus highlights by way of contrast Mary's attachment to Jesus. Finally, Jesus interprets Mary's extraordinary action as the gesture of one who is his kinswoman, for her anointing of his feet demonstrates that she has kept the perfume for "the day of [his] burial preparation" (12:7). The Bethany anointing thus closes with a ringing endorsement of Mary as a member of the household about to be gathered to Jesus through his death. Jesus' emphasis on Mary's action as

the burial preparation of a kinswoman is especially poignant in light of the Passover context, for it was on precisely "a sixth day before the Passover" (12:1) that households chose and isolated the Passover lamb (cf. Exod 12:2–3).

In the third chapter of the dissertation we argued that the narrative that follows John 12:1–7, especially John 13:2–30 and 19:38–42, recalls the former passage and its interest in the ancient theme of a household. The first "echo narrative" of the Bethany anointing, John 13:2–30, brings out many of the same images in a striking manner: the Passover setting (cf. 13:1), a dinner (13:2, 4), foot service (13:4–12), slavelike self-effacement (13:4–5), the presence of Judas as treasurer of the household (13:2, 2, 29–30), and the death of Jesus (13:3). More importantly, the literary and sociohistorical context of the footwashing indicate that it anticipates a welcome to the eschatological household of God, yet to be accomplished in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel. While the differences between the circumstances at the Bethany anointing and the foot washing are evident, the similarity between pericopae is remarkable in light of Jesus' instructions to his disciples that they do unto one another as he has done unto them (13:14–15). This illustrates that the household of Mary and the household of Jesus' disciples are to be compared and understood in similar terms, especially according to their responses to Jesus. The second echo narrative, John 19:38–42, resembles the Bethany anointing in both deep structural form and content. Joseph, a "disciple" of Jesus (19:38), and Nicodemus, who together with Joseph attends to Jesus' body as a member of his household (19:39–42), are clearly analogous not only to the disciples gathered at Bethany (12:4) and at the foot washing (13:5) but also to Mary, whose similar action distinguishes her as a kinswoman of Jesus (12:7). In both the Bethany anointing and the burial preparation at the end, a lavish quantity of fragrant substance is applied to Jesus' body (19:39). Like Mary before him, Nicodemus, who had come to Jesus previously "at night"

and left bewildered at his pronouncements regarding new birth "from above," now attends to Jesus in the context of the Jewish Passover in extraordinary terms.

Finally, in the fourth chapter of the dissertation we set out to investigate the likely significance of the evangelist's use of repetition. This led to the conclusion that John 12:1–7, foreshadowing especially the beginning (John 13:2–30) and the end (John 19:38–32) of the day of Jesus' crucifixion (John 13–19), advances in key terms the Fourth Gospel's interest in Jesus gathering unto himself a new household of God through his death. Several observations supporting this conclusion dealt with chronological elements that are evident in the latter half of the Fourth Gospel. We argued that John 12:1, with its emphasis on "a sixth day before Passover," marked the beginning of a six-day "week" that culminated with the Passover described in John 13–19. This conclusion was made in light of three key observations: (1) the Fourth Gospel counted measurements of time inclusively; (2) "a sixth day before the Passover" in John 12:1 refers to Nisan 10; and (3) the narrative of the Fourth Gospel emphasizes Jesus' death on the day before the Sabbath, a day on which he would accomplish all things necessary (19:30), which the Gospel's readers understood as analogous to the final day of creation on the sixth day (cf. Gen 2:2). We also demonstrated that the two echo passages described in Chapter 3 of the dissertation, John 13:2–30 and 19:38–42, mark the beginning and end of a final day in the Fourth Gospel, Nisan 15.

Other conclusions explain the evangelist's use of these chronological details to make a theological point. We noted how John 13:1 functions as a key passage for linking and serving as a turning point between Nisan 10 and Nisan 15 in the Fourth Gospel. We also noted how, immediately before all things are said to be accomplished (19:30), Jesus speaks the words of his final testament (19:26–27), thereby creating a new household which will come into being upon

his death (19:25–27). This event is especially meaningful for the Fourth Gospel and its use of household imagery when we consider that two unnamed people, the mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple, each of whom enjoys a household relationship with Jesus, are joined to form a new household at the Gospel's climax. In Jesus' absence, the beloved disciple will fill a role involving testimony that will include the reader in the circle of the household of God. This testimony is focused on the crucifixion of Jesus and offered in the whole of the Fourth Gospel (21:24).

Having revisited the essential points argued in the course of the dissertation, the present study will now make a few final observations, in light of these conclusions, about the significance of the anointing at Bethany.

Jesus as Passover Lamb and Head of the Household/Son of God

Regarding the symbolism of the Fourth Gospel, Craig Koester has concluded that "Symbolism in John's Gospel centers on Jesus, the person in whom God is revealed."[1] At the same time, interpreting a Johannine symbol, including the very one who reveals God himself, means "identifying and explicating the various dimensions of meaning conveyed by an image."[2] The text of John 12:1–7 reveals not one but several aspects of Jesus' identity that are more greatly elaborated in the Gospel's second half, especially in connection with his death. No one aspect of Jesus' identity symbolized below is truer for him than any other. What is important for

[1] Koester, *Symbolism,* 33.

[2] Ibid., 25. Koester gives by way of example the multiple dimensions of meaning used to interpret Jesus' identity in the blind man healed by Jesus in John 9. The blind man first declares Jesus to be a "man" (9:11), then a prophet (9:17), and finally one to be worshiped as the Son of Man, the incarnate revealer of God (9:35–38). Though there is a progression from "lower" to "higher" aspects of Jesus' identity, the blind man does not move from falsehood to truth. "Each of the beggar's statements revealed a new facet of meaning without negating what he had said before."

our purpose is what each aspect detailed here signifies about the household theme that runs throughout the Fourth Gospel, climaxing at the cross.

Passover Lamb

The scholarly study of the Fourth Gospel has traced the Gospel's Passover lamb symbolism in the entire Gospel,[3] symbolism that the present study has argued is evident in John 12:1–7. It is not likely that either the reference to the "Lamb of God" identified by the baptist at the beginning of the Fourth Gospel (1:29, 36) or the image of bones unbroken at the death of Jesus at the end of the passion narrative (19:36) refers exclusively to the Passover lamb. Still, it is conspicuous that imagery applicable to the Passover lamb is used in these two locations in conjunction with the gathering of people to Jesus, both at the beginning of his earthly ministry and upon his death,[4] and that the day of Jesus' death coincides with a Passover featured in the Gospel's second half. By design the evangelist has sandwiched the bulk of the Gospel narrative between two passages that comprise testimony brought by the baptist and the beloved disciple (19:35–36), testimony by which these two men reveal the person and work of Jesus to others. The baptist makes known Jesus' person and work to the future disciples of Jesus, whereas the beloved disciple testifies about Jesus to the readers of the Fourth Gospel, so that they too might believe. When the evangelist specifies "a sixth day before Passover" as a means of referring to Nisan 10, as the present study has argued he has done, he is not introducing imagery that is foreign or unknown to this Gospel. Rather, he is highlighting a detail that focuses on Passover lamb imagery, imagery that he will highlight similarly in the latter half of the Gospel, to interpret the significance of Jesus' death. In this second half of the Gospel Jesus will die as the perfect

[3] Cf. Porter, "Traditional Exegesis," 411–17.

[4] See Howard, "Passover and Eucharist," 331, 337; Schuchard, *Scripture,* 136; and Webster, *Ingesting,* 30–33.

Passover victim, on the final working day of the week, when he will declare all things to be "accomplished" (19:30). Jesus, by dying as the perfect Passover lamb, supersedes once-and-for-all any alternative redemption-offering that "the Jews" are able to make or receive (cf. 18:28).

This Passover lamb imagery is significant for the household theme of the Fourth Gospel, especially regarding the gathering of a new household of God. As the reader progresses through the narrative following John 12:1, he or she discovers that the Passover imagery accompanies the gathering of people to Jesus. The unusual supper narrated in John 13 which the present study has argued is a Passover meal,[5] finds Jesus surrounded by his disciples performing a symbolic action that foreshadows his imminent death as eschatological welcome to the heavenly household.[6] At the end of this Passover day, while "the Jews" are anxious about removing Jesus from the cross should his corpse pollute the land, the evangelist does not allow us to turn our attention from the scene without noting the similarity between the body of Jesus and the Passover lamb, for both are sacrificed with legs unbroken (19:36; cf. Exod 12:10 [LXX], 46; Num 9:12). Two men appear on the scene not only to remove the body of Jesus (ἄρῃ τὸ σῶμα, 19:38) but to receive the body of Jesus (ἔλαβον . . . τὸ σῶμα, 19:40), despite the fact that it is the Jewish Passover and the ritual impurity incurred by handling a corpse will bar them from further participation in the Jewish feast (cf. Num 9:10–12; 19:11–16).[7] Jesus gathers people to himself in household terms through his death on the Passover, by first anticipating this new household through symbolic action (13:1–11) and then concretely bringing it about (19:25–27; cf. 19:30–42). The Passover context complements and enhances the interest of the Fourth Gospel in a household theme and

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[5] See ch. 4, pp. 150–54; cf. John 13:1.

[6] See ch. 3, pp. 116–21.

[7] Some have even seen in these events the suggestion that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, in exempting themselves from the week-long celebration of the Jewish Passover, are depicted as symbolically observing the Christian Passover and receiving Jesus as the Passover lamb (19:40). See especially Catherine Laufer, "The Farewell Discourse in John's Gospel as a Commentary on the Seder Service," *Colloq* 27 (1995): 154.

highlights the significance of Jesus' death as the event that gathers a new household of God.

Head of the Household/Son of God

At the same time that Jesus, in foretelling his imminent death during the anointing at Bethany on a sixth day before the Passover, signifies himself as the Passover lamb selected and set apart for the Passover meal, his interpretation of Mary's foot service indicates that her anointing foreshadows a certain household relationship to Jesus and his Father that is brought about through his own death. The focus on Jesus as head of the household and Son of the Father is not explicit in John 12:1–7.[8] Nevertheless, this focus is in evidence in the second half of the Fourth Gospel, as the meaning of Jesus' death for those who are his own is illuminated by the evangelist.

In John 12:1–7, Jesus is nowhere said to be "father" or "householder" of those gathered together at Bethany. Indeed, he is not the host of the meal at all; he is instead the featured guest of the gathering (12:2). But the evangelist sets the stage with a reminder that Jesus has arrived in Bethany, where he raised Lazarus from the dead (12:1). He is one who has restored a household; for this reason, and because no clearly identifiable host emerges in the narrative, the focus of attention falls on him from the beginning of the pericope to its end. The impression that Jesus is the center of attention is confirmed when the reader is introduced to at least one disciple who is present (12:4).[9] Though the reader has been made aware of Mary's household relationship to her sister Martha and brother Lazarus in the previous account of Lazarus's resurrection (11:1–3, 5,

[8] Regarding the manner in which the Fourth Gospel develops this theme, see ch. 1, pp. 17–21.

[9] Contrast the parallel accounts of the Bethany anointing in the Synoptics, where the location of the anointing is specifically said to be at "the house of Simon, the leper" (Matt 26:6; Mark 14:3). Though some scholars (cf. especially Blank, *Johannes,* 1/2:291–92) assume that Lazarus and the sisters play host to Jesus, others argue just as strongly that Lazarus's position at table as one of the guests indicates he was not likely to be the host of the event. Cf. Westcott, *Gospel,* 111; Sanders and Mastin, *Commentary,* 283; Morris, *Gospel,* 511; and Ridderbos, *Gospel,* 414 n. 104.

19, 21, 23, 28, 32, 39), the text does not focus on Mary's sibling relationships in the anointing pericope. Rather, the episode emphasizes the significance of Jesus' relationship to those gathered. To decipher this relationship, the reader begins with the perspective of Mary, who lovingly attends to Jesus in thanksgiving for the household that he has restored to her. Mary's deed is the act of one who rejoices over the resurrection of a brother by one who is the resurrection and the life (11:25). She appears both confident and self-effacing at the same time. The evangelist includes details in the Bethany anointing that evoke the picture of the Old Testament house of God (tabernacle and temple), the fragrance of offerings to God, and the divine presence that filled the sanctuary (12:3). These are images that associate the interaction between Mary and Jesus with the worship life of OT Israel and Yahweh, God himself, especially for first-century readers familiar with a Jewish worldview.[10] From there the reader moves to the response of Judas, who mistakenly interprets the anointing as an action that wastes a precious resource as he feigns interest in the needs of the poor (12:4–6). Judas, though an actual disciple of Jesus (12:4), does not live as a member of his household and serves as a foil for the others gathered at the Bethany dinner. Finally, Jesus' words in John 12:7 result in the last word about Mary and her household relationship to him. He interprets her action as that of his own kinswoman, for her action anticipates his own burial preparation on the day of his death. Mary, though she is never said to be either his disciple or a relative, is nevertheless declared by Jesus to perform an act befitting a member of his household.

The latter portion of the Fourth Gospel more fully elaborates the symbolism adumbrated by Jesus' words. As we have demonstrated above,[11] among the many similarities between the anointing at Bethany and the last supper narrated in the Fourth Gospel, Mary's manner of

[10] See ch. 2, pp. 84–87.

[11] See ch. 3, pp. 105–11 and 113–17.

anointing Jesus' feet is vividly echoed in Jesus' own washing of his disciples' feet (13:2–11), a washing that is to be an "example" (13:15) of what Jesus' own should do for one another. Mary's attention to Jesus on this day anticipates a similar action by Joseph and Joseph's associate, Nicodemus (19:38–42). Though neither Mary nor any other woman in the Fourth Gospel is explicitly said to be a "disciple" of Jesus, Mary attends to Jesus as he intends for his disciples to do (cf. 13:14). So even while Mary remains aligned to Lazarus and Martha as their sister (12:2), when Jesus describes her action as anticipating his own burial preparation, he characterizes her as one of his own; the echoes of the anointing in John 13:2–30 and 19:38–42 demonstrate that Mary is unwittingly responding to Jesus in accordance with others who likewise serve him as their teacher and lord.[12] Mary's action anticipates a new household relationship with Jesus: as members of a household that is loved by Jesus, Mary and her siblings will love Jesus and serve him in all humility.

Jesus does more than simply gather people to himself, however; as the Son of the Father, he gathers people into a new household of God through his death. His identity as Son of the Father highlights his obedience to the Father (he accomplishes the Father's will and glorifies God by his death; cf. 13:3, 31; 14:7, 10–11, 24; 15:9, 15; 17:3–4, 6–8, 14, 21–23, 25–26), while at the same time, as one who goes to the Father, Jesus brings the children of God into fellowship with the Father (13:8, 36; 14:1–3, 6, 23; 17:24). The Father is not mentioned in John 12:1–7, nor is Jesus referred to here as his "Son." But the association of nard (12:3), together with the image of Jesus reclining at table (12:2), is reminiscent of the Song of Songs and highlights Jesus as king, the "son" or servant of God (cf. John 1: 49) and those gathered at Bethany as the king's

[12] See the use of "lord" and "servant" language between Jesus and his disciples in John 13:13–16.

beloved.[13] The narrative echo of John 12:1–7 in John 13:2–30 reminds the reader that Jesus' utmost love for his own (13:1), previewed in the foot washing, occurs in the context of him doing the work of his Father (13:3). The domestic setting, together with the later emphasis in the text on Jesus' going away in order to prepare a place for the disciples in the Father's house (14:2), demonstrates the foot washing to be an act of eschatological welcome to the heavenly household by Jesus, as this dissertation has demonstrated.[14] Explicit references to the Father immediately before, during, and after the block of material formed by John 12:1–19:42 are of key importance. Jesus raises Lazarus to new life and so reveals the glory of God (11:4, 40) by invoking the Father's name in prayer (11:41). He demonstrates that the reason for the sign is that those who are present might believe that he has been sent by God the Father (11:42). Jesus rises to wash the disciples' feet at the Passover meal because he does what the Father has given him to do (cf. 14:2–3, 23).[15] In returning to the Father, he will be glorified by the Father (13:31). Finally, at his first resurrection appearance, Jesus demonstrates that in departing to the Father, it is God who is the true head of the household: Jesus and his disciples, whom he now calls "brothers," are all to call upon God as Father (20:17).

Jesus, then, is foreshadowed in John 12:1–7 to be one who gathers a new household; through his death he gathers this new household to the house of God, his Father. Having examined the symbolic importance of Jesus himself in the Bethany anointing, the present study will now turn to Mary and others of her household who are also present.

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[13] See ch. 2, pp. 83–84.

[14] See ch. 3, pp. 116–21.

[15] See ch. 3, pp. 112–13.

Mary of Bethany and Her Household: Gathered to Receive the Lamb as Brothers and Sisters of Jesus

The present study has argued the anointing at Bethany in the Fourth Gospel depicts Jesus as one simultaneously appointed to gather a new household of God as Passover lamb set apart/prepared for the sacrifice and the meal of the feast. As has been discussed above (cf. p. 49), symbols in John are structured in a twofold manner: the primary level of meaning concerns Christ; the secondary concerns discipleship.[16] What, if anything, does Jesus as Passover lamb and gatherer of the household/Son of God imply for the community gathered at Bethany in John 12? And how does this relate to the image of Mary, foreshadowed to be Jesus' kinswoman in light of his imminent death? Jesus, a divine figure who comes to bridge the divide between heaven and earth and to make God known (1:18) through symbolic actions and by speaking about "heavenly things" (3:12), is himself the ultimate symbol of what can otherwise not be fully comprehended about God. Can even the ordinary, flesh-and-blood people in the biblical narrative—people who, like Jesus, were independent, historical individuals, but unlike him, were not divine figures—be understood as representative or symbolic of something? Koester is not alone in understanding the Bethany family in representative terms.[17] If the household theme is significant for the Gospel, as this dissertation has argued, then it is fitting to consider the ramifications of this imagery for Mary and those who are closest to her. What does it mean in this Gospel for Mary to be Jesus'

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[16] Koester, *Symbolism,* 13.

[17] Though Martha and Mary are unique individuals also appearing outside the Gospel of John (cf. Luke 10:38–40), Koester, *Symbolism,* 65, observes the following: "Readers of later generations would find ready analogies between this story and their own stories, as they experienced sickness and death in a time when Christ was not visibly present . . . ." The sisters request Jesus' help for their brother by not using his name (11:3); their reluctance to use names (cf. "brother," 11:19, 21, 23, 32; "sister," 11:3; "the dead man," 11:38, 44) further highlights the representative role of the individual members of the Bethany family. Finally, Jesus' words that "*everyone* who lives and believes in me will never die" demonstrates that what happened to Lazarus on one day during Jesus' ministry foreshadows what will happen on the last day. Others who see a representative role either for Mary or her siblings in John 11–12 include Seim, "Roles of Women," 73; Fehribach, *Women,* 93; and McWhirter, *Bridegroom Messiah,* 133–34. In contrast to Koester, Esler and Piper, though they likewise understand the Bethany family to play a representative role, conclude that they are only fictional or imagined characters and so label them "prototypes." Cf. *Lazarus, Mary, and Martha,* 17–22; 75–130.

kinswoman, a member of his household? And what ramifications does this have for the other members of Mary's household?

Mary of Bethany and Her Household: Gathered to Receive the Lamb

It would be tempting to read the account of the Bethany anointing and see the two women of the passage, Martha and Mary (12:2–3), as the focus of the account. Other people in the account appear largely passive, reclining at table (12:2), and the one named disciple of Jesus, Judas, misunderstands Mary's action, causing the nature of a true household to be thrown into question (12:4–6). By contrast, Martha serves (12:2) and Mary attends to Jesus' feet (12:3). Not much later in the narrative we find Jesus speaking of his followers as those who best serve him (12:26) and his disciples as those who should be concerned to attend to each others' feet (13:12–15).[18] Certainly these women exemplify what it means to be followers of Jesus, but this is not the only or even the primary message of the Bethany anointing. Jesus as the Passover Lamb of God who dies on behalf of the household is a theme that runs throughout John 12–19, and thus ties together the household of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus with the new household to be gathered. As we have argued already, Jesus alludes to the life he will lay down on behalf of his friend Lazarus by speaking about his imminent death and his journey to Judea (site of Lazarus's tomb, Bethany, and his own cross) in similar terms. Both the final journey to Judea and the return to the Father involve a departure (πορεύομαι, 11:11; 14:2–3, 12, 28; 16:7, 28; and ὑπάγω, 11:8; 13:3; 14:4–5, etc.). Both will result in the glory of God (11:4; 13:31; 17:1; cf. 11:40; 12:23).[19] But this life

[18] Some therefore focus on Mary's action as one that typifies true discipleship. Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza concludes, "Mary is not portrayed as the opposite of Martha, but the counterpart of Judas. The centrality of Judas both in the anointing and in the foot washing scene emphasizes the evangelistic intention to portray the true female disciple, Mary of Bethany, as the alternative to the unfaithful male disciple, Judas, who was one of the Twelve" Cf. her "A Feminist Interpretation for Liberation: Martha and Mary: Lk. 10:38-42," *RelIntelL* 3 (1986): 21-36, as cited by Collen M. Conway, *Men and Women,* 153.

[19] See ch. 3 pp. 113–14.

given on behalf of Lazarus is merely a preview of the larger context of the life Jesus lays down on behalf of his friends (15:13), for it is by this "going away" that Jesus is able to bring a new household into being (cf. 14:2–3, 18–19). Through the sacrifice of the first Passover victim, the firstborn of the households of Israel did not perish but were saved (Exod 12:27). Yahweh led the people out of the house of bondage, Egypt (Exod 13:3, 14; 20:2), and made of them a new people, the House of Israel (Exod 16:41; 40:38). Passovers ever since were a commemoration of and an anticipation of these things. Jesus, the Passover Lamb of God, in giving up his very own life once-and-for-all both restored the household of Mary and gathered a new household, a new people of God.

The anointing at Bethany, the mutual foot washing that Jesus expects of his disciples, and even Jesus' burial preparation on the day of Passover occur as responses to what he has already done. The anointing is Mary's response to his restoration of her household; the disciples' washing of each others' feet is a response to his own washing of their feet; and the extraordinary burial preparation of Jesus is the result of his death on the cross, the completion of his work. It is Jesus himself and his death on the cross, not the actions of either his disciples or the members of the Bethany household, which is the true focus in the narrative. Thus it is here at the cross that the theological significance of the anointing at Bethany and the household theme in the Fourth Gospel as a whole must ultimately be determined.

Mary of Bethany and Her Siblings: A Household Anticipating a New Household of God

As this dissertation has already demonstrated, Jesus' resurrection of Lazarus and restoration of the household at Bethany result in Mary anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume (12:3), an action that presents a spectrum of symbolic possibilities suggestive of a household relationship between Mary and Jesus. Mary presents herself to Jesus, finally leaving it to Jesus to

determine the nature of her precise household affiliation to him.[20] The text closes with Jesus characterizing Mary as his kinswoman and her anointing as an action that foreshadows his own death, a death by which he will gather to himself a new household of God.

Echoes of John 12:1–7 in other passages in the Gospel's second half (13:1, 2–30; 19:38–42), together with the Gospel's interest in a household theme that culminates in a new household formed in John 19:25–27, invite inevitable comparisons between the physical household of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary and a new household that would be focused on Jesus as Son of the Father. It is important for us to understand that the comparison is not merely between the family of Lazarus at Bethany and the circle of Jesus' disciples narrated in John 13. While the similarities between the Bethany anointing and the foot washing certainly suggest that Mary's act constitutes an exemplary form of discipleship,[21] the family at Bethany is never explicitly said to be disciples of Jesus, nor do the echoes of John 12:1–7 in the narrative end with the foot-washing episode. Echoes of the Bethany anointing continue in John 19:38–42 in the deeds of Nicodemus, who is similarly never called a disciple. Moreover, the Gospel interest in a gathered household does not culminate in the scene at the last supper, but builds toward a climax in Jesus' words to his mother and beloved disciple in John 19:25–27 immediately before all is said to "be accomplished" (19:30).

With the death of Jesus in view then the significance of Mary and her household in the narrative can be seen in the way the evangelist describes the love of Jesus in John 13:1 toward his own. One way the evangelist ties together the household at Bethany and the new household gathered by the death of Jesus is through the image of his love for his own εἰς τέλος. Mary and her siblings are the first and only named characters in the Gospel to be distinguished as loved by

[20] See ch. 2, pp. 74–87.

[21] Seim, "Roles of Women," 73.

Jesus (11:3, 5; cf. 11:11, 36; 13:1).[22] As our reading of John 13:1 has highlighted,[23] Jesus' love for the family at Bethany is echoed in his love for his own εἰς τέλος in John 13–19. Though this love is certainly manifested in Jesus' love voiced and demonstrated for his disciples (13:2–11, 34; 15:9, 12; 16:27), it encompasses a wider category, specifically, love that is manifested to all who are his own (13:1). It will be carried out most completely when he dies on that day reminiscent of the final day of creation, after which God rested from his work, for all had been accomplished and declared to be "good" (Gen 1: 31).[24]

The anointing of Jesus by Mary at Bethany anticipates the day of Jesus' death, when he will be both Mary's head and the Son of God through whom Mary becomes a child of God (1:11–13). Both these aspects of Jesus' new relationship to Mary must be taken into account in order to understand the significance of Jesus' words to Mary at the Bethany anointing.

Mary's primary household relationship, as sister of Lazarus and Martha, has been highlighted in the narrative leading up to this anointing (11:1, 3, 5, 28). Though the Fourth Gospel does not utilize the metaphor of "brother" and "sister" to describe disciples and followers of Jesus, it is striking that Jesus refers to his disciples as "brothers" in his first resurrection appearance to Mary Magdalene (20:17; cf. 21:23), a term that we have already demonstrated is applied to the members of the household of God.[25] In the Fourth Gospel the term is elucidated by the last testament of Jesus, as he entrusts his mother to the care of the beloved disciple (19:26–27), and thus the disciple becomes "brother" to Jesus. It must also be understood in light of the Gospel's frequent allusion to the new life given by Jesus through his death and resurrection, for

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[22] See Esler and Piper, *Lazarus, Mary, and Martha,* 77–78.

[23] See ch. 4, pp. 162–67.

[24] Regarding the day of Jesus' death as a "sixth day" that alludes to the final day of Creation narrated in Genesis, see ch. 4, pp. 156–58.

[25] See p. 21. Cf. p. 13 and Mark 3:34, where Jesus' ἀδελφοί comprise whoever "does the will of the Father," both "brother" and "sister" (3:35). See also Matt 5:47; 12:49–50; 25:40.

this results in a new birth for those given to become children of God (1:11–13; 3:3, 5–6; cf. 11:52).[26] Thus the concept of being gathered together as a new household composed of people who are children of God and so either "brother" or "sister" to Jesus is connected to the death of Jesus (11:52; 19:25–27). Though it is going too far to assert that in John 12:7 Jesus already is identifying Mary of Bethany as his "sister," still he is pointing to his own death as the watershed event that will bring Mary and the members of her household into a new relationship with him and the Father, a relationship in which children of the Father are also brothers and sisters of Jesus. As a result, the everyday brother/sister relationships between Mary, Martha, and Lazarus detailed in John 11 are relationships that serve to emphasize the extraordinary new "brother"/"sister" relationships that believers in Jesus are to have with one another.

At the same time that Jesus' words allude to a new relationship elucidated by sibling imagery, Jesus is also Mary's head. As we have demonstrated, this household imagery is important because it focuses on Jesus as one with the Father, the provider, protector, and life-giver.[27] Jesus raises Mary's brother Lazarus from the dead, but more importantly, he dies and is raised to life. In so doing Jesus brings life to Mary (10:10; 11:25–26) as only he who is both her Lord and God is able to do (20:28), though this is not fully apparent to the disciples and followers of Jesus until after Jesus' resurrection. Moreover, as one who grants life, Jesus continues to provide for the new household of God and to gather others into it through the testimony of those whom he chooses (19:35; 20:31; cf. 19:25–27). Though a crowd witnessed Mary's brother Lazarus alive and brought testimony regarding Jesus' raising of him (12:17), this anticipates a more foundational testimony, that of the beloved disciple (21:24), who records

[26] Again, cf. p. 21.

[27] See p. 11.

testimony to be received by the Gospel's readers, that they too may have life as members of the new household of God.

A New Household of God and the 21st-Century Reader

This dissertation demonstrates that John 12:1–7 depicts Jesus as one whose intention is to die in order that he might gather unto himself a new household of God. This interpretation is consistent with the symbolism—Passover Lamb, household, and Son of the Father—that is important for understanding the person and work of Jesus Christ in the latter portion of the Gospel.

In demonstrating that John 12:1–7 foreshadows Jesus both as the Passover Lamb of God and the gatherer of a new household that he establishes as the Son of God, the present study has investigated John 12:1–7 primarily according to its first-century sociohistorical, literary, and theological context. These conclusions will bear little significance unless they can be properly understood in their 21st-century context. How might the insights gained from this investigation be applied to the church today?

First, while our conclusions do much to elucidate the christology of the Fourth Gospel, the prevailing focus of this christology is soteriological. That is to say, the prevailing message of the Bethany anointing in light of the sociohistorical and narratological context of the Fourth Gospel pertains to the role of Jesus and his work of gathering a new household of God. This work concerns the rescue and giving of life accomplished through his death on the cross. Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet (12:3), like the mutual foot washing of the disciples (13:12–17) and the burial anointing of Joseph and Nicodemus (19:38–42), is a response to what Jesus has first accomplished. On this point the first Epistle of John and the Gospel are in complete agreement: "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

Second, narrative echoes following upon the Bethany anointing are intended to produce an effect upon the Gospel's readers, causing the soteriological emphasis of the passion narrative in John to move them in the direction of a cross-centered ecclesiology. In the introduction to the dissertation, this was referred to as the "perlocutionary function" of the narrative.[28] The Fourth Gospel does not merely dispense information: it does not *only* offer historical data regarding the Christ (its locutionary function).[29] It offers the reader repeated opportunities to consider how Jesus gathers to himself a new household of God, inviting its community of readers to respond to Jesus and to one another, as representative figures in the Gospel narrative have already done.[30] The evangelist's use of repetition to accomplish a perlocutionary task in the reader highlights the importance of the farewell discourse (John 13:31–17:26) as additional commentary on the household theme. Though other structures pertain also, the cross-centered nature of the household (with the Father as householder, Jesus as Son, and Jesus' own as those whom the Son would not orphan who are to love one another as Jesus has loved them; cf. 14:2–3; 18–24; 15:9–17) is the structure of the household of God that the Fourth Gospel most consistently emphasizes.

The household imagery of the Fourth Gospel is introduced as early as the Gospel's prologue and is associated with the Father, his only Son, and those who receive the Son who are called children of God (1:12–13; cf. 11:52; 1 John 3:1, 10).[31] In especially the latter portion of the Gospel, it becomes evident that not only does the Father love his only Son Jesus, but Jesus

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[28] See ch. 1 p. 58.

[29] For a helpful explanation of speech-act theory and its relation to exegesis, see Voelz, *What Does This Mean?* 275–92.

[30] Tannehill, "The Composition of Acts 3–5," 240, has argued that repetition in biblical narrative, especially the use of an "expanding symbol," produces an effect on the reader that encourages him or her to put the pattern of the narrative into practice for him or herself: "The discovery of an expanding symbol is a powerful enticement to explore a new perspective on life. Repetition may lead us to deepening discovery of such symbols, as familiar material returns in new contexts and with new significance. Having experienced the power of the symbol to expand in the story, the reader is more likely to believe that it hides residues of meaning which call for further exploration."

[31] τέκνα θεοῦ; see ch. 1 pp. 20–21.

loves those who follow him and calls them to have a like-minded love for one another (13:1, 12–17, 34; 15:9–12; cf. 1 John 5:2). The present study has demonstrated that as readers progress through this portion of the narrative, they encounter a narrative echo resonating from the anointing of Jesus by Mary at Bethany, first at the foot washing on the day of Jesus' death, which then climaxes with the burial preparation of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Though repetition in narrative without any change or development at all is monotonous, recurring images in the narrative that expand in meaning can motivate readers to embrace the values reflected therein.[32] The definitive event in this narrative, as we have argued, is the death of Jesus. Once the reader has experienced the power of the household theme to expand in the story and to be interpreted in light of Jesus' death, he or she is more likely to believe that the symbol still holds a "residue of power" which has yet to be uncovered. Nicodemus, though his action aligns him with the household of Jesus as the present study has argued,[33] is a sufficiently ambiguous person in the narrative to enable him to function as a point of departure for the reader. Through Nicodemus, the reader is left to ponder the significance of the household metaphor and to consider his or her own place in the household of God that is gathered at Jesus' death.[34]

It is not the goal of the present study to describe in detail the structure or composition of the first community or communities that received the Fourth Gospel; still, certain features of the text elucidate realities that we conclude must exist in the church regardless of time or place.

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[32] See Tannehill, "Composition," 240. Cf. especially Tannehill's citation of E. K. Brown, *Rhythm in the Novel* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1950) 59: "By the use of an expanding symbol, the novelist persuades and impels his readers towards two beliefs. First, that beyond the verge of what he can express, there is an area which can be glimpsed, never surveyed. Second, that this area has an order of its own which we should greatly care to know."

[33] See chap. 3, pp. 139–40.

[34] Cf. Bassler, "Nicodemus," 644: "Nicodemus creates a cognitive 'gap' in the text that the reader must fill, and in the process of filling this gap the reader is confronted with some serious questions. Far more than an encounter with the 'flatter' figures in the Gospel that are unequivocally located on one side or another of true faith, the struggle to resolve Nicodemus's indeterminancy forces the reader to wrestle with the contours of Johannine faith."

Though the word "church" may not appear anywhere in all of the Fourth Gospel, this Gospel understands the church to be the new household of God, gathered by Jesus through his death, a community of men and women, disciples and followers, brothers and sisters, with God the Father and the Father's Son Jesus, at its head. Those who love Jesus as Jesus' own are, in response to his gift of life, to love one another (15:12). This is not only how the Father has dealt with Jesus (15:9); it is how Jesus, the Lord of the Church, has dealt with his own (13:1; 15:12–13). Love of brother and sister is the closest that the people of God, first century or otherwise, can come to imitating the foot service of Jesus and the love of his own that he first gave "to the utmost/end" (13:1). In an age when the church is too often plagued by infighting and controversy, and when, paradoxically, people yearn for community more than ever before, the message of the Fourth Gospel has become all the more timely.

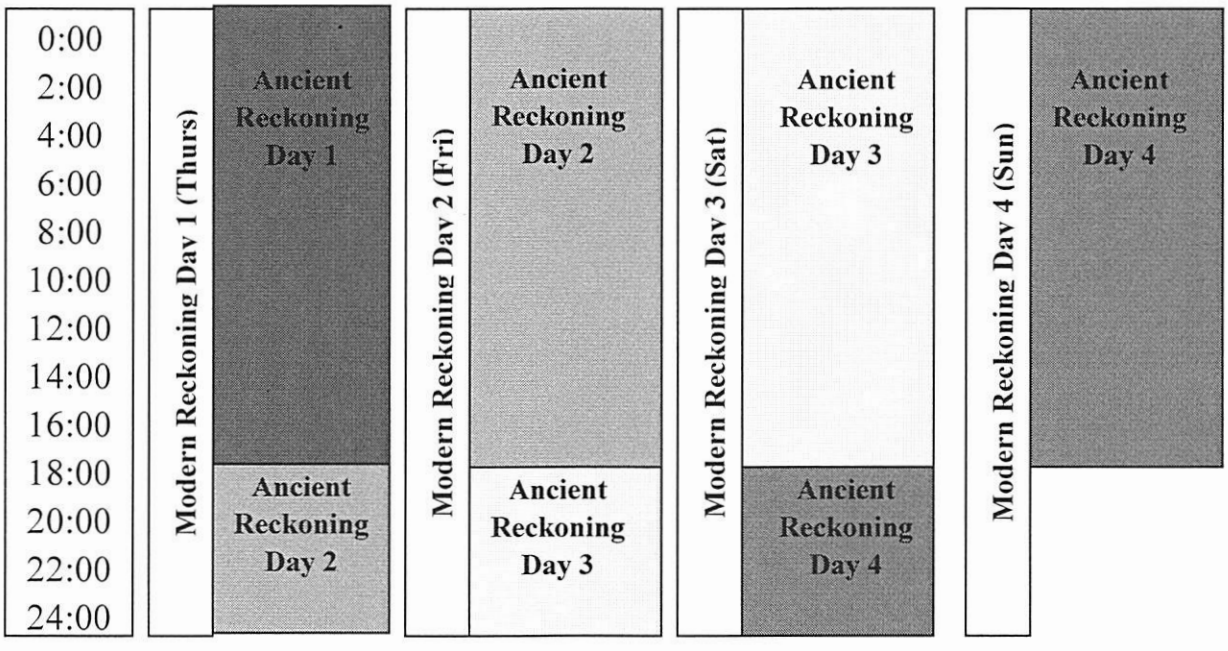
Finding the 21st-century application of the household theme in the Fourth Gospel means finding the point where the new household of God is not only made up of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, or the disciples and followers of Jesus and Jesus himself, but the *modern reader* and Jesus. The key to this link is the beloved disciple and his testimony: the death of Jesus, and ultimately, the entire Gospel. The Fourth Gospel is not afraid to bring its story to a grinding halt and address the reader directly. One of the most important instances occurs immediately following the crucifixion, when the person observing the soldiers' thrust of the spear writes, "He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth—that you also may believe" (19:35). The household theme of the Fourth Gospel is so important because it is ultimately the reader whom the evangelist longs to bring into and keep in community with Jesus and his Father (cf. 20:31). It is those who have not yet heard the word of the people of God but will hear it and believe (cf 17:20–23) for whom Jesus prays "that they may

all be one" (17:21–22). This is so that even the world may see that the Father loves them as he loves Jesus his Son (17:23). Through Jesus and the testimony of his life-giving death on the part of the beloved disciple, modern readers, even those who find themselves otherwise bereft, have gained a family. They have both a place and a community—with one another and with the Father—with which to dwell forever.

APPENDIX ONE

DIVISION OF DAYS (JOHN 13–19)

Assuming a division of days according to which sundown occurred at approximately 6:00 p.m. (18:00), the chronology described in John 13–19 might be compared to a modern reckoning of days in the following way:



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VITA

Jonathan Andrew Blanke

Date of Birth: December 21, 1961

Place of Birth: Chicago, Ill.

Collegiate Institutions Attended

The College of William and Mary in Virginia, Williamsburg, Va., Bachelor of Arts, 1983

Graduate Institutions Attended

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., Master of Divinity, 1992

Current Memberships in Academic Societies

Society of Biblical Literature