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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

The Gospel according to John, also known as the Fourth Gospel due to its placement in the New Testament, is one of paradoxes and contradictions both in its content and in the reactions it evokes in its readers. It tells the story of the Son of God who becomes flesh and dwells in the world, and dies an ignominious death that nevertheless marks his exaltation, ascension to God, and the divine triumph over the forces of evil. It presents a sublime vision of a future salvation that is also in some inexplicable way already a present reality. Many readers love this Gospel because of its sublime language and imagery, and its ability to lift its readers out of the historical moments of Jesus' life to the lofty heights of the cosmos. Others dislike it because of its insistence on the exclusive truth of its message, and the absence of space for any other way of viewing the world.

The paradox that this Gospel presents extends to its relationship to Judaism. It makes abundant use of the Hebrew Bible, through direct quotations and allusions, as well as, more subtly, through its appropriation of some of its characters, motifs and stories that are then interpreted through the lens of faith in Jesus as Christ and Son of God. This Gospel also has numerous parallels to other Jewish sources, from the second temple and rabbinic periods, as well as references to Jewish practices. At the same time, the Gospel is highly disturbing in its representation of "the Jews." "The Jews" are the archenemies of Jesus and his followers; they are blind to the truth and relentless in pursuit of Jesus to the point of masterminding his demise. Their behavior toward Jesus and their failure to believe demonstrate that they have relinquished their covenantal relationship with the God of Israel, and show them to be instead the children of the devil. For this reason, John's Gospel has been called the most Jewish and the most anti-Jewish of the Gospels.

DATE AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

John's Gospel is generally considered the latest of the four canonical gospels to be written. This view was held as early as the second century CE. The church father Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–211/216), was quoted by the fourth century Christian historian Eusebius of Caesarea (*Hist. eccl.* 6.14.7), to the effect that John's Gospel was written to supplement the other Gospels. Today, the question of John's relationship to the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) remains controversial. To be sure, there are a number of significant parallels between John and the Synoptics, such as the feeding of the multitudes (6:1–14; cf. Mt. 14:13–21; Mk 16:32–44; Lk 9:10–17) and Jesus' walking on water (6:16–21; cf. Mt 14:22; Mk 6:45–51). On the basis of these parallels, some scholars have argued that John is familiar with one or more of these Gospels. Yet most of the stories, such as the wedding at Cana (2:1–13), Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman (4:1–42), and the raising of Lazarus (11:1–44), are unique to the Fourth Gospel. The Gospel also has a distinctive perspective on Jesus, such as belief in his identity as the preexistent Word and the Word's role in the creation (1:1–5). It seems reasonable to suggest that while all the Gospels had access to some common traditions, insufficient evidence exists to determine whether the Fourth Gospel had access to a complete text of one or more of the Synoptics. For this reason, it is not possible to date John on the basis of a literary dependence upon one or more other canonical Gospels.

Dating the Gospel based on its theology is equally problematic. A late first-century or early second-century dating has been suggested on the basis of the Gospel's high Christology, which focuses primarily on Jesus' role as the Son of God rather than on his human aspect. Earlier examples of exalted views of Jesus, such as Paul's letter to the Philippians (2:6–11), make this a less useful criterion for determining the Gospel's date.

Not are the historical circumstances in which the Gospel has been written of much assistance. No external evidence exists for the historical first audience of the Gospel, but on the basis of internal evidence it has been argued that the Gospel was written within and for a particular group of Christ-believers, often referred to in scholarly literature as the Johannine community. The particular circumstances that led to the final version of the Gospel are often reconstructed from three references to expulsion from the synagogue on account of confessing Jesus to be the messiah (9:22; 12:42; 16:2). Because expulsion on these grounds would be anachronistic to the time of Jesus, it is often argued that these passages refer to an exclusion of Jewish believers in Christ from the synagogue, either in John's community or more broadly. Exclusion from the synagogue, it is argued, would have been tantamount to complete and forcible removal from the Jewish community, with numerous social and economic consequences. Proponents of this interpretation argue that the traumatic experience of expulsion was written into the community's story of Jesus and suggest that experience can be reconstructed by reading the Gospel on two levels: as a

story of Jesus set in the first third of the first century CE that simultaneously recounts a story of the Johannine community set in the last decade or two of the first century. External corroboration for this hypothesis has been sought in the liturgical curse on the heretics, "Birchat ha-minim," euphemistically called a Blessing on the Heretics, that was added to the Eighteen Benedictions that constitute the central prayers of the Jewish liturgy. The theory is that at some point in the late first century, Jewish authorities added this curse to the daily liturgy as a way of flushing undesirable, including Jewish Christ-confessors, out of the worship service and thereby from the community as a whole. If this theory is correct, it would provide a basis for dating the Gospel to the late first century, after 85 CE.

This construction is flawed on both literary and historical grounds. From a literary-critical point of view, there is no evidence that the Gospel in fact encodes the history and experience of the community in its story of Jesus. With the exception of the expulsion passages, no other parts of the Gospel lend themselves easily to this two-level reading. The well-documented theological diversity within first-century Judaism, as evidenced by the widely differing views of the Pharisees and Sadducees on fundamental matters such as the authority of oral tradition and the belief in bodily resurrection and the distinctive views expressed in the Dead Sea Scrolls, makes it unlikely that Jews would have been excluded from the synagogue for believing Jesus to be the Messiah. Indeed, in the period of 132–135 similar claims were apparently made for Simeon Bar Kosiba to be a messiah, by the prominent Rabbi Akiva, whose status and stature within early rabbinic Judaism did not suffer as a result. Finally, the manuscript evidence for Birchat ha-minim as a whole does not support the view that the curse would have been in existence at this time in a form that could have served to exclude Jewish Christ-confessors from the synagogue. For these reasons, it is difficult to use historical circumstances as a basis for dating the Gospel.

The most persuasive evidence for the date of the Gospel is textual. The earliest material evidence for the Gospel is a small Egyptian codex fragment of John 18:31–33:37–38, known as the Rylands Library Papyrus 52. This fragment is dated to 135–160. Because circulation of the Gospel from Asia Minor, where it was likely written, to Egypt would have taken a few decades, the existence of this fragment suggests a late first- or early second-century dating for the final version of the Gospel. For these reasons, John's Gospel is generally thought to have been completed ca. 85–95 CE.

HISTORY OF COMPOSITION

This dating applies to the final version of the Gospel found in the most complete manuscripts of the New Testament, such as Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Vaticanus. This final version, however, was the product of a lengthy and complicated history of composition. It is likely that pre-Johannine sources or early versions of the Gospel circulated for some decades before the date of final composition. Evidence for a lengthy process of composition includes narrative inconsistencies and awkward narrative transitions. For example, whereas ch 5, which recounts the healing of a lame man, is set in Jerusalem, ch 6, v. 1 abruptly situates Jesus on the "other side of the Sea of Galilee." Also puzzling is the comment in 14:31, in which Jesus says, "Rise, let us be on our way," and then continues to speak, with no change in setting, for three more chapters.

Some scholars posit that a written "signs source" served as the basis for the Gospel's narrative. The Gospel recounts a series of "signs" (GK "semeia") or wondrous deeds, often, though not always, accompanied by lengthy discourses. These signs are not mere miracles but rather witnesses to Jesus' identity as God's only son; the accounts of these signs are intended to foster or deepen the faith of the Gospel's audience.

The version of John's Gospel now found in the New Testament contains one passage that did not originally belong: the story of the woman caught in adultery (7:53–8:13) is absent from some of the earliest manuscripts, and in some manuscripts it appears after Luke 21:38 (where it fits better narratively). Questions have also been raised regarding John 21. On the grounds of both content and style, some scholars believe that this final chapter is a later addition, written by someone other than the author(s) of the rest of the Gospel. In antiquity, later traditions were often added at a book's end.

AUTHORSHIP AND PROVENANCE

The Gospel identifies the beloved disciple (or "the disciple whom Jesus loved") as the eyewitness author (19:35; 21:24). This anonymous figure first appears in the scene of Jesus' last meal with his disciples (13:23). He is presented as the disciple who is closest to Jesus, and at the cross, Jesus appoints him to take care of his mother (19:25–27). Since the second century, Christian tradition has identified the beloved disciple with John son of Zebedee, one of the twelve disciples mentioned in the Synoptics. This tradition is unlikely to be correct, however, both because

John the son of Zebedee, a Galilean fisherman, does not match the Jerusalem-based depiction of the beloved disciple, and because the Gospel does not identify the beloved disciple as John. Therefore, the Gospel's author is better understood to be anonymous and probably not an original follower of Jesus or an eyewitness. The final version of the Gospel has traditionally been assigned to Ephesus in Asia Minor (Izmir, in modern-day Turkey), though it is possible that an early version originated orally or in written form with a group from Judea.

AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

John 20:30–31 states the purpose for the Gospel: “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.” This translation implies that the purpose is to bring readers to faith in Jesus as the Messiah (Christ) and Son of God. However, the verb translated “that you may come to believe” reflects one manuscript tradition; other manuscripts contain a different form of the verb that is better translated “that you may continue to believe.” This second form suggests that the Gospel was intended to strengthen the faith of those already within the community. The latter interpretation suits the overall tone and content of the Gospel, which does not emphasize openness to nonbelievers, but focuses on a set of specific views of Jesus (Christology), the end times (eschatology), and salvation (soteriology).

The view that the Gospel was written for a specific community is closely related to the historical context of the Gospel. The predominantly negative role played by “the Jews” in the narrative suggests that the text was written in a context of overt conflict between Jews and the members of the Johannine community. Even if the expulsion theory is tenuous, the Gospel's hostility toward the Jews is certainly real. It is possible that the Gospel reflects a stage in the process by which Johannine believers came to see themselves as separate from and, to some extent, over and against Jews and Judaism. Views on the size and ethnic character of the intended audience vary widely: they range from seeing the audience as comprised of all followers of Jesus to the view that the first audience was a small and select community of Israelites who were the direct descendants of those who had remained in Judea after the destruction of the First Temple (see “John's Prologue as Midrash” p. 546). If the first view is correct, the conflict portrayed within the Gospel may well reflect a widespread separation between Jews and Christ-confessors (the term “Christian” may not yet have been in effect for those who believed in Jesus as the Messiah). If the second view is correct, the Gospel reflects an inner-Jewish controversy but not a widespread or even local parting of the ways.

There are significant clues within the Gospel itself, however, to suggest that the intended audience included not only those of Jewish origin but those of Samaritan and Gentile origin as well. John 4 describes Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman, as a result of which many other Samaritans came to believe in Jesus. John 12 describes the strong interest of some “Greeks,” perhaps Jews from the Diaspora but more likely Gentiles, in Jesus, after which Jesus declares that his death will draw all people to himself. If the intended audience, and therefore the Johannine community, included Jews, Gentiles, and Samaritans, then it could be plausibly argued that they needed to create their own identity that overcame the social, historical and theological boundaries existing between their groups of origin. An important part of doing this work would have been to create an identity quite distinct from those other groups, especially from Jews and Judaism, from which this new group has appropriated much of its symbolism, scripture, and theology. The Gospel stresses Jesus' superiority to Moses (1:18; 3:14–15). John 2:13–22 implies that Jesus replaces the Jerusalem Temple as the place where God dwells, a claim that is made explicitly in 4:21 and illustrated in 6:1–4, in which Jews flock to Jesus in the Galilee region instead of to Jerusalem for the Passover pilgrimage festival.

JEWIS AND JUDAISM

John's knowledge of first-century Judaism

The Gospel of John reflects deep and broad knowledge of Jerusalem, Jewish practice, and methods of biblical interpretation. Some references to early first-century Jerusalem topography and landmarks, such as the pool at Beth-zatha near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem (5:2) are supported archaeologically, suggesting direct knowledge of the city and surroundings. The Gospel refers to the Sabbath and Passover as well as to the Feast of Tabernacles (5:1) and Hanukkah (10:22). It explains ritual hand-washing before meals (2:6), a comment that supports the hypothesis, mentioned earlier, that at least some of the Gospel's intended audience is not of Jewish origin. Most strikingly, the Gospel alludes to a broad range of Jewish ideas. For example, in Jn 6, often called the Bread

of Life discourse (6:25–71), it employs argument similar to later rabbinic midrashic traditions. In 5:17, Jesus responds to the Jews' accusations that he breaks the Sabbath by asserting: “My Father is still working, and I also am working.” This response recalls the discussion by the Hellenistic Jewish philosopher, Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 BCE–50 CE) on the question of whether God works on the Sabbath (*Cher.* 86–89; *Leg. all.* 1:5–6). The same issue is discussed in rabbinic literature, e.g., *Ex. Rab.* 11:10; 30:9; though this text in its present form postdates the Gospel of John by several centuries, it may reflect traditions that were already present in the first century. The Gospel's prologue applies concepts associated with Lady Wisdom in Prov 8:22–31 and Sir 24 to “the Word” (incarnated in Jesus); the Word is portrayed as preexistent and instrumental in the creation of the world. And like Lady Wisdom, the Word is instructed to take on flesh and dwell in the world (1:14; cf. Sir 24:8).

John and Jewish sources

Despite the striking parallels between John and Hellenistic Jewish sources such as the Apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, and the works of Philo, there is no evidence of John's direct knowledge and use of these sources. Rather, the similarities reflect ideas that were “in the air” in Asia Minor, where the final version of the Gospel may have been written. The parallels to rabbinic literature also do not reveal any dependence or direct knowledge of rabbinic texts, all of which are dated to a period at least two centuries after the completion of the Gospel. For this reason, John's similarities to some rabbinic traditions and his use of similar exegetical methods do not demonstrate dependence but rather help to establish the existence in the first century of beliefs, practices, or methods that may otherwise be known only from much later Jewish texts. John is therefore a source for the antiquity of some rabbinic traditions, not the other way around.

The most important, and the only documented, textual sources used by John's Gospel are the Jewish scriptures, most likely in a Greek translation. The Gospel includes numerous quotations and allusions to the Pentateuch (Torah) and prophetic literature, as well as the writings (see annotations for examples). Important biblical figures, such as Abraham, Moses, and Jacob, are mentioned. More subtly, certain biblical narratives form the basis of several of the major discourses. The figure of Lady Wisdom, and her association with God and with creation is a major feature of the prologue (Jn 1:1–18; Prov 8; Sir 24; Wis 10; cf. Philo, *On the Creation*). The Abraham cycle (Gen 12–36) underlies Jn 8:31–59, especially the contrast between Ishmael and Isaac (Gen 16 and 21; cf. Jn 8:24–35). Abraham's hospitality to three angelic visitors (Gen 18; cf. Jn 8:39–44), and the tradition that Abraham was given a vision of the future times and heavenly worlds (Gen 15:17–20; cf. *1. Abr.*; Jn 8:53–58). The story of the Exodus from Egypt is evoked throughout Jn 6.

At the same time, it must be stressed that the Gospel also alludes to non-Jewish practices and ideas. The notion of the Logos as a creative power in the world is a feature not only of Jewish wisdom literature but also of Greek philosophy, e.g., in the work of Heraclitus, Aristotle, and the Stoics. John 6 refers not only to the book of Exodus but also to Greco-Roman mystery cults and perhaps even Roman accusations against Christianity as engaging in cannibalism and other immoral practices. John 4 also has strong allusions to Samaritan messianic beliefs.

John and anti-Judaism

Although the Gospel draws extensively on Jewish tradition, its explicit references to Jews and Judaism are often hostile. The Greek term *hoi Ioudaioi* or variations appears more than seventy times. The literal translation is “the Judeans,” that is, the inhabitants of Judea, or, as became commonplace, “the Jews.” (See “Ioudaios,” p. 524.) The appropriate translation of this term is one of the most contentious issues in Johannine studies. Some suggest that the term should be translated as “the Jews” when used neutrally or positively, as in references to the festivals of the Jews (e.g., 2:13; 5:1; 6:4), but not when it is used negatively to refer to Jesus' enemies. In these latter cases, *hoi Ioudaioi* does not designate the Jews or even the Judeans as a whole. The crowds who eat the “bread of life” (Jn 6), or who hear Jesus teach in the Temple during the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn 7) are Jews, yet they are not arrayed against Jesus. In addition, Jesus says in his conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well that “salvation is from the Jews” (4:22). These examples show that the specific referent of *hoi Ioudaioi* within the narrative varies according to its literary context.

Yet this does not quite resolve the issue. More important than the referent of each usage is the overall rhetorical effect of the relentless repetition of the words *hoi Ioudaioi*. The Gospel's use of the term serves two important functions: it blurs the boundaries among various Jewish groups, and it employs the term to designate the forces that are hostile to Jesus. Notably, *hoi Ioudaioi* is never used to describe the disciples and other followers, who are certainly

Jewish with regard to their religious and ethnic origins, though not residents of Judea for the most part. Similarly, Jesus is not referred to as a "Jew" except once, by the Samaritan woman, who wonders that Jesus, a Jew, asks a drink of a Samaritan woman (4:9). Instead, the Gospel uses "Israelite" and "Israel" as positive terms. Jesus refers to Nathanael approvingly, as an "Israelite in whom there is no deceit" (1:47). Nathanael in turn declares Jesus to be the King of Israel (1:49) and the enthusiastic crowds who greet Jesus as he enters Jerusalem before his final Passover do the same (12:13). The effect is to distance the reader from any group designated as *hoi Ioudaioi*, regardless of the specific referent. On the basis of these arguments, the generic translation of *hoi Ioudaioi* as "the Jews" is the most suitable.

The Jews are from the outset portrayed as the people who reject Jesus (1:11), persecute him (5:16), seek his death (8:40), expel believers from the synagogue (9:22), plot Jesus' death (9:49–52), and persecute his followers (16:2). Furthermore, both the Gospel narrator and the Johannine Jesus employ dualistic language that contrasts spirit and flesh, light and darkness, life and death, salvation and eternal damnation, God and Satan, belief and nonbelief. Those who believe Jesus to be the Messiah and Son of God are firmly associated with the positive element in each pair, whereas those who reject him—epitomized by "the Jews"—are associated with the negative elements. The most extreme example appears in Jn 8, in which Jesus declares to his Jewish audience: "You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires" (8:44). This accusation has contributed to anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism from ancient times to the present day.

In using the term "the Jews" to indicate, and to condemn, those who do not believe in Jesus, the Gospel of John encourages its readers to dissociate themselves from any who would identify with that designation. For that reason it may also be considered "anti-Jewish," insofar as it declares that Jews who do not believe in Jesus as the Christ and Son of God thereby relinquish their covenantal relationship with God (8:47). It must be emphasized that the Gospel is not anti-Semitic in a racial sense, as it is not one's origins that are decisive but one's beliefs. Nevertheless, it has been used to promote anti-Semitism. Most damaging has been Jn 8:44, in which Jesus declares that the Jews have the devil as their father. The association of the Jews with Satan or the devil is pervasive in anti-Semitic discourse and imagery, from woodcuts (such as the image of *l'Jeu juif calling the Devil from a Vessel of Blood*, a 1560 woodcut found in the *Histoires Prodigieuses* by the important French humanist, Pierre Boissieu, ca. 1517–66) to plays such as Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, in which the Jewish merchant Shylock is referred to as "a kind of devil," "the devil himself," and "the very devil incarnate" (act 2, scene 2), and on present-day white supremacist websites, to name but a few examples.

While John's difficult rhetoric should not be facetiously dismissed, it can be understood as part of the author's process of self-definition, of distinguishing the followers of Jesus from the synagogue and so from Jews and Judaism. This distancing may have been particularly important if the ethnic composition of the Johannine community included Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles. This approach does not excuse the Gospel's rhetoric, but it may make it possible for readers to understand the narrative's place in the process by which Christianity became a separate religion, to appreciate the beauty of its language, and to recognize the spiritual power that it continues to have in the lives of many of its Christian readers.

STRUCTURE AND LITERARY FEATURES

The Gospel of John falls into two main sections, traditionally called the Book of Signs (chs 1–12) and the Book of Glory (chs 13–21). For details on the subsections under each main section, see the headings in the annotations.

The Johannine narrative

As a "life" of Jesus, the Gospel of John tells what we might term a "historical tale," in that it situates Jesus' story in its historical context of Galilee and Judea, during the decades leading up to the first Jewish Revolt against Rome. The Gospel also tells a cosmological story of the preexistent Word of God who enters the world, conquers Satan, and returns to the Father. This cosmological tale exists within and behind the account of Jesus' words and deeds. The historical tale, which describes his interactions with his followers and his opponents, is evident primarily through the plot, which traces Jesus' life from the moment of his identification by John the Baptist (1:9–36) through to his crucifixion (ch 19) and his resurrection appearances to the disciples (chs 20–21). The cosmological tale is told both by the narrator and by Jesus, in their comments and reflections upon Jesus' life and death.

The Gospel of John employs a number of literary devices, which direct the reader's attention to its main themes and help to bridge the historical and cosmological tales. These include repetition (e.g., "The hour is coming, and is now here"; 4:21, 23; 5:25, 28; 16:2, 25, 32), double entendre (e.g., "be lifted up" in 3:14–15 as mean-

ing both crucifixion and exaltation), misunderstanding (cf. Nicodemus's question on how it is possible to be "born a second time," 3:3–5), and irony (e.g., 7:34–35, in which the crowd thinks that Jesus might "go to" the Diaspora when the reader knows he is speaking of his death and return to the Father).

Narrative patterning

The Gospel of John narrates fewer events than do the Synoptics, but the stories are more developed and stylized; perhaps in order to make them easier to follow. The narrative structures of these stories are easily discernible and tend to follow similar patterns. One example consists of "signs" stories, the accounts of Jesus' miracles. These tend to have the following structure or a variation thereof: (1) the identification of a problem, (2) the expectation that Jesus will remedy the problem, (3) the apparent frustration of this expectation, (4) the miracle itself, and (5) the aftermath. For example, in ch 2, the wedding at Cana, Jesus' mother points out to Jesus that the wine has run out, clearly expecting him to do something about this; he apparently rebukes her (2:4), saying that his hour has not yet come. He then performs the miracle, the steward marvels, and the narrator explains that "Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him" (2:11). The purpose of this pattern seems to be to convey to the audience that Jesus' miracles are not intended to demonstrate his superhuman abilities but to testify to his identity as the Son of God. This aspect of the Johannine signs calls to mind Ex 10:2, in which the Lord tells Moses that the signs that he has done among the Egyptians were in order that the people might know that "I am the Lord."

A second example of close narrative patterning can be found in the stories that narrate the call of the disciples. In almost every case, it is someone who already believes that testifies to others and brings them to encounter Jesus, after which they believe as well. For example, John the Baptist tells two of his disciples to follow Jesus. One of them, Andrew, tells his brother Simon Peter, who then comes to Jesus and becomes a disciple himself (1:42). Jesus finds Philip, who tells Nathanael, who comes to encounter Jesus and becomes a disciple (1:49). The Samaritan woman meets Jesus by the well and testifies to her Samaritan community; they invite Jesus to stay with them, after which they become believers (4:41–42). The purpose of this pattern becomes clear at the end of the Gospel, when Thomas refuses to believe the disciples' testimony that Jesus has risen from the dead unless he can see for himself. Jesus returns and invites him to see and touch him, but he offers a gentle rebuke: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe" (20:29). Here the Johannine Jesus is clearly addressing later readers who will not have the capacity to see Jesus directly but will believe in any case. The Gospel's concluding statement (20:30–31) indicates that for later generations, it is the Gospel of John itself that will be a basis for faith, the means through which believers can encounter Jesus.

Adele Reinhartz

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God.

³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being⁴ in him

1:1–18: Prologue. In contrast to Matthew and Luke, John does not include an infancy narrative describing Jesus' conception and birth; neither Joseph nor Mary figures in the account of Jesus' human origins. Rather, Jesus' arrival in the world is described in cosmological terms, and his role as God's son emphasized. 1–3: In the beginning, echoing the opening of Genesis. The Word signifies God's power of creation and redemption; as a means of expression, reason (or truth), and grace it is identified with Jesus (vv. 9, 14, 17). It suggests Wisdom terminology (Ps 33:6; Prov 8:7–30; Wis 9:1, 9; 18:15; Sir 24:9; 43:26). For the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher Philo, God's Logos was the very first fruit of creation; *Leg. all.* 3:175. In the Wisdom of Ben Sirach, Wisdom is strongly associated and even identified with the divine commandment, that is, the Torah (Sir 24:22–23). This identification persists well into the rabbinic period, as attested by its presence in *Gen. Rab.* 1:10, probably redacted no earlier than the fifth century. See also the use of "memra" ("word") in the Aramaic Targum to Genesis (see "John's Prologue as Midrash," p. 546). *With God*, as in Prov 8:22–31, "[Wisdom] was there . . . I was beside him [the Lord]." 4: Life, whose source is God (Gen 1:20–25); *light*, the first created thing (Gen 1:3); a frequent image for God or God's presence or favor (Isa 2:5; Ps 27:1; 36:9). Cf.

was life,⁴ and the life was the light of all people.⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.^b

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.¹¹ He came to what was his own,^c and his own people did not accept him.¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God,¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory

also Wis 7:26. 5: Creation (Gen 1:2). The *light/darkness* contrast, a prominent theme in the Gospel of John, is evident also in the Dead Sea Scrolls, e.g., IQS 3:13–4:26, but direct influence of the DSS on the Gospel is unlikely. 6–8: These verses preview 1:9–34. John the Baptist is also mentioned by Josephus, *Ant.* 18:116–119. 10–12: These verses summarize the basic plot of the Gospel, on both the historical and cosmological levels: Jesus' own people, the Jews, failed to accept him and indeed they led him to his death; those who did accept him become God's children and receive eternal life. *The world* (Gk “kosmos”) is used in two senses, meaning both creation and humankind, or, more specifically, that portion of humankind that rejected Jesus (cf. 12:31; 16:11). 11: *His own people* are the Jews (4:22); cf. Ex 19:5. 12–13: Contrast between a biologically based covenant, such as that of the Jews, and a faith-based covenant, such as that the Gospel proposes (cf. 8:33–40). *Believed in his name*, gave him due honor. *Children of God*, contrast Deut 14:1, where the “children” are enjoined from following other religious practices than those given to them. 14: *Word became flesh*, a paradoxical formulation since “flesh” is all that is perishable and “logos” is a divine quality that is eternal; cf. Isa 40:6–8, “All people [lit., *flesh*] are grass. . . . The grass withers . . . but the word of our God will stand forever.” This point marks the “incarnation,” the moment at which the Word becomes a human being. The idea that a divine being, “God’s son,” can simultaneously be human is seen as a major dividing line between Judaism and Christianity by many Jews and Christians today. It should be noted, however, that Jews in the Second Temple period believed in the existence of supernatural beings, such as angels, who could at times take human form (e.g., Raphael in the book of Tobit). This is not to say that Christ-confessors believed Jesus was human in form only (this was argued by the Docetists, a group labeled as heretical by the developing Christian church), but simply that the boundaries between human and divine were understood in a more porous and less absolute way at this time. *Lived among us*, the Gk means “tabernacled,” an allusion to the Tabernacle that the Israelites constructed in the wilderness and the precursor of the Jerusalem Temple (e.g., Ex 25:9). There may also be a connection to the Heb “shekhinah,” which in some texts, such as *Tg. Oiq.* at Deut 12:5, was used as a technical term for God’s presence among God’s people. *Glory*, Gk “doxa” is the usual LXX equivalent of Heb “kavod,” the visible manifestation of God’s presence (e.g., Ex 16:10). 17–18: Contrast between Jesus and Moses, and the superiority of the Gospel to the Torah (Ex 34:18). *Grace and truth*, both God’s loving presence (Heb “hesed,” “steadfast love,” e.g., Ps 85:10) and God’s firm faithfulness (Heb “emet,” “truth” that does not give way).

1:9–34: The testimony of John the Baptist. 19: *The Jews*, here refers to the Jerusalem authorities most closely associated with ritual purification. 20: John the Baptist was revered by the Mandaeans, a little-known

as of a father’s only son,⁴ full of grace and truth.¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’”) ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son,^e who is close to the Father’s heart,^f who has made him known.

- a Or ^a“through him. And without him not one thing came into being that has come into being.” In him was life
- b Or He was the true light that enlightens everyone coming into the world
- c Or to his own home
- d Or the Father’s only Son
- e Other ancient authorities read *It is an only Son, God, or It is the only Son*
- f Gk *bosom*

also Wis 7:26. 5: Creation (Gen 1:2). The *light/darkness* contrast, a prominent theme in the Gospel of John, is evident also in the Dead Sea Scrolls, e.g., IQS 3:13–4:26, but direct influence of the DSS on the Gospel is unlikely. 6–8: These verses preview 1:9–34. John the Baptist is also mentioned by Josephus, *Ant.* 18:116–119. 10–12: These verses summarize the basic plot of the Gospel, on both the historical and cosmological levels: Jesus' own people, the Jews, failed to accept him and indeed they led him to his death; those who did accept him become God's children and receive eternal life. *The world* (Gk “kosmos”) is used in two senses, meaning both creation and humankind, or, more specifically, that portion of humankind that rejected Jesus (cf. 12:31; 16:11). 11: *His own people* are the Jews (4:22); cf. Ex 19:5. 12–13: Contrast between a biologically based covenant, such as that of the Jews, and a faith-based covenant, such as that the Gospel proposes (cf. 8:33–40). *Believed in his name*, gave him due honor. *Children of God*, contrast Deut 14:1, where the “children” are enjoined from following other religious practices than those given to them. 14: *Word became flesh*, a paradoxical formulation since “flesh” is all that is perishable and “logos” is a divine quality that is eternal; cf. Isa 40:6–8, “All people [lit., *flesh*] are grass. . . . The grass withers . . . but the word of our God will stand forever.” This point marks the “incarnation,” the moment at which the Word becomes a human being. The idea that a divine being, “God’s son,” can simultaneously be human is seen as a major dividing line between Judaism and Christianity by many Jews and Christians today. It should be noted, however, that Jews in the Second Temple period believed in the existence of supernatural beings, such as angels, who could at times take human form (e.g., Raphael in the book of Tobit). This is not to say that Christ-confessors believed Jesus was human in form only (this was argued by the Docetists, a group labeled as heretical by the developing Christian church), but simply that the boundaries between human and divine were understood in a more porous and less absolute way at this time. *Lived among us*, the Gk means “tabernacled,” an allusion to the Tabernacle that the Israelites constructed in the wilderness and the precursor of the Jerusalem Temple (e.g., Ex 25:9). There may also be a connection to the Heb “shekhinah,” which in some texts, such as *Tg. Oiq.* at Deut 12:5, was used as a technical term for God’s presence among God’s people. *Glory*, Gk “doxa” is the usual LXX equivalent of Heb “kavod,” the visible manifestation of God’s presence (e.g., Ex 16:10). 17–18: Contrast between Jesus and Moses, and the superiority of the Gospel to the Torah (Ex 34:18). *Grace and truth*, both God’s loving presence (Heb “hesed,” “steadfast love,” e.g., Ps 85:10) and God’s firm faithfulness (Heb “emet,” “truth” that does not give way).

1:9–34: The testimony of John the Baptist. 19: *The Jews*, here refers to the Jerusalem authorities most closely associated with ritual purification. 20: John the Baptist was revered by the Mandaeans, a little-known

¹⁹ This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” ²¹ And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” ²² Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³ He said,

“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’” as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴ Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah,^a nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” ²⁶ John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know,^b the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to

unite the throng of this sandal.” ²⁹ This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing. ³⁰ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” ³¹ This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ ³² I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.” ³³ And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. ³⁴ I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁵ And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.”^b

- a Or ^athe Christ
- b Other ancient authorities read *is God’s chosen one*

monotheistic group, adherents of which still exist today, mostly in Iraq. 21: *Elijah* (2 Kings 2:1) and the prophet were believed to be the forerunners of the messiah (Mal 4:5 [3:23 in MT]). Elijah’s ascent to heaven in a fiery chariot (1 Kings 2:11) led to speculation that he was still alive and would return before the messianic age. Elijah’s role as a forerunner of the messiah is indicated in a number of rabbinic stories, e.g., *b. Sanh.* 98a; “the prophet” may be a reference to the expectation that the messiah would be a “prophet like Moses” (Deut 18:15–18; see also 1 Macc 4:46; 14:41). The expectation of a prophet-messiah is also present in the DSS (e.g., IQS 9:11). The inclusion of this interrogation may be part of a polemic against those who viewed John the Baptist as a messianic figure. 23: The quotation from Isa 40:3 reflects the Septuagint (LXX) version, in which “in the wilderness” modifies “voice,” rather than the Hebrew (MT) version, in which the phrase modifies “way of the Lord.” 24: *Pharisees* were a group with spiritual authority. Rabbinic tradition, e.g., *m. Avot* 1:1, later portrays the Pharisees as the forerunners of the rabbis who developed Jewish law and practice after the destruction of the Temple. It is not apparent, however, that the author of this Gospel is aware of this tradition, as it uses the terms Pharisees and Jews interchangeably (1:19; 7:52, 45; 11:45–57; 18:3, 12). 25: Cleansing with water was an important means of ritual purification in biblical law (e.g., Ex 19:10; Lev 14:8). Although the language of purity and impurity is occasionally used in the discussion of moral issues, there are no sources that unambiguously point to the use of immersion in the “cleansing” from sin. 28: *Bethany*, this Bethany is a town in the Transjordan, of which no trace now remains, and not the Judean town mentioned in Jn 11:18. While the name is open to a symbolic interpretation (lit., “house of response”), place names in John are generally factual even if they take on a degree of symbolic significance, e.g., Galilee as the place where Jesus is accepted, and Judea as the place where he is rejected (cf. Jn 4:1–2). 29: *Lamb*, a possible allusion to the sacrificial Passover lamb (Ex 12:31: *Israel* refers to the people Israel, a positive designation in John meaning the “children of God” who know God through his son (see 1:18). 32: In contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, John does not describe Jesus’ actual baptism. The simile connecting Spirit and dove is present in all of the canonical Gospels. The positive symbolism attached to the dove is present in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Gen 8; Ps 68:13; Song 2:14; Isa 60:8) though not the direct association of dove and the Spirit of God. 34: *Son of God*, Jesus is seen as God’s Son who resembles his father, does his will, and serves as his agent (e.g., 6:38). Although some have seen John’s use of this title against the background of non-Jewish Greek and Roman usage, it is likely that it has its origins in the Hebrew Bible and postbiblical literature, in which “son of God” can refer to Israel and the righteous more generally (e.g., Ex 4:22–23; Hos 11:1; Wis 2:13; Sir 4:10; Ps. Sol. 13:9; *Ido.* 1:224–23).

³⁵ The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples,³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!"³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.³⁸ When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?"³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.⁴¹ He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed).⁴² He brought Simon^b to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter^c).

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me."

low me."⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth."⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!"⁴⁸ Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you."⁴⁹ Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"⁵⁰ Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these."⁵¹ And he said

^a Or Christ
^b Gk him
^c From the word for rock in Aramaic (*kapha*) and Greek (*petra*), respectively

¹³⁵⁻⁵¹: Call of the disciples. ³⁷: One disciple is Andrew (v. 40); the anonymous other is sometimes identified as the beloved disciple. ³⁸: *Rabbi*, originally meaning "my master," became at an uncertain date the term for one qualified to pronounce on matters of Jewish law and practice. The Hebrew root of *rabbi* is "ray," meaning "great" in biblical Hebrew, often a title denoting reverence. In Second Temple Judaism it did not refer to a religious functionary or clergy person but primarily to a person whose authority was accepted by the speaker. *Teacher* is therefore not a literal translation but captures the general sense of the term. In Hebrew sources it does not appear before the Mishnah, though the Gospels of Matthew (e.g., 26:25), Mark (e.g., 9:5), and John use the term to refer to Jesus; Mt. 3:7-8 refers more generically to "rabbi" and may be the earliest evidence of its usage to denote a classification of learned individuals. ⁴¹: *Messiah* is the Greek transliteration of the Aramaic, "meshia" ("the anointed one"); the Gk translation is "Christos" (Christ). This term recurs in 4:25 and 4:29 but nowhere else in the NT. ⁴²: *Cephas* means "rock" in Aramaic; this disciple is also called Peter (Gk "Petros," also "rock"); cf. Mt. 16:18. ⁴³: The narrative implies that Jesus was still in Bethany (cf. 1:28). ⁴⁴: *Bethsaida*, close to the Sea of Galilee. Although the Gospel implies that Bethsaida is in Galilee, it was in fact in Gaulanitis, across the border from Herod's Galilee, in the territory controlled by Philip. ⁴⁵: Philip's words to Nathanael imply that he, and others, were waiting or searching for a messiah who would fulfill the Torah and prophecies in the scriptures. The reference may be to the "prophet like Moses" described in Deut. 18:15-18, the son of man ("one like a human being," Dan 7:13, 8:17), and/or Elijah (Mal 4:5). For Jesus as the son of Joseph, see also in 6:42 and Mt. 1:23. This may reflect a historical detail as it is possible that Jesus was known as Joseph's son within the Jewish community in which he lived. Despite the prominence of the "Son of God" title, and Jesus' frequent references to himself as the Son, the Gospel does not refer or allude to the idea that Jesus' mother was a virgin. ⁴⁶: *Nazareth*, approximately 15 mi (26 km) west of the Sea of Galilee. ⁴⁷: *Israelite*, the Israelite Nathanael recognizes Jesus as the King of Israel (v. 49). *No deceit*, an allusion to Jacob, also known as Israel (Gen 32:28-29) who deceitfully supplanted his twin brother, Esau, in receiving his father Isaac's blessing (Gen 27:35). ⁴⁸: *Fig tree*, associated with abundance, as well as with the eschatology; "gathering figs" was an expression that in later sources means "studying," apparently because the tree of knowledge in Gen 3 was believed to be a fig tree (b. Ber. 40a). ⁴⁹: *Son of God*. . . *King of Israel*, treated as synonymous expressions; Ps 2:6-7 uses adoption language in relating the king to God. ⁵¹: *Very truly, Ite*, "amen, amen" (Heb "amen," "it is so," "it is true"). A formula used for emphasis (cf. 3:3, 5:11; 5:19, 24ff.; 6:26, 32, 47, 53; 8:34, 51, 58; 10:1, 7; 12:24; 13:16, 20ff.; 38; 14:12; 16:20, 23; 21:18). *Son of Man*,

to him, "Very truly, I tell you," you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

2 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.² Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.³ When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."⁴ And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come."⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."⁶ Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.⁷ Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim.⁸ He said to the chief steward,⁹ "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward." So they took it.⁹ When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom¹⁰ and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have

kept the good wine until now."¹¹ Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

¹² After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there a few days.

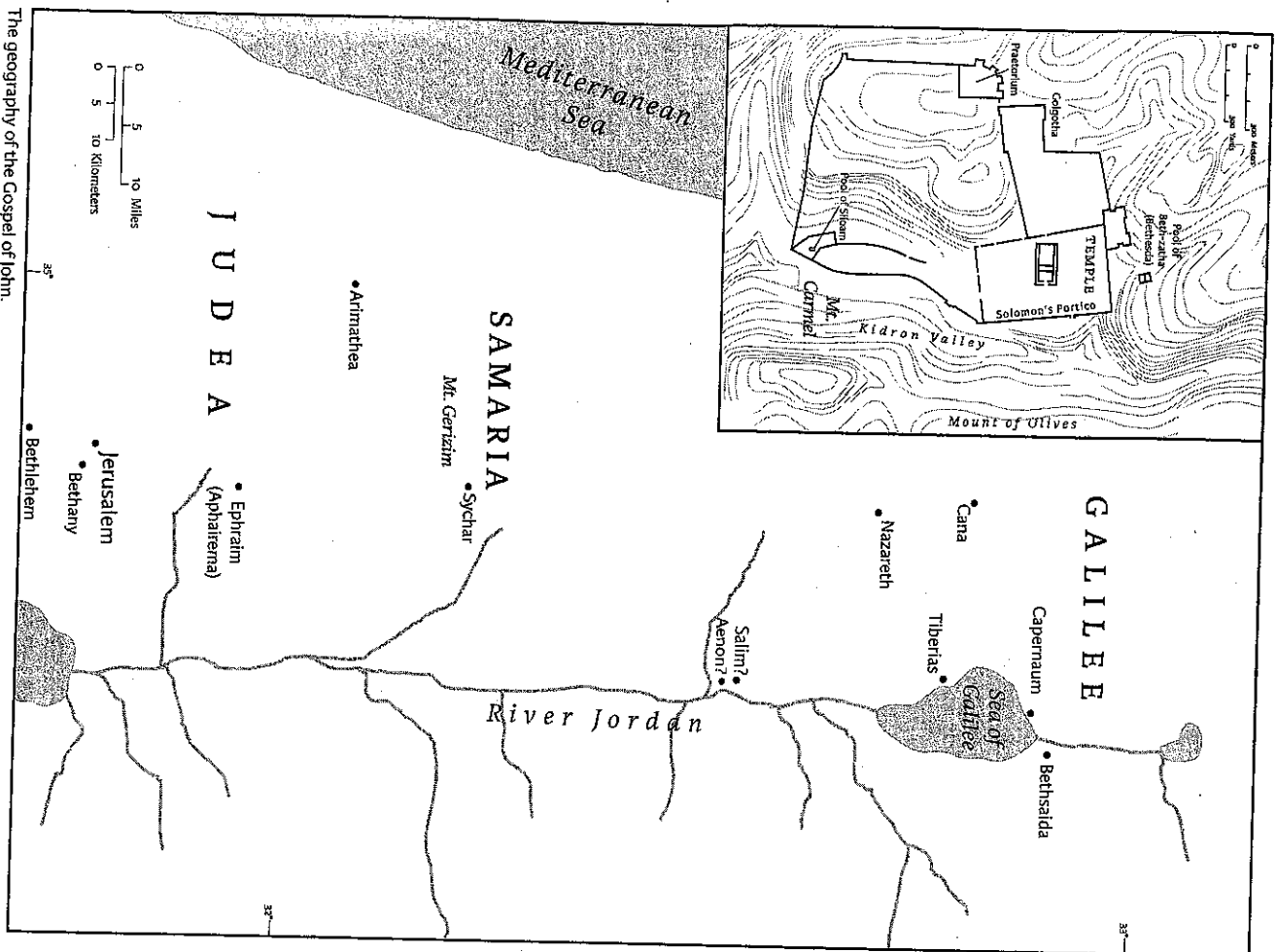
¹³ The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.¹⁴ In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables.¹⁵ Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.¹⁶ He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!"¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."¹⁸ The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?"¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple,

^a Both instances of the Greek word for you in this verse are plural

"Bar Enosh" in Aramaic (cf. Dan 7:13), a cosmic messianic figure associated strongly with apocalyptic eschatology (views of the end of times as including a violent battle). *Angels . . . ascending and descending*, an allusion to Jacob's dream (Gen 28:12), implying that Jesus is the ladder connecting heaven and earth.

²¹⁻¹²: Jesus' first sign: wedding at Cana. ¹: *Third day* may foreshadow the resurrection, just as the wedding may allude to the messianic banquet, the feast that will celebrate the inauguration of God's rule. *Cana*, village in the Galilee, about 9 mi (15 km) north of Nazareth. *Mother of Jesus*, Jesus' mother is never mentioned by name in this Gospel. ³: Jesus' mother expects him to remedy the situation. ⁴: *Woman*, an unusual address to one's mother, but used in this Gospel to introduce a revelation to a woman (cf. 4:21; 19:26; 20:13-15). *Hour*, the hour of Jesus' death and glorification. ⁶: *Rites of purification*, ritual hand-washing that precedes the meal. This practice is later described in b. Ber. 53b; b. Shabb. 62b; its presence in John indicates that the ritual was already common in the first century. Since the jars needed to be filled (again), presumably the washing had already taken place. The size of the jars may indicate that there were many guests. ⁹: *Bridegroom*, a double entendre referring to the bridegroom of the wedding and alluding to Jesus as the eschatological bridegroom (cf. 4:29). ¹¹: *First of his signs*, possible evidence for a "signs source" underlying the narrative (cf. 2:23; 3:2; 4:48, 54; 6:14; 10:41; 12:18; 20:30). *Glory*, see 1:14n. ¹²: *Capernaum*, a town on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. *Brothers*, see 7:3; 20:17; 21:23; Mk. 6:3.

²³⁻²⁵: Jesus' sign of authority over the Temple (see Mt. 21:17; Mk. 11:15-19; Lk. 9:45-48). In the other Gospels, this incident occurs at the end of Jesus' ministry; in John it is, in effect, his inaugural public appearance. ¹³: *Passover*, the week-long spring festival celebrating the Exodus from Egypt and the barley harvest (Ex. 12:1-18). *Passover* is closely associated with liberation from oppression and divine salvation, past and future. *Of the Jews*, a redundancy that may indicate the lack of acquaintance with Judaism on the part of at least some members of John's audience. ¹⁴: *Animals* (unblemished and therefore acceptable for sacrifice) were sold at the Temple, and foreign currencies had to be exchanged for the official half-shekel for the Temple tax (Ex. 30:11-16). ¹⁷: Ps 69:9; see Zech. 14:21; Mal. 3:1. ¹⁸: *The Jews*, here, Temple authorities. *What sign . . .* may be a challenge to Jesus' authority. ¹⁹: *Destroy this temple . . .*, alludes to the tradition of Temple critique (4:21; see Jer. 7:1-15; Ezek. 10:18-19; Acts



and in three days I will raise it up.”²⁰ The Jews then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?”²¹ But he was speaking of the temple of his body.²² After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

²³ When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing.²⁴ But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people²⁵ and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.

3 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews.² He came to Jesus³ by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.”

⁴ Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.”⁵ Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second

time into the mother’s womb and be born?”⁶ Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.⁷ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.”⁸ Do not be astonished that I said to you, “You⁹ must be born from above.”¹⁰ The wind¹¹ blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”¹² Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?”¹³ Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?”

¹⁴ “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you¹⁵ do not receive our testimony.”¹⁶ If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell

^a Gk him
^b Or born anew
^c The same Greek word means both wind and spirit
^d The Greek word for you here is plural
^e Or anew
^f The Greek word for you here and in verse 12 is plural

7:48) and continues the theme of Jesus’ authority over the Temple. 20: *forty-six years*, according to Josephus, (*Ant.* 15.11.1) construction began in the eighteenth year of the rule of Herod the Great (20/19 BCE) and concluded under Herod Agrippa II in 64 CE. 22: *The word*, Jesus’ own prophecies are treated as of equal authority to scripture. 23: *His name*, the expression of his true being and power. 24: *Entrust himself*, rely upon others to vouch for his authority. 25: *Needed no one to testify*, forensic (courtroom) language evokes the theme of God as judge. He himself knew, Jesus’ foreknowledge appears first with Nathanael (1:48; cf. 4:17–18; 6:70).

3:1–21: Nicodemus. 1: *Nicodemus’ leadership role* is not specified. The Pharisees are normally counted among Jesus’ opponents (but see also 12:42). “Nicodemus” is a Greek name that was apparently used among Jews as “Nagdimor” (*b. Tan.* 20a). The Sanhedrin, the governing body was responsible primarily for the internal and autonomous affairs of the Jewish people. Membership included Sadducees and Pharisees. 2: *By night*, secretly. Night and darkness are associated with those—such as the Jewish authorities—who are spiritually blind (cf. 9:39–41). 3: *Very truly*, see 1:51n. *Kingdom of God*, used by John only in 3:3–5, but prominent in the other Gospels, referring to the divine domain that will arise at some future point in this world (Mk 9:1) or in some other place in which the righteous will dwell (Lk 13:29), or an altered state of existence in the here and now (Lk 17:21). The Hebrew term, “malkut shamayim” (Dan 4:3; 1 Chr 29:10–12) implies the divine reign in this world. *Born from above*, “born anew”, the origin of the term “born-again Christian.” 4: Puns and double entendres are a frequent literary device in John, as they are also in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Dan 5:25–28), classical Greek literature (e.g., Ovid, *Metam.*); and rabbinic literature (e.g., *Lam. Rab.* 1.1) 5: *Water and spirit*, suggesting that baptism is the act of rebirth that allows one to enter or see (v. 3) the kingdom. The combination may suggest both the baptismal act and the gift of the Spirit (Acts 1:5). 6: Spiritual birth contrasted with biological birth; cf. 8:12–59 that dismisses genealogy as the basis for being a child of God. 8: *Wind*, Gk “pneuma,” like Heb “ruah,” can mean wind, breath, or spirit. Each is unpredictable and cannot be seen or grasped but is essential for life and can express great power. 11: Jesus views Nicodemus as a representative of his opponents. 13: Allusions to

you about heavenly things?¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.¹⁶

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned, but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God.¹⁹ And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.²⁰ For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed.²¹ But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.^{2b}

¹⁵51 and Gen 28 (Jacob's ladder). The statement seems to ignore Enoch (Gen 5.22.24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2.11), both of whom were taken up to heaven instead of undergoing death; *ascended* may imply some agency on the part of the Son of Man. ¹⁴Jesus is here described as superior to Moses, who held up the bronze serpent to save Israel from a plague of snakes (Num 21.4–9; cf. 2 Kings 18.4, in which King Hezekiah demolishes the bronze serpent). ¹⁶–²¹: Because the Greek manuscripts do not include punctuation, it is not always easy to identify the speaker in these long discourses. These verses are often attributed to the narrator rather than Jesus. ¹⁶: Jesus is God's son; Jesus' death testifies to God's love for the world, and is necessary for salvation. *Perish* . . . *eternal life*, the contrast implies that eternal life is not intrinsic to persons but is given to them, or withheld from them, according to their relationship to the Son or to God. ¹⁹–²⁰: Here *evil* is not a moral category but a theological one, referring to the failure to believe.

3.22–36: Baptizing. ²²–²³: *Aenon* comes from the Aramaic plural of "spring"; *Salim* comes from the Semitic root for "peace." The exact sites are uncertain, as tradition has located this event in Transjordan, in the northern Jordan Valley, and in Samaria. In contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, in which Jesus' main ministry takes place after John's imprisonment, this passage suggests that the missions of John and Jesus overlapped in time. The Synoptics do not mention that Jesus baptized. ²⁴: An allusion to John's imprisonment, which the Gospel does not recount (cf. Mk 6.14–29). ²⁵: *Purification*, implying that baptism is related to Jewish practices of dealing with ritual purity (see e.g., Lev 14.8), rather than the "Christian" baptism as such. ²⁷–³⁰: *Receive* . . . *except what has been given*, a statement about authority, not a predetermination; John is the *friend* to the *bridegroom* Jesus. *Bridegroom* is a prophetic image of one who rejoices (Isa 62.5; Jer 16.9); in the other Gospels the bridegroom is the symbol of one who is to arrive, after which festivities can begin (Mt 25.1ff), or the one in whose presence rejoicing takes place (Mt 9.15; Mk 2.9; Lk 5.34). It also (Rev 18.23) became the symbol of the messiah united with God's people at the wedding banquet celebrating the new age. This symbol, like the wedding at Cana, may be an allusion to the Jewish idea of the eschatological banquet, as a metaphor for the joy and abundance that will be experienced in the messianic age (Isa 25.6–8; Exek 34.17–30; see also 4Q521.2, 11.5–13). The notion of a

²²After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he spent some time there with them and baptized.²³ John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there; and people kept coming and were being baptized.²⁴—John, of course, had not yet been thrown into prison.

²⁵Now a discussion about purification arose between John's disciples and a Jew.⁵

²⁶They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you testified, here he is baptizing, and all are going to him."²⁷ John answered, "No one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven.²⁸ You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Messiah,'⁴ but I have been sent ahead of him."²⁹ He who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. For this reason my joy

^a Other ancient authorities add *who is in heaven*
^b Some interpreters hold that the quotation concludes with verse 15
^c Other ancient authorities read *the Jews*
^d Or *the Christ*

has been fulfilled.³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease.^{3a}

³¹The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is above all.³² He testifies to what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his testimony.

³³Whoever has accepted his testimony has certified³⁴ this, that God is true.³⁴ He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands.³⁶ Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God's wrath.

4 Now when Jesus⁵ learned that the Pharisees had heard, "Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John"²—although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized—³he left Judea and started back to Galilee.⁴ But he had to go through Samaria.⁵ So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

messianic banquet also occurs later, in rabbinic literature, e.g., *b. Sanh.* 96–99. John's acknowledgement that Jesus' movement must expand and his (John's) decrease may be a historical reminiscence of the development of these two groups and/or an element in the Gospel's polemic against the baptizing group. ³²–³³: *No one accepts* . . . *whoever has accepted*, a contradictory formulation, but intended presumably to convey that those who do not accept the testimony are doubting not just the one who testifies but also that God is true (trustworthy or faithful). ³⁴–³⁵: *Spirit* . . . *all things in his hands*, the Son's authority from God includes the granting of God's spirit. (see 3.5ff.). ³⁶: See 3.16n.

4.1–42: The Samaritan woman. ⁴: *Samaria*, between Judea and Galilee. Samaritans are descendants of two distinct groups: the remnant of the ten tribes associated with the Northern Kingdom of Israel who were not deported when the Northern Kingdom fell in 722 BCE, and foreign colonists from Babylon and Media brought by the Assyrian conquerors of Samaria (cf. 2 Kings 17.24–41). Tension between the Samaritans and the Jews who returned from the Babylonian exile was created in part by the Samaritans' opposition to the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra 4.6–24). Avoiding Samaria would have required going through the non-Jewish territory east of the Jordan River. ⁵: *Sychar*, near Shechem; see Gen 33.19; 48.22; Josh 23.32. ⁶–⁸: *Well*, a place where women gathered (see e.g., Gen 24, where Abraham's servant meets Rebekah at the spring of water); the overtones of an encounter between a man and a woman at a well are those of courtship. The fact that the woman is there at noon serves to contrast the woman favorably with Nicodemus, who first met Jesus at night (3.2). Jesus' thirst is mentioned again only in 19.28, at the crucifixion, also at noon. ⁹: This passage suggests that in the view of the Gospel writer, Jews and Samaritans would not eat together. Whether this is due to the issue of purity or to other matters is not possible to determine. ¹⁰: *Living water*, flowing water, as in a spring or river (Num 19.17) and refreshing (Jer 2.14; 17.13). ¹¹: Perhaps in a parallel with Nicodemus (3.4), the woman takes Jesus literally and therefore misunderstands him. ¹³: *Everyone who drinks* . . . , see Sir 24.21, in which Wisdom personified promises that those who taste wisdom will thirst for more. Continuous thirst

⁷A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."⁸ (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)

⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."¹¹

¹²The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"¹³ Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?"¹⁴ Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,¹⁵ but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."¹⁶ The woman said to him, "Sir, give

^a Some interpreters hold that the quotation continues through verse 36
^b GK set a seal to
^c Other ancient authorities read *the Lord*
^d Other ancient authorities lack this sentence

me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." ¹⁷The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" ¹⁹The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you^a say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. ²⁴God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." ²⁶Jesus said to her, "I am he,^b the one who is speaking to you."

²⁷Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" ²⁸Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ²⁹"Come and see a man who told me every-

thing I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah," can he?" ³⁰They left the city and were on their way to him.

³¹Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." ³²But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." ³³So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" ³⁴Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. ³⁵Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. ³⁶The reaper is already receiving^d wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

³⁹Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹And many more believed

^a The Greek word for you here and in verses 21 and 22 is plural
^b Gk I am
^c Or the Christ
^d Or ³⁵... the fields are already ripe for harvesting. ³⁶ The reaper is receiving

because of his word. ⁴²They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

⁴³When the two days were over, he went from that place to Galilee. ⁴⁴(For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in the prophet's own country.) ⁴⁵When he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the festival; for they too had gone to the festival.

⁴⁶Then he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. ⁴⁷When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you^a see signs and wonders you will not believe." ⁴⁹The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my little boy dies." ⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Go, your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way.

⁵¹As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. ⁵²So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, "Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him." ⁵³The father realized that this was the hour

in 1:41-45, the woman now acts as an apostle to her townspeople. 42: Savior (Gk "soter," in LXX for Heb "yasha," basis for Yehoshua [Jesus]; see Mt 1:21), the word could mean "deliverer" (from enemies) and was a common title for rulers. The Samaritan term is "Tahab."

4:43-54: Second sign: healing of the official's son (Mt 8:5-13; Lk 7:1-10). 44: See Mk 6:4; Lk 4:24. This proverb has close parallels in the Synoptic tradition (Mk 6:1-6; Mt 13:53-58; Lk 4:22-24) and Gos. Thom., logion 31 (logion = a saying of Jesus). It is unlikely that John took it from any of these sources; rather, this proverb had circulated in different forms. In the Johannine context, it contrasts the generally warm reception that the Johannine Jesus receives in Galilee with the suspicion that his activities arouse in Judea. While this may be a historical reminiscence, it also serves a symbolic purpose, drawing attention to the opposition to Jesus largely among the Jewish authorities based in Judea, especially the Temple precinct. It is possible to read this as an ironic saying, in that for both groups, Galileans and Judeans alike, a faith based only on observing the signs is considered inadequate (cf. 2:23-25). 45: Galileans, a geographical designation, but since they were at the festival in Jerusalem, it follows that they are Jews. 46: Cana, see 2:1-11. A royal official, likely under the aegis of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee 4 BCE-39 CE. 48: You is plural. Signs and wonders, if "signs" only produce awe and not faith, they have failed in their role. 50: Biblical parallels to the healing of a son include 1 Kings 17:23 (Elijah) and 2 Kings 8:9 (Elisha).

5:1-47: Third sign: healing of the lame man. 1: Festival of the Jews, perhaps one of the three pilgrimage festivals, Passover, Weeks (Shavuot), or Tabernacles (Sukkot). 2: Sheep Gate is a gate to the Temple precinct (cf. Neh 3:1). Remains of a second-century healing sanctuary and pool with five porticoes have been discovered

when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he himself believed, along with his whole household. ⁵⁴Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

5 After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

²Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew "Beth-zatha," which has five porticoes. ³In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. ⁴One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. ⁵When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" ⁷The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me."

^a Both instances of the Greek word for you in this verse are plural
^b That is, Aramaic
^c Other ancient authorities read Bethesda, others Bethesda
^d Other ancient authorities add, wholly or in part, waiting for the stirring of the water; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred up the water; whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was made well from whatever disease that person had.

⁸ Jesus said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk." ⁹ At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Now that day was a sabbath. ¹⁰ So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, "It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." ¹¹ But he answered them, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Take up your mat and walk.' " ¹² They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take it up and walk'?"

¹³ Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there. ¹⁴ Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him,

"See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you."

¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. ¹⁶ Therefore the Jews started persecuting Jesus, because he was doing such things on the sabbath. ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, "My Father is still working, and I also am working." ¹⁸ For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.

¹⁹ Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father^b does, the Son does likewise. ²⁰ The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing; and he will show him

greater works than these, so that you will be astonished. ²¹ Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes. ²² The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son, ²³ so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. ²⁴ Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life. ²⁵ "Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; ²⁷ and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and will come out—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. ³⁰ "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

^a Or *had left because of*
^b Gk *that one*

³¹ If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. ³² There is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that his testimony to me is true. ³³ You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth. ³⁴ Not that I accept such human testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. ³⁶ But I have a testimony greater than John's. The works that the Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen his form, ³⁸ and you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent.

³⁹ You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. ⁴⁰ Yet you refuse to come to me to have life. ⁴¹ I do not accept glory from human beings. ⁴² But I know that you do not have the love of God in^a you. ⁴³ I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? ⁴⁵ Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. ⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote

^a Or *among*
^b Gk *of Galilee of Tiberias*
^c Gk *Two hundred denarii; the denarius was the usual day's wage for a laborer*
^d Gk *the men*

about me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. ² A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. ³ Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. ⁵ When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. ⁷ Philip answered him, "Six months' wages^c would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" ¹⁰ Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they^d sat down, about five thousand in all. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them

²⁴ A characteristic of this Gospel's presentation of ideas is that God's goals, as expressed in Jesus' ministry, have already been accomplished (a position known as "realized eschatology," meaning that the conditions of the "last days" [Gk "eschatō"] are already present ["realized"]). ^{25–30} Jesus' voice reaches the realm of the dead who will be called to final judgment (see 11:1–44; cf. Dan 12:1–3; 1 Thess 4:13–18). ^{31–47} Deut 17:6 specifies that in capital cases, two or three witnesses are required. Continuing the juridical motif, Jesus acts as his own lawyer and calls John the Baptist (v. 33), his works and God's works (v. 36), God (v. 37), and the scriptures (vv. 39–47) as witnesses. Thereby he accuses his Jewish opponents of misunderstanding their scriptures and alienating God. ⁴¹ *Accept glory, rely on God for authority.*

near the church of St. Anne in Jerusalem. ⁸ *Stand up*, in Mk 2.11, this is offered as proof of Jesus' authority to forgive sins. ⁹ The healing story becomes an account of conflict over Sabbath observance, in which carrying any object outside the domain of one's household was prohibited (Jer 17:21–22). According to later rabbinic law, the healing of an acute, life-threatening illness or condition was permitted, even mandated, on the Sabbath, but the healing of a chronic illness was not, on the grounds that treatment could just as easily take place before or after the Sabbath (see b. Yoma 84b). The Johannine passage suggests that this law was in place, at least in the eyes of some, in the first century. ¹⁴ Jesus implies that illness is punishment for sin; see 9.2–3 (on disease as punishment for specific sins, see Ex 4.11; Lev 26.16; Num 12.9–10; Deut 32.39; 2 Chr 7.13; 21.14–15). ^{16–17} *Persecuting*, although no specific persecution is mentioned, use of the word (as in Mt 5.10 and Acts 9.4) calls to mind the persecution of the early Christian community. *Sabbath*, according to Gen 2.2–3, God rested on the seventh day of creation. Hellenistic Jewish speculation (Philo, *Cher.* 86–90; *Leg. All.* 1.5–6) conceded that God did not rest on subsequent Sabbaths, given that vegetation grew, children were born, and other natural processes continued. Jesus declares his filial relationship to and imitation of God as a creative force (cf. 1.1–4); there is no explicit statement in the Gospel that abrogates Jewish Sabbath observance (cf. Mk 2.28, "The Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath"). ¹⁸ For Jesus' Jewish audience, this statement violated monothemism; see 10.30–33; Phil 2.6. ¹⁹ This statement implies that Jesus' actions are like what the Father does, not in the sense of slavish imitation but rather acting within a specific context according to the will of God. ²¹ An anticipatory statement (or perhaps anachronism) regarding the resurrection of Christians, but perhaps a reference to Jewish belief in resurrection; the idea that resurrection is God's act is an established one (Ezek 37.5).

about me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. ² A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. ³ Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. ⁵ When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. ⁷ Philip answered him, "Six months' wages^c would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" ¹⁰ Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they^d sat down, about five thousand in all. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them

to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.¹² When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost."¹³ So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets.¹⁴ When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world."

¹⁵ When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

¹⁶ When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea,¹⁷ got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them.¹⁸ The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing.¹⁹ When they had rowed about three or four miles,²⁰ they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified.²¹ But he said to them, "It is I,²² do not be afraid."²³ Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

²⁴ The next day the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there. They also saw that Jesus had not got into the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone.

²⁵ Then some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.²⁶ So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

²⁷ When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?"²⁸ Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you are your fill of the loaves."²⁹ Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal."³⁰ Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?"³¹ Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."³² So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?"³³ Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"³⁴ Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.³⁵ For the bread of God is that which³⁶ comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."³⁷ They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

³⁸ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."³⁹ But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.⁴⁰ Everything that

- a GK about twenty-five or thirty stadia
- b GK I am
- c Other ancient authorities lack after the Lord had given thanks
- d Or he who

^{11:23-26}: 12-13: Gather up the fragments, see Mk 6.43. The Hebrews during the Exodus and wilderness wanderings were fed by manna that they gathered, including gathering enough for two days to avoid work on the Sabbath (Ex 16.14-26). Twelve baskets, perhaps a correspondence with the number of tribes of Israel, or the number of Jesus' apostles, thereby signifying God's people. 15: The risk in being made king by popular acclaim, rather than as a Roman vassal, was that the Romans would regard such an act as treasonous and would execute the would-be ruler. 16-21: Walking on water demonstrates power over the natural world (cf. Mt 14.22; Mk 6.45-51). Similarly, Elsha makes an ax head float (2 Kings 6.4-7). God is the one who calms waves (Ps 89.9).

6.22-71: The bread of life discourse. The imagery of the eucharistic body and blood is extended in this section. 23: The Lord had given thanks, this phrase may not be original (see translators' note c). Calling Jesus Lord here is anachronistic. 27: Perishes . . . endures, manna perished after one night, in contrast to God's provision of manna at the time of Moses, eternal life can only result from the bread of life (v. 33). Jesus himself. Seal, a symbol of authority (see Rev 5.2). 28-29: Works of God . . . believe in him whom [God] has sent: the contrast is between "working" for food (v. 27) and participating in God's life (v. 33). 31: Manna (Ex 16.4, 15; Num 11.8; Ps 78.24 [quoted]; 105.40). Like Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, the crowds misunderstand Jesus' meaning (cf.

the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away;³⁸ for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.⁴⁰ This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day."

⁴¹ Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."⁴² They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven?'"

⁴³ Jesus answered them, "Do not complain among yourselves.⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day."⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.⁴⁶ Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father.⁴⁷ Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life.⁴⁸ I am the bread of life.⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

⁵² The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"⁵³ So Jesus said to them, "Very

truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."⁵⁴ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.⁵⁶ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."⁵⁹ He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?"⁶¹ But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you?"⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.⁶⁴ But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him.⁶⁵ And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father."

⁶⁶ Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.⁶⁷ So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?"⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.⁶⁹ We have come to believe and know that you are the

3.5; 4.15). 35: I am expresses divinity and implies Jesus' unity with God (Ex 3.14; Jn 1.1-3; 6.20; 8.58). 38: Jesus is not identical with God but rather is God's agent. 39-40: Raise it up . . . raise them up . . . last day, GK "anastaseo . . . te escatote hemon," lit., "resurrect . . . the day at the end of the age." 41: Jesus began to complain, Jesus' claim to be from heaven is offensive, given their knowledge of his parentage. 45: Prophets, Isa 54.13; cf. Jer 31.34. 51-58: In contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, John's Gospel does not provide an account of the memorial meal during the Last Supper. Jesus alludes to his death and resurrection, in that he became flesh (1.14) and offered himself to God, thus sacrificing his life for the life of the world. 53: Flesh . . . blood, the literal meaning is not only repellent but offensive because Jews do not ingest the blood of an animal along with its flesh (Gen 9.4; Lev 7.26-27; 17.15). The passage may allude to the practice of theophagy associated with Greco-Roman mystery cults such as the cults of Demeter and Dionysus. If so, this may be one indication that the Gospel's intended audience included non-Jews. 59: Synagogue at Capernaum, as in Mk 1.21; Lk 4.31; the sudden mention of this place may indicate that various traditions have been combined into one discourse. 60: Many followers were offended by this teaching, perhaps because of its cannibalistic overtones. Ingesting blood was forbidden (see v. 53n), 63: Flesh . . . useless, an indication that the meaning of terms in this Gospel is fluid (see also "world," 3.16; 16.33; 17.14-16).

Holy One of God.^{2a} Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve? Yet one of you is a devil."⁷ He was speaking of Judas son of Simon Iscariot,⁸ for he, though one of the twelve, was going to betray him.

7 After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He did not wish^c to go about in Judea because the Jews were looking for an opportunity to kill him.² Now the Jewish festival of Booths^d was near.³ So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea so that your disciples also may see the works you are doing,"⁴ for no one who wants^e to be widely known acts in secret. If you do these things, show yourself to the world."⁵ (For not even his brothers believed in him.)⁶ Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here."⁷ The world cannot have you, but it hates me because I testify against it that its works are evil.⁸ Go to the festival yourselves. I am not going to this festival, for my time has not yet fully come."⁹ After saying this, he remained in Galilee.

¹⁰ But after his brothers had gone to the festival, then he also went, not publicly but as it were^f in secret.¹¹ The Jews were looking for him at the festival and saying, "Where is he?"¹² And there was considerable complaining about him among the crowds. While some were saying, "He is a good man," others were saying, "No, he is deceiving the crowd."¹³ Yet no one would speak openly about him for fear of the Jews.¹⁴ About the middle of the festival Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach.

69: Holy One of God, this title is not present elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel. See Judg 13:7, 16:17 in reference to Samson as a Nazirite, and Ps 106:16 in reference to Aaron. **70:** Judas is aligned with the cosmic forces hostile to Jesus. This verse foreshadows Judas's role as the betrayer, which in 13:2 is associated with the devil entering into him **71: Judas**, the name of Judah the Maccabee, who led a revolt against the Seleucid (Greek) rulers of Judah in 167–164 BCE; *Iscariot*, that is, a man (Heb "ish") from the town of Kerioth.

71–82: Festival of Tabernacles. **1:** *Judea* was the location of the Temple in Jerusalem, where the leadership would have been hostile to Jesus if they saw him as a possible insurrectionary who would bring down Roman power to crush even their limited autonomy. **2: Tabernacles**, or *Booths* (Heb "Sukkot"), a weeklong fall pilgrimage festival celebrating the harvest and commemorating Israel's sojourn in the desert after the Exodus. It was required that all males attend this festival (Lev 23:42; Deut 16:16, which specifies Passover, Weeks, and Booths as required). Jesus' refusal (v. 8), followed by his covert attendance (v. 10), shows that he meant to obey the requirement. **3: His brothers**, likely biological relations, rather than disciples (for "brothers" as disciples, see 20:17). **6–7:** Jesus' brothers, like "the Jews," represent the hostile world. **8:** Jesus tries to hide his intentions. Despite this statement, he secretly goes to Jerusalem (v. 9). **11: The Jews**, here the Jewish crowds in Jerusalem. **13: The Jews**, here Jewish authorities. **14–18:** Jesus teaches openly in the Temple (see 8:20n.), which he mentions when interrogated by Annas (18:20). **15: The Jews**, here the crowd that was listening to Jesus. **18:** An implicit criticism of Jewish authorities as self-glorifying (cf. Mt. 23:5–7). **22–24:** Jesus refers to the healing of the lame

¹⁵ The Jews were astonished at it, saying, "How does this man have such learning," when he has never been taught?"¹⁶ Then Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me."¹⁷ Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own.¹⁸ Those who speak on their own seek their own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and there is nothing false in him.

¹⁹ Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why are you looking for an opportunity to kill me?"²⁰ The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is trying to kill you?"²¹ Jesus answered them, "I performed one work, and all of you are astonished.²² Moses gave you circumcision (it is, of course, not from Moses, but from the patriarchs), and you circumcise a man on the sabbath.²³ If a man receives circumcision on the sabbath in order that the law of Moses

^a Other ancient authorities read *the Christ, the Son of the living God*
^b Other ancient authorities read *Judas Iscariot son of Simon*; others, *Judas son of Simon from Keriot* (Kerith)
^c Other ancient authorities read *was not at liberty*
^d Or *Tabernacles*
^e Other ancient authorities read *wants it*
^f Other ancient authorities add *yet*
^g Other ancient authorities lack *as it were*
^h Or *this man know his letters*

may not be broken, are you angry with me because I healed a man's whole body on the sabbath?²⁴ Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

²⁵ Now some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, "Is not this the man whom they are trying to kill?"²⁶ And here he is, speaking openly, but they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Messiah?²⁷ Yet we know where this man is from; but when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from."²⁸ Then Jesus cried out as he was teaching in the temple, "You know me, and you know where I am from. I have not come on my own. But the one who sent me is true, and you do not know him."²⁹ I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me."³⁰ Then they tried to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him, because his hour had not yet come.³¹ Yet many in the crowd believed in him and were saying, "When the Messiah comes, will he do more signs than this man has done?"³²

³³ The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering such things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent temple police to arrest him.³⁴ Jesus then said, "I will be with you a little while longer, and then I am going

to him who sent me."³⁴ You will search for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come."³⁵ The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?"³⁶ What does he mean by saying, 'You will search for me and you will not find me' and 'Where I am, you cannot come'?"

³⁷ On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me,"³⁸ and let the one who believes in me drink. As^c the scripture has said, "Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water."³⁹ Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit,^e because Jesus was not yet glorified.

^a Or *the Christ*
^b Other ancient authorities read *is doing*
^c Or *come to me and drink*. ³⁸ *The one who believes in me, as*
^d Or *out of his belly*
^e Other ancient authorities read *for as yet the Spirit* (others, *Holy Spirit*) *had not been given*

man (ch 5). **Moses**, the Torah (Gen 17:10; Lev 12:3), including the patriarchs, traditions predating the time of Moses. **25: The people of Jerusalem** know the sentiment against Jesus (contrast the crowd of v. 20). A distinction is drawn between the people and the authorities; significantly, CK "hoi Ioudaioi" ("the Jews") is not used of either group in vv. 25–26. **27: No one will know** . . . , a possible allusion to the tradition of the "hidden messiah," one of several different strands of messianic expectation in the first century (cf. 1 En. 46:1–3). **27–28:** Although the crowd claims to know where Jesus came from—perhaps an allusion to Nazareth (see 1:45, 6:42)—Jesus asserts that they do not know where he really comes from. He does therefore fulfill the expectations of the "hidden messiah" tradition. **30: They**, perhaps the people of Jerusalem (v. 25), but their attempt to arrest him suggests that "they" refers specifically to the authorities. **31: The crowd** continues to be divided in their assessment of Jesus, with some believing that he fulfills the criteria of the messiah, such as doing signs. **32: Pharisees and chief priests**, implies that "the Jews" as a whole are hostile to Jesus; the Pharisees, who held to a more expansive interpretation of Torah, including oral tradition, were often at odds with the priesthood, most of whom were Sadducees who differed from the Pharisees in that they relied on the Written Torah and did not believe in a bodily resurrection after death. **Temple police**, the guards who kept order in the Temple. **34–35:** Another misunderstanding. The Jews think that Jesus refers to a trip to the Dispersion (the Diaspora), yet readers know that Jesus is alluding to his death. **The Greeks**, Gentiles. **37–39:** According to rabbinic sources, it was customary at Sukkot to bring water in a golden pitcher from the pool of Siloam to the Temple to remind the people of the water from the rock in the desert (Num 20:2–13) and as a symbol of hope for messianic deliverance (Isa 12:3). On each day of the festival there was a procession including prayers for deliverance (Heb "hoshana," pl. "hoshanot," meaning "deliver" or "save"); on the last day was "Hoshana Rabba," the "great" hosana, the culmination of these prayers (b. Sukk. 53a). The Johannine material suggests that these practices may have been known to the author in the first century. **38: As the scripture has said**, allusions to Isa 44:3; 58:11; Prov 18:4. **39: The Spirit**, NRSV capitalizes this word to identify this as the Holy Spirit predicted in 14:26ff. and given in 20:22.

⁴⁰When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, "This is really the prophet."

⁴¹Others said, "This is the Messiah." But some asked, "Surely the Messiah^a does not come from Galilee, does he?" ⁴²Has not the scripture said that the Messiah^a is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived? ⁴³So there was a division in the crowd because of him. ⁴⁴Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

⁴⁵Then the temple police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not arrest him?" ⁴⁶The police answered, "Never has anyone spoken like this!" ⁴⁷Then the Pharisees replied, "Surely you have not been deceived too, have you?" ⁴⁸Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? ⁴⁹But this crowd, which does not know the law—they are accursed." ⁵⁰Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus^b before, and who was one of them, asked, ⁵¹"Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?" ⁵²They replied, "Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee."

⁵³Then each of them went home, ¹while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. ³The scribes and

It thus may allude to the spirit that will infuse the community after Jesus' death (cf. 15:26). *Glorified*, a reference to Jesus' death and resurrection (13:31). ^{40–42}: These verses reflect one set of speculations, according to which the messiah was to be born in Bethlehem of Judaea, not in Galilee (cf. Mic 5:2; Mt 2:1; Lk 2:1–7), and descended from King David (on the basis of the promise in 2 Sam 7:16 that David's throne would stand forever). *Bethlehem*, David's home town (1 Sam 17:12). ⁴⁹: *Crowd* . . . does not know the law, that is, ordinary Jews are not experts in legal matters. ⁵⁰: *Nicodemus* (see 3:1n), ⁵¹: *A hearing*, Deut 19:15–21 mandates taking testimony from accusers and witnesses to assess the truth of an accusation. Nicodemus's defense of Jesus may point to his growing belief in Jesus as the Messiah.

7:53–8:11: The adulterous woman. This episode is an interpolation and therefore not part of the original Gospel. It appears in Miss of other Gospels, particularly after Lk 21:38, where it fits the narrative much better. Here the conclusion of the incident, in v. 11, does not lead into the following v. 12; in addition, *scribes and Pharisees* is not a phrase in John's Gospel (John uses the term "Pharisees," but not "scribes"), but is frequent in Luke. 1: *Mount of Olives*, a ridge overlooking the Jerusalem Temple. 3: The sole reference to the scribes in John's Gospel; in the Synoptics they are closely associated with the chief priests (e.g., Mt 2:4; Mk 8:3; Lk 20:19) and the Pharisees (Mt 23:2; Mk 2:16; Lk 6:7). 5: Lev 20:10; Deut 22:23–24. Roman law did not permit execution for adultery. Jesus' opponents may have been trying to test his faithfulness to the law. 6: What Jesus wrote in the sand is not known, though it may be an allusion to Jer 17:3, which declares that those who depart from God shall be written in the earth ("underworld" in NRSV). Perhaps it is simply the fact that he is writing—thereby

the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and making her stand before all of them, ⁴they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery." ⁵Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" ⁶They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." ⁸And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. ⁹When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" ¹¹She said, "No one, sir." ¹²And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again." ¹

^a Or the Christ

^b Gk him

^c Other ancient authorities add the sins of each of them

^d Or Lord

^e The most ancient authorities lack 7:53–8:11; other authorities add the passage here or after 7:36 or after 21:25 or after Luke 21:38, with variations of text; some mark the passage as doubtful.

¹² Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." ¹³ Then the Pharisees said to him, "You are testifying on your own behalf; your testimony is not valid."

¹⁴ Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid because I know where I have come from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going." ¹⁵ You judge by human standards.^a I judge no one.^b Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is valid; for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father^b who sent me." ¹⁷ In your law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is valid. ¹⁸ I testify on my own behalf, and the Father who sent me testifies on my behalf." ¹⁹ Then they said to him, "Where is your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also." ²⁰ He spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury of the temple, but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

²¹ Again he said to them, "I am going away, and you will search for me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you

cannot come." ²² Then the Jews said, "Is he going to kill himself? Is that what he means by saying, 'Where I am going, you cannot come?'" ²³ He said to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. ²⁴ I told you that you would die in your sins, for you will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he." ²⁵ They said to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "Why do I speak to you at all?" ²⁶ I have much to say about you and much to condemn; but the one who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him." ²⁷ They did not understand that he was speaking to them about the Father. ²⁸ So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am he," and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me." ²⁹ And the one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to him." ³⁰ As he was saying these things, many believed in him.

^a Gk according to the flesh

^b Other ancient authorities read he

^c Gk I am

^d Or What I have told you from the beginning

evoking the Written Torah?—that is important.

8:12–59: Confrontation with the Jews. 12: *Again*, apparently following 7:52. *Light of the world*, recalls 1:5, 8:9, 13: *Testimony is not valid*, see 5:31–47n. 15: *Human standards*, i.e., by appearances, not as God (and Jesus as associated with God) would judge. 17: *Your law*, here Jesus dissociates himself from the Jewish law (cf. also 10:34). This, along with the near absence of the connection of the term "Jew" with Jesus, is part of the rhetorical strategy whereby the Gospel encourages its readership to distance themselves from "the Jews." Deut 19:15 requires the testimony of two witnesses for capital cases. 18: The two witnesses are Jesus and God (v. 16). *The Father* (God) and Jesus (the human being) are separate; the later development in Christian thought of the doctrine of the Trinity (three persons in one God) is not the issue here. 19: More misunderstanding; the Jews inquire as to Jesus' paternity, whereas Jesus claims God as his father. 20: *Treasury*, not a strongroom but apparently (see Mk 12:41) the publicly available receptacles into which offerings could be placed. Both men and women had access to these, and therefore this is a reference to a public place in the Temple precincts to which anyone could have access. Jesus later refers (18:20) to the fact that he has taught publicly. 21: *Going away*, i.e., to death and then to eternal life with the Father. 22: *Kill himself* . . . as in ch 7, the Jews misunderstand; Jesus is not committing suicide but willingly moving toward his own death (cf. 3:16). 23: Jesus and the Jews occupy opposite ends of the spiritual pole. 24: Continuation of the trial motif; Jesus judges the Jews and condemns them for their refusal to believe. 25: *Why do I speak to you at all?*, another rendering, making more sense in the context, is given in translators' note d. ²⁶ *I am* what I have told you from the beginning." 28: *I am he*, a divine claim, alluding to the theophany of Ex 3:14. *Lifted up*, i.e., in the crucifixion (see 12:32); for this Gospel, crucifixion is transformed from a shameful form of death to Jesus' exaltation and glorification, which in turn are seen as essential to the completion of God's work and Jesus' resurrection. 30–59: The rest of the chapter initially appears to be addressed to former believers; as the discussion proceeds, the sense that the audi-

³¹Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." ³³They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?"

³⁴Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. ³⁷I know that you are descendants of Abraham; yet you look for an opportunity to kill me, because there is no place in you for my word. ³⁸I declare what I have seen in the Father's presence; as for you, you should do what you have heard from the Father."^a

³⁹They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing^b what Abraham did, ⁴⁰but now you are trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. ⁴¹You are indeed doing what your father does." They said to him, "We are not illegitimate children; we have one father, God himself." ⁴²Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from

God and now I am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me. ⁴³Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot accept my word. ⁴⁴You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? ⁴⁷Whoever is from God hears the words of God. The reason you do not hear them is that you are not from God."

⁴⁸The Jews answered him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" ⁴⁹Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is one who seeks it and he is the judge. ⁵¹Very truly, I tell you, whoever keeps my word will never see death." ⁵²The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, and so did the proph-

^a Other ancient authorities read *you do what you have heard from your father*

^b Other ancient authorities read *if you are Abraham's children, then do*

ence within the narrative constitutes a specific Jewish subset recedes, and the impression is created that the Johannine Jesus is speaking to, and about, all Jews who are not believers. 32: *The truth will make you free*, Heb "emet," implies reliability or steadfastness, something to depend on, which can provide a firm basis for one's life. For John, this can only be knowledge of and faith in Jesus' identity as the Messiah and Son of God. Jesus' statement could be taken in combination with his later claim, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (14.6) to mean "The one who knows me knows the truth and is thereby free." This statement, and the passage as a whole, plays on the contrast between Isaac and Ishmael that is present also in Gal 4: Isaac as the son of the free woman Sarah, and Ishmael as the son of the slave woman Hagar. Faith in Jesus is a sign of one's own freedom and therefore one's identity as the son of Isaac and heir to the covenant between God and Abraham. 33-59: The Jews claim their covenantal relationship with the one God, and declare that Jesus contravenes monotheism by asserting divine sonship. Jesus denies their covenantal relationship on the grounds that they reject God's son. 33: Two claims are made: the Jews are children of Abraham (cf. Gen 12; Deut 14.1), and that they have never been enslaved. The Israelites were enslaved in Egypt (Ex 13.3); the reference here is likely to idolatry, which is sometimes referred to as enslavement to foreign gods (Jer 2.10-14), 34-36: The distinction between the slave and the son is one of property and inheritance. As in ch 2, Jesus claims to be the true "son" who has inherited the Temple and all that it symbolizes, in contrast to the Jews, who serve in the Temple but do not inherit it. 39: Jesus argues that paternity is shown by behavior. *Abraham's children* implies offspring sharing the characteristics of their ancestor, not merely physical "descendants" as in v. 37. 41-47: In trying to kill Jesus, the Jews show that they are not God's children but the devil's. 41: *We are not illegitimate*, perhaps an implied contrast to Jesus' supposed illegitimacy (Origen, Cels 1.28). 44: This verse is the source of the association of the Jews with Satan. 48-52: The Jews express their growing inability to believe Jesus' words, especially

etc.; yet you say, 'Whoever keeps my word will never taste death.' ⁵³Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets also died. Who do you claim to be?" ⁵⁴Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, he of whom you say, 'He is our God,' ⁵⁵ though you do not know him. But I know him; if I would say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him and I keep his word. ⁵⁶Your ancestor Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day; he saw it and was glad." ⁵⁷Then the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" ⁵⁸Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I am." ⁵⁹So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

⁶As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴We^b must work the works of him who sent me^c while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used

to sit and beg?" ⁹Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and

^a Other ancient authorities read *has Abraham seen you?*

^b Other ancient authorities read *I*

^c Other ancient authorities read *us*

the claim that belief overcomes death. 48: *Samaritan*, here apparently a general term for one outside Judaism (see 4.4ff.). 51: *Death* here may mean not so much the physical death that ends human life but the ultimate death that is the opposite of "eternal life." 56-58: *Abraham* . . . see my day, this may be a reference to the traditions described in *T. Abr.*, in which God gives Abraham a tour of the heavens and provides him with knowledge of the final judgment, before his own death. *I am*, an allusion to God's revelation to Moses at the burning bush (Ex 3.14), also perhaps a claim to preexistence (1.1-3).

9.1-41: **Fifth sign: healing of the blind man.** 2-3: Illness and disability were sometimes attributed to sin; cf. 5.14. 4: A reference to Jesus' death. 5: See 1.4-5; 8.12. This verse indicates that Jesus is viewing the man's blindness and later the restoration of his sight as symbolic of the spiritual journey from darkness to light, from unbelief to belief. 6: *Saliva* was seen to have medicinal value (cf. Pliny, *Nat.* 28.4). 7: *Pool of Siloam*, Isa 8.6; Neh 3.15. *Siloam* is Gk spelling of Heb "shiloah," possibly from "sh-l-h," "send." It is the end point of the tunnel built by King Hezekiah to provide Jerusalem with water. 14: Only now does the Gospel mention that it was the Sabbath as in ch 5. 16: The interrogators are here referred to as Pharisees, but in v. 18 as Jews. 17: The man like the Samaritan woman (4.19) declares Jesus to be a prophet based on firsthand experience. 18-34: The Jewish authorities conduct a legal investigation. Whether interrogations or trials were undertaken on the Sabbath in

that he was born blind,²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him, he is of age. He will speak for himself.”²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus^a to be the Messiah^b would be put out of the synagogue.²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.”²⁵ He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”²⁶ They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”²⁷ He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?”²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.”²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”³⁰ The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will.”³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone

opened the eyes of a person born blind.³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”³⁴ They answered him, “You were born entirely in sin, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”³⁶ He answered, “And who is he, sir?” Tell me, so that I may believe in him.”³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.”³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him.³⁹ Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.”⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?”⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

10 “Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit.”² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.³ The

- ^a Gk *him*
- ^b Or *the Christ*
- ^c Other ancient authorities read *the Son of God*
- ^d *Sir* and *Lord* translate the same Greek word

the first century is uncertain, but unlikely; later rabbis explicitly forbid courts to be in session on the Sabbath (cf. *Sanh.* 4.6). ²¹ Traditionally, a male comes of age at thirteen (“bar mitzvah”) though in this instance the parents are merely pointing out that their son is an adult and therefore capable of explaining his own situation. ²² It is difficult to know what is meant here. Exclusion of Christ-confessors from the synagogue would be anachronistic for the time of Jesus, and for that reason the verse has often been understood as a reference to the historical experience of the Johannine community at the end of the first century CE. It is understood not as a one-time event but as a type of excommunication that would involve not only the exclusion from participation in worship services but also social ostracism. Yet this interpretation is problematic on many grounds (see Introduction), and whether it has any historical referent at all cannot be demonstrated. ²⁴ *Give glory to God*, i.e., do not credit Jesus with the healing. ²⁸ This passage sets up a contrast between the disciples of Jesus and the disciples of Moses. There is no evidence, however, that Jews referred to themselves as disciples of Moses. ³¹ That Jesus could heal the man is evidence that he is not a sinner. ³² In the book of Tobit, however, the protagonist is healed of blindness by his son Tobias (Tob 11.11). ³⁴ *Born entirely in sin* likely refers back to v. 2 and the common belief that congenital blindness is somehow related to the sin of the man or his parents, a view that Jesus rejects (vv. 3–4). ³⁸ Bowing in worship is a biblical response to a theophany; cf. Gen 17.3–39–41; Comments on the literal and figurative meanings of blindness and sight echo 9.5. *Become blind*, see Isa 6.9–10.

10.1–42: Good shepherd discourse. 1–6: A figure of speech (v. 6 comparing Jesus to a good shepherd). 1.8: The thieves and bandits may be a reference to the Jewish leadership though this is not certain. 2: The passage alludes to biblical shepherds such as Moses (Ex 3.1); David (e.g., 2 Sam 5.2); and God (Ps 23). 3: The language (*hear his voice, calls his own sheep by name, leads them out*) recalls 5.5 and anticipates 11.43. This may be an at-

gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.”⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.”⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them.⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”¹² The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.¹³ The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep.¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep.¹⁶ I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power

to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

¹⁹ Again the Jews were divided because of these words.²⁰ Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is out of his mind. Why listen to him?”²¹ Others were saying, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

²² At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon.²³ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah,^b tell us plainly.”²⁵ Jesus answered, “I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name testify to me;²⁶ but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep.”²⁷ My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand.²⁹ What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father’s hand.³⁰ The Father and I are one.”

³¹ The Jews took up stones again to stone him.³² Jesus replied, “I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these are you going to stone me?”³³ The Jews answered, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you, but for blasphemy,

- ^a Other ancient authorities read *has taken*
- ^b Or *the Christ*
- ^c Other ancient authorities read *My Father who has given them to me is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of the Father’s hand*

lusion to the “narrowing of hell,” the idea that Jesus spent the days between his crucifixion and resurrection in Hades bringing the dead to faith (1 Pet 3.19, as interpreted in the Apostles’ Creed, *Gos. Nic.*). ⁷ *I am the gate*, the figure changes from the one who calls to his sheep to the one who is the means by which they are brought in. ¹⁰ *Life . . . abundantly*, i.e., eternal life. ¹² The *hired hand* may refer to the Jewish leadership (see Ezek 34.1–10). *Wolf, evil*; a more specific referent cannot be determined. ¹⁶ *Other sheep* may refer to Gentile followers. ²² *Festival of the Dedication*, Hanukkah (beginning on 25 Chislew, a date that falls in December), commemorating the rededication of the Temple (164 BCE), after it had been desecrated by the Seleucid king Antiochus IV (1 Macc 4.52–59). It is unclear clear how this feast was observed in the first century. ³⁰ Jesus reiterates his unity with God, which the Jews see as blasphemy (v. 53). ³¹ *Took up stones*, in biblical and rabbinic law, stoning is the prescribed penalty for blasphemy (Lev 24.16; *m. Sanh.* 7.4). It is difficult to know, however, what exactly constituted blasphemy in the late first century. The context suggests, however, that Jesus’ utterances, here, and elsewhere (e.g., 5.17) are seen by the Johannine Jews as a violation of monotheism, that

because you, though only a human being, are making yourself God.”³⁴ Jesus answered,

“Is it not written in your law,³⁵ ‘I said, you are gods’?³⁶ If those to whom the word of God came were called ‘gods’—and the scripture cannot be annulled—³⁶ can you say that the one whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world is blaspheming because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’?³⁷ If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me.³⁸ But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand³⁹ that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.”³⁹ Then they tried to arrest him again, but he escaped from their hands.

⁴⁰ He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing earlier, and he remained there.⁴¹ Many came to him, and they were saying, “John performed no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true.”⁴² And many believed in him there.

11 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.¹ Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill.² So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.”³ But when Jesus heard it, he said, “This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”⁴ Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus,⁵ after two days longer in the place where he was, having heard that Lazarus⁶ was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”⁸ The disciples said

to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?”⁹ Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world.”¹⁰ But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.”

¹¹ After saying this, he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.”¹² The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.”¹³ Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep.¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.¹⁵ For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”¹⁶ Thomas, who was called the Twin,¹⁷ said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

¹⁸ When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus¹⁹ had already been in the tomb four days.²⁰ Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles²¹ away,²² and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother.²³ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.²⁴ Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my

- ^a Other ancient authorities read *in the law*
- ^b Other ancient authorities lack *and understand*; others read *and believe*
- ^c *Gk him*
- ^d *Gk he*
- ^e *Gk Didymus*
- ^f *Gk fifteen stadia*

brother would not have died.²⁵ But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.”²⁶ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”²⁷ Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”²⁸ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life.²⁹ Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,³⁰ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”³¹ She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah,³² the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

³³ When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.”³⁴ And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.³⁵ Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him.³⁶ The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there.³⁷ When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”³⁸ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.³⁹ He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.”⁴⁰ Jesus began to weep.⁴¹ So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”⁴² But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

⁴³ Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.⁴⁴ Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.”⁴⁵ Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”⁴⁶ So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me.”⁴⁷ I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.”⁴⁸ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”⁴⁹ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”⁵⁰ Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.⁵¹ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done.⁵² So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council, and said, “What are we to do? This man is performing many signs.⁵³ If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place⁵⁴ and our nation.”⁵⁵ But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all!

- ^a Other ancient authorities lack *and the life*
- ^b *Or the Christ*
- ^c *Or our temple, Greek our place*

is, of the fundamental belief in the one, unique God of Israel. 33: Good work, perhaps a reference to healings. 34: Your law, see 8:17n. ¹ said, you are gods, see Ps 82:6. This is Jesus’ answer to the charge that he is making himself God (v. 33): it is God who has consecrated him as God’s son. This is consistent with the biblical and Second Temple idea that certain people such as Jeremiah (Jer 1:5), the priests (2 Chr 26:18) or Moses (Sir 45:4) are chosen to do God’s work. 41–42: John the Baptist’s testimony cited as corroborating Jesus’ claims (see 1:19–28, 3:27–30). 11:1–57: Sixth sign: raising of Lazarus and its aftermath. 1: Lazarus, Gk “Eleazar” (see also Lk 16:20–25). Bethany, a village near Jerusalem. Mary and Martha, see Lk 10:38–42. 2: This reference anticipates 12:1–3. 3: Lord, as elsewhere depending on context could be translated “Sir.” 4: As in 9:3, Lazarus’ illness is an opportunity to demonstrate Jesus’ relationship to God. 5: Deliberately ignoring the expectation, Jesus remains where he is, apparently to make sure that Lazarus is dead and buried. According to some rabbinic sources (e.g., Gen. Rab. 50:10) and some non-Jewish belief systems (e.g., Zoroastrianism), the spirit hovers near the body for three days. This view may have been known to the Gospel writer or the traditions that he used, as he has Jesus approach the tomb only on the fourth day (v. 17): 8. The disciples fear for Jesus’ life. 11: Asleep . . . awakened, metaphors for death and resurrection (cf. Dan 12:2). 19: In contrast to the parents of the man born blind (9:22), Mary and Martha are unafraid to

be known as Jesus’ followers. The presence of many Jews with them implies that they are engaged in a somewhat ritualized mourning observance, but it is unclear whether the formal practice of “sitting shiva” (observing a week of home-based mourning during which time others come to console the mourners) was already in existence at the time. 24: Pharisees believed in bodily resurrection (Aint. 18:4; see Dan 12:1–3; 2 Macc 7:9), whereas Sadducees did not (Mk 12:18). 25–27: Jesus reveals his identity as the resurrection and the life. God’s gift of new existence (cf. 20:30–31). 33–35: Here (repeated in v. 38) and 13:21 are the only passages in which the Gospel ascribes emotion to Jesus. 39: The references to the stench in the tomb emphasize that Lazarus is really and truly dead, and therefore stresses in anticipation the marvel of his return to life. 40: Glory, bringing Lazarus back to life is a manifestation of God’s glory, a term associated with divine splendor (11:4). 41: Jesus prays to show that the resurrection of Lazarus manifests God’s power, not Jesus’. 43: Jesus calls Lazarus by name (cf. 5:25; 10:4). Lazarus’s revival foreshadows Jesus’ own (chs 20–21). 44: In the first century, Jews were buried in linen shrouds and their bodies laid in a sealed tomb so that the flesh would decompose. After a period of eleven months, the tomb would be unsealed, and the bones would be placed in an ossuary (bone box) and stored on a shelf in the tomb. 47: The council, perhaps the Sanhedrin. 48: The fear on the part of the authorities is that the Romans will see Jesus’ activities as tantamount to being a claim as king, and they will therefore crush not only Jesus’ followers but the religion of the Jewish peo-

⁵⁰ You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed.” ⁵¹ He did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, ⁵² and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God. ⁵³ So from that day on they planned to put him to death.

⁵⁴ Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews, but went from there to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness; and he remained there with the disciples.

⁵⁵ Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. ⁵⁶ They were looking for Jesus and were asking one another as they stood in the temple, “What do you think? Surely he will not come to the festival, will he?” ⁵⁷ Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where Jesus^a was should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

12 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ² There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³ Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus’ feet, and wiped them^b with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵ “Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii^c and the money given to the poor?” ⁶ (He said this not because

he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷ Jesus said, “Leave her alone. She bought it^d so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.”

⁹ When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, ¹¹ since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

¹² The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting.

“Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—

the King of Israel!”
¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

¹⁵ “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!”

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done

^a Gk. *he*

^b Gk. *his feet*

^c Three hundred denarii would be nearly a year’s wages for a laborer

^d Gk. *she bought it*

to him. ¹⁷ So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify. ¹⁸ It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him. ¹⁹ The Pharisees then said to one another, “You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!”

²⁰ Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” ²² Philip went and told Andrew, then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³ Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵ Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

²⁷ “Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—I fear, save me from this hour? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” ²⁹ The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” ³⁰ Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people^b to myself.” ³³ He

said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. ³⁴ The crowd answered him, “We have heard from the law that the Messiah^c remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” ³⁵ Jesus said to them, “The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.”

After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them. ³⁷ Although he had performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in him. ³⁸ This was to fulfill the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

“Lord, who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

³⁹ And so they could not believe, because Isaiah also said,

⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they might not look with their eyes, and understand with their heart and turn—

and I would heal them.”

⁴¹ Isaiah said this because^d he saw his glory and spoke about him. ⁴² Nevertheless many, even of the authorities, believed in him. But

^a Other ancient authorities read *with him began to testify that he had called... from the dead*

^b Other ancient authorities read *all things*

^c Or *the Christ*

^d Other ancient witnesses read *when*

ple, including their Temple. ⁴⁹ Caiaphas, high priest between 18–36 ce. (Ant. 18.90–95). 50–52: The evangelist emphasizes that Caiaphas’s statement is, ironically, truer than he knows. *Dispersed children*, either the Jews of the Diaspora, those who live outside Judea, or the non-Jewish members of the Christian community. 54: Ephraim, twelve miles north-northeast of Jerusalem. 55: The third Passover in this Gospel. *Before the Passover to purify themselves*, i.e., those who had to travel allowed extra time for a purification rite in case they had encountered anything in their journey that might have made them ritually unclean.

12.1–11: Anointing at Bethany (Mk 14.3–11). 1: *Bethany*, 11.18. 2: In Lk 10.38–42, Martha serves and Mary sits at Jesus’ feet. 3: A Roman pound, 327.45 grams (11 or 12 ounces). *Nard*, oil of a plant, the spikenard, the rhizomes of which can be crushed to extract an aromatic oil used as perfume; cf. Mk 14.3. 5: A denarius was approximately one day’s wages for a laborer. 7: Jesus interprets Mary’s act as foreshadowing his death. 8: Deut 15.11. 10–11: The Jewish leaders are motivated not only by political concerns (see 11.50) but also by the number of Jews that were deserting them. This formulation suggests that one could no longer be both a “Jew” and a follower of Jesus.

12.12–19: Triumphal entry (Mt 21.1–9, Mk 11.1–10, Lk 19.28–38). 13: *Hosanna*, Heb meaning “please save,” “save now,” most directly associated with the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths) (see 7.37–39n.). Ps 118.26, *King of*

Israel is absent from the psalm. 15: Zeph 3.16; Zech 9.9. 16: The disciples do not fully understand this event until after Jesus’ resurrection (2.22). 19: The Jewish leaders’ concern over Jesus’ popularity continues to mount. **12.20–50: End of Jesus’ public ministry.** 20: *Greeks*, likely Gentiles rather than Greek-speaking Jews (cf. 7.34–35). 21–22: Would-be followers initially encounter Jesus indirectly, through someone who is already a disciple. They may approach Philip because his name is Greek (“horse-lover”). 23: *The hour has come*, perhaps a foreshadowing that the Gospel will be preached to “Greeks” (i.e., Gentiles). 24–25: Jesus apparently refuses to meet with the Greeks. On grain imagery, see 1 Cor 15.36. 28: *A voice... from heaven*, a rabbinic term was Heb “bat qol,” “daughter of the voice” or “echo,” (cf. 11.41). 29: Cf. the Israelites’ response at Mount Sinai (Ex 19.18–19). Heb “qol,” at Sinai (esp. Ex 19.19), may be voice or thunder as well. 31: The trial motif concludes. *Ruler of this world*, the devil (14.30; 16.11). 34: *Law* refers to Torah in this context. The reference may be to Ps 89.36 saying that David’s seed remains forever; the psalm is interpreted messianically in Acts 13.22 and Rev 1.5; 3.24. 38: Isa 53.1. 40: Isa 6.10. The quotations are used to explain why the Jews as a whole did not recognize Jesus as the messiah, though individual Jews did do so. In the original the second quotation is in the imperative (“Make... blind,” “Harden... heart”). 42: See 9.22. Pharisees do not in fact run synagogues.

because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;⁴³ for they loved human glory more than the glory that comes from God.

⁴⁴Then Jesus cried aloud: "Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me.⁴⁵ And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.⁴⁶ I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness.⁴⁷ I do not judge anyone who hears my words and does not keep them, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.⁴⁸ The one who rejects me and does not receive my word has a judge: on the last day the word that I have spoken will serve as judge.⁴⁹ For I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak.⁵⁰ And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I speak, therefore, I speak just as the Father has told me."

13 Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.² The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God,⁴ got up from the table,⁵ took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself.⁶ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.⁷ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"⁸ Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am

doing, but later you will understand."⁹ Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me."¹⁰ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"¹¹ Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet,¹² but is entirely clean. And you¹³ are clean, though not all of you."¹⁴ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹⁵After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?"¹⁶ You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am.¹⁷ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.¹⁸ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.¹⁹ Very truly, I tell you, servants²⁰ are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them.²¹ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.²² I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But it is to fulfill the scripture, "The one who ate my bread²³ has lifted his heel against me."²⁴ I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he.²⁵ Very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me."²⁶

²⁷After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "Very truly, I tell you,

^a GK from supper

^b Other ancient authorities lack except for the feet

^c The Greek word for you here is plural

^d GK slaves

^e Other ancient authorities read *are bread with me*

^f GK I am

^{44-50:} Jesus here claims that his authority, his offer of eternal life and salvation, and the judgment that he announces, are not from himself but from God.

^{13-18:} Final dinner. ^{1:} Passover begins here on Friday night, in contrast to in the Synoptics, where it begins on Thursday (see Mt. 26:77; Mk. 14:12–16; Lk. 22:15). This "supper" is not a Passover meal—it lacks the paschal lamb, and there is no institution of the Eucharist (contrast Mt. 26:26–29; Mk. 14:22–25; Lk. 22:13–20). ^{2:} The devil ... Judas, Jesus makes one more appeal to Judas (v. 27), after which Judas leaves to begin his betrayal. ^{5-10:} The foot washing is unique to John, and it indicates that members of the community should be willing to perform acts of service for one another. The foot washing was not an act of hygiene but a ritual act of purification. ^{13:} Teacher ... Lord, both one who offers instruction and insight and one who acts with authority. ^{14:} The foot washing was an exemplary act of humility. ^{16:} See Mt. 10:24; Lk. 6:40. ^{18:} Ps. 41:9. ^{20:} Receives ... whom I send,

one of you will betray me."²⁸ The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking.²⁹ One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him;³⁰ Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking.³¹ So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?"³² Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish."³³ So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot.³⁴ After he received the piece of bread,³⁵ Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do."³⁶ Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him.³⁷ Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor.³⁸ So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

³⁹When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him.⁴⁰ If God has been glorified in him,⁴¹ God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.⁴² Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'⁴³ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.⁴⁴ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

an apostle (Gk. "one who is sent") is a full representative of the sender. ^{22:} The identity of Jesus' betrayer is not known to the other disciples. Cf. Mt. 26:21; Mk. 14:17. ^{23:} The first appearance of the anonymous "beloved disciple," but apparently Jesus' closest disciple and the eyewitness who "wrote" the Gospel; cf. 19:25–27; 20:2; 21:1–14, 20–24. From this point on, the Gospel subordinates Peter to the beloved disciple in their relationship to Jesus and leadership of the disciples. ^{30:} Night, see 3:19. ^{31:} Now ... glorified, the events are now underway. ^{34:} New commandment, the commandment (Gk. "entolē," in LXX for "mitzvah," "commandment, order") is not "new" in the sense of not having been given before; Lev. 19:34 enjoins love of one's fellow and of the stranger (see "The Concept of Neighbor," p. 540). "Hillel would say, Be of the followers of Aaron, loving peace, pursuing peace, loving your fellow human beings and bringing them to Torah" (Jm. Avot 1.12). Instead, it is part of the new life to which the disciples are invited (14:15; 15:12–17). ^{36–38:} Mt. 26:33–35; Mk. 14:29–30; Lk. 22:33–34. ^{38:} See 18:15–27.

^{14-16:} 33: Farewell discourses. ^{2:} My father's house implies that eternal life pertains to another realm. There may be an allusion here to the Jewish "hekhalot" ("palaces") tradition, involving stories in which a seer visits the heavenly realm and explores its different rooms (based on the chariot vision in Ezek. 1, and in such works as 1 En. 17, 18). More immediately, the verse also alludes to the Temple, which Jesus called his Father's house in 2:16 and to the son/s slave contrast in 8:35. ^{6:} The way, a summary of Johannine Christology. Christ-believers called themselves "the Way" (Acts 9:2). Truth ... life, knowledge of truth is more like a personal relationship, instead of

³⁶ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterward."³⁷ Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."³⁸ Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times."

14 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe^a in God, believe also in me.² In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?"³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going."⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and

^a GK dipped it

^b Other ancient authorities read *Judas Iscariot son of Simon*; others, *Judas son of Simon from Kanyot* (Kenoth)

^c GK After the piece of bread

^d Other ancient authorities lack *If God has been glorified in him*

^e Or You believe

^f Or If it were not so, I would have told you, for I go to prepare a place for you

⁹ Other ancient authorities read *Where I am going you know, and the way you know*

the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know^a my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

⁸Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." ⁹Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?' ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me^b for anything, I will do it."

¹⁵"If you love me, you will keep^c my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,^d to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in^e you."

¹⁸"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal

myself to them." ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?" ²³Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me."

²⁵"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate,^d the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. ²⁸You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you. If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I.' ²⁹And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe. ³⁰I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; ³¹but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us be on our way."

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every

- ^a Other ancient authorities read *If you had known me, you would have known*
- ^b Other ancient authorities lack *me*
- ^c Other ancient authorities read *me, keep*
- ^d Or *Helper*
- ^e Or *among*

an intellectual experience. No one . . . *except through me*, the basis for exclusive claims in later Christian history. 7-11: To "see" Jesus is not a visual experience but one of personal knowledge; therefore to know Jesus and to understand his life is to understand and know the life of God. 12-14: *Works* means not just "signs" but Jesus' willingness to offer his life (15.13). *In my name*, in accordance with my true character. 15: Jesus, like Moses, has given commandments, which are now central to the covenantal relationship between the believer and God. (See "The Concept of Neighbor," p. 540.) 16-17: The community will receive an Advocate (Gk "parakletos," "one who stands beside," a supporter or comforter), who is the Spirit of truth. This passage influenced later Christian thought about the nature and role of the Holy Spirit. 20: John's Gospel suggests that Jesus is equivalent to God (10.30) and that Jesus is God's son and agent (6.38). 22: *Judas*, apparently two disciples had this name; see Lk 6.16; Acts 1.3. 30: *The ruler of this world*, Satan (cf. 12.31; 16.11). For John's Gospel, the Jews, who plotted Jesus' death, are Satan's agents (cf. 8.44). 31: The discourse seems to be at an end, yet Jesus continues to speak for three more chapters.

branch that bears fruit he prunes^a to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed^b by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become^c my disciples. ⁹As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹²"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants^d any longer, because the servant^d does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in

- ^a The same Greek root refers to pruning and cleansing
 - ^b Or *be*
 - ^c Gk *slaves*
 - ^d Gk *slave*
 - ^e Gk *were of the world*
 - ^f Gk *Slaves*
 - ^g Or *Helper*
- my name. ¹⁷I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another. ¹⁸"If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹If you belonged to the world,^e the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. ²⁰Remember the word that I said to you, 'Servants^f are not greater than their master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. ²¹But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. ²²If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³Whoever hates me hates my Father also. ²⁴If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not have sin. But now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. ²⁵It was to fulfill the word that is written in their law, 'They hated me without a cause.' ²⁶"When the Advocate^g comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. ²⁷You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning."

Jesus and his followers do not go out until 18.1, perhaps indicating that two or more sources have been combined into one final speech. 15.4-6: *Vine*, a common image for God's people; see Isa 5.1-10. 3: *Cleansed*, or "pruned" (see translators' note *d*). The image is of the necessary cutting back on a vine so that it will produce fruit. 5: *Vine . . . branches*, the branches are part of the vine; the comparison is not "stem" and "branches." 6: The wood of the vine cannot be put to any other use if it does not produce fruit. See also Mt 3.10. 12: The notion of dying for one's friends is also expressed in Aristotle's extensive comments on friendship in the *Nicomachean Ethics* 9.10-9.16. 16: *I chose you*, probably not an expression of predestination, but of Jesus' calling his followers (e.g., 1.43). 18-25: Prophecy of persecution perhaps intended to help the Johannine community through a time of difficulty. The world is both the opposition to the work of Jesus and the community of his followers, and the area where that work takes place (17.15-18). 22-24: Those who knew Jesus and saw his works cannot claim ignorance as an excuse for their opposition to him. 24: Allusion to 9.39-41, implying that the Jews are agents of persecution. 25: *Law*, used by extension of the entire Bible, since the quotation is not from the Torah but from Ps 35.19; 69.4. The opponents of Jesus do not understand their own law. 26: *Advocate*, see 14.15ff. 27: *Testify*, presumably in public.

16 "I have said these things to you to keep you from stumbling. ² They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God. ³ And they will do this because they have not known the Father or me. ⁴ But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them.

"I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵ But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. ⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate^a will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about^b sin and righteousness and judgment;^c about sin, because they do not believe in me;¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer;¹¹ about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

¹² "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁶ "A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me." ¹⁷ Then some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by

saying to us, 'A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'; and 'Because I am going to the Father?' ¹⁸ They said, "What does he mean by this 'a little while'?" ¹⁹ Jesus knew that what he is talking about."²⁰ Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Are you discussing among yourselves what I meant when I said, 'A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me?' ²⁰ Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy." ²¹ When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. ²² So you have pain now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. ²³ On that day you will ask nothing of me.^c Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴ Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

²⁵ "I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures, but will tell you plainly of the Father. ²⁶ On that day you will ask in my name. I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf,^d for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from

^a Or *Helper*
^b Or *convict the world of*
^c Or *will ask me no question*
^d Other ancient authorities read *Father, he will give it to you in my name*

16:1–4a: Synagogue expulsion (9:22; 12:42). 2: Those who kill you, a general reference, but in context a suggestion that Jews will kill Jesus' followers. 4: Their hour could mean either the hour of the opponents' ascendancy (Lk 22:53) or the hour of seeming defeat that is actually triumph (17:1). 4b–14: The Paraclete (see 14:15ff.), 8–11: Sin is here the failure to believe or trust in Jesus and therefore to separate oneself from God; righteousness is Jesus' reunion with the Father, which the opponents do not acknowledge; judgment is the recognition that the power of opposition and evil that organizes this world has already been deposited. 12–14: These statements about the Spirit and the Father were important in the later development of Christian doctrine about God as Trinity. 16: A little while, perhaps an indication that the end is near; cf. Hag 2:6, 20–22: Apocalyptic imagery prophesying the end times. Woman . . . labor, see Isa 21:3, 42:14, 25–28: Jesus speaks plainly of his death and return to the Father, and the state of being he occupied before coming into the world (cf. 1:1–18).

God. ²⁸ I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father."

²⁹ His disciples said, "Yes, now you are speaking plainly, not in any figure of speech! ³⁰ Now we know that you know all things, and do not need to have anyone question you; by this we believe that you came from God." ³¹ Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? ³² The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. ³³ I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!"

17 After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all people,^b to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶ "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me is from you,^c for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁸ I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹ And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father,

protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

¹² While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost,^d so that the scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.^e ¹⁴ I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵ I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.^f ¹⁶ They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

²⁰ "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word,²¹ that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us,⁹ so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one. ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

^a Other ancient authorities read *the Father*
^b Gk *fish*
^c Other ancient authorities read *protected in your name those whom*
^d Gk *except the son of destruction*
^e Or *among themselves*
^f Or *from evil*
⁹ Other ancient authorities read *be one in us*

17:1–26: Jesus' prayer. Jesus addresses God on behalf of his followers (Mt 6:9–13; Lk 11:2–4). In Mt and Lk, Jesus teaches his followers how and what to pray; here he prays for himself and on their behalf. 3: Eternal life, defined as faith in Christ. 4: Glorification refers to the revelation of God's power and expresses Jesus' desire to return to the Father. 5: Before the world existed, see 1:1–3; 8:58. 12: Destined to be lost, Judas Iscariot. 15: Evil one, Satan. 17: Truth, see 8:32; 14:6. 24: Foundation of the world, Jesus' preexistence (1:1–18).

²⁵ "Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me." ²⁶ I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

18 After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. ² Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. ³ So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. ⁴ Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" ⁵ They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." ⁶ Jesus replied, "I am he." ⁷ Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. ⁸ When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. ⁹ Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." ¹⁰ Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. ¹¹ So if you are looking for me, let these men go." ¹² This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." ¹³ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. ¹⁴ Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

¹⁵ So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him.

18:1-19:42: Passion narrative (Mt. 26:30-27:61; Mk 14:26-15:47; Lk 22:39-23:56).

18:1-40: Arrest and trial. 1. *Kidron valley*, east of Jerusalem. A garden, called Gethsemane in Mt. 26:36; Mk 14:32-3. Jesus' arrest was carried out by Roman and Jewish police. Pharisees would not have had their own police; perhaps the Pharisees came along with the Temple police. 5. Double entendre. Jesus identifies himself with the "I am" formula (Ex 3:14; cf. Jn 6:35; 8:58). 6. *Fall to the ground*, perhaps suggesting a theophany. 9: Cf. 6:39; 10:26; 17:12. Jesus' words, throughout the Gospel, are viewed as prophecies, with the same authority as the scriptures. 10: Mt 26:51-52; Mk 14:47; Lk 22:50. Only John names perpetrator (Peter) and victim (Malchus). 11: *Drink the cup*, see e.g., Isa 51:17; Ps 16:5; Lam 4:21. 13: *Annas*, high priest 6-15 CE. 14: Cf. 11:49-52. 15-27: Peter's interrogation by the high priest's slaves and police is interwoven with Jesus' interrogation before Annas. 15: *Known to the high priest*, suggesting a Temple connection, but one that is not specified. Peter's unwillingness to admit that he is Jesus' follower fulfills Jesus' prophecy in 13:38. 20: See 7:14-37; 8:20n, 59. Such passages demonstrate Jesus' assertion that he has spoken openly in the Temple and synagogue. 24:

¹³ First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. ¹⁴ Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

¹⁵ Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, ¹⁶ but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. ¹⁷ The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." ¹⁸ Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

¹⁹ Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰ Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. ²¹ Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." ²² When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" ²³ Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" ²⁴ Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

^a Gk *the Nazorean*

^b Gk *I am*

^c Gk *he*

²⁵ Now Simon Peter was standing and warning himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." ²⁶ One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" ²⁷ Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

²⁸ Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. ²⁹ It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, ³⁰ so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover.

³¹ So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" ³² They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." ³³ Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." ³⁴ This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

³⁵ Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" ³⁷ Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" ³⁸ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being

handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." ³⁹ Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." ⁴⁰ Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. ⁴¹ But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ⁴² They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ² And the soldiers wore a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. ³ They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. ⁴ Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." ⁵ So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" ⁶ When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." ⁷ The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

^a Gk *the pretorium*.

In contrast to Matthew, John depicts no trial before Caiaphas, which, if any of the Gospel trial accounts is historical, is not possible to determine (cf. Mt 26:57-68). 28: *Avoid ritual defilement*, an ironic statement. "Defilement" could mean touching heaven during Passover or anything associated with a corpse. 31: Jews were not allowed to impose the death penalty; thus Jesus is crucified, a Roman penalty. 33: *King of the Jews*, anyone claiming kingship without Roman permission would have been regarded as a potential or actual insurrectionist. The ruler(s) of the Jewish territories owed their primary loyalty to Rome. 36: *My kingdom is not from this world*, in context, this is an argument against seeing Jesus as a political threat. 38: More irony: Pilate cannot see the truth in front of him. 39: This tradition has no external historical support (cf. Mt 27:15; Mk 15:6; Lk 23:17). 40: *Barabbas* could be translated "son of a [or the] father." *Bandit*, probably meaning a revolutionary rather than a thief.

19:1-16: Condemnation. 1: *Flogged*, Lk 23:22. This was a common penalty (2 Cor 11:23-25), but here was perhaps meant to weaken Jesus' resistance. 2: *Crown*... purple, symbols of kingship used in mockery. 5: *Here is the man*, famous in its Latin version, "Ecce Homo." 6-7: In John it is the Temple party, and not the people as a whole, who call for crucifixion (contrast Mt 27:23); this indicates that John saw the opposition to Jesus primarily in the leadership. 7: *Law*, probably a reference to the prohibition of blasphemy (Lev 24:16), the penalty for which

⁸ Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. ⁹ He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" ¹¹ Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." ¹² From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

¹³ When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat^b on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew^c Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" ¹⁵ They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." ¹⁶ Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus,^d and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew^e is called Golgotha. ¹⁸ There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them.

¹⁹ Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." ²⁰ Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place

where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew,^f in Latin, and in Greek. ²¹ Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" ²² Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." ²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. ²⁴ So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,

and for my clothing they cast lots,"^g and that is what the soldiers did.

²⁵ Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

²⁸ After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a

^a Gk the praetorium

^b Or seated him

^c That is, Aramaic

^d Gk the Nazorean

was death by stoning. ⁸ *Afraid*, perhaps of making the wrong judgment. ¹² The Jews threaten to blackmail Pilate if he releases Jesus. ¹³ *Gabbatha*, an outdoor platform, perhaps meaning "elevated place." It is at this point that Pilate actually renders judgment (previously he has, in effect, been conducting an inquiry). ¹⁴ *Day of Preparation*, when the Passover lambs are slaughtered in the Temple. ^{15–16} When the Jewish leaders affirm the kingship of Caesar, Pilate agrees to have Jesus crucified. The execution will be carried out by Romans.

^{19–17–37} *The crucifixion*. ¹⁷ *Cross*, the crossbeam rather than the entire cross. There is no mention that someone else (Simon of Cyrene, Mk 15:21) carries the cross instead of Jesus. *Golgotha*, likely just outside the city walls to the northwest. ^{19–20} *inscription* . . . in *Hebrew*, in *Latin*, and in *Greek*, it is uncertain whether such inscriptions were usual; this seems mostly to indicate that Jesus' claims were addressed to all who would pass by. ²³ *Tunic*, undergarment. ²⁴ Ps 22:18. In Mk 15:34, Jesus quotes the first verse of this psalm, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ²⁵ *His mother*, unnamed in the Gospel (cf. 2:1). *Mary the wife of Clopas*, perhaps the mother of James and Joses (Mk 15:40). In the Synoptics the women must stand at a distance (Mk 15:40). ²⁸ Ps. 69:21. ²⁹ The only time in the Gospel that Jesus explicitly consumes food or drink. *Hyssop* was used to mark

sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. ³⁰ When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

³¹ Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. ³⁵ (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows^a that he tells the truth.) ³⁶ These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." ³⁷ And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

³⁸ After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. ³⁹ Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing

the doorposts with the blood of lambs at the time of the Passover before the Exodus from Egypt (Ex 12:22). Its mention here may be intended to recall the theme of Jesus as the Passover sacrifice. ³¹ *Day of Preparation*, see 19:14n. The legs of crucifixion victims were often broken to hasten death. In keeping with the sacrificial theme, the fact that Jesus' legs were not broken may have symbolized his suitability as a Passover sacrifice given his unblemished nature, both physical and spiritual (cf. Ex 12:46; Heb 9:14). ³⁴ *Blood and water*, signifying both birth and the rituals of baptism and the eucharistic meal. ³⁶ Ex 12:46; Ps 34:20. Jesus is the Passover lamb, as lambs were slaughtered for the Passover sacrifice (see also 1:29). ³⁷ *Zech 12:10*.

^{19–38–42} *Burial*. ³⁸ *Joseph of Arimathea*, cf. Mk 12:57–60; Mk 15:43; Lk 23:50–53. ³⁹ *Nicodemus*, see 3:1–17; 7:50–52. *Myrrh*, resinous gum mixed with *aloes*, used for embalming; this may recall Jesus' anointing (12:3). A hundred Roman pounds = 75 lbs. ⁴⁰ The explanation implies a non-Jewish audience. ^{41–42} *The garden* is not literally *in the place where he was crucified*, but *nearby*. There was not much time to complete the burial preparations before sunset, when Passover would begin.

^{20–1–31} *Resurrection appearances*. (Mt 28; Mk 16; Lk 24). ^{1–18} *The empty tomb*. ¹ *First day*, Sunday. Mary had to wait until the Sabbath was over. *Mary Magdalene* is named in Mt and Mk; Lk does not name the women at the tomb, but here, Mary Magdalene is alone. ^{3–8} A foot race between the contenders for Jesus' closest disciple. This passage may intimate the Johannine effort to elevate itself over churches who viewed Peter as the principal disciple. ⁸ The "beloved disciple" may have believed the prophecy of Jesus' resurrection, or simply the testimony of Mary Magdalene. ⁹ There is no specific quotation referring to this from the Tanakh.

ing about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹ Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴² And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary

Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed. ⁹ For as yet they did not

^a Or there is one who knows

understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to their homes.

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look^a into the tomb,¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet.¹³ They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him."¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew,^b "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher).¹⁷ Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and she told them that he had said these things to her.

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were

11: The language echoes Song 2.9, 14–16: Mary, possibly through tears, does not recognize Jesus by sight nor by his voice, but she does know him when he speaks her name; perhaps a reference to the shepherd calling the sheep by name (10.3). 15: *Woman*, signaling that Jesus is about to impart a revelation. *Whom are you looking for*, echoes 1.38–17: It is not clear whether Jesus is asking Mary to let go of him or warning her not to touch him. See Song 3.4. *Ascending*, see 14.3; 16.10; Jesus leaves both to return to the Father and to prepare to receive his followers.

20.19–29: Appearances to the disciples. An important theme in this passage is Jesus' postcrucifixion corporeality. On the one hand, he can walk through walls in order to appear in the room with the disciples, suggesting that his body does not have the substance that it had before his death, or that the process of resurrection is not yet complete. On the other hand, he invites Thomas to touch his wounds, implying that he does indeed have a physical body with the same properties as mortal humans do. 19: *Fear of the Jews* is a recurrent theme (7.13; 19.38) and echoes Jesus' prediction that those who believe in him will be persecuted just as he was (16.2–3). *Peace be with you*, traditional greeting (cf. Tob 12.47). 22: *He breathed on them*, giving them new life (cf. 3.5; Gen 2.7). *Spirit*, perhaps alluding to the Paraclete or Advocate (14.16, 26; 15.26; 16.7; compare the account in Acts 2). 23: *Forgive* . . . retain, the authority to decide who can become or remain a member of the community; in Matthew, Jesus grants this power before the crucifixion (Mt. 16.19; 18.18). 24: *Thomas*, also known as the *Twin* and *Doubting Thomas*. Thomas's other statements perhaps express resignation (11.16) or puzzlement (14.5). 28: *Lord* . . . *God*, a full recognition of Jesus' being, as given at the beginning (1.1–14).

locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin^c), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you

a GK lacks to look
b That is, Aramaic
c GK *Didymus*

believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe^d that Jesus is the Messiah,^b the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

21 After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he showed himself in this way.² Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin,^c Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples.³ Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

⁴ Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.⁵ Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No."⁶ He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some."⁷ So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish.⁸ That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea.⁹ But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards^d off.

¹⁰ When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread.¹¹ Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught."¹² So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them;

20.30–31: Conclusion and statement of purpose. 30: *Other signs*, implying that a selection has been made. This book, the Gospel of John. 31: *Come to believe*, or, continue to believe.

21.1–25: Epilogue. On the basis of its content and literary style, this chapter has sometimes been viewed as an addition, written by someone other than the author of chs 1–20. Unlike 7.53–8.11, however, the manuscript evidence does not show that it circulated separately from the rest of the Gospel or that the Gospel originally ended with ch 20. 2: Not a full list of Jesus' disciples; the sons of Zebedee are mentioned here for the first time (cf. Mk 1.19–20). 3: *Fishing*, recalling the prior occupation of the disciples but also symbolizing their new

and though there were so many, the net was not torn.¹³ Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord.¹⁴ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.¹⁵ This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁶ When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs."¹⁷ A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep."¹⁸ He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."¹⁹ Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go."²⁰ (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

²¹ Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?"²² When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about him?"²³ Jesus said

a Other ancient authorities read *may continue to believe*
b Or *the Christ*
c GK *Didymus*
d GK *two hundred cubits*

to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!"²³ So the rumor spread in the community^a that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?"^b

²⁴ This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them, and we

know that his testimony is true.²⁵ But there are also many other things that Jesus did, if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

^a *Gk among the brothers*

^b Other ancient authorities lack *what is that to you*

role of gathering disciples. 7: It is odd that Peter dresses but then jumps into the sea. 9: The passage recalls the multiplication of loaves and fishes in ch. 6. 11: Numerous theories have been proposed to account for the number 153, e.g., Jerome states that Greek zoologists had recorded 153 different types of fish, in which case the number symbolizes the universality of the Gospel's message and mission; Augustine notes that 153 is the sum of all numbers from 1–17; 15–17: The referent of *these* is not certain, Jesus commissions Peter as the leader of his lambs (cf. 10:1–5). The triple question undoes the triple denial (18:17, 25–27). These verses include extraordinary variation in Greek terminology that is not generally evidence in English translation, including two verbs for "to love," "to know," and "to feed or tend." It is not clear that this variation has significance in terms of meaning. 18: This verse contrasts the agility of the young with the infirmity of the old, who cannot even fasten their own belts. 19: This comparison refers to Peter's martyrdom, which will glorify God, to which he will be led by others. This may be a reference to the death of Peter. 23: The beloved disciple has apparently died. This verse corrects the rumor that Jesus had promised him eternal life. 24–25: A second ending to the Gospel, identifying the beloved disciple as the author, or, alternatively, its authoritative witness. *World . . . could not contain the books*, an example of hyperbole that is a common literary convention in first-century Jewish and Greco-Roman literature (cf. Eccl 12:12).

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

TITLE OF BOOK AND MEANING

The Acts of the Apostles (Acts) appears fifth in the canonical order of the books of the New Testament, but most scholars now see it as the second part of a two-volume work (1:1) written by the author of the third Gospel, traditionally identified as Luke. The two works (Luke–Acts) have a common literary style, narrative parallels, and thematic similarities. While the title "Acts of the Apostles" refers in general to all the apostles, the work focuses on Peter and Paul.

AUTHORSHIP

The attribution of Acts to Luke, often considered a physician and companion of Paul (Col 4:14; 2 Tim 4:11; Philem 24), first appears in the second century (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1; 3.14.1; Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.2.2; Clement, *Paed.* 2.1.15; *Strom.* 5.12.82). The author had considerable familiarity with the Septuagint, Jewish customs and institutions such as Sabbath restrictions on travel (1:12), Greek literary traditions (Paul quotes from Greek poets in 17:28), and Roman political structures (e.g., legal proceedings in ch. 24).

DATE

The Gospel of Luke probably alludes to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple (cf. 19:47–48; 21:20–24), which places its composition after 70 CE. While a precise date is impossible to establish, Acts was most likely composed early in the second century CE.

LITERARY HISTORY

Modern scholarship has long debated the historical reliability of Acts. The author describes the writing as an orderly narrative based on careful investigation (cf. Lk 1:3). Several characters, such as the Roman procurator Gallio (18:12) and Judean procurators Felix and Festus (ch. 24), were historical figures. Other details, such as the sailing routes and nautical practices (e.g., 27:9–44), references to Roman law (ch. 24), and, beginning in ch. 16, the frequent use of first-person plural ("we"), may suggest that the author was present at the events narrated or had access to firsthand accounts. It is also possible, however, that these details were included to add verisimilitude to the story. Many of the deeds and words of Peter, Paul, and the other apostles cannot be confirmed, and in several instances the information presented in Acts contradicts what we know from other sources, including the letters of Paul. For instance, the result of the Jerusalem council's decision on the admission of Gentiles to the community, including abstinence from eating "whatever has been strangled" (15:20), in keeping with the Torah's prohibitions of eating carrion (e.g., Lev 17:15), is not borne out in Paul's letter to the Galatians (2:10), which mentions only service to "the poor" as the requirement. Whatever historical information may be present in Acts, the selection of events, their ordering, the content of the speeches, and many of the details were determined by the theological and literary interests of the author.

STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

Acts presents an account of the expansion of the church from its origins among the small group of Jesus' followers in Jerusalem to a movement spread throughout the Roman Empire. The narrative trajectory is summarized in the initial instructions that the resurrected Jesus imparts to his disciples: they should be his "witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (1:8). The action unfolds in two main units. The first, chs 1–12, focuses largely on activities that take place in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria; Peter, the central figure, delivers speeches, performs healings, and, as the climax of this section, baptizes the first Gentile convert, the Roman centurion Cornelius. (Philip had previously baptized an Ethiopian eunuch, 8:26–40, but he is characterized as already worshipping God in Jerusalem.) Beginning in ch. 13, the focus shifts to Paul, his missionary activity in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) and Greece, his arrest by Jewish authorities, questioning before Roman and Jewish authorities, and his journey to Rome, where he is to plead his case before the emperor. Although the author surely knew that Paul was dead, likely killed during Nero's persecution of Jesus' followers in 64 CE, the book concludes with Paul preaching openly in Rome.