

THE DESTINATION AND PURPOSE

OF THE

FOURTH GOSPEL

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Barrett, St John : The Gospel According to St John
 "John" : "John" in Peake's Commentary on the Bible
- Bernard, St John : A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St John
- Braun, Jean le Théologien, I : Jean le Théologien et son Évangile dans l'Eglise ancienne
 Jean le Théologien, II : Jean le Théologien et les grandes Traditions d'Israël et l'Accord des Écritures selon le Quatrième Évangile
 Jean le Théologien, III : Jean le Théologien, sa Theologie
- Brown, John : The Gospel According to John
- Bultmann, John : The Gospel of John : A Commentary
 Theology, I and II : Theology of the New Testament, Volumes One and Two
- Dodd, Interpretation : The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel
 Tradition : Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel
- Grant, Introduction : A Historical Introduction to the New Testament
- Guthrie, Introduction : New Testament Introduction
- Howard, St John : The Gospel According to St John
- Kümmel, Introduction : Introduction to the New Testament
- Lightfoot, St John : St John's Gospel : A Commentary
- Marsh, St John : The Gospel of St John
- Mollat, St Jean : L'Évangile et les Épîtres de Saint Jean (La Sainte Bible)
- Painter, John : John : Witness and Theologian
- Richardson, St John : The Gospel According to Saint John : The Meaning of the History of Jesus
- Robert and Feuillet, Introduction : Introduction to the New Testament
- Sanders, "John" : "John, Gospel of" (IDB)
- Sanders and Mastin, St John : The Gospel According to Saint John
- Schnackenburg, St John : The Gospel According to St John, Vol. 1
- Wikenhauser, Introduction : New Testament Introduction

(Note: Full bibliographical details of the above may be found at the end of this thesis).

Other Abbreviations used frequently:

<u>BJRL</u>	:	<u>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</u>
<u>ICC</u>	:	<u>The International Critical Commentary</u>
<u>IDB</u>	:	<u>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</u>
<u>JBL</u>	:	<u>Journal of Biblical Literature</u>
<u>NovT</u>	:	<u>Novum Testamentum</u>
<u>NTS</u>	:	<u>New Testament Studies</u>
<u>TDNT</u>	:	<u>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</u>

Whatever he may have meant when he claimed that John had written a "spiritual gospel" (πνευματικὸν εὐαγγέλιον) as opposed to the "external/corporeal facts" (τὰ σωματικά) recorded by the other evangelists,⁽¹⁾ it is clear that we did not need a Clement of Alexandria to point out to us that the Fourth Gospel is different in many respects from the other three. Even a cursory reading of it is sufficient to convince one of this.

It is not only the "contents" of the Fourth Gospel that have taxed the skills of exegetes and biblical scholars down through the centuries, simple though the language and style appear to be at first reading; practically everything else that has been said about or claimed for this gospel has been challenged or at least questioned at some time or other. This means that in most areas of Johannine studies there appears to be very little agreement or unanimity on what can definitively be accepted as being the true position. In the absence of such knowledge about what many would consider to be basic questions surrounding the gospel, the scholar can choose one of two possible courses of action. Firstly, he may decide that unless basic questions about the Gospel have been satisfactorily answered and placed beyond reasonable doubt, then there is no advantage to be gained from proceeding further as one's foundations and initial hypotheses would be suspect from the start. This in turn would place a question mark over the value of subsequent findings. On the other hand, the scholar may choose to make certain well-founded assumptions on the basis of all available information. Such "assumptions" will be necessary at times not only about matters that can be classified as peripheral questions, but also about aspects of the gospel that can be considered to be basic to and at the root of our whole understanding of the gospel.

Fortunately most scholars opt for the latter course of action, for it must be accepted that such assumptions are necessary if any progress is to be made in the field of Johannine studies. It is always recognized, of course, that these assumptions may, at a later date, have to be reassessed and even reformulated in the light of any new information that is discovered.

When studying a question such as that of the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel what has been said above is particularly apposite. It is

first of all necessary to clear the ground, so to speak, by stating the position that will be adopted in this thesis on what many scholars would consider to be fundamental questions in the field of Johannine studies. The "assumptions" to be made will, in so far as this is necessary, provide the framework within which the problem under review will be investigated. These "assumptions" will be grouped together under general headings. Their implications and relative importance for the study of the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel will be briefly discussed.

(A) The Text and Structure of the Fourth Gospel

Before scholars can discuss the purpose of any book it stands to reason that there should be general agreement on the text itself, on what constitutes its "contents", and on the proper sequence of the various parts of the book, according to the intention of its author. This general principle also applies in the case of the Fourth Gospel. Unfortunately, however, each of the points mentioned have been contested to a greater or lesser extent at some time or other.

(1) The Text of the Fourth Gospel⁽²⁾

Hoskyns and Davey (The Riddle of the New Testament, 35) point out that the New Testament scholar must have "reasonable confidence that the text of the New Testament has not suffered serious corruption during the fourteen centuries when it was transmitted by scribes. No serious historical work can be undertaken on the basis of texts which may be suspected of being radically corrupt."

It has been the task of textual criticism to uncover as far as possible what may be regarded as the text that approximates as closely as possible to the original. Such a task has not always been easy. But painstaking work by textual critics, especially during the past two centuries, has produced a text of the New Testament that can certainly be considered to be adequate and about which there is general agreement, at least as far as the greater part of it is concerned. However the text is advisedly described as "adequate" because it is still far from being perfect. There are, for example, a number of variant readings where it is possible to regard one reading as being the more probable one or better substantiated textually than another; yet the texts supporting the less favoured reading cannot be dismissed altogether. Schnackenburg (St. John, 182, ff) lists what he considered to be 53 "important variants" in the text of the

Fourth Gospel, which in itself indicates the amount of work to be done by textual critics in this field.

Of the 53 variant readings listed by Schnackenburg the one that could have the greatest bearing on the gospel's destination and purpose concerns the tense of the verb in 20:31, namely ΠΙΣΤΕΨΑΤΕ (present subjunctive) or ΠΙΣΤΕΥΣΑΤΕ (aorist subjunctive). Metzger (A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 256) sums up the implications of this variant reading thus: "The aorist tense, strictly interpreted, suggests that the Fourth Gospel was addressed to non-Christians so that they might come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah; the present tense suggests that the aim of the writer was to strengthen the faith of those who already believe ("that you may continue to believe"). Because of the importance the reading adopted could have on the gospel's destination and purpose we shall return to this discussion in due course."⁽³⁾

Of the other variant readings there are a few that could have an indirect bearing on the Fourth Gospel's purpose in that they shed light on the evangelist's christology and his understanding of the person of Jesus. In this context mention may be made of the following: μονογενης Θεος, ὁ μονογενης Θεος or ὁ μονογενης υἱος in 1:18; ὁ υἱος or ὁ ἐκλεκτος in 1:34; προφήτης or ὁ προφήτης in 7:52.

However, in spite of what appears to be a large number of variant readings the student of the Fourth Gospel can proceed to a study of the text with that "general confidence" in it to which Hoskyns and Davey referred. This is possible because of the large degree of agreement there is among the textual critics as to what the more probable readings are.

(2) Dislocations in the Text⁽⁴⁾

Some scholars are of the opinion that in the course of its transmission certain pages of the Fourth Gospel must have been transposed and as a result the order in which the gospel has been handed down is not the order in which it was written. In an attempt to uncover what they claim to be the correct order of the various sections of the gospel, certain rearrangements of the material have been suggested. The more common of these are:

- the placing of 3:22-30 between 2:12 and 2:13,
- the inverting of chapters 5 and 6,

- the placing of 7:15-24 immediately after chapter 5,
- the placing of 10:19-29 immediately after chapter 9,
- the placing of 12:44-50 between 12:36a and 12:36b,
- the re-arranging of the order of chapters 13 to 16 thus: 13,15,16,14 (Bernard's rearrangement is 13:1-30, 15,16, 13:31-38, 14,17), and
- the rearrangement of the verse order of 18:13-24.

Advocates of these rearrangements point out that the changes they suggest either improve Jesus' itinerary or the flow of the discourses of Jesus and the various discussions. It must be admitted that all these rearrangements do have some merit and because of this it is assumed by some scholars that they reflect better the order and intentions of the original author. Unfortunately, however, we have no means of ascertaining whether this last contention is true or not. In fact there are certain considerations that would make it most unlikely:

- i. there is no textual evidence to support any of the proposed rearrangements except possibly the last mentioned;
- ii. advocates of these rearrangements assume that the evangelist was primarily concerned with the topography and chronology of events. The evangelist's stated purpose was not to write a biography of Jesus but to stimulate belief (20:30-31). Hence, while we may assume that he did not disregard chronological and topographical considerations, at the same time it would seem reasonable to accept that even these were used in the manner best suited to the achieving of the stated purpose;
- iii. as far as the logical development of themes is concerned, there is nothing to prove that this was an essential aspect of Jesus' discourses (or of the evangelist's way of writing). Barrett (St. John, 20) expresses it thus: "his theological thought does not habitually move in straight lines. It is rather his custom to regard a question from one point of view, and then adopt another, sometimes taking up a somewhat different subject between the two treatments." It could, however, be argued that Barrett is merely rationalizing the order of material in the Fourth Gospel as it is known to us. It is these illogical aspects of the treatment of his material by the evangelist as reflected in the state of the present state of the text of the gospel that the advocates of the rearrangements seek to eliminate.⁽⁵⁾
- iv. the argument that displacements occurred as a result of some of the sheets on which the text was written being rearranged

inadvertently but incorrectly is not very sound. Such an argument presupposes that the material on these displaced sheets was of equal length and that the sheets themselves never ended in the middle of a sentence. Even the supposition that the original draft of the gospel was written on sheets is open to question.

Thus, the evidence in favour of dislocations having taken place is not at all convincing, nor is there any compelling reason why the text as we have it today should be rearranged. For this reason such rearrangements appear to be falling more and more into disfavour. Barrett (John, in "Peak's Commentary on the Bible", 845) sums up the more commonly accepted attitude on this question as follows: "The fundamental test by which all such proposed rearrangements must be judged is that of exegesis. If the gospel makes sense as it stands there is no need to alter its order. In fact it is often found that though the changes proposed improve some connections they worsen others, and it is hard to accept any of them as proved." Further, it is highly probable that some element of subjectivity will enter into all such proposed rearrangements. Dodd (Interpretation, 290) puts it thus: "Unfortunately, when once the gospel has been taken to pieces, its reassemblage is liable to be affected by individual preferences, preconceptions and even prejudices. Meanwhile the work lies before us in an order which (apart from insignificant details) does not vary in the textual tradition, traceable to an early period. I conceive it to be the duty of an interpreter at least to see what can be done with the document as it has come down to us before attempting to improve upon it." There are few scholars today who would disagree with this approach of Dodd.

(3) Additions to the Text⁽⁶⁾

(a) 7:53 - 8:11. The Adulteress Pericope

It is generally agreed by scholars that this pericope was not originally a part of the Fourth Gospel. The external evidence in support of this passage's inclusion in the Fourth Gospel appears to be mainly Western in origin. All of the important early Greek uncial manuscripts except one (D) omit it. Further, no Greek commentator during the first thousand years of Christianity makes any reference to it. In the Western Church the evidence for it goes back to the Old Latin versions of the Gospel (b, c, e, ff²) and to Jerome's Vulgate. On the basis of the textual evidence Metzger (The Text of the New Testament, 223, f) concludes that "the pericope

is obviously a piece of floating tradition which circulated in certain parts of the Western Church."

The internal evidence also strongly suggests that the passage was not written by the author of the gospel. For example, in this passage the particle δε is used far more frequently than elsewhere in the gospel. In these twelve verses it appears ten times, whereas in the rest of the gospel it is used only on 202 occasions. The author of the gospel makes greater use of οὖν in similar instances (195 times) whereas οὖν only appears once in 7:53 - 8:11. The usual word for "crowd" in the Fourth Gospel is ὄχλος whereas λαὸς is used in this passage. Again, the word used here for "early" is ὄρθρου, but elsewhere the author shows a preference for πρωί (e.g. 18:28, 20:1). Finally the author of this passage refers to the "scribes", a term not used elsewhere in the gospel. In similar circumstances the author uses the "Jews".

Apart from considerations of style and vocabulary, there are those scholars who note that the theme of the passage is more appropriate to the Synoptic Gospels than to the Fourth Gospel. Indeed there is even some external evidence (Family 13) that situates this pericope after Luke 21:38.

(b) 5:4. The Waters of the Sheep Pool

It is generally accepted that this verse is a gloss of a comparatively late date. Metzger (A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 209) gives the following reasons why it is not usually accepted as being part of the original text of the Fourth Gospel:

- (1) "its absence from the earliest and best witnesses". In fact it makes its first appearance in the Codex Alexandrinus and then in subsequent Greek manuscripts. However it was apparently known to Tertullian (ca. 200 A.D.) in the West while Chrysostom (ca. 400) appears to have been the first Greek writer to have been aware of its existence;⁽⁷⁾
- (2) "the presence of asterisks or obeli to mark the words as spurious in more than twenty Greek witnesses";
- (3) "the presence of non-Johannine words or expressions". In this one verse Metzger lists seven of these; and
- (4) "the rather wide diversity of variant forms in which the verse was transmitted".

Thus, while "this ancient gloss (however) may well reflect with accuracy a popular tradition about the pool" in question (Brown, John, 207) the evidence is strongly against attributing it to the evangelist or to the editor(s)/redactor(s) who were responsible for the gospel in the form in which it was originally handed down.

(c) Chapter 21. The Epilogue

The question of the Epilogue cannot be solved in as clearcut fashion as that of the adulteress pericope. However many scholars believe that this chapter was not written by the evangelist and the implications of such an opinion for the Fourth Gospel as a whole must be mentioned.

The reasons behind this suggestion are of a different nature to those listed above in connection with the adulteress pericope. Firstly, all the textual evidence supports the contention that this chapter was a part of the gospel from the very beginning. And yet, as J. Marsh (St. John, 653) notes, "if there had never been a copy or manuscript of the fourth gospel that contained ch. 21, it would be hard, even for the most inventive and imaginative scholar, to claim that some final chapter was manifestly missing." The reason for this is that 20:30-31 appears unmistakably to be the conclusion to the book; as Bultmann (John, 700) expresses it: "That the evangelist himself added it (i.e. chapter 21), and put it after his first conclusion, then to append yet a second concluding statement (vv.24f), is extraordinarily improbable". Bultmann comes to this conclusion not primarily from a consideration of language and style which he notes "admittedly afford no sure proof" but rather from an examination of the internal features of the chapter as a whole. He accordingly attributes this chapter to a redactor (op. cit., 700, ff). This is a view that is also shared by, according to R. Brown (John, 1080), Michaelis, Dibelius, Lightfoot, Dodd, Strathmann, Schnackenburg, Wikenhauser, Kümmel, Barrett, Goguel and Käsemann. To this list Kümmel (Introduction, 149) adds the names of Albertz, McNeile-Williams, Feine-Behm, Goodspeed, Hirsch, H. Braun, Eckhardt and Teeple.

(d) The Significance of the assumption made in regard to Chapter 21

From the point of view of the question under discussion in this thesis it is important to emphasize that, unlike the adulteress pericope, there is no doubt that Chapter 21 belongs to the Fourth Gospel as the Church has inherited it. The question in dispute, therefore, is not its authenticity

but rather its authorship. Thus while it must be considered to be a part of the original text^{of} the Fourth Gospel at least in the form known to us, the evidence strongly suggests that it was not written by the evangelist who was originally responsible for the composition of the gospel. This means that we must accept that more than one person had a hand in the writing of the gospel. The other person(s) assumed, in all probability, the role of editor(s) and/or redactor(s). Whether it is possible to attribute to the editor(s)/redactor(s) any other parts of the Fourth Gospel, apart from Chapter 21, is a question to which we shall return in the course of our discussion.

At this point it is, however, important to note, because of the effect that it could have on the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose, a possible consequence of accepting what seems to be the well-founded assumption that this gospel is not entirely the work of one person. The consequence in question is this: presuming that the editor(s)/redactor(s) made changes or additions to the Fourth Gospel, they must have done this for a specific reason. This introduces the possibility that the original destination and/or purpose, as intended by the evangelist, has either been supplemented to give to the gospel a wider appeal and meet further needs, or, alternatively, that a completely new destination and purpose have been superimposed upon the gospel. This is a possibility that obviously cannot be overlooked in any discussion of the gospel's destination and purpose.

(B) The Author of the Fourth Gospel⁽⁸⁾

J. Painter (John, 3) notes: "It is a maddening fact that the author of the Fourth Gospel has given no clear indication of his identity." It is "maddening" because, among other things, this question of the identity of the author is (but to an ever-lessening extent) seen by some as being at the very core of what has come to be known as the "Johannine problem". It is a question which, as Schnackenburg (St. John, 75) has put it, "has harrassed theologians and historians, professional exegetes and laymen, down to recent years, and the answer to it is often considered as a confession touching the faith itself, or at least as the assertion of a definite theological standpoint - and demanded from the scholar on these terms". J.N. Sanders in his article on the Gospel of John in the

Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (p.932) explains the point at issue thus: "Conservative scholars have been at pains to uphold its apostolic authorship, and others to deny it, both sides tacitly agreeing that it constituted a bulwark of orthodoxy." He continues, "it has not always been sufficiently realized by both parties to the controversy that to settle the question of its authorship would not necessarily decide that of its value. Even if it could be proved that it was not the work of an apostle and eyewitness of the events it purports to describe, it would not follow necessarily that its testimony is intrinsically inferior to that of the other gospels, and vice versa."

This view expressed by Sanders is, I believe, representative of a trend to put this question of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel into a more realistic perspective. It does, of course, remain an "important" question, but not such a vital one for the progress of Johannine studies. The fact that we do not know the identity of the author of the Fourth Gospel is "maddening" more from the point of view of unsatisfied curiosity than from the genuine need to know.

As far as the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel are concerned, however, knowledge of the identity of the author could have a significant contribution to make in ascertaining what these are. The extent of its contribution would be dependent upon whether or not we have sufficient information about the author himself and his background, e.g. whether he was a Jew or not, whether he was an apostle or disciple of Jesus, where he lived, when he died, the people among whom he laboured, and so on. In reality, however, we do not know very much about any of the candidates that have been proposed for the title of "author of the Fourth Gospel", the apostle John included, though we do know more about him than about the others.⁽⁹⁾

Briefly, therefore, it seems that even if we did know the identity of the author of the Fourth Gospel this fact would not throw much light on the destination and purpose of the gospel. What it is important to note, however, is that the Fourth Gospel, whoever may have been its author, came to be accepted by the Church as a genuine gospel and therefore one that contained an authentic account of the life and teaching of Jesus.

(C) The Place of Composition (10)

As in the case of the identity of the author of the gospel, the place of its composition could also make a significant contribution to our understanding of the destination and purpose of the gospel, depending on the nature and quality of the knowledge about the place and its inhabitants that we possess.

Three cities have in the course of history been proposed as the place of composition. They are Ephesus, Antioch in Syria, and Alexandria. The weight of tradition, however, favours Ephesus. Having said that, it should be remembered that all three cities must have had much in common. They were all great cosmopolitan centres in the Roman Empire and there must have been a regular exchange of news and ideas between them. At the same time each of them must have possessed characteristics that served to distinguish it from the other two. On the intellectual level certain writers were more popular and therefore probably more widely read in one particular city. The name of Philo who lived in Alexandria comes to mind here. Yet the influence of Philo's writings must have spread far beyond his own city.

In view of the comments made above it is doubtful whether knowledge of the actual place of composition would necessarily have a direct bearing on the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel. Something more specific would be required before this would be the case.

It should also be noted that merely knowing the name of the "place of composition" could be misleading when it comes to establishing the gospel's destination and purpose, and this for the following reason. It has been noted above that it is a reasonably well-founded assumption that before the Fourth Gospel began to be circulated it passed through the hands of at least one editor/redactor who made certain additions to it. When one speaks of the "place of composition" one must, therefore, be clear as to whether one is referring to the place where the gospel received its final form, or to the place where the greater part of the gospel may have originated.

It is my opinion that our knowledge about the way in which the gospel as we know it came to be composed is not sufficiently well-established or accurate enough for us to speak in meaningful terms about a "place of

composition". If such a designation implies that the gospel was "composed" in its entirety in one particular place, an assumption of this nature is definitely open to question.

Hence, in the context under discussion in this thesis it is my view that probable places of composition should not be used as a major argument in establishing the purpose of the Gospel or even its destination. If, however, after an analysis of other evidence (both internal and external) it is found that the gospel was, for example, written for a cosmopolitan population such as may have been found in one of the cities mentioned, then it would be legitimate to use the Ephesus tradition as corroborative evidence.

(D) The Date of Composition⁽¹¹⁾

By "date of composition" is meant that date when the final form of the Gospel, as known to the Church, was completed prior to it being circulated.

Until about fifty years ago the terminus ante quem for the Fourth Gospel was generally placed in the second half of the second century. The arguments used in support of this contention were -

- i. the developed nature of the theology of the Fourth Gospel,
- ii. the apparent lack of evidence that the Fourth Gospel was used by the early second century writers, the assumption being that it was therefore unknown to them,
- iii. the claim that the Fourth Gospel was first circulated among Gnostics, with Gnosticism held to be a second century movement, and
- iv. the Fourth Gospel was dependent on the Synoptic Gospels and must have therefore been written after them.

The validity of each of these arguments has been seriously questioned during the past fifty years. However the most conclusive evidence in favour of an earlier dating has been the publication of various papyri texts. The Rylands Papyrus 457 (p52) which contains Jn 18:31-33, 37-38 and which appears to be a fragment of a codex, is generally dated between A.D. 135 and 150. Some scholars would give to it an even earlier date. The Bodmer Papyri II and XV (p66, p75) are dated in the late second or early third century. Finally, Papyrus Egerton 2 is dated about 150 A.D. When taken together the

papyri evidence suggests that the Fourth Gospel was reasonably widely circulated in Egypt in the second half of the second century. It is presumed that in the normal course of events it would have taken a number of years for the gospel to reach such a level and to establish itself. It is interesting to note in this regard that in Tatian's Diatessaron which was written ca. 175 A.D. the Fourth Gospel is treated as the equal of the other three. On the basis of the evidence a terminus ante quem of about 110 A.D. appears to be a reasonable assumption.

To establish a terminus post quem that would enjoy general acceptance is not an easy matter as there is obviously no textual evidence that can be adduced in support of such a date. Attempts to establish such a terminus post quem are usually based upon an examination of the internal evidence. For example, those who accept that the fourth evangelist was directly dependent upon the Synoptic Gospels would postulate a later terminus post quem in all probability than those who argue for the independence of the Fourth Gospel. Further, attempts are made to analyze various events and sayings in the Gospel in the light of contemporary events in an attempt to situate the gospel in a particular time period. But in all of this the approach must to a large extent be hypothetical and conjectural.

In what way, if any, does the date of composition chosen as being the most probable affect the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel? At first sight it might appear that there is no connection between these two questions. However, presuming that the evangelist did have a purpose that was applicable to a specific situation it is clear that the date of composition, if it was verified, would have to be taken into account in determining what the purpose was. In reality this will only apply to the terminus ante quem. As far as the terminus post quem is concerned, this can only be determined only after the purpose of the gospel has been established and its destination identified. Armed with this information one is in a better position to calculate the terminus post quem; without this information all attempts to determine this date will be largely guesswork.

Briefly, therefore, as the calculation of the terminus post quem must remain largely hypothetical in the absence of textual evidence or incontrovertible testimony from other sources, the question of the date of composition can make only a limited contribution to the establishing

of the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel. It does this by setting the outside limit within which the gospel is to be situated.

(E) The "Background" of the Fourth Gospel⁽¹²⁾

(1) Introduction

The problem of the "background of the Fourth Gospel" has become one of the major questions in the field of Johannine studies in recent decades. Wikenhauser (Introduction, 309) expresses it thus: "In the nineteenth century the central problem of Johannine scholarship was the question of authorship; twentieth century efforts to solve the Johannine problem have concentrated on the relationship between Johannine thought and the syncretistic piety of late antiquity."

It cannot be doubted that background is of vital importance for a correct understanding of the Fourth Gospel. In fact it is considered by some to be the key to such an understanding. Guthrie (Introduction, 319) tells us that "the exegesis of the whole book has been considerably influenced by different opinions regarding the milieu of both writer and readers."

Attempts to discover the background of the gospel are concerned with the question of how best to explain those characteristics that are considered to be peculiar to the fourth evangelist's thought. In other words, to which "conceptual world" (Kummel, Introduction, 155) did the evangelist belong?

The answer to this question has proved to be somewhat elusive, a fact proved by the many and widely divergent theories that have been proposed. In the main scholars claim to have detected the influence of -

- i. Hellenistic Thought, especially that of Greek Philosophy (Platonism, Stoicism), Philo, and the Hermetica;
- ii. Palestinian Judaism in the form of the Old Testament, Rabbinic Judaism and Qumran; and
- iii. Gnosticism, especially that of the Mandaeans.

In general scholars recognize that the Fourth Gospel could have been influenced by a combination of the above. In Dodd's view, (Interpretation, 133) for example, "Rabbinic Judaism, Philo and the Hermetica remain our most direct sources for the background of thought, and in each case the

distinctive character of Johannine Christianity is brought out by observing the transformation it wrought in ideas which it holds in common with other forms of religion." Barrett (St. John, 32) also believes that "John sets forth a synthesis of Jewish and Greek thought." In similar vein Bultmann, in his book Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting, has emphasized the syncretistic nature of primitive Christianity in general. In the introduction to this book (p.11) he writes:

"The cradle of primitive Christianity as an historical phenomenon was furnished by late Judaism, which in turn was a development from Hebrew religion as evidenced in the Old Testament and its writings. Yet despite the predominance of the Old Testament and Jewish heritage, primitive Christianity remained a complex phenomenon. At a very early stage in its development it came into contact with Hellenistic paganism, a contact which was to exercise a profound influence on Christianity itself. This paganism was itself equally complex. Not only did it preserve the heritage of Greek culture; it was also enlivened and enriched by the influx of religions from the Near East." (13)

It is apparent that the question of the background of the Gospel is a very complex one. However in this introductory chapter we are only concerned with establishing whether there is any relationship between the gospel's background and its destination and purpose. If it is held that there is such a relationship then the claims of the advocates of the respective schools of thought will be evaluated in the proper context. At this point we must comment on two related yet very distinct aspects of the question of the "background" of the gospel, namely, the evangelist's own background and the environment in which the gospel material itself originated.

(2) The Evangelist's Own "Background"

That the fourth evangelist must have been influenced by the environment in which he was brought up and in which he was living at the time the gospel was composed cannot be doubted. As Hoskyns and Davey (The Fourth Gospel, 18) put it: "The gospel was assuredly written down at a particular time and in a particular place by a man who had ideas, theological ideas, in his head and an experience, a religious experience, in his heart; moreover, he must have had a particular historical background. He must have been born somewhere and lived somewhere, and this cannot be irrelevant for our understanding of his book...".

To what extent these environmental influences affected the destination and purpose of the gospel is by no means easy to ascertain. In the opinion of Dodd (Interpretation, 6) "whatever influences may have been present have been masterfully controlled by a powerful and independent mind. There is no book, either in the New Testament or outside it, which is really like the Fourth Gospel. Nevertheless its thought implies a certain background of ideas with which the author could assume his readers to be familiar".

These questions from Hoskyns and Davey and from Dodd indicate the possible relationships that could exist between the Fourth Gospel and the evangelist's background. That he was influenced in the composition of the gospel by his own background and environment cannot, in my opinion, be doubted. However the extent of this influence would have been dependent in some measure at least upon his purpose in writing and also upon the background of the intended readers of the gospel. If, for example, as has been suggested,⁽¹⁴⁾ the Fourth Gospel was written primarily to satisfy a personal need, then I believe that the logical assumption in this instance would be that the evangelist used the language and concepts with which he was familiar from his own background. If, on the other hand, the gospel was addressed to a specific audience, then it seems to me that the evangelist would have made some attempt to adapt his style and language - presuming that these were different from those of his audience - in an attempt to make his message more appealing to and meaningful for its intended readers. Whether, however, he was completely successful in his attempts to compose his gospel to suit the "conceptual world" of its readers is, of course, another question.

Briefly, therefore, we may summarize the various possibilities concerning the relationship between the "background" of the fourth evangelist and the gospel's "destination" thus:

- (a) if the gospel was written primarily for the benefit of the evangelist himself we may assume that its language and style reflect his own background and environment;
- (b) if the gospel was intended to be read by a specific audience there are two possibilities here, namely,
 - (i) if this audience shared the evangelist's background and environment there would have been no need for him to consciously adapt his language and style, and
 - (ii) if the audience belonged to a "conceptual world"

different from that of the evangelist the assumption is that he would have made some attempt to adapt his gospel accordingly;

- (c) if the evangelist intended his gospel to appeal to as wide an audience as possible, i.e. to people who belonged to different "conceptual worlds", this consideration would also have affected his language and style in that his gospel would have to have been written in a manner that would have been intelligible to all.

(3) The Environment in which the Gospel Material Originated

In addition to the question of the influence of the evangelist's own environment upon the composition of the Fourth Gospel there is another aspect of the problem that must be taken into account, namely, the milieu in which the gospel material originated.

The first thing to remember here is that the gospel is concerned with someone who was known as a Jew and who lived in Palestine at a particular time. It is logical to assume therefore that the events described therein as well as the discussions, controversies and discourses recorded by the evangelist will be situated in a Palestinian and Jewish context irrespective of what the environment and background of the evangelist or of the audience to which the gospel was addressed may have been.

Because it stands to reason, therefore, that the contents of the gospel will have a Palestinian flavouring no matter who its original readers may have been, does this mean that we should totally disregard this aspect of the gospel in determining what its destination was? I do not think so because it is possible that the way in which the evangelist has handled this material could give us a clue to the identity of the gospel's original readers. However an important caveat is in order at this point, namely, the mere presence of "Palestinian" or "Jewish" material in the gospel is not in itself sufficient proof that the readers for whom the gospel was intended shared the same background.

In the course of our discussion in the chapters which follow we shall have reason to discuss some of the material in question with a view to evaluating its importance for the matter under investigation. At this point, however, we must examine the significance of the topographical details to be found in the gospel for possible clues to its background and the conclusions that may be drawn therefrom.⁽¹⁵⁾

Attention has frequently been drawn to the detailed nature and accuracy of the Fourth Gospel's topography. A study of the places named by the fourth evangelist as well as a comparison of the same with those of the Synoptics leads to some interesting conclusions. While the Fourth Gospel mentions two places in Galilee that do not appear in the Synoptics (Cana, Tiberias as another name for the Sea of Galilee) it omits many others that appear in the latter (Gennesaret, Choraizin, Decapolis, Gadara, Caesarea Philippi, Magadan (Magdala), Tyre and Sidon, Nain, Trachonitis, Abilene and Itruraea).⁽¹⁶⁾ At times the fourth evangelist is not content with merely giving the name of a place; he frequently adds some distinguishing feature that will help the reader to situate the place in question. Thus we read of "Bethany beyond the Jordan" (1:28 - this description serves to distinguish this Bethany from the one mentioned in 12:1), "Cana in Galilee" (2:1, 4:46), "Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there" (3:23), "Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph" (4:5), "to the country near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim" (11:54).

However, what probably strikes the reader of the Fourth Gospel most forcibly in connection with the evangelist's topography is his familiarity with and detailed knowledge of Jerusalem in particular, when compared with the details provided by the Synoptics. Like the fourth evangelist the Synoptics refer to Bethany, the Praetorium, the Temple and Golgotha by name. But it is the fourth evangelist who tells us that Bethany was ἔγγυς τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων ὡς ἀπὸ σταδίων δεκαπέντε (11:18). He is obviously familiar with the layout of the Temple, referring as he does to Jesus walking ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἐν τῇ στοᾷ τοῦ ἑσολομῶνος (10:23). In this part of the temple Jesus would have been protected from the severe winds that were a feature of the winter (Howard, *op. cit.*, 448). The evangelist himself tells us that it was winter at the time (10:23). He also knows that the garden, called Gethsemane by the Synoptics, is πέραν τοῦ χειμάρρου τοῦ κεδρῶν (18:1). His use of the word "shows that he knew this was a wadi, the dry bed of a winter torrent" (Howard, *op. cit.*) and therefore easily crossed at that time of the year. His reference to the λιθόστρωτον (Γαββαθα) (19:13) likewise indicates a more than general knowledge of Jerusalem. On two occasions he refers to pools in Jerusalem. In 9:7 he sends the man born blind to wash in the Pool of Siloam, the origin of the name of which he seems to be familiar with. The evangelist also tells us that the Pool of Bethesda is ἐπὶ τῇ προβατικῇ and that it has πέντε στοᾶι (5:2).⁽¹⁷⁾

In recent times much effort has gone into the verification of the accuracy of the topographical details of the Fourth Gospel,⁽¹⁸⁾ as well as the identification of various place-names, e.g. Cana, the town of Ephraim, Aenon near Salim, Sychar.

While there might still be grounds for reasonable doubt about the exact location of many of these places, there is general agreement among scholars that the fourth evangelist's use of place-names must not be interpreted in an allegorical or symbolical manner. For example, it is Dodd's view (Interpretation, 452) that all attempts to extract a profound symbolical meaning out of the various place names "are hopelessly fanciful". Barrett (The Gospel of John and Judaism, 38) likewise maintains that "we may be confident that if John used place names he meant to refer to places and not to allegorical mysteries". K. Kundzin's contention that the Fourth Gospel's interest in topographical details and place names arises from the fact that Christian communities settled there has also been rejected.⁽¹⁹⁾

The fourth evangelist's knowledge of the topography of the city of Jerusalem should be seen against the background of the importance he appears to give to it in his gospel as a whole. Unlike the Synoptics he situates the greater part of Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem and Judaea. For him Jerusalem is the centre of Judaism, the seat of the Jewish authorities; hence Jesus' main work must be carried out here. Because it was the place where the Temple was situated it was to this city that devout Jews would go to celebrate the great feasts of the Jewish calendar.

The fourth evangelist's concentration on Jerusalem and Judaea and the preponderance of topographical details about these places seems, in the opinion of some scholars at least, to indicate that he had a special interest in Southern Palestine as opposed to Galilee, or alternatively, that he was far more familiar with the former than with the latter.⁽²⁰⁾ In fact, some scholars, on the basis of 4:4, have argued that the fourth evangelist considered Judaea to be the true πατρίς of Jesus.⁽²¹⁾ Further, it has been argued that the evangelist's preference for Judaea seems to find an echo in the retort of Nathanael: ἐκ Νυζαρέθ ὄυαται τι ἄγαθὸν εἶναι; (1:46).

What conclusions may be drawn from this brief review of the topography of the Fourth Gospel? The evidence is frequently used to support the view

that the author of the Fourth Gospel was Jewish or at least that the tradition from which he was drawing material had its origin in Southern Palestine. It is, however, one of the premises of this thesis, as we shall show later, that the Fourth Gospel is basically the work of one person. Hence, even if he did draw material from a source or sources he felt free to rework it to suit his own purposes. This observation must also be applied to the topographical details of the Gospel. In other words, if the evangelist saw fit to include the details in his gospel it is not unreasonable to assume that he had a purpose in doing so. Since it is generally agreed that the evangelist was not interested in drawing out allegorical or symbolical meanings we are led to enquire why he included the wealth of topographical detail which he did. The answer to this question involves a consideration of the problem of the original readers of the gospel. For whom would these details have been the most meaningful? There is no reason to believe that they would have had much meaning or importance for people who were not familiar with Southern Palestine in general and Jerusalem in particular. This consideration alone would rule out the large majority of the gentiles, leaving us with the Jews. In this instance, would these details have been intelligible only to the Jews of Palestine or would they also have been meaningful to the Jews of the Diaspora? It seems to me that while the fourth evangelist does presume a knowledge of Jerusalem in his readers the knowledge required is not that which an inhabitant alone would possess. A Jew who made fairly frequent visits to Jerusalem, on the occasion of feasts for example, would have little difficulty in recognizing the places to which the evangelist refers. It could be argued that inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judaea would not have required the descriptive details provided by the fourth evangelist as the name alone should have been sufficient. On the other hand, without a knowledge of the general layout of Jerusalem this information would be meaningless. To illustrate the point that is being made let us turn once more to the evangelist's description of the Pool of Bethesda which, he says, is ἐπὶ τῇ προβατικῇ (5:2). It would seem that the evangelist presumes that his readers know where the προβατικῇ is, whether one translates it "by the Sheep (Pool)" or "by the Sheep (Gate)".⁽²²⁾ This must have been a well-known place which for the evangelist becomes a point of reference in his description. If it cannot be presumed that the readers knew where this place was, then the detail is meaningless. The lack of topographical detail, on the other hand, in 4:20 also supports the view that only the Jews (and Samaritans) would have understood the point at

issue. The Samaritan woman says to Jesus: "Our fathers worshipped on this mountain....". In this instance the evangelist does not even see the need to name the mountain. The only explanation that can be offered for this is that he did not consider it to be necessary as his readers who were familiar with the Jacob tradition would have known to which mountain he was referring.

Our analysis of the topographical information to be found in the Fourth Gospel leads us to conclude that these features would have been most meaningful to Jews. In itself this conclusion is not surprising, especially when seen against the background of the comments we made in the opening paragraphs of this section. By saying that these features would have been most meaningful to Jews we are not, however, thereby implying that they would have been meaningful only to Jews. It is possible that they would have been equally intelligible to that group who were known as "God-fearers" who had become familiar with the topography of Jerusalem in particular by visits to the city. Similarly Gentile Christians who had gone to the trouble of steeping themselves in the traditions of the Old Testament in particular and Judaism in general might have been able to make something of them. However the knowledge required of these people in this instance would, it seems to me, to be beyond that which the evangelist could expect his audience to have if they were Gentiles. This consideration alone is a substantial, though not conclusive, argument in favour of the contention that the author of the material in question had a "Jewish" audience in mind; otherwise one would have expected him to have gone to a little more trouble to make these details intelligible for his readers.

(4) What is meant by the "Destination" of the Fourth Gospel

The points raised in the previous section make it imperative that we should have a clear idea of what we mean by "destination" of the gospel.

Of necessity the term must refer to people, a.v. to the audience to which the gospel was being addressed. It is possible, however, to view this audience in one of two ways depending on which characteristic the primary emphasis is placed. Thus, one may speak of a geographical destination. In this instance the gospel would be seen as being addressed to people living in a particular country, area, or town. The geographical location would play a major role in this view of the gospel's destination. On the other hand it is possible to think of the audience in terms of its

religious affiliations. Here what is the important consideration is the religious beliefs of the people being addressed. On the basis of their beliefs we may group such people into the following general categories: non-Christian Jews, Jewish Christians, non-Christian Gentiles and Gentile Christians. Within these categories further subdivisions are possible and some of these we shall meet in the course of our investigation.

It is important to bear in mind that the two types of destination described above are not mutually exclusive. In fact one presumes the other. For example, a "geographical" destination would necessarily presume an audience among which it is reasonable to assume that some of the people in question would have had various religious beliefs. Similarly, if one wished to emphasize the "religious affiliations" of the gospel's audience it cannot be denied that these people must have lived somewhere. What is important for our purposes, however, is whether both the place where they lived and their religious affiliations or whether only one of these aspects was in the mind of the evangelist when he composed his gospel, influencing his choice of material and the manner in which he treated it.

At this point it is sufficient to note that nowhere in the Fourth Gospel does the evangelist indicate that he has a "geographical" destination in view, nor is there any well-founded tradition in the early Church on this question.⁽²³⁾ In the absence of such information it seems to me that we will be on surer ground if we direct our attempts at uncovering a destination for the gospel in terms of the categories we listed above under "religious affiliations".

(F) The Language in which the Fourth Gospel was Written⁽²⁴⁾

In discussing the background of the Fourth Gospel and the bearing that this could have on its destination and purpose we referred to the language of the gospel as one of the constituent elements of that background. An important aspect of this whole question is, naturally enough, the actual language in which the gospel was originally written. At first sight the answer to this question might appear to be obvious. In reality it is one of those much discussed and debated points of the "Johannine problem" that has taxed the skills of scholars in the present century.

If it is possible to give a satisfactory answer to this question this could give us some information about the evangelist's own background.

Further, in the light of what we have said in the previous section, it could provide us with a valuable indication of the audience to whom the gospel was originally addressed. If, in this way, it is possible to be more precise about the "destination" of the gospel, this in turn would help us to situate its "purpose" in a particular environment. For all of these reasons it is necessary for us to discuss the problem of the language in which the Fourth Gospel was originally written.

The Gospel as we know it is, of course, written in Greek. Barrett (St John, 5) describes it as being "neither bad Greek nor (according to classical standards) good Greek." Nevertheless its style is "highly individual", despite the general impression of simplicity of language a reading of the Gospel conveys. Howard (A Grammar of New Testament Greek, 33), for example, maintained that the author "wrote Greek after the fashion of men of quite elementary attainment." The impression of simplicity is conveyed by the evangelist's use of such features as parataxis and asyndeton as well as by the very limited vocabulary he uses. On this latter point R.M. Grant (Introduction, 149) tells us that "the Gospel of John contains 15,240 words, only 1,011 of them different. Of these, 112 do not occur in any other New Testament book. In proportion to its size, the gospel employs the smallest vocabulary in the New Testament...."⁽²⁵⁾ It is considerations such as these, together with the stylistic characteristics peculiar to the fourth evangelist as isolated by E. Schweizer, E. Ruckstuhl and others⁽²⁶⁾ that have led some scholars to investigate the text of the gospel with a view to establishing whether or not the Gospel may have first appeared in a language other than Greek.

In an attempt to simplify what has become a rather involved and complicated question it is possible to distinguish three main viewpoints in this connection:

- i. that the Fourth Gospel as a whole was translated from an Aramaic original;
- ii. that the Fourth Gospel was originally written in Greek and shows no signs of Aramaic or Semitic influence;
- iii. that sections of the Fourth Gospel were translated from an Aramaic original, or, alternatively, that the whole Gospel shows Semitic influence in its style.

- (i) Although he was not the first to propose that the Fourth Gospel was translated from an Aramaic original, the credit for attempting

to establish this theory on a scholarly foundation must go to C.F. Burney. He it was who clarified the issues by introducing the distinctions between an "Aramaism" (i.e. "any grammatical or syntactical construction which, while abnormal in Greek, is ordinary in Aramaic"), a "Hebraism" (i.e. "a construction which, while abnormal in Greek, is ordinary in Hebrew"), and a "Semitism" (i.e. "a construction which, while peculiar in Greek, is found in both Hebrew and Aramaic").⁽²⁷⁾ In Burney's opinion the Fourth Gospel contains Aramaisms and Semitisms but no Hebraisms; hence, he concludes the author did not set out to imitate the style of the LXX.

Burney paid particular attention to the question of "mistranslations" in his attempts to prove the presence of Aramaisms in the Fourth Gospel. A "mistranslation" in this context refers to the translation in the Greek text of the Fourth Gospel of an ambiguous Aramaic word or construction by the less likely or satisfactory of the possible alternative translations. This presumes that one is able to recognize behind the Greek translation the Aramaic word or construction that has been "mistranslated". One Aramaic word which, according to Burney, was particularly open to being "mistranslated" was the particle $\bar{\text{ܐ}}$ or $\bar{\text{ܐ}}$ which is not only indeclinable but also capable of being translated in a large variety of ways (e.g. as a relative pronoun, to indicate a genitive of relationship, to express purpose, result, cause, to introduce a temporal clause).

In establishing the presence of Aramaisms in the Fourth Gospel (with a view to proving that the gospel was translated from an Aramaic original) Burney admitted that two other considerations had to be taken into account, namely,

- a) that it was possible to find in Koine Greek some of the so-called Aramaisms of the Fourth Gospel; and
- b) that the Fourth Gospel could be a "virtual" translation, as opposed to an "actual" translation from an Aramaic original.⁽²⁸⁾

In his book, The Poetry of Our Lord (1925), Burney also tried to demonstrate that the sayings of Jesus often reveal similarities with Semitic poetry, e.g. in parallelism, rhythm and rhyme.

C.C. Torrey, in his books, The Four Gospels (1933) and Our Translated Gospels (1936), was not so cautious as Burney. For him the mere presence of Aramaisms in the Fourth Gospel (and the other gospels also)

was sufficient proof that it had been translated from an Aramaic original. Nor did he accept that it was necessary to establish the presence of these Aramaisms by proving that they were "mistranslations". Thus he rejects the possibility that a "virtual" translation could account for their presence.

(ii) E.C. Colwell is perhaps the best known propagator of the second viewpoint listed above. In his book, The Greek of the Fourth Gospel (1931), he pointed to the confusion that existed among those who proposed an Aramaic original behind the Fourth Gospel as to what was required before it could be said that such an original exists, as well as to the lack of agreement among them when it came to presenting the evidence. He set out to prove that the text of the Fourth Gospel was not influenced by Semitisms. This he attempted to do by comparing the Greek of the gospel with that of the Discourses of Epictetus and various papyri to show that the so-called "Semitisms" could be explained in other ways.

(iii) The third viewpoint covers a comparatively wide group of opinions. For example, Bultmann, as we shall see⁽²⁹⁾ maintained that one of the sources behind the Fourth Gospel, i.e. the "Offenbarungsreden", was written in Aramaic. M. Black (An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts, 272, ff) came to a similar conclusion when he stated that the fourth evangelist had probably used an Aramaic "sayings" source. He also believes that there is evidence of an Aramaic source behind the Prologue and the sayings of John the Baptist. However, according to Black, the fourth evangelist's use of this source material was quite free. S. Brown (op. cit., 335) sums up Black's view thus: "For Black the key to an understanding of the meaning of translation Greek lies in the word "interpretation". In his view the Greek evangelists did not merely transmit an Aramaic tradition unaltered; their creations, composed in more or less literary Greek, are to be conceived rather as "Targums" of the Aramaic preaching of Jesus and his disciples. This is not to deny, of course, that many of Jesus' sayings were so simple and concrete that they could not change their meaning in Greek any more than in Aramaic."

Like Burney, Black accepts the value of the so-called "mistranslations" for proving the presence of an Aramaic original in the sense described above. However, he refines the concept and eliminates from it those elements that had caused the earlier confusion.⁽³⁰⁾

J. Bonsirven, like Black, admits that there are Semitisms in the Fourth Gospel. But these, in his opinion, do not indicate the presence of an Aramaic original. Their presence can be explained by the fact that they reflect words spoken by Jesus which had impressed themselves on the mind of the author. In themselves they do not detract from the generally idiomatic character of the Greek of the Fourth Gospel.⁽³¹⁾

The above discussion has concentrated in the main on the syntactical nature of the Greek of the Fourth Gospel. However it should not be overlooked that in this gospel we frequently come across words that are first given in their Semitic form and are then translated into Greek, or explained on the first occasion when they are used; e.g. ῥαββί (1:38, also 1:49, 3:2, 4:31, 6:25, 9:2, 11:18; on one occasion, viz. 3:26, it is addressed to John the Baptist); ῥαββουρί (20:16); Μεσσίας (1:41, 4:25); Κηφᾶς (1:42);⁽³²⁾ Σιλῳάμ (9:7); Θωμᾶς (11:16, 21:2). In some instances the fourth evangelist specifically states that the names of certain places are given in their Hebrew forms, e.g. βηθζαθά or βηθέσδα (5:2), Γαββαθά (19:13), Γολγοθᾶ (19:17). The use of the double ἄμην, which occurs twenty five times in the Fourth Gospel can also be traced to the Old Testament and rabbinic usage;⁽³³⁾ other Semitic words which could be mentioned are μάννα (6:31,49) and ὠσαννά (12:13).

The presence of such words in the Fourth Gospel does not, in itself, have any bearing on whether the gospel has been translated from the Aramaic or not. However they do indicate that the fourth evangelist was definitely aware of and probably familiar with Aramaic and Hebrew, a conclusion supported by the fact that his translations of the words in question are always correct.⁽³⁴⁾

Concluding Comments

In evaluating the evidence of the various parties to the debate as outlined above it is necessary to state clearly what the evidence is supposed to prove. The more extreme positions described in (i) and (iii) seem to imply an "either.... or...." type of argument, a.v., "either there are Aramaisms which prove the presence of a translation from an Aramaic original, or there are no Aramaisms and therefore no evidence of Semitic influence in the gospel." S. Brown (op. cit., 339) notes that "few, if any" would be willing to go along with either of these views. Hence to reject Colwell's position does not necessarily involve the acceptance of

some form, complete or partial, of an Aramaic original behind the gospel.

It appears that there is still no general agreement as to what constitutes an Aramaism or Semitism (as opposed to the definition of these concepts), or, to word it differently, what is necessary before it can be said that certain words or phrases have "a strongly Semitic colouring" or show signs of "Semitic influence".⁽³⁵⁾ On this point Moule (An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek, 171) has indicated some of the problems that are encountered:

"It is not always possible to determine where to draw the line between a clear, alien 'Semitism' and a term or idiom which is indeed reminiscent of a characteristically Semitic equivalent but which is none the less good or tolerable Greek, and which may, therefore, owe little or nothing to Semitic influence. Sometimes it is only the frequency of its occurrence, not its actual existence, that a term or phrase owes to the alien influence.

Obviously, too, this problem is complicated by the question of how far the generally understood, secular κοινή had unconsciously absorbed and, so to speak, naturalized what were originally alien elements from Semitic populations."

Other considerations, according to Moule, include the problem of distinguishing between "direct" Semitisms and "indirect" or "secondary" Semitisms "mediated by the Septuagint or other translation Greek", as well as the problems arising from differences within the Semitic languages themselves.

Barrett (St. John, 10) is of the opinion that much of what has passed as Aramaisms or Semitisms can be paralleled in Greek literature, personal letters, papyri, etc. If any of the so-called Aramaisms or Semitisms can be classified as possible or probable he maintains that "they are certainly too few (if we leave out parataxis and asyndeton) to prove that the Greek was translated from an Aramaic gospel, and probably too few to prove that the Aramaic tradition lies anywhere close to the surface."⁽³⁶⁾

In view of the disagreements that exist among the experts on this question it seems to me that the ultimate solution, if ever one is reached, will lie somewhere between the two extreme viewpoints discussed above. Greater attention should, I believe, be given to the possibility of "virtual" translation having occurred, though to prove that this actually was the case would be extremely difficult if not impossible. The problem here

would be to draw up a set of criteria by which it would be possible to draw a distinction between a "virtual" and an "actual" translation. It would be seen that the case for a "virtual" translation must rest on less conclusive probabilities. However among these attention should be given to the distinct probability that Jesus frequently addressed the crowds in Aramaic and that many of his sayings were, in the beginning at least, transmitted in Aramaic either orally or in written form. In incorporating these into his gospel it is not unreasonable to assume that the fourth evangelist tried to keep as close as possible to the language and style in which they had become traditional. (37)

To what extent, therefore, may one appeal to the language of the Fourth Gospel as an indication of a Jewish background and thus having a possible bearing on its destination and purpose? Dodd (Interpretation, 75) states that "the view that the gospel as it stands is a translation has found little favour either with Semitists or with Hellenists, and is entirely improbable. Opinions differ whether the undeniable Semitisms are due to the use, in some places, of Aramaic (or Hebrew) sources, written or oral, or simply to an author who thought in a Semitic idiom while he wrote in Greek. In any case, the evidence for an underlying Semitic idiom is irresistible. This in itself brings the gospel back into a Jewish environment, of which we must take account." In the present state of the debate it is hard to see what evidence allows one to conclude that the presence of an underlying Semitic idiom is "irresistible". Unfortunately Dodd himself does not elaborate this.

It seems to me that the crux of the matter is the extent of the influence of the Semitic languages on the κοινὴ. Until we have a clearer picture of any interpenetration that may have taken place it is difficult to see how one's conclusions can be anything but tentative. In the meantime, difficult though it is to prove, the possibility of "virtual" translation having taken place can by no means be ruled out for the reasons given above. Finally, the presence of Semitic words in the text of the Gospel must also be taken into account as there is no reason why the evangelist could not have omitted these if he had so desired.

In sum: in the present state of the debate there is not sufficient evidence to decide definitively in which language the Fourth Gospel, or even parts of it, was originally written. Further, even if one were to admit that there is evidence of a "Semitic idiom" in the gospel it cannot

be established that it is sufficiently widespread or obvious enough to throw much light on the gospel's "destination". Its presence can be explained in terms of the evangelist's own background and does not appear to have been consciously used by him to appeal to a particular audience.

(G) The Question of Sources and the Unity of the Fourth Gospel

(1) The Fourth Gospel and Source Material

One of the problems surrounding any study of the Fourth Gospel is that of the origin of the material used in its composition. Another problem concerns the number of those who have made a contribution in this regard. If, for example, it could be proved that one man was responsible for the writing of the Fourth Gospel as we now have it, that it represents the attempts of one person to achieve a particular end and that the origin and source of the contents of the gospel are to be traced back to the fourth evangelist himself, then we would be justified in approaching it as a self-contained and unified piece of writing. Many scholars however believe that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that this is not the case. As we saw in our discussion of "the text and structure of the gospel", it is generally accepted today that the Fourth Gospel as it came to be circulated in the Church was not entirely the work of one man but that at least one editor also had a hand in its composition. We based this conclusion on the evidence of John 21 as this was the most obvious indication of editorial work.⁽³⁸⁾

Granted that at least one editor has been at work on the text of the Fourth Gospel certain questions have to be answered before it will be possible to discuss in a meaningful fashion the gospel's destination and purpose. These concern the identity of the editor and the nature and extent of his contribution to the completed work. The various possibilities in this regard, and their consequences, can be grouped together as follows:

- (i) If one were to assume that the "evangelist" and the "editor" were one and the same person, with the evangelist revising his own work before its final publication, and therefore that any indication of an editor's hand in the gospel is the work of the evangelist himself, this would suggest various questions as to why it had become necessary to "edit" the original gospel. Was he, for example, editing an earlier edition

of his own work in order to give to it a wider appeal than previously? Or did he intend the second edition to have a completely new and different destination and purpose to that of the first? Or was he only interested in making more clear certain points that might have struck his original readers as being obscure or open to misinterpretation?

- (ii) If, on the other hand, we were to accept that the "editor" and the "evangelist" were different people, the assumption here would be that the former was merely "editing" material that he had received in some manner from the latter. In this instance also we would have to ask the same questions as in the previous case as to why it was necessary to edit the gospel in this way.

Whatever might have been the nature of the relationship of the editor to the evangelist an important question that has to be answered concerns the origin and source of the material which the evangelist originally used. Was he, for example, merely recording events and sayings of Jesus which he himself had witnessed and heard? Or was he in any way dependent upon other sources, written or oral, for his material? If it can be proved that the answer to this latter question is in the affirmative a further question would suggest itself, viz., Is it possible to separate this source material from the evangelist's own contribution?

It should be clear that the answers given to the questions posed above would have a direct bearing on the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose. As has already been noted, any editorial work must have been undertaken for a specific reason and to achieve a particular end. This means that the editor, whoever he may have been, in all probability intended to give to the gospel a destination and purpose wider than or different from that of the original work. But the possibility that he might not have been entirely successful in this is something that cannot be ruled out altogether either. If this actually were the case his contribution would more likely have confused the issue rather than have clarified it for us in that it might still be possible to detect traces of the original destination and purpose as well as any new ones he himself might have intended the gospel to have.

Similarly the situation could have become more confused if it can be proved that the Fourth Gospel is the end result of the work of more than

one editor. Because each of these obviously felt the need to alter and adapt the gospel, it would be a legitimate assumption that each had a specific purpose in mind in subjecting the gospel to a revision. If it is possible to detect various layers in the gospel that can be attributed to the different editors, then it is not inconceivable that there could be as many "purposes" in the gospel as there are layers of material. It could be argued that the "purpose" of the final editor would also be the "purpose of the Fourth Gospel" strictly speaking. This, however, presupposes that the final editor so shaped the gospel material as to make his purpose clear and that the additions and alterations of previous editors were revised and adapted in the light of the new purpose. But the more successful the final editor was in stamping the gospel with his purpose the more difficult it becomes to detect the work of other editors in the gospel and therefore to attribute specific "purposes" to them also.

If one were to accept that the evangelist himself made use of material from other sources this too could have a direct bearing on the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose in a manner similar to what could have happened in the case of the editors' revisions. Let us assume, for example, that the evangelist set himself a specific purpose in writing his gospel but that he made use of material from other sources. If he has done his job well that material would have been so used and adapted by him in the most effective way possible with a view to the achieving of the aim which he had set himself. Such a position presupposes that the evangelist felt free to use the material in the way he thought most suitable for his purposes. If, however, he felt that the material he was using deserved to be treated with the greatest respect this may have encouraged him to copy in a slavish manner the material as he found it in his sources with the minimum amount of adaptation. If this is what actually did happen then the uncovering of the gospel's purpose could prove to be a very difficult task. The reason for this is that one presumes that the source material itself must have been put together for a "specific purpose" in the first place, a purpose which the evangelist could conceivably have incorporated into his gospel without necessarily having made it his own.

In the early Church questions like those we have been discussing were apparently never asked. It was generally assumed, at least from the end of the second century, that the Fourth Gospel was the work of one man,

namely, the Apostle John.⁽³⁹⁾ However with the development of a more critical approach to the study of the New Testament, especially during the past century, direct apostolic authorship came to be questioned.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Doubts about the validity of attributing the authorship of the Fourth Gospel to the Apostle John naturally meant that other explanations had to be proposed to explain its origin and authorship. These explanations raised the possibility that the evangelist might not in fact have actually witnessed the events he records in his gospel. It is in this context that the questions we have posed above should be seen.

The various answers that have been given by scholars to these questions in recent times assume that the Fourth Gospel as we have it now is not to be considered to be an entirely original work, but that it is in some way dependent upon other material. As far as the original source of the material used by the evangelist is concerned, it is possible to group the opinions of scholars under two general headings, viz.

- (i) That the evangelist was dependent upon the Synoptic Gospels to a greater or lesser extent for the material he used; and
- (ii) That the evangelist made use of material from either a single source or from a variety of sources that were independent of the Synoptic Gospels.

Each of these positions will be discussed in their proper context in order that their significance for establishing the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose can be correctly assessed. As we shall see, an alleged relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics is at the root of a whole group of theories that attempt to explain this gospel's destination and purpose in terms of the Synoptics. Those scholars who reject the existence of any direct relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics have tended to look for other sources behind the former. Perhaps the most famous of these scholars, though not the first, was R. Bultmann who claimed to have discovered a number of sources behind the Fourth Gospel the most notable of which he called the "Offenbarungsreden" and the "Semeia-Quelle". In recent times it is the latter source, or something very much like it, that has received the greatest attention, and appears to be gaining in popularity.⁽⁴¹⁾

(2) The Unity of the Fourth Gospel

Those who have opposed the tendency to find sources behind the Fourth Gospel have argued in favour of its literary and stylistic unity. This

line of argument was dictated in large part by the attempts of those who sought to identify and isolate sources on the grounds of difference in language and style in various parts of the gospel. Proponents of the literary unity of the gospel, on the other hand, have attempted to show that it is possible to find similarities of expression and construction throughout the greater part of the gospel. Further, it is claimed that many of these characteristics may be considered to be peculiar to the author of the Fourth Gospel.

The first person to undertake a comprehensive study of the literary unity of the Fourth Gospel was E. Schweizer in his book, Ego Eimi. He set out to establish those criteria that might be considered to be characteristic of Johannine style. He isolated thirty-three of these. Barrett, in his commentary on John's Gospel (p.7), lists some of the more important stylistic characteristics (Eigentümlichkeiten) which Schweizer isolated:

- i. asyndeton,
- ii. the use of οὖν simply as a narrative link,
- iii. the use of ἐκεῖνος as a substantive,
- iv. the use of ἐμός instead of μου which is more common in New Testament Greek,
- v. the comparatively regular use of the expression ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ or ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ in John (13 times) as opposed to the rest of the New Testament (3 times),
- vi. the use of ἐκ and the genitive in place of the partitive genitive,
- vii. the presence of epexegetical clauses involving the use of ἵνα and ὅτι, and
- viii. the very frequent use of the construction οὐ(μη) ἀλλά (c.75 times).

Having drawn up a set of characteristics of Johannine style Schweizer then studied their distribution throughout the whole of the gospel. Because he found them to be so widespread throughout the gospel he came to the conclusion that it was not possible to prove the existence of sources behind the Fourth Gospel purely on stylistic grounds. He did not, however, rule out the possibility that sources may have been used by the evangelist in the composition of the gospel. As he put it: "If such sources are to be supposed, they have been worked over to such a degree that they form a uniform whole; they have been worked over so well that for the present at any rate it has been impossible to demonstrate them."^(4?)

The work begun by Schweizer was taken up by other scholars, notably Ruckstuhl. In his book, Die literarische Einheit des vierten Evangeliums, he pays particular attention to Bultmann's theory of sources. He took over Schweizer's list of Johannine stylistic characteristics, revised and expanded it, and came up with a total of fifty items. These he grouped into three categories, viz. the most important ones which consisted of 19 characteristics, then the 12 that were considered to be next in importance, and finally the 19 which in his opinion had the least significance.⁽⁴³⁾ Armed with these characteristics Ruckstuhl argues that it is not possible to distinguish various sources in the Fourth Gospel on the grounds of style, as Bultmann has done, because the characteristics are to be found throughout the whole of the gospel. In this respect Ruckstuhl was merely echoing the findings of Schweizer. However it should be noted that he went a step further than Schweizer did in the conclusions he drew from the evidence. He maintained that an analysis of the style of the Fourth Gospel leads one to the conclusion that there could not have been any written sources behind it. Therefore the Fourth Gospel should be seen as the original creation of a single author.⁽⁴⁴⁾

It is possible to counter Ruckstuhl's assumption that because there is uniformity of language and style in the Fourth Gospel the author did not use any written sources, with the argument that the evangelist or editor took great care to imitate the style of his source(s) or alternatively stamped his own style on the material he may have drawn from his source(s). It is, for example, generally accepted, as Barrett (op. cit., 17) and others have pointed out, that it is practically impossible to separate on stylistic and linguistic grounds the narratives and the discourses in the Fourth Gospel. Structurally both are woven together to form a whole. This is particularly well-illustrated in chapters 9 and 11. In fact the purpose of the discourses appears to be, in Dodd's words (Interpretation, 290), "to bring out the significance of the narratives".

In themselves, however, it seems to me that these observations neither prove nor disprove the existence of source material in the Fourth Gospel. Scholars such as Schweizer and Ruckstuhl have emphasized the literary unity that is to be found in this gospel and in doing so have perhaps given to it an excessive degree of importance in determining whether or not the fourth evangelist has used sources. There is no doubt that "literary unity" is a very important consideration here. But it should not be the only one. As we have noted, literary unity and the use of source material are not mutually exclusive.

For this reason perhaps more attention should be given to other types of unity or disunity that could indicate the presence or otherwise of sources in the gospel, e.g. structural unity, thematic unity, etc. If it could be proved that the Gospel possesses unity on all of these levels then the case would be much stronger that the evangelist did not make use of any sources.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Taken by itself, therefore, "literary unity", while it must be accepted as being very important in this connection, does not furnish us with conclusive proof that the fourth evangelist did not make use of sources. Hence while on the one hand it seems to me to weaken considerably the argument in favour of Bultmann's source theory, it certainly does not prove Parker's contention either that "if the author of the Fourth Gospel used documentary sources, he wrote them all himself" ("Two Editions of John", 304).

(3) Concluding Comments on Source Material and the Unity of the Fourth Gospel

Our purpose in this section of Chapter One has been to clarify some of the problems we shall encounter by accepting that the Fourth Gospel as we now have it is not the work of one man, or that it was not composed at one time if one accepts that the editorial work was done by the original evangelist himself. We have also introduced the question of the possibility of sources having been used in the composition of the gospel, a possibility which, if proved true, could have far-reaching effects for the gospel's destination and purpose. Because of the increasing popularity of source theories a word of caution is in order about what may be claimed in this regard.

Thus, in discussing the question of possible sources behind the Fourth Gospel it is necessary to draw a clear distinction between two very different aspects of the problem, namely, their existence and their extent. The fact that there may not be general agreement about the extent of a source does not mean that no source was used by the evangelist. To quote J.M. Robinson (Trajectories Through Early Christianity, 242) :

"The question of the difficulty of reconstructing a source is not identical with the question of whether the source existed. To be sure, if the source can nowhere be laid hold of with any assurance, then the question of whether the source actually existed becomes acute. But if at some place a written source is visible, then the existence of a source is established, and the question becomes merely how extensive the source was and what character it had."

The most important piece of evidence usually adduced in support of the existence of a source behind the Fourth Gospel is the record of the two miracles in Cana, namely, the changing of the water into wine (2:1-12a) and the healing of the son of the official (4:46b-54a). The discussion of the evidence in favour of this hypothesis is not necessary for our purposes. Suffice it to say that it is a hypothesis that seems to be gaining in popularity among scholars.⁽⁴⁶⁾

While it might be true to say that there is fairly widespread and growing support for the view that there is at least one source behind the Fourth Gospel which includes at least some of Jesus' Signs as recorded in the gospel, it cannot be claimed that there is general agreement about the extent of this source.⁽⁴⁷⁾ The considerable differences of opinion among scholars on this very point is, to my mind, a significant indication of how successfully the evangelist has been able to give to any material he may have borrowed from a source his own stamp and style.

What conclusions therefore may we draw from our discussion of the question of source(s) behind the Fourth Gospel, and what bearing will these conclusions have on our subsequent investigation of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose?

(a) While the evidence in favour of the existence of at least one source behind the Fourth Gospel is not inconsiderable and appears to be winning more supporters, it cannot yet be claimed beyond all doubt that the evangelist did in fact make use of such a source.

(b) The acceptance of the argument that the Fourth Gospel is a literary unity cannot be brought forward as conclusive proof that the evangelist did not use any sources. E. Schweizer has perhaps best summed up the conclusions we may legitimately draw in this respect. In the preface to the second edition of his book, Ego Eimi (1965), he writes:

"What I had generally established, has also been confirmed in terms of (Bultmann's commentary): the unity of style is such that the distinction of sources on the basis of these characteristics seems impossible. An exception is found only in the case of the prologue and the miracle stories, where, at least in the first two, a source can still be proven with high probability. Indeed I thought - and here I was more cautious than E. Ruckstuhl - that the fact that sources cannot be proven linguistically does not prove that they did not exist at all. Yet sources, apart from the prologue and miracle stories, seem to me very unlikely."⁽⁴⁸⁾

(c) Even if one were to accept as a working hypothesis that the evangelist did in fact make use of material from either written or oral source(s), there is considerable evidence to show that he has used this material in such a way that the Fourth Gospel gives the impression of being a highly individualistic work, possessing a uniformity of language and style that stamps it in its present form as the work of one man, at least for the most part.

(d) But having said that it is also necessary to remember that there is some evidence of editorial work in the gospel. However, our conclusions so far suggest that the work of the editor, presuming that it is possible to separate it from the main body of the gospel, has not drastically upset the overall unity which we hope to show this gospel possesses. This would seem to indicate that the editorial work was kept to a minimum once the gospel had been completed by the evangelist. Nevertheless because it has been shown that there is evidence of it in the gospel its presence and extent will have to be explained as also will the reasons why it was thought necessary at the time to make additions and/or alterations, and the effect that these might have had on the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose. These are questions to which we shall return in due course.

(H) General Conclusions and Outline of Procedure to be Followed

In this chapter certain basic questions in the field of Johannine studies have been examined briefly with a view to assessing their significance for a correct understanding of the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel. Of the points discussed it was concluded that three of them could make an indirect contribution, viz. the identity of the author, the date and place of composition. In other words, exact knowledge about these three questions is not essential for an investigation into the gospel's purpose and destination, though such knowledge could offer corroborative evidence. Further, while it would be incorrect to equate the problem of the search for the "background" of the gospel with that of its purpose and destination, nevertheless between these two questions there could be a close connection. There is a need, however, to guard against using evidence of a particular "background" to prove too much in this regard. Similarly, it is possible that the language in which the gospel was originally written could give us a clue as to whom its original readers might have been. But all of this evidence falls far short of the conclusive proof we shall be seeking. Finally, as far as the text itself

of the gospel is concerned, it was established that there are clear indications of editorial work. This may have been undertaken either by the evangelist himself or by other person(s). The presence of editorial work in the gospel is closely associated with that of source material. As we saw, while there is some evidence to suggest that the evangelist made use of source material, the Fourth Gospel appears on the whole to be a highly individualistic work that possesses an overall literary unity at least. This suggests that the evangelist has reworked the material in question, using it to meet the purpose he had in mind in composing the gospel.

In the course of our discussion we had reason to explain what is meant by "destination" in the present context. Before proceeding with our investigation a word of clarification is, I feel, in order as to how the concept "purpose" is used and understood in this thesis.

When a person decides to write a scholarly work there are certain basic steps he must follow if he wishes to make a success of it. The first and most obvious of these is that he must decide on the field of study about which he wishes to write. For example, this could be a subject such as "the Life and Times of Napoleon Bonaparte". This is, however, an extremely wide field and also one about which much has already been written. These considerations should make an author realize that if he wishes his book to be a valuable contribution to what we already know about Napoleon, he should clarify in his own mind what he hopes to achieve by writing yet another book on this topic. Because of its vastness he may decide to do an in-depth study of one particular aspect of Napoleon's character. Or he may set out to re-assess what we already know about this man in an attempt to arrive at a more true-to-life picture of him. Or, again, he may wish to provide no more than a factual panoramic view of his life and achievements. Whatever aspect he chooses to write about it is clear that the author must set himself some objective that will serve to give both direction and unity to his work.

Now in the light of our comments in the previous paragraph it seems to me that we may define the "purpose" of a book as that which it is intended to achieve on being completed. In many instances it would be possible to define this in another way and say simply that the "purpose" of a book is nothing else than the "reason" why the author wrote it. However a word

of caution is in order here. A little reflection will show that the "purpose" of a book as described above may not necessarily be the same as the "reason" why the author wrote it. For example, a man may decide to write a book about Napoleon because he is interested in history. Or perhaps his "reason" for writing it may be that he expects it to be a best-seller. In brief, therefore, it has to be remembered that a book itself can have a "purpose" very different from the "reason" why the author decided to write it.

Because a book is usually meant to be read by people this presupposes that an author should have a clear idea of the audience to whom he wishes to address his book. This aspect we have described elsewhere as the book's "destination".⁽⁴⁹⁾

Finally, the "purpose" of a book and its "destination" will in large measure dictate the author's method of procedure, especially his choice of material, the way in which he handles and develops it, the style and language used by him, etc. For example, a book that is directed at an university-educated audience would be written in a manner very different from one intended for Standard Six pupils.

Modern authors frequently make sufficiently clear in their 'Introductions' or 'Prefaces' what the book is intended to achieve. At times they will indicate the audience they are addressing as well as the method they have followed in writing the book. Armed with this information the reader is in a position to approach the work critically and to evaluate it objectively in order to assess whether or not the author has succeeded in his stated objective.

When we turn to the Fourth Gospel we find that some of the steps outlined above have been followed by the evangelist while others have not. Clearly his book is concerned with the person of Jesus. But within this general field he has set himself a specific objective, viz. to encourage faith in Jesus in its readers by a consideration of his words and works. If it is held that this "objective" is in actual fact the "purpose" of the gospel, then we must hasten to add that it is a "purpose" which this gospel has in common with the other three.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Because it is a "purpose" that is shared with the other gospels we may describe it as the Fourth Gospel's "general purpose". On this point there is not likely to be much disagreement among scholars. What will be of special concern to us, however, is that which

makes this gospel's destination and purpose different from those of the Synoptics, a.v., the particular situations, problems and people which the evangelist had in mind and in the light of which he considered it to be necessary to write his gospel 'to encourage faith'. This aspect we shall call the gospel's "specific purpose(s)". It will be noted that the way we have defined these purposes implies that they are very closely tied to the gospel's destination. Indeed, as we progress it will be seen that it is at times very difficult to speak of one without taking the other into account.

While there is no doubt about the Fourth Gospel's "general purpose" there is very little, if any, explicit information in the gospel about its "specific purpose(s)" or about the identity of its "destination". Nor is there any conclusive external evidence that can give the answers we are seeking. How then are we to proceed with our investigation?

In our earlier discussion about the writing of a book we noted that an author, if he wishes his book to be successful, must adapt both his material and style of writing to suit the "purpose" and "destination" of his book. As far as the Fourth Gospel is concerned, therefore, we shall work on the assumption that the evangelist has followed much the same procedure. In other words, if we are to uncover the gospel's "specific purpose(s)" and its "destination", the only way open to us to do this is to examine what has been written in the gospel itself and then to attempt to 'situate' this in the light of contemporary events. In this way it is to be hoped that we shall be able to discover for whom and for which situations it would have served 'to encourage faith'.

It is possible, of course, that the Fourth Gospel was written to encourage faith in Jesus in a variety of situations and for different categories of people. If this was in fact what actually happened, then it would be better to speak of "special purposes" and different "destinations". It would, however, be necessary to decide whether among these "special purposes" there might have been one that could be classified as "primary" with the others being no more than "secondary" or "subsidiary", or whether all of them should be considered to have equal standing. The same would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, in the case of the gospel's possible "destinations".

Following on from this distinction between "primary" and "secondary" or "subsidiary" purposes we cannot afford to forget a point frequently referred to in this chapter, viz., that additions and/or alterations have been made to

the text of the gospel. Here we shall have to decide whether these changes were intended to alter radically or merely to widen the scope of the gospel's destination and purpose. These questions will be treated in the appropriate places.

One final point should be noted. It is possible that other "purposes" and "destinations" came, in retrospect, to be attributed to the Fourth Gospel in so far as its contents were found to be of great value in dealing effectively with problems that arose after its publication. Clearly, it cannot be claimed that these purposes and destinations belong to the Fourth Gospel itself unless it is concluded that the gospel's original purpose and destination were so general and all-embracing that it was written to meet any problematic situation in which it was found necessary 'to encourage faith in Jesus'. Such a conclusion, however, would dispense with "specific purposes" as we have described them in favour of only a "general purpose".

Now that our discussion of "preliminary observations" has been completed we are in a position to proceed with an examination of the gospel itself along the lines indicated in the foregoing paragraphs. This investigation will take the form of an analysis of the various theories that have been proposed to explain the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose. Our evaluation of the arguments and evidence that have been used should reveal those aspects that have to be taken into account if we are to arrive at a satisfactory answer to the problem we have posed.

CHAPTER TWO : A POLEMICAL DESTINATION AND PURPOSE

Introductory Comment

We shall be concerned in this chapter with those explanations of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose that are usually described as "polemical". These theories can be grouped under four headings, viz. a polemic against (a) the Jews, (b) the Gnostics, (c) certain followers of John the Baptist, and (d) against the Church in general or certain of her practices in particular.

We shall examine the evidence and arguments brought forward in support of each of these theories. Our intention shall be to see whether any of them are convincing in themselves or whether perhaps they might clarify any of the issues dealt with by the gospel, or other aspects that will have to be taken into account in formulating any satisfactory explanation of the gospel's destination and purpose.

I. A POLEMIC AGAINST THE JEWS

(A) Introduction: Statement of the Theory

The view that the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel should be understood as a polemic against the Jews has always been reasonably popular among scholars. Among those who have supported it in more recent times A. Wind ("Destination and Purpose of the Gospel of John", 32) lists the following: C. Weizäcker, W. Wrede, Jülicher-Fascher, Lord Charnwood, G.H.C. Macgregor, V. Taylor, Fr. Büchsel, R.M. Grant, C.F.D. Moule. There are other scholars who are not prepared to accept that this was the primary purpose of the gospel; nevertheless they do agree that it was a secondary one. Among these Kümmel (Introduction, 163) includes the names of Wikenhauser, Meinertz, Feine-Behm, Henshaw, Riddle-Hutson and Schnackenburg.

To have attracted the support of so many scholars it stands to reason that the evidence in support of it must be substantial and have much to recommend it. Indeed there are many who would probably agree that even a cursory reading of this gospel leaves one with the impression, as Wikenhauser (Introduction, 307) puts it, that "the whole Gospel is permeated by a quiet but unmistakable polemic against Judaism". The basis for such an impression is to be found primarily in the way in which the fourth evangelist uses the term "the Jews". As W.F. Howard (St. John, 450) puts it: "No reader can fail to be struck by the way in which our Lord's opponents in this Gospel

are so often described as "the Jews"." They refuse to accept that God is his Father (5:18, 8:40, ff). They attempt to arrest him (7:30, 44, 10:39), to stone him (8:59, 10:31, 11:8), and to kill him (5:18, 7:1, 11:53, f). They expel from the synagogue all who confess that he is the Christ (9:22, 12:42). Indeed, they believe that they are doing a service to God by killing Jesus' disciples (16:2).

In addition to describing the opposition between Jesus and "the Jews" on a personal level it is also claimed that in the Fourth Gospel Jesus is portrayed as setting himself up in opposition to the beliefs and institutions of Judaism itself. Wikenhauser (op. cit., 307, f) summarizes the evidence in support of this view thus: "The Law was given through Moses, grace and truth come through Jesus Christ (1:17); he is the end of Jewish ritualism (2,1-10), and also of the Temple and its worship (2,13-22; 4,21-23). Moses could not give the true Bread from Heaven, the Father gives it by sending his Son into the world (6,32 sq.). In reality the Jews are not (true) sons of Abraham, but sons of the devil (8,39-44). They have no right to appeal to Moses; he is their accuser (5,45). They search the scriptures diligently and hope to find life there, but it is to Jesus that the Scriptures bear witness (5,39). They object that he is from Galilee (7,52), but they are contradicted by the testimony of Nathaniel (1,45 sqq.)."

R.M. Grant ("The Origin of the Fourth Gospel") sums up other evidence that could be brought forward in support of the anti-Jewish polemic theory under the following headings:

- i. Jesus clearly separates himself from Judaism and "the Jews".
- ii. He reinterprets the law entirely and in so doing replaces it.
- iii. He is superior to the patriarchs and to Moses.
- iv. He transcends the whole later history of Israel so that all who came before him were nothing else but "robbers and thieves".
- v. His miracles are far superior to any others, including those of the Old Testament.
- vi. It is "the Jews" and not Pilate who, according to the Fourth Gospel, are responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus.

(B) Evaluation of the Evidence⁽¹⁾

In assessing the significance of the evidence cited above it is clear that the problem of the identity of "the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel is of

paramount importance because this point is the foundation on which much of the other evidence rests. For this reason we shall deal with this question first. Then we shall examine the Fourth Gospel's treatment of the other themes that have been mentioned in an attempt to ascertain what its attitude was to them.

(1) Who are "the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel?

At first sight the question posed above might appear to be meaningless. But the reason why such a question is necessary is because the fourth evangelist does not appear to be consistent in the use he makes of the term: different contexts suggest that he is at times referring to different groups of people. However, if one wishes to understand the evangelist's purpose in composing his gospel it is essential to understand clearly what his attitude is to "the Jews".

The fourth evangelist uses the term Ἰουδαῖος (in its various forms) seventy one times altogether, viz., 1:19, 2:6,13,18,20, 3:1,22,25, 4:9,22, 5:1,10,15,16,18, 6:4,41,52, 7:1,2,11,13,15,35, 8:22,31,48,52,57, 9:18,22, 10:19,24,31,33, 11:8,19,31,33,36,45,54,55, 12:9,11, 13:33, 18:12,14,20,31, 33,35,36,38,39, 19:3,7,12,14,19,20,21,31,38,40,42, 20:19. It is possible to distinguish two main uses of the term, namely, (a) the "historical/geographical", and (b) the "religious". The "historical/geographical" use of the term refers to those occasions when the Jews are seen as being distinct from other nations, much in the same way as one might speak of the "Romans", the "Egyptians", the "Greeks". In other words, in these instances it is used to describe the inhabitants of Palestine. The "religious" use of the term refers to the "Jews" from the point of view of their religious beliefs, practices and customs, those things that were considered to constitute the essence of being a Jew. Living in Palestine is obviously not essential for the "religious" understanding of the concept as there were many "Jews" living in the Diaspora.

A division of this nature is somewhat arbitrary and its value is limited because it is not always possible to determine which meaning the evangelist had in mind. It is possible, for example, that on many occasions he was referring to both aspects described above. In cases such as these it will be necessary to try to determine which meaning, in the particular context, appears to be the more important. On the other hand, such a division does help to bring a little order to the material in question which in turn can contribute towards a meaningful answer to the question posed at the beginning of the section.

(a) The historical/geographical use of Ἰουδαῖος

The references that fall under this heading may be grouped together thus:

- i. Non-Jews' use the term Ἰουδαῖος/Ἰουδαῖοι to indicate that they are not Jews themselves (e.g. on the lips of Pilate - 18:33,35,39, 19:3,19 - where it frequently occurs in the phrase "King of the Jews"; in 4:9 the Samaritan woman refers to Jesus as a "Jew"; see also 4:22).
- ii. Ἰουδαῖος is sometimes used to explain customs and feasts with which (presumably) the non-Jewish reader would not be familiar (e.g. 2:6,13, 4:9, 5:1, 6:4, 7:2, 11:55, 19:40,42).
- iii. On some occasions οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι is used without any apparent special meaning being given to it apart from the fact that the people concerned were inhabitants of Palestine, especially of Jerusalem. There is certainly no polemic note involved here (e.g. 1:19, 3:1,25, 7:11, 8:31, 11:19,31,33,36, 12:9). Dodd (Tradition, 242) has noted that in some of the instances referred to in this context οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι could be translated by "Judeans" (e.g. 7:1, 11:8,54). Similarly Ἰουδαῖος is used as an adjective to qualify γῆ. In 3:22 we read that Jesus and his disciples went εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν γῆν; see also 7:1, 11:7.

(b) The religious use of Ἰουδαῖος

Again, we may subdivide the references in this section into the following groups:

- i. Some of the "Jews" set themselves up in opposition to Jesus especially when, in their eyes, he appears to be attacking aspects of their religious beliefs, e.g. Jesus' apparent rejection of the Temple (2:18,20); his disregard for the sabbath (5:10,15,16); his claim to be "the bread which came down from heaven" (6:41,52);⁽²⁾ his claim to be not only greater than Abraham (8:48,52,57) but also to be one with the Father (10:31,33).

The opposition of these "Jews" to Jesus is so strong that they are not satisfied with merely excommunicating from the synagogue all who acknowledge him (9:22, 12:42) or questioning his learning and right to teach (7:15),⁽³⁾ or misinterpreting his meaning (7:35, 8:22, 10:20,24); on occasion they attempt to stone him (8:59, 10:31, 11:8), arrest him (7:30,44, 10:39), and even seek to kill him (5:18, 7:1, 11:53,f).

The actual extent of their responsibility for the death of Jesus is a moot point. R.E. Brown (John, 792-802) provides us with a comprehensive review of the evidence that takes into account what the New Testament as a whole has to say, the testimony of other sources, as well as Christianity's attitude vis-à-vis the Romans and the Jews. As far as the involvement of the Jews was concerned this author distinguishes four views, namely,

- a) The Jewish authorities were the prime movers in Jesus' arrest, trial and sentencing;
- b) Although the Jewish authorities were deeply involved, all the main legal formalities were carried out by the Romans; thus no Jewish sentence was actually passed on Jesus;
- c) The Romans were the prime movers, believing Jesus to be a possible troublemaker. In bringing about his death it is postulated that they forced at least some of the Jewish authorities to co-operate with them;
- d) No Jewish authorities were involved in any way, not even as a tool of the Romans.

For our purpose it is necessary to examine these views in the light of the evidence of the Fourth Gospel alone. We are told, for example, that Jesus was arrested by the Romans and "some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees" (18:3). He is then brought to Annas (18:13) who eventually sends him on to Caiaphas (18:24). From Caiaphas's house Jesus is taken to the Praetorium (18:28). If the Romans had forbidden the Jews the right to pass the death sentence⁽⁴⁾ this could explain why Pilate told the Jews to judge Jesus according to their own law (18:31), not realizing that they were seeking the death sentence. The fourth evangelist then proceeds to explain how Pilate tried to secure Jesus' release, once he realized what their intentions were. But on each occasion the "Jews" brought fresh pressure to bear upon Pilate (18:38, ff., 19:4, ff., 12, ff.) so that in the end he is forced to hand Jesus over to be crucified.⁽⁵⁾

Such in brief are the main points of Jewish involvement in the procuring of the death sentence on Jesus according to the Fourth Gospel. The picture that we are presented with is closer to that described in the first view outlined above. Even though it might be true that no Jewish sentence was passed upon Jesus, the fourth evangelist would have us believe that this was so because the Jews did not have the power to pass the death sentence, even though he deserved to die according to their law (19:7).

It should be noted that in the arrest and trial of Jesus it is the leaders of the Jews, especially Annas and Caiaphas, who play the main role in securing the death sentence. Jesus himself said to Pilate: ὁ παραδούς μέ σοι μείζονα ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει (19:11). According to Dodd (*op. cit.*, 107) ὁ παραδούς refers to Caiaphas rather than to Judas. This scholar sums up his conclusion thus: "It would be difficult, on any construction of the events, to shake the judgement - a sober and moderate judgement - that as between Pilate and Caiaphas the *major* (in italics in the text) responsibility lay with the latter, although the sentence was actually pronounced (of necessity under the law) by the governor." In the context under discussion, therefore, it would be true to say that οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι (18:12,14,31,36,38, 19:7, 12,14,21,31) is used interchangeably with ὁ ἀρχιερεύς (Annas or Caiaphas) (18:13,19,24) or οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς in general (18:3,35, 19:6,17,21).

It should also be noted that the real reason given by the Jews for demanding the death of Jesus was that he claimed to be the Son of God (19:7).⁽⁶⁾ However, when this charge appeared to make Pilate more anxious than ever to release Jesus, only then did they press the 'political' charge that Jesus was making himself a king and therefore was setting himself up in opposition to Caesar (19:12,ff).⁽⁷⁾

This digression into the involvement of "the Jews" in the death of Jesus has, I believe, been necessary for a correct understanding of the use of the term in the Fourth Gospel. However, it has taken us away from our discussion of the various groups into which the "religious" use of the term can be subdivided. To this we shall now return.

- ii. The apparent opposition of some of "the Jews" was dictated more by "fear of the Jews" rather than by any deep religious conviction (e.g. 7:13, 9:22). Among these, in fact, we find Joseph of Arimathea who was a disciple of Jesus "but secretly, for fear of the Jews" (19:38; see also 3:1,ff. regarding the attitude of Nicodemus to Jesus).
- iii. The Fourth Gospel clearly makes the point that not all of "the Jews" were opposed to Jesus but that some of them were prepared to profess their belief in him openly. For example, the evangelist draws attention to the fact that there was frequently a "division" (σχίσμα) among the Jews about Jesus and his claims, with some accepting them and other rejecting them (7:12,43, 9:16, 10:19). The evangelist also tells us that "many of the Jews" (πολλοὶ ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων) believed in him (11:45, 12:11). This distinction between those who believe and those who do not is very clearly brought out in

13:33: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come'." Here we see Jesus addressing his disciples as if they were not "Jews". We can only conclude that in some sense they are not.

- iv. In assessing the meaning to be given to the term "Jews" in the Fourth Gospel one cannot overlook the all-important fact that Jesus himself is called a "Jew" by the Samaritan woman (4:9). It is an appellation which he endorses a little later when, in contradistinction to the Samaritans, he states ἡμεῖς προσκυνοῦμεν ὃ οἶδαμεν. The use of the emphatic ἡμεῖς here is, I believe, significant in view of the fact that on other occasions Jesus speaks of the "Jews" in a manner that gives the impression that he was dissociating himself from them.⁽⁸⁾ The reason for this apparent discrepancy in Jesus' attitude to "the Jews" lies in the fact that in 4:22 it is a question of a comparison between Jews and non-Jews as distinct national groups. The same distinction is made by Pilate when he says to Jesus: Μήτι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖος εἶμι; τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς παρέδωκάν σε ἐμοί (18:35). This in turn echoes the thought of the Prologue, εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον (1:11).

Thus, when it is a matter of whether one is a "Jew", or a non-Jew or Gentile, the Fourth Gospel makes it very clear that Jesus is to be classified with the former. In other contexts, however, where it is a question of a dispute between people all of whom call themselves "Jews", the argument then hinges on who can be considered to be the "true" Jews. Jesus told the Samaritan woman, ἡ σωτηρία ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐστίν (4:22). As far as non-Jews were concerned, therefore, the important question was: where was salvation to be found? But for people who considered themselves to be Jews the vital question was: in what did salvation consist? Any polemic between Jesus and "the Jews" should be seen in the light of the second question as all parties to these disputes were in agreement about the answer to the first question.

In the light of this conclusion we would, therefore, agree with Allen (op. cit., 88) that the anti-Jewish bias in the Fourth Gospel "is not racial but theological". Hence, the fourth evangelist does not attack the "Jews" as a nation, as a geographical entity; rather, his argument is with those who have rejected Jesus as the means of and way to salvation.

(c) Concluding Comment

This brief review of the references to Ἰουδαῖος / Ἰουδαῖοι in the Fourth Gospel shows that the question, "Who are the Jews?", does not admit of an easy answer. What is clear, however, is that in only some instances does it appear to be used in a polemical way. Further, in these instances it is used, to quote Brown's description, "for the religious authorities, particularly those in Jerusalem, who are hostile to Jesus" (op. cit., LXXI). "Jews" in this sense are at times referred to by other terms, e.g. οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς (12:10, 18:35, 19:6, 15, 21), or οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι (7:32, 45, 11:47, 57, 18:3), or simply οἱ Φαρισαῖοι (1:24, 4:1, 7:32, 47, 8:13, 9:13, 15, 16, 40, 11:46, 12:19, 42), or οἱ ἔρχοντες (7:26, 48, 12:42).

It is important to note that not all of the religious authorities were condemned by the fourth evangelist, but only those who were "hostile to Jesus". As we have indicated, the Fourth Gospel makes it clear that some of the authorities believed in Him (cf. 12:42-43, 3:1, ff., 19:38).⁽⁹⁾

(2) Jesus and the Patriarchs in the Fourth Gospel(a) Abraham

Abraham is mentioned by name in only one passage of the gospel, namely 8:31-59. It is in the context of a discussion between Jesus and "the Jews" about their ancestry. When Jesus claims that the truth will make them free (8:31) they counter by saying that they are descendants of Abraham (σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ) and that they have been in bondage to nobody. The Jews take Jesus' words in a political sense whereas he meant them to be understood on a spiritual level, as he explains (8:34, ff).⁽¹⁰⁾ Jesus does not deny the Jews' claim to be the "descendants of Abraham" (8:37). However, he does contest their right to call Abraham and God their "father". Rather it is the devil who is their "father" because their will is to do his desires (8:44). The discussion continues in a haphazard sort of way with the Jews resorting to an argumentum ad hominem, claiming that it is Jesus, and not they, who is possessed. Jesus tries to bring the discussion back to the point from which it had begun by telling the Jews that if any one keeps his word that person will never see death (8:51, compare with 8:31). But once more the Jews take Jesus' words literally and ask him if he is claiming to be greater than Abraham and the prophets who have died (8:52, ff). Jesus does not immediately answer their question but notes that Abraham rejoiced to see his "day". Yet again do the Jews take Jesus' words literally (8:58) so that Jesus is forced to state his superiority over Abraham unequivocally: "Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was, I am (ἐγὼ εἰμί)." (8:58).⁽¹¹⁾

In brief, this passage brings out two points in particular about Jesus' relationship to Abraham:

- i. he considered himself to be superior to Abraham, and
- ii. it was a superiority which Abraham had recognized and about which he was "glad".

It was the Jews who had failed to see the true nature of this relationship because they would not accept his "word".

(b) Isaac

Some scholars believe that it is possible to find in the Fourth Gospel an Isaac-Christ typology even though Isaac is not specifically mentioned by name. To support this view 3:16 is usually appealed to, where we read, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son (ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν) that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

The ἔδωκεν of this verse, coming as it does after the saying about the lifting up of the Son of Man (3:15), is interpreted to refer to the handing over of Jesus to death. If this is the correct interpretation of this verse, then the other similarities with the Isaac-sacrifice fall into place. These may be summarized as follows:

- i. In both instances it is the fathers (i.e. God and Abraham) who offer their respective sons in sacrifice.
- ii. Each son is an "only" son (cf. Gen. 22:2,12).⁽¹²⁾
- iii. Jesus was sent so that "the world might be saved through him" (3:17); similarly, God tells Abraham, "by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves, because you have obeyed my voice" (Gen. 22:18).⁽¹³⁾

(c) Jacob

Jacob is expressly mentioned in 4:12 in connection with the well that bore his name. Here Jesus' request to the Samaritan woman for a drink serves to introduce a discussion about the merits of the "living water" (ὕδωρ ζῶν) which Jesus can give in comparison with the water that can be drawn from the well given by Jacob. Just as the "living water" which he gives is far superior to that provided by the well, so too is Jesus far greater than Jacob. ⁽¹⁴⁾

F.-M. Braun (op. cit., 183,f) believes that there is also a reference in Jn. 1:50,f. to Jacob's dream of the ladder reaching up to heaven and on which the angels of God were ascending and descending (cf. Gen. 28:12,ff).

Other scholars would agree in seeing such an allusion here. However the meaning which the fourth evangelist is giving to it in the context under discussion is not so clear.

(3) Jesus and the Moses-Exodus Theme in the Fourth Gospel

It is frequently claimed that one of the Old Testament themes that plays an important role in the Fourth Gospel is that of Moses and the Exodus story. However the actual extent of the use made of it by the fourth evangelist is debatable. In discussing this theme, therefore, it is necessary to distinguish clearly between:

- (a) those instances where explicit reference is made to it, and
- (b) those instances where it is possible that some aspect of this theme might have influenced the evangelist and shaped his thought on some particular subject.

(a) Explicit References to the Moses-Exodus Theme

The name "Moses" (excluding the reference to it in 8:5) occurs twelve times in the Fourth Gospel (1:17,45, 3:14, 5:45,46, 6:32, 7:19,22,23, 9:28,29). Specific aspects of the Exodus story explicitly referred to in the Fourth Gospel include the following: the Tabernacle (1:14), the paschal lamb (1:29, 19:36), the lifting up of the serpent (3:14),⁽¹⁵⁾ the giving of the Law (1:17, 7:19), the manna in the desert (6:30,ff),⁽¹⁶⁾ and (probably) the striking of the rock in the desert (7:37,f).⁽¹⁷⁾

J. Jeremias in his article on Moses in the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament says that "in general it is a mark of the Moses/Christ typology in John's Gospel that it emphasizes more strongly than other early Christian literature the contrast between Moses and Christ" (op. cit., 873). Such a statement can be misleading especially if it is interpreted to mean that the fourth evangelist's main concern in this regard is to highlight the differences and "contrasts" between Moses and Christ. It is true that this aspect is treated in the Fourth Gospel as will be noted below. However, it is, perhaps, more accurate to describe the evangelist's attitude to Moses as one of ambivalence. At times he does appear to be depreciating him, but on other occasions it seems to me that the evangelist wished to emphasize both the importance and greatness of Moses. This last statement should, however, be seen in its correct perspective. The fourth evangelist was not primarily interested in Moses for what he was in himself. Rather by exalting the person of Moses the evangelist thereby emphasizes the importance of Jesus also. There is no doubt in the evangelist's mind that

Jesus is superior to Moses. Hence the greater it can be shown that Moses was, the greater does Jesus in the process become when compared to him.

It is important to note that the fourth evangelist does not set up Jesus in opposition to Moses as if the important thing for him was merely to show how they were different from each other. It is true that in comparing them he does also contrast them; but this is understandable for, as Glasson (op. cit., 24, n.2) notes, "every comparison involves an element of contrast". At the same time he qualifies this statement by adding, quite rightly, that "it is impossible to contrast two objects or persons unless they have much in common". It is against this background that we must examine what the Fourth Gospel has to tell us about the relationship between Jesus and Moses.

The reader of the Fourth Gospel cannot fail to note that the evangelist always views the importance of Moses in terms of his relationship to the person and work of Jesus. Thus Jesus tells the Jews that if they believe Moses they will believe him also because Moses wrote of him (5:46), a fact recognized by Philip when he tells Nathanael that they had found "him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote" (1:45). But because the Jews in general do not believe Moses' writings they do not believe Jesus' words either (5:47). It is as if belief in the former is a necessary condition for belief in the latter. This unity that exists between Moses and Christ is emphasized yet again when Jesus tells the Jews that there will be no need for him to accuse them to the Father because Moses himself will do this (5:45). Moses will identify himself with Jesus against the Jews even though they claim to be "disciples of Moses" (9:28). In 3:14 Jesus describes his own "exaltation" in terms of the lifting up of the serpent by Moses in the wilderness, the latter being a "type" of the former. Finally, in 7:19,ff. Jesus once again shows that between himself and Moses there is no opposition in spite of the Jews' attempts to set one against the other. Apparently because of the sign he had performed on the sabbath (cf. 5:2,ff) Jesus believed that the Jews wanted to kill him since in their view he had broken the law given by Moses. In reply to their accusation Jesus notes that what he had done was of far greater importance than circumcision which the law permitted on the sabbath. For this reason he cannot be considered to have broken the law and as a consequence to have set himself up in opposition to Moses. (18)

This brief review of the texts listed above in the previous page serves to emphasize the positive nature of the relationship between Jesus and

Moses that is portrayed in the Fourth Gospel. It should however be noted that even though the relationship is viewed as being positive, nevertheless it is a relationship in which Jesus' superiority to Moses is highlighted. It is in the light of this last comment that one should understand 1:17: "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Here the evangelist is not setting up "grace and truth" in opposition to the Law as such. In itself he sees the Law as being something positive and of value.⁽¹⁹⁾ Yet when compared with the "grace and truth" which came with Jesus it is as if the Law pales into insignificance, being replaced by something that is far superior to it.⁽²⁰⁾

That a certain tension does exist in the Fourth Gospel between the persons of Jesus and Moses cannot be denied. However the cause of this tension lies in the misrepresentation of Moses' role by the Jews. It is this misunderstanding of theirs that the fourth evangelist seeks to emphasize and rectify. The most notable example of this is the events surrounding the multiplication of the loaves and fish. As a result of this miracle the people appear to identify Jesus with the prophet-like-Moses (6:14, cf. Deut. 18:15,ff) whom they in turn identify with the Messiah.⁽²¹⁾ For this reason they attempt to make him king (6:15). The similarity between the miracle Jesus had just worked and the feeding of the people in the wilderness with manna is obvious. R. Brown (*op. cit.*, 265,f) quotes the evidence to show that there was a popular expectation that in the last days there would be a repetition of the miracle of the manna and that this miracle would be worked by the Messiah. It is against this background that 6:25,ff. should be seen. Jesus first of all puts Moses' role in providing the manna into its true perspective by noting that it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven but rather God (6:32a).⁽²²⁾ Having corrected their misunderstanding on this point Jesus then proceeds to explain to them the superiority of the "bread" which his Father gives (6:32b,ff).

(b) Implicit References to the Moses-Exodus Themes

Some authors have claimed to have found similarities between the Moses-Exodus theme and the Fourth Gospel that are not confined to isolated references in the text but rather cover the contents of whole sections and even books of the Old Testament. According to R.H. Smith ("Exodus Typology in the Fourth Gospel") J.J. Enz, for example, believes that it is possible to parallel the contents of the Book of Exodus with the contents of the Fourth Gospel. H. Sahlin extends the parallelism to include even the first

eight chapters of 1 Kings. B.P.W. Stather Hunt, on the other hand, emphasizes the similarities that exist between the miracles of Jesus and those that Moses worked in the wilderness. R.H. Smith himself takes up the question of Jesus' miracles but believes that "the most likely place where one may seek an exodus typology of major proportions in the Gospel of John is not in the traditions concerning the Hebrews after they departed from Egypt but in those concerning them before their departure and up to it, i.e. the materials of Exod. 2:23-12:51" (op. cit., 333). He believes that a correlation can be established between the signs to be found in Exodus 3-12 and those in the Fourth Gospel which he summarizes thus:

<u>YHWH's (Moses') Signs in Egypt</u>	<u>Jesus' Signs</u>
I Water turned to blood (Exod. 7:14-24)	I Water turned into wine (John 2:1-11)
II Onslaught of frogs (7:25-8:15)	
III Onslaught of gnats (8:16-19)	
IV Onslaught of flies (8:20-32)	
V Plague on animals (9:1-7)	II Healing of Official's son (4:46-54)
VI Disease of boils (9:8-12)	III Healing of the lame man (5:2-9)
VII Hail and thunderstorm (9:13-35)	IV Feeding of the multitude (6:1-15)
VIII Onslaught of locusts (10:1-20)	V Stilling of the storm (6:16-21)
IX Darkness upon the land (10:21-29)	VI Healing of the blind man (9:1-41)
X Death of the first-born (11:1-12:32)	VII Raising of Lazarus (11:1-44) and death-resurrection of Jesus

The important point about the nature of the relationship between the signs of Jesus and the Mosaic signs is that, while it is possible to establish some sort of parallel between them, it is nevertheless one in which inversion plays a significant role. As Smith (op. cit., 335) puts it: "whereas Moses demonstrated divine power by works of destruction, Jesus demonstrates that same power by beneficial acts". When we examine the various signs in the light of this statement we get the following results:

- (a) In the case of the first Mosaic sign we find Moses "creating death-dealing blood" whereas at Cana Jesus "creates life-giving wine".⁽²³⁾
- (b) Smith admits that the points of similarity between the fifth Mosaic sign and Jesus' second one are "not very strong", but he believes that it is nevertheless possible to establish some degree of similarity. "In both signs the affliction leads to death. There is also an element of indirectness in the suffering, for the Egyptians are not afflicted in their own bodies and the official himself is not ill." As far as the element of inversion is concerned, "Moses brings about the extinction of valued possessions, Jesus sustains life in that which is treasured".
- (c) In the sixth sign of Moses and the third of Jesus "direct personal affliction is involved". "In the one, Moses brings physical debilitation, while in the other, Jesus brings restoration to health" (336).
- (d) In the seventh Mosaic sign and the fifth of Jesus "Moses conjures up a storm to bring destruction" whereas "Jesus, by implication, stills a storm and brings calm".
- (e) The onslaught of the locusts in the Book of Exodus (the eighth Mosaic sign) "leaves the people without agricultural sustenance" resulting in famine; Jesus on the other hand provides an abundance of food to those who are hungry (4th Sign).
- (f) Whereas the ninth Mosaic sign resulted in a darkness over the land that was so deep that people, according to the Book of Exodus (10:21-29), behaved as though blind, Jesus brings sight to one who sits in darkness (6th Sign).
- (g) In both the tenth sign of Moses and the seventh sign of Jesus "death is the dominant thought.... but in the former God brings death where there was life, whereas in the latter Jesus brings life where there was death". The same two themes of death-life are also to be found in the death-resurrection sequence of Jesus.

The similarities between the signs of YHWH-Moses and those of the Fourth Gospel are not limited merely to their content. There is the similarity in the language used to describe them (σημεία); further, the aim of the

signs in both cases is the same - "to bring the recipient or observer to a recognition of the power of the deity"; in the gospel Jesus is "reluctant to perform signs (4:48)" just as "YHWH seems reluctant to loose his afflictions upon Egypt"; and finally the "hardness of heart" of Pharaoh is paralleled by the disbelief of "the Jews" in the face of Jesus' signs.⁽²⁴⁾ R. Brown (John, 529) also comments on the similarity in the ending of the Book of Deuteronomy (34:11) with that of the Fourth Gospel (20:30), while Num. 14:22 connects God's glory with his signs just as Jesus' signs show his glory (2:11, 12:37,41).⁽²⁵⁾

Smith also notes that the end result of the signs of YHWH-Moses in the Book of Exodus was usually destruction of one kind or another. However in the case of Jesus' signs the main emphasis is on restoration: "whereas Moses demonstrated divine power by works of destruction, Jesus demonstrated that same power by beneficial acts." (op. cit., 335).

Similarities between the portrayal of Moses in various books of the Old Testament and the fourth evangelists's portrayal have been noted by some scholars. In the Pentateuch, for example,

- i. God tells Moses that he will teach him what to say (Ex. 4:12), while in the Fourth Gospel Jesus states that he speaks as the Father taught him (8:28).
- ii. Moses did "as the Lord commanded him" (Num. 17:11); Jesus also claims to do "as the Father has commanded me" (14:31).
- iii. Jesus claims that what he speaks he has been commanded to speak by his Father (12:49, 14:24); such statements appear to echo the words of Deut. 18:18, ".... and I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him."
- iv. The Fourth Gospel's view of the commandments (12:49-50, 13:34, 14:31, 15:10,12-17) has some similarities with that of the Book of Deuteronomy (4:5, 5:33, 6:1-6).
- v. Repeatedly Jesus claims to have been sent into the world by the Father (e.g. 3:17,34, 4:34, 5:37, 10:36, 11:42, 12:44, 15:21, 17:3); similarly we are told that Moses had been sent by God to the people of Israel in order to deliver them (e.g. Ex. 3:10,15, 4:38, 5:22, 7:16).⁽²⁶⁾

Again, some scholars believe that there are similarities between Ben Sira's description of Moses and that of the Fourth Gospel. Ben Sira

(Ecclesiasticus 45:4-6), speaking of Moses, says, "For his loyalty and gentleness he (i.e. God) sanctified him, choosing him alone out of all mankind;" (cf. Jn. 1:14,18, 3:16,18), "he allowed him to hear his voice," (cf. Jn. 8:40, 12:49-50), "and led him into the darkness; he gave him the commandments face to face, the law of life and knowledge" (cf. Jn. 14:16), "to teach Jacob his ordinances and Israel his decrees." (cf. Jn. 3:2, 7:16, 8:28,40, 12:49-50, 14:24).

Perhaps the one thing which, more than anything else, tends to undermine attempts to find parallels between different books of the Bible, or even parts thereof, is that these attempts are usually selective. This means that there is always the danger that a high degree of subjectivity is present in the making of such parallels. Or, to put it differently, such an approach, while emphasizing the similarities, tends to gloss over the differences. Alternatively, the degree of probability to be attached to the different similarities is not made sufficiently clear. Both of these criticisms are, I believe, true in the case of those who set out to draw parallels between the Fourth Gospel and the Moses-Exodus theme, especially as portrayed in the Book of Exodus.

This does not mean that all the claims of these scholars are to be rejected - far from it. But it does mean that their claims should be treated with circumspection and evaluated on their individual merits. For example, it is not necessary to accept Smith's correlation of the Johannine signs with those of the Exodus to accept that the Johannine use of the concept "sign" is definitely intelligible against the background of the use made of it especially in the Book of Exodus.

That the author of the Fourth Gospel was familiar with the biblical tradition behind the Moses-Exodus theme cannot be doubted in the light of the explicit use he makes of it as described above. Further, because of the detailed knowledge he shows in this regard it is not an unwarranted assumption, I believe, that the same theme could have influenced him, if only at an unconscious level, in writing other parts of his gospel. For this reason the reader who had a good grounding in the writings of the Old Testament would have found many echoes of the Moses-Exodus theme in the pages of the Fourth Gospel. It is some of these only which we have attempted to discuss in this section.

In brief: it seems to me that the evidence we have discussed shows that

the fourth evangelist singled out the person of Moses for special consideration in his gospel. This was no doubt due to the important place Moses had in Judaism. However, the evangelist was not primarily interested in the person of Moses himself. Rather his concern was to explain what the true nature of Moses' relationship to Jesus was. While it cannot be doubted that his treatment of this theme involved him in a discussion of some negative, contrasting aspects of that relationship, this approach was apparently dictated by misunderstanding on the part of "the Jews". But the significance of this should be assessed in the light of the evangelist's main concern which was to show that a correct understanding of the relationship in question led one to see that in reality there was no fundamental conflict between Moses and Jesus, and that to accept the latter did not automatically involve a rejection of the former.

(4) The Fourth Evangelist's attitude to and use of Scripture

In their arguments against Jesus "the Jews" frequently called upon the teachings of Scripture to substantiate the point they were making. In view of this our concern in this section is to see whether the use made of Scripture by "the Jews" has in any way influenced the evangelist's own attitude to and use of Scripture, and whether there is any indication of the way he believes Scripture should be understood. Our discussion will first of all deal with his manner of quoting Scripture; then we shall examine the way in which he makes use of some of the more important images of the Old Testament.

(a) Quotations from the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel

The fourth evangelist quotes "directly" from the Old Testament on only fourteen occasions (1:23, 2:17, 6:31,45, 7:38, 10:34, 12:15,38,39-40, 13:18, 15:25, 19:24,36,37).⁽²⁷⁾ In other places he makes reference in general terms to something that can be found in the Scriptures (e.g. 1:45, 2:22, 5:39,46, 7:42, 8:17, 17:12, 19:28, 20:9).⁽²⁸⁾

Perhaps the most surprising thing about the evangelist's method of quoting from the Scriptures is that on only five occasions can it be claimed that he quotes literally. Of these five quotations, four follow the text of the LXX, viz. 2:17 (Ps. 68:10), 10:34 (Ps. 81:6), 12:38 (Is. 53:1), 19:24 (Ps. 21:19). In the other instance, 19:37 (Zech. 12:10), he shows a preference for the Hebrew as opposed to the LXX.

In the other direct quotations the evangelist is sometimes close to the LXX and /or the Hebrew text. However, it is not possible to say with any

degree of certainty whether he was consciously quoting from either of these texts or whether he was relying on his memory. The quotations in question and their apparent sources are 1:23 - Is. 40:3, 6:31 - Ex. 16:14, f., Ps. 77(78):24, f., 6:45 - Is. 54:13, 13:18 - Ps. 40(41):10, 15:24 - Ps. 34(35):19, Ps. 68(69):5, 19:36 - Ex. 12:46, Num. 9:12, Ps. 33(34):21. In these instances a comparison of the texts in question shows clearly that the fourth evangelist has adapted the Old Testament texts.

On other occasions the evangelist appears to disagree quite markedly with both the LXX and Hebrew texts; e.g. in 12:15 where he is apparently quoting Zech. 9:9, and in 12:40 where he is quoting Is. 6:10. As far as 7:38 is concerned it is difficult to say which Old Testament text the evangelist has in mind. It is possible he is referring to Is. 48:21, Zech. 14:8, Ezek. 47:1, ff., Ps. 77:15-16 (LXX), or Ps. 104:41 (LXX).⁽²⁹⁾

How is one to explain the discrepancies that exist between the texts of the fourth evangelist's quotations from the Old Testament and the texts of the Hebrew and the LXX? "It is possible," as Barrett (St John, 24) notes, "that he also knew other versions of the Old Testament."⁽³⁰⁾ However the evidence to support such a view is somewhat thin.⁽³¹⁾

It does not seem unreasonable to assume that the fourth evangelist felt at liberty to quote the Old Testament in a free manner. There are scholars who believe that he quoted "from memory".⁽³²⁾ Now there are two conceivable situations in which a person would quote "from memory": (a) when the quotation is considered to be of such value that the author feels that it must be included in the text but it is not possible to check the exact wording because of the unavailability of the sources; and (b) where the sources are available but in the view of the author the exact wording is not so important provided that the general meaning of the quotation is conveyed accurately. Because the texts of the Scriptures must have been readily available one presumes that the evangelist falls into the second category. Braun (op. cit., 8) puts it thus: "Ce qui l'intéresse, est non pas la matérialité des termes, au sujet desquels il lui eut paru vain de spéculer, mais leur contenu". As in the case of the "signs" the evangelist wishes to bring out what he considers to be the true meaning of the Old Testament. In this regard Schnackenburg (op. cit., 122) believes that "the decisive element in the choice and formulation is how useful and significant the texts may be in Christology." As an example of what he means this author refers to 19:36 "where there is a definite recall of the Paschal

lamb, of which the bones were not to be broken by the Israelites, Exod. 12:10,46; Num. 9:12; but the verbal form $\sigma\upsilon\tau\tau\iota\beta\acute{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$ recalls Ps. 34(33):21 (the suffering of the just man), so that this text too seems to be prophecy of Jesus". 7:38 seems to be another case in point. In the Old Testament texts that probably provide the origin of this quotation "the source of living water" is either the rock in the desert which Moses struck and from which water flowed, or Jerusalem and the Temple from which rivers of living water would flow at some future date (cf. Ez. 47:1,ff., Zech. 14:8). In 7:38, however, it is the view of many scholars that the fourth evangelist makes Jesus himself the source of "the rivers of living water".⁽³³⁾

That all the direct references to the Scriptures in the Fourth Gospel are centred on the person of Jesus is clear. He is the one whose advent was foretold by Moses and the prophets (1:45, 5:46) and announced by John the Baptist (1:23), for in him has come the long-awaited Messianic King (12:15) who was descended from David (7:42). Those who believe in him will receive the "true bread" that has come down from heaven (6:31) and they will be taught by God himself (6:45). From the very beginning of his public life Jesus was fired with zeal for his Father and his Father's House (2:17). His claim to be called Son of God and therefore call God his Father is also indicated by Scripture (5:39, 8:17, 10:34).⁽³⁴⁾ Yet he was rejected without cause (15:25) by the unbelieving Jews (12:38-40). Betrayed by one of his own (13:18, 17:12) he died like a lamb (19:28,36,37) with his garments being divided among those who crucified him (19:24). However his raising up on the cross is a glorious exaltation, leading as it does to the resurrection (2:22, 20:9), which causes men to look on him (19:37). In those days "rivers of living waters" shall flow from him (7:38).⁽³⁵⁾

Finally, in addition to what I have called "direct quotations" (although as we have already noted, some of them are "direct" simply because the evangelist intended them to be considered as such) it is also possible to discover in the Fourth Gospel many "turns of phrases which suggest indirect quotations".⁽³⁶⁾ In this regard, however, one has to be careful about the conjecture involved in the tracing of such quotations.⁽³⁷⁾

(b) Old Testament Images, used by the Fourth Evangelist

In composing the Fourth Gospel there can be little doubt that the evangelist was inspired by some of the great images of the Old Testament when he set out to portray his figure of Jesus for his readers. We shall concern ourselves only with the more important of these.

(i) The "Good Shepherd" (ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός) (10:11, ff)

The image of the shepherd is a common one in the Old Testament. This is understandable in view of the importance of the pastoral and agricultural way of life, especially during the earlier centuries of Israel's history as a nation. Many of the great leaders of the people were shepherds, e.g. the patriarchs, Moses, David. Hence it is not surprising that the designation "shepherd" should have come to be applied even to God who was considered to be the leader of the people (cf. Gen. 49:24, Ps. 23, Ps. 78:52, Is. 40:11, Jer. 31:10). The most extensive and developed treatment of the shepherd theme is to be found in Ezek. 34. Here God castigates the rulers of his people, "the shepherds of Israel", for thinking of themselves and their own interests instead of looking after his "sheep". Because they have had no one to care for them the "sheep" have become "scattered over all the face of the earth" (34:1-10). Therefore God himself will seek out his sheep and be a shepherd to them (34:11-16). After a reference to the good and bad sheep to be found in his flock (34:17-22) God promises to "set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them and be their shepherd" (34:23-24; see also 37:24). Finally God promises to make a covenant of peace with his flock and to banish wild beasts from the land so that his sheep may live securely. "And they shall know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, says the Lord God. And you are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, says the Lord God" (34:30-31).⁽³⁸⁾

A comparative study of John 10 and the Old Testament tradition in general and Ezekiel 34 in particular shows that while there are similarities between the two there are also some differences, as R. Bultmann (John, 367) has noted. At the same time, with Bultmann (op. cit., 364, 367, ff) and Barrett (St John, 310), it should be noted that the Ruler = Shepherd image is not confined to the Old Testament and Jewish traditions. However the similarities between John 10 and the Old Testament tradition, especially Ezekiel 34, seem to me to be so clear as to suggest that the fourth evangelist drew his main inspiration from this source while at the same time treating the theme in an original manner. Dodd (Interpretation, 358, ff) is of the opinion that Ezekiel 34 "must have been in the author's mind" when composing the discourse of chapter 10.

(ii) The "True Vine" (ἡ ἀμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή) (15:1, ff)

In the Old Testament the image of Israel as a vine is fairly common, e.g. Hosea 10:1, Is. 5:1-7, Jer. 2:21, 5:10, 6:9, 12:10, Ezek. 15:1-8, 17:3-10,

19:10-14, Ps. 80:8-18, Is. 27:2-5. Bultmann, on the other hand, basing himself on the findings of Schweizer, believes that the vine image of John 15 has its origin in the myth of the tree of life (op. cit., 530, n.5).

As in the case of the image of the Good Shepherd the fourth evangelist's treatment of the vine image bears the marks of originality. His use of it in reference to the person of Jesus is obviously different from the Old Testament usage where it was an image of Israel. Yet even though the fourth evangelist's use of the image is original it should be seen as a development of the Old Testament usage: Jesus is the true Israel and therefore he is the "true" (ἀληθινή) vine.

(iii) The "Lamb of God" (ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) (1:29, 36)

The source of the idea/s behind the Fourth Gospel's use of the designation "lamb of God" is a much disputed point, and for our purposes there is no need to dwell on the finer details of this discussion. What is of interest to us, however, is that all of the explanations offered are rooted in Old Testament tradition. These explanations may be briefly summarized thus, using the headings provided by Dodd (Interpretation, 233):

- i. "the lamb of the sin-offering" : this explanation is based on Lev. 16:21, f. (However, in Lev. it is a goat - the "scapegoat" - that takes away the sins of the people);
- ii. "the paschal lamb" : an explanation based on Exod. 12. (But it should be noted that the lamb of Exodus 12 did not take away the sin of the people; further, the word used by LXX in this context is πρόβατος (= πῶ) and not ἀμνὸς);
- iii. "the ἀμνὸς of Is. 53", i.e. the Suffering Servant : (against this explanation it is pointed out that the emphasis in Isaiah is on the silence of the Servant before his accusers and not on the taking away of sin; further this interpretation is based on the assumption that ἀμνὸς is a "mistranslation"⁽³⁹⁾ of the Aramaic אֲרָםָּ which can mean both "boy"-"servant", and "lamb". That such a "mistranslation" has taken place has not yet been proved according to Dodd (op. cit., 235, f), Bultmann, (John, 96, n.3), and others);
- iv. "the young ram which is ἀρχὸν καὶ ἡγούμενος τῶν προβάτων i.e. the Messiah as King of Israel : this is the view which Dodd himself accepts. (Against it, it has been noted that

the word for "lamb" in the Apocalypse, to which Dodd appeals, is not ἀμνός, but ἀρνίον; further, the lamb of Jewish apocalyptic expectation "was to be raised up by God to destroy evil in the world" (Brown, John, 60) which is not the same thing as taking away the sin of the world).⁽⁴⁰⁾

A novel interpretation that deserves mention if only for the imaginativeness it shows is that of Negoitsa and Daniel in their article, "L'Agneau de Dieu est le Verbe de Dieu (Ad Jo. i 29 et 36)". These authors argue that the Aramaic word, at least in the Babylonian Talmud, for a "lamb" (ʿimmerah, אִמְרָה אִ, emphatic state) is so close in sound, when spoken, to the Hebrew term for a "word" (ʿimrah, אִמְרָה) - "c'est à dire exactement le même terme que celui qui signifie 'agneau' en araméen" - that when the Baptist spoke the phrase in question the two disciples would have 'heard' both "Lamb of God" and "Word of God". They argue further that the phrase in question must refer to a divine being as the Baptist had already spoken of "the Son of God" (cf. 1:34). Now because the Fourth Gospel had already described the "Logos" as pre-existent Negoitsa and Daniel conclude that the phrase must mean "Word of God" since there are no grounds for believing that "Lamb" in this context refers to a divine being.

It seems to me that there are two points on which it is possible to criticize this theory. The first is that the Baptist was speaking either Aramaic or Hebrew at the time, and that, therefore, the two disciples would have understood what he had to say accordingly. Secondly, there are good reasons to believe, as we shall see later,⁽⁴¹⁾ that the phrase "son of God" on the lips of the Baptist probably does not refer to a "divine being".

Whichever interpretation one accepts as being the most satisfactory⁽⁴²⁾ there are probably very few scholars who would disagree with Barrett when he says (op. cit., 146) that "it is certain that this phrase has an Old Testament background..." even though there is no general agreement about the exact nature of that background.

Briefly, therefore, the attitude of the fourth evangelist to Scripture is basically that of a man who believes that it has an invaluable contribution to make to his line of argument if correctly understood. It is true that his manner of quoting it is sometimes loose but this does not mean that it is careless. He was at times obviously more interested in bringing out the true meaning of the quotation in question rather than

in merely reproducing the words exactly. Thus he uses the Old Testament to show that Jesus is both at the centre of Scripture as well as its fulfilment.

(5) The Fourth Evangelist's Attitude to the Law

Excluding 8:5 the word νόμος is used fourteen times in the Fourth Gospel (1:17,45, 7:19,23,49,51, 8:17, 10:34, 12:34, 15:25, 18:31, 19:7). While it is true to say that on the whole the evangelist's use of the term is consistent, it is nevertheless possible to distinguish, from the point of view of the extent of its content, various levels of meaning. Thus, progressing from the more comprehensive to the narrower meanings we find that νόμος is used to refer to:

- i. the whole of the Old Testament: e.g. 10:34 (where the quotation is apparently taken from Ps. 82:6), 12:34, 15:25;
- ii. the Torah in the sense of the Pentateuch: e.g. 1:45;
- iii. a specific commandment, e.g. the question of performing circumcision on the sabbath, 7:19,ff., or a particular "law" in the legal sense, e.g. 7:51, 8:17, 18:31, 19:7. (It should be noted that in i. and ii. above ὁ νόμος becomes a synonym for αἱ γραφαί).

Dodd (Interpretation, 76,ff) has noted that "in the Fourth Gospel νόμος is used, exactly as in the LXX, to cover both the narrower and the wider meanings of $\aleph \aleph \aleph$, but never in any sense which is not covered by $\aleph \aleph \aleph$. That is to say, it never strays away from the Jewish into the Greek field of meaning.... This in itself is an important piece of evidence for the Jewish affinities of this work."⁽⁴³⁾

We have already had reason to discuss some of the references to νόμος in the Fourth Gospel. In discussing the fourth evangelist's use of Scripture in the preceding section, for example, we found that the evangelist uses these quotations to show that it was to Jesus that the Scripture bore witness. The same applied in the case of the evangelist's treatment of the great figures of Israel's history, a history that is contained in the "Law".

An analysis of the remaining texts shows a similar pattern emerging in so far as the relationship between Jesus and the Law is concerned. The fourth

evangelist is not interested in the Law for its own sake; rather his concern is with the light it can throw on the person of Jesus.

The purpose of the Law is, in fact, to bear witness to Jesus for in him and his life does the Law find its fulfilment (1:45, also 5:39 where "the Scriptures" = "the Law" as explained above, 8:17, 10:34, 15:25). A correct understanding of the Law will lead to belief in Jesus. On the other hand, failure to grasp the true meaning of the Law will result in the rejection of Jesus. It must be emphasized, however, that such rejection cannot be attributed to some inadequacy in the Law but arises rather from an unwillingness on the part of the individual to read and understand the Law correctly. To put this another way: misinterpretation of the true meaning of the Law results in the rejection of Jesus because it is to Jesus that the Law bears witness. Those who are guilty of rejecting Jesus have so perverted the meaning of the Law that it can no longer be called the Law given to Moses by God but has become something of their own creation. Thus it is that Jesus, speaking to "the Jews", can use the terms $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \nu\omicron\mu\omicron\upsilon\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\upsilon}\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega$ (8:17) and $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \nu\omicron\mu\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\upsilon}\mu\omicron\upsilon\omega$ (10:34). The Law as it had been given to "the Jews" was clear; yet in these instances at least, they refuse to make what Jesus considers to be the logical application of the Law in so far as it affected him. It is as if Jesus is saying to "the Jews": "The Law which you claim as your own states that Why therefore do you refuse to accept what it has to say about me?"⁽⁴⁴⁾

In the context of the point under discussion it is important to note that at times the attitude of the "Jews" themselves to their own Law was nothing short of hypocritical. This could account for Jesus' attitude to their use of it and his disassociating himself from it in particular instances. Perhaps the most glaring example of the Jews' attitude in this regard is that contained in 7:45, ff. The Pharisees claim that the "crowd, who do not know the law, are accursed" (7:49). Yet they themselves who do claim to know it choose to disregard its provisions when it is more convenient for them to do so. In the exchange between Nicodemus and the Pharisees which follows 7:49 Nicodemus draws attention to the requirement of the Law that an accused person should be granted a proper hearing (cf. Dt. 1:16, 13:14, 17:9, 19:18). The reply of the Pharisees to him, viz., "Are you from Galilee too? Search and you will see that no prophet is to rise from Galilee", is no more than an excuse for not treating Jesus as the Law required.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Because the purpose of the Law is to bear witness to Jesus and because it receives its fulfilment in him, it stands to reason that he is greater than the Law and in a sense replaces it. For this reason Jesus describes himself in terms that were frequently associated with the Law by the rabbis. He, and not the Law, is the "true light" (φῶς ἀληθινόν) (1:9, see also 8:12, 9:5, 12:35). Similarly, he is "the bread of life", the bread which "gives life to the world" (6:33,ff); he gives "the water" that will well up to eternal life (4:14); he is the one who provides the "good wine" as opposed to the inferior wine provided by the Law up to that time (2:1,ff); (note that in this latter instance, as indeed in the other cases, it is a question of a difference of degree and not a difference in the basic nature between what Jesus and the Law had to offer, although the difference in question could rightly be called infinite.)⁽⁴⁶⁾

In brief: our conclusion about the Fourth Gospel's attitude to the Law has much in common with the conclusions reached concerning the other points we have discussed. There does appear to be an element of antagonism to the Law in the gospel but this must be seen in its true perspective. It is not the Law itself that is being attacked but rather the misuse and misinterpretation of it by "the Jews". When properly understood, the Law's function is seen to be to bear witness to Jesus and it is in him that it finds its true meaning. In essence therefore the relationship between Jesus and the Law is not fundamentally one of opposition but one in which the former takes the place of the latter, in which the lesser gives way before the greater, the imperfect before the perfect. And just as Jesus is so much greater than Moses so too is the value of what each had to offer: "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (1:17).

(6) The Temple, Worship, and Jewish Festivals in the Fourth Gospel

The Jewish feasts not only provide the background for Jesus' discourses but also provide a framework within which his whole ministry unfolds. That this was not accidental on the evangelist's part appears to be a reasonable assumption. R.H. Lightfoot (op. cit., 20) expresses it thus: "From the first it was a recognized part of the tradition that the Lord's death had taken place at passover time, and in thus spreading the incidence of the Jewish feasts throughout the ministry, St John not only does justice in all probability to frequent visits of the Lord to Jerusalem, but also invites the reader to see the Lord's whole work in close connexion with the Jewish festivals, especially the passover."

The feasts in question are those of Tabernacles (cf. 7:2), of the Dedication (cf. 10:22) and of Passover (cf. 2:13,23, 6:4, 11:55, 12:1, 13:1, 18:28,39, 19:14).⁽⁴⁷⁾ The purpose of these feasts is admirably expressed by R.H. Lightfoot (op. cit.) thus: "In St John's view all these festivals in different ways have pointed forward to the coming of the Lord, and in that coming they have now been 'fulfilled' (cf. Heb. 10:1-25)." In other words these feasts and the events they recall point to and are replaced by Jesus. Thus Jesus' proclamation at the feast of Tabernacles, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink...." (7:37-38) should be seen against the background of the ritual that involved the ceremonial carrying of water from the Pool of Siloam to the Temple on each of the seven days of the feast. The purpose of this was to remind the Jews of the water drawn from the rock in the desert (Num. 20:2,ff). It was also a symbol of the people's expectation of their deliverance by the Messiah (cf. Is. 12:3, also Zech. 13:1, 14:8).⁽⁴⁸⁾

When we turn to the discourse of Jesus on the occasion of the feast of Dedication (ἐνκρίνιαι) (10:22,ff) the connection between the two, while being a little more subtle, is still present. It is to be seen in what the feast was recalling, namely, the rededication of the Temple in 165 B.C. after the deliverance of the people by Judas Maccabaeus. This theme of dedication Jesus takes up when he refers to the fact that he has been consecrated (ἡγιάσεν) by the Father (10:36). It is a theme to which he returns shortly before his death, an event which will mark the people's final deliverance. In 17:19 he says: "And for their sake I consecrate (ἁγιάζω) myself, that they may also be consecrated in truth (ἡγιάσμενοι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ)."⁽⁴⁹⁾

The Passover themes also abound in the Fourth Gospel. The first Passover of Jesus' public life is associated with the cleansing of the Temple (see below). On the occasion of the second Passover the discourse and events associated with it occur in Galilee. Here we find the "Manna-True Bread" theme being developed.⁽⁵⁰⁾ The third Passover is, of course, the final one during which Jesus is put to death. In this regard it has often been noted that the fourth evangelist differs from the Synoptics as regards the date of the crucifixion. According to him Jesus died on the cross during the time when the Passover lambs were being slaughtered in the Temple.⁽⁵¹⁾

In addition to Tabernacles, Dedication, and Passover, another festival that receives prominence in the Fourth Gospel is, of course, the Sabbath.

The miracle of the curing of the sick man at the Pool of Bethesda (5:2,ff) provides Jesus with the opportunity of proclaiming that like his Father he is entitled to "work" on the sabbath (5:17). However, the "work" that he performs is not contrary to the Law of Moses (7:22,f). Jesus' superiority over the Sabbath is also brought out in the curing of the man born blind (9:1,ff).

The Jews considered Jerusalem to be the centre of their religion and at the very heart of the city was the Temple. This consideration alone helps one to understand why the Jews looked to the Temple with so much reverence; it also explains the reason for the importance they attached to it.

It is against this background that one should see the Jews' reaction to the cleansing of the Temple by Jesus (2:13,f) and his challenge to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (2:19). Because the Jews misunderstand his meaning, taking the words literally, the evangelist tells us that Jesus was speaking of his body (2:21). In the evangelist's view the Risen Christ would replace the temple and its religious functions in the life of the people. That the fourth evangelist wished to make it clear that the old order of worship was replaced by Jesus cannot be doubted. However, the level of meaning which he intended to convey is disputed by scholars. Dodd (Interpretation, 302) for example, says that the "instructed reader" (of Ephesus) "would conclude that the new order in religion which Christ inaugurates is that of the Church which is His Body. That the evangelist intended this is highly probable...." Schnackenburg (St John, 357) on the other hand, believes that "a comprehensive interpretation, which takes the "body" of Christ as already including his Church, is unacceptable. While allowing for the unity between Christ and the Church, John lays very strong stress on union with his person (in faith), and the Church itself only comes into view in so far as Christ's saving gifts become efficacious in the Church and are communicated through its sacraments."⁽⁵²⁾

Of the two views outlined above it seems to me that Schnackenburg is closer to the mark. The whole context suggests that it is the person of Jesus that is meant here. The reference to "the raising up in three days" can refer to nothing else but to Jesus himself. After the resurrection of Jesus the temple will no longer have a role to play for in those days "true" worship will not be associated with any particular place. Rather it will consist in worshipping the Father ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ (4:20,ff).

This will be possible because of the believer's relationship with his Risen Lord.

Briefly, therefore, our review of the place of Jewish festivals and the temple in the Fourth Gospel has shown that the evangelist considers them to have considerable importance. However, his reason for treating these themes was to show that they had been replaced by Jesus. Their value consisted in that they pointed to Jesus; with his coming their *raison d'être* ceases.

(C) Conclusions

Our evaluation of the evidence on which the anti-Jewish polemic theory rests has led us to make certain conclusions about the way in which the Fourth Gospel handled this material. These conclusions may be summarized as follows: In the evangelist's treatment of the material which we have been discussing we noted that there is some degree of tension in his approach that can best be described as ambivalence. On the one hand, for example, he appears to play down the importance of the great figures of the Old Testament and the value of such institutions as the Law, Jewish feasts, the Temple and its worship. Yet on other occasions he appears to be exalting them and using them to bolster his own line of argument. In these latter instances it is as if he wants to emphasize the positive side of their relationship to Christ for it is the person of Jesus who is undoubtedly the focal point of the Fourth Gospel. Thus, in the eyes of the fourth evangelist the real value of the Old Testament, the Law, the various Jewish feasts, the Temple with its worship, is that they all point to Jesus and in him do they find their meaning and fulfilment. With the coming of Jesus, however, their *raison d'être* ceases as they are now superseded by the person of Jesus. In like fashion the lives and achievements of the great figures of Israel's history (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses) point to Jesus and the work he would do. The former were no more than pale reflections of the latter.

Granted that there is some tension, some ambivalence, in the evangelist's handling of his material, how are we to account for it? What was it that prompted him to treat his material in this way? In the course of our analysis we have hinted at where the answer is in all probability to be found. We noted that much of the material in question was treated by the evangelist against the background of various conflicts and controversies with "the Jews". In this context he found it necessary to correct some

of the misunderstandings to which they gave expression. The "Jewish" attitude had come to view Moses, the patriarchs, the Law, the Temple with its feasts and worship, etc., almost as if they were ends in themselves. When confronted with this attitude Jesus (and the evangelist) of necessity had to depreciate them, to put them into their true perspective. But this did not involve a denial that these people and institutions did have an inherent greatness, importance, value. It was a greatness, etc., that was relative for they were not to be considered as ends in themselves. Rather their *raison d'être*, as we have said, consisted in that they pointed to Jesus and it was from their relationship to him that they received any meaning and importance that they had. Hence the Fourth Gospel attacks not so much the Old Testament persons and institutions in themselves but rather the incorrect attitude and unwarranted importance attached to them by "the Jews". In so doing it did not wish to destroy them but rather to place them in the proper perspective which was a necessary condition for a true understanding of their role and significance. Briefly, therefore, it was because of the nature of the controversies with "the Jews" that the evangelist found it necessary to highlight and emphasize Jesus' superiority over the great figures and institutions of the Old Testament.

What bearing do these conclusions have on the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose? Before proceeding to answer this question a few comments are in order about the value of the nature of the material to be found in the gospel. The problem that confronts us at this point can best be formulated in the form of another question: In view of the extensive use made of the Old Testament by the fourth evangelist as well as the prominence given to "Jewish" questions and controversies in the gospel, are we therefore entitled to assume that the destination of the gospel was a Jewish audience?

First of all, in evaluating the evangelist's use of the Old Testament a word of caution is in place about the conclusions that may be drawn from this. Sanders (John, 942) notes that "the Jewish Scriptures were studied and valued by Gentile as well as by Jewish Christians, and familiarity with them does not necessarily argue a Jewish origin" for the Fourth Gospel.

In this connection we have stated before, but it bears repeating, that there is a need to distinguish clearly the two questions of the gospel's background and its destination and purpose. The two are not necessarily linked together. In a sense it was inevitable that the Fourth Gospel

should display Jewish material. As Bultmann (Primitive Christianity, 84) puts it: "Jesus was not a 'Christian', but a Jew, and his preaching is couched in the thought forms and imagery of Judaism, even where it is critical of traditional Jewish piety." Jesus himself tells us that "salvation is of the Jews" (4:22). It is therefore difficult to conceive of the message of salvation being preached totally independently of Judaism. Thus a clear distinction must be drawn between the origin or source of the material used and the purpose for which it is used in the Fourth Gospel. This implies a further distinction between the evangelist's own background which must have had some influence on his presentation of the gospel message, and the background of his intended readers. While in the case of each of these distinctions the former could be Jewish it does not follow that the latter part of each statement must also be Jewish.

Now in the light of what we have said so far it seems to me that there is little doubt that the material used in the Fourth Gospel had its origin in the controversies that took place between "believers" and "the Jews" in the period preceding the composition of the gospel. At least this seems to explain best of all the dichotomous approach of the evangelist to his material. It is possible to sum up the essence of these controversies as follows: according to "the Jews" a man had to choose between being either "a disciple of Moses" or "a disciple of Jesus" since it was not possible, in their view, to be both (cf. 9:28). The true (Jewish) believer on the other hand accepted that by becoming "a disciple of Jesus" he was being true to the teachings of Moses and the Old Testament. Hence for him it was not a matter of accepting the former and rejecting the latter. It is this conflict of attitude that the Fourth Gospel seems to reflect. Bowker (op. cit., 407) sums up the point at issue thus: "in the first twelve chapters, John reproduces some of the major issues whereby the new Israel came to be distinct from the old - at any rate in his estimate. In spite of this he has suggested at almost every point that this distinction is not to be understood as a total divorce. Whatever the issue of the debate may be, Christianity belongs inescapably to Judaism."

In view of the important role that the controversies with "the Jews" play in the Fourth Gospel may it be concluded that its purpose was to show how wrong the "Jews" had been to reject Christ, a.v. that the evangelist's intention was anti-Judaistic? I do not think so. It is hard to believe,

and the evidence does not indicate this, that the fourth evangelist set out primarily to attack the attitudes and arguments of "the Jews" even though, as we have seen, the material he used was shaped by conflicts with Judaism. Lindars (op. cit., 78) expresses the point admirably when he writes: "In so far as it is permissible to look for polemical aims in the Fourth Gospel, it is Jewish objections to Christianity which are the chief concern, and constitute the most powerful formative influence over John's thought. But influence is not the same thing as purpose. The purpose of the Fourth Gospel is to bring men to faith...."

Perhaps the most significant contribution that advocates of the anti-Jewish-polemic theory have made to the discussion of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose is to emphasize the importance and extent of Jewish material in the gospel. This is something which we have to take into account not only when attempting to uncover the gospel's purpose but also its destination. As we have already noted, it is incorrect to argue that merely because the nature of the material to be found in the gospel can be described as "Jewish", therefore the intended readers must also have been Jewish. Yet in the absence of any other more reliable indicators it could provide us with some information about the identity of the original readers. Even when one makes allowances for the degree of 'Jewishness' which one would expect to find in any presentation of the Gospel material, it cannot be denied that the fourth evangelist squarely and consciously situates his gospel right in the centre of Judaism and its beliefs and practices, and that many of the questions he discusses would have been of interest almost exclusively to the Jews.

In brief: while there are no convincing arguments to support the view that the fourth evangelist's purpose in writing his gospel was only or even primarily to attack "the Jews", the evidence brought forward provides us with a strong indication that the destination of the gospel could have been Jewish. Finality on this last point is not, however, possible at this stage as it will first of all be necessary to evaluate those theories which support a Gentile destination before accepting or rejecting the evidence to which we have referred.

II. A POLEMIC AGAINST THE GNOSTICS

Introductory Comment

It can be stated without fear of contradiction that one of the most fruitful fields of study which has been pursued by scholars in the present century is that of the Gnostic Systems. Many have found these systems to be of great significance for an understanding of the history of primitive Christianity in general and of the Fourth Gospel in particular. However, in spite of the tremendous amount of research that has been undertaken in this regard, it is still generally accepted that this is an area in which there are many questions yet to be answered.

Because it is widely accepted that there is indeed some kind of relationship between the Gnostic Systems and the Fourth Gospel, and that this relationship could have a bearing on the gospel's destination and purpose, it will be necessary to investigate some of the problems involved. Traditionally, however, the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose have been seen by some in terms of a refutation of various heresies that have been described as "Gnostic". For this reason we shall discuss these first of all. However, because in more recent times the relationship of the Fourth Gospel to the Gnostic Systems has been viewed against a much broader background the second part of this section will be devoted to a discussion of the claims made by some scholars regarding the nature and extent of this relationship.

(A) The Fourth Gospel and the "Gnostic" Heresies

The word "Gnostic", when used to describe certain heresies, refers to a variety of trends or movements that have a number of tenets in common while differing on others.⁽⁵³⁾ Under the above heading we shall be limiting our discussion to three of these heresies, viz. Cerinthus, the Ebionites and the Docetists.

(1) Cerinthus

According to Irenaeus (Adversus Haereses, III, 11, 1), Victorinus of Pettau (Comm. Apoc., 11, 1) and Jerome (In Matt. Prolog.) the Gospel of John was written to refute the errors of the Gnostic Cerinthus. Now our knowledge of what Cerinthus taught - and therefore of what the Fourth Gospel was supposed to be combatting - also comes from Irenaeus.⁽⁵⁴⁾ In this connection he writes:

"A certain Cerinthus also in Asia taught that the world was not made by the first God, but by a certain Virtue far separated and removed from the Principality which is above all things, a Virtue which knows not the God over all. He added that Jesus was not born of a virgin but was the son of Joseph and Mary, like other men, but superior to all others in justice, prudence and wisdom. And that after his baptism Christ descended upon him in the form of a dove, from that Principality which is above all things; and that then he revealed the Unknown Father and performed deeds of virtue, but that in the end Christ flew back, leaving Jesus, and Jesus suffered and rose again, but Christ remained impassible, being by nature spiritual." (55)

On the basis of what Irenaeus has to say here Grant (op. cit., 313) maintains that if the Gospel of John was written to refute the errors of Cerinthus, then we would expect the evangelist to have stressed the following points:

- (a) the world was made by the first God either directly or through an intermediary which was not separate and distinct from him, and one which knew him;
- (b) Jesus Christ is one person and therefore the "spiritual" Christ did not descend upon him at his baptism and leave him at the end;
- (c) Jesus Christ, one person, was capable of suffering; and
- (d) and (possibly) the question of the virginal conception of Jesus.

When we examine the Fourth Gospel in the light of these points we find that the evangelist does indeed have something to say about each of them except for (d). For example, the Prologue stresses the unity of the Logos with God, as well as his role in the creation of the world. Moreover we find no suggestion of a division between "Jesus" and "Christ" in the gospel. Clearly the designation, "Christ", which the evangelist uses as a translation for "Messiah" (cf. 1:41, 4:25), is a title of Jesus and not a separate person. That this Jesus suffered and died is highlighted in 19:30,34. Finally, as far as the question of the virginal conception is concerned, however, the Fourth Gospel does not appear to have set out to refute the teachings of Cerinthus on this point. In fact in 1:45 we have Philip, for example, referring to Jesus as "the son of Joseph". It is probably more correct to say that this problem of the virginal conception did not concern the evangelist.

Briefly: the evidence suggests that while it is possible to argue that

in the Fourth Gospel there is material that could be used to refute the errors attributed to Cerinthus by Irenaeus, it is unreasonable to assume that the gospel was written exclusively or even primarily for this purpose. The evidence in question is comparatively meagre in relation to the gospel as a whole. Further, and more important still, there is no indication in the gospel to suggest that the evangelist was consciously aware of, and therefore refuting, the errors of Cerinthus.

(2) The Ebionites

Jerome mentions a certain Ebion along with Cerinthus as another heretic whose errors the Fourth Gospel was intended to combat. While there is no conclusive evidence that such a person ever existed, it is assumed that the views in question were those to which the "Ebionites" subscribed. These Ebionites were, apparently, very attached to various Jewish beliefs and practices.⁽⁵⁶⁾

"Ebion" was, it seems, mentioned along with Cerinthus because the Ebionites and Cerinthus had certain views in common. Like Cerinthus, for example, they held that Jesus was a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary, on whom the Spirit descended for a limited period only.⁽⁵⁷⁾

A detailed evaluation of the hypothesis that the Fourth Gospel was written in part to refute the errors of the Ebionites is not necessary. In so far as their views are similar to those of Cerinthus, what we said above in this regard will also apply in the case of the Ebionites.

(3) The Docetists

Another theory which had much in common with the views of Cerinthus is that of Docetism.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Among those who support this view, to a greater or lesser degree, A. Wind (Destination and Purpose of the Gospel of John, 31) includes the following: R.H. Strachan, F.W. Groscheide, M. Meinertz, W.F. Howard, W. Wilkens, W. Grundmann, A. Wikenhauser, W. de Boor.

According to the docetists matter was essentially evil. Therefore in the view of those who subscribed to this teaching Jesus could never have come "in the flesh" as this would have resulted in him having been contaminated by it. What actually happened was, according to them, that Jesus only appeared to take on a human form.⁽⁵⁹⁾ Thus his humanity is no more than a

figment, a phantasy. Because of this it is incorrect to say that he suffered or died. As a consequence of this interpretation of the person of Jesus the docetists place the emphasis on his revelatory rôle rather than on his redemptive rôle.

Against this docetic understanding of the person of Jesus it is claimed by its antagonists that the fourth evangelist clearly and unequivocally proclaims that ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο (1:14). Attention is also drawn to the fact that when the soldier pierced the side of Jesus the evangelist emphasizes that blood and water came out (19:34), something that would obviously not have happened if Jesus' body was no more than an external appearance. Further, throughout the gospel the evangelist also takes care to note that Jesus manifested other human reactions, e.g. tiredness and thirst (4:6,7), and sorrow (11:35).

As in the case of Cerinthus it is hard to believe, on the basis of the evidence cited above, that the Fourth Gospel was written to refute the errors of the Docetists. The value of this evidence must be considered to be somewhat suspect when it is borne in mind, as Brown (John, LXXVI) points out, that the passages in question "are perfectly understandable even without the anti-docetic interpretation". We are thus led to conclude that there is no clear proof or even indication in the Fourth Gospel itself that the evangelist set out to refute the errors of Docetism.

So unconvincing in fact is the case for the anti-docetic theory of the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel that some scholars have even claimed that the evangelist himself, far from combatting docetic tendencies, even shares the views of the docetists. The most celebrated of these scholars is E. Käsemann.

Käsemann, in his book The Testament of Jesus, argues that the Fourth Gospel adopts a docetic approach in its Christology. Not that the evangelist was consciously aware of these tendencies in his work; as Käsemann (ibid., 26) puts it: "it (i.e. docetism) is present in a still naive, unreflected form and it has not yet been recognized by the Evangelist or his community". The danger of falling into docetism to which he was exposed was closely allied to the particular emphasis of his Christology which was, in Käsemann's words, a "christology of glory". This theme of the "glory" of Christ is one which Käsemann himself develops, taking as his starting point

John 17 the beginning of which, he notes, is dominated by the key word of the "glorification" of Jesus. However this is not a theme that is limited to this chapter; rather it pervades the whole of the gospel from the "we have beheld his glory" of the Prologue (1:14) right through to the very end, even including the Passion itself.⁽⁶⁰⁾

In his understanding of the Christology of the Fourth Gospel Käsemann associates himself with the "liberal interpretation" represented by F.C. Bauer, G.P. Wetter and E. Hirsch, "which characterizes the Johannine Christ as God going about on the earth" (*ibid.*, 8,f). For him the declaration of the Prologue, "The Word became flesh" (1:14) should not be seen as the centre and proper theme of the gospel because in his view Jesus is not depicted as a real man. As Käsemann puts it: "In what sense is he flesh, who walks on the water and through closed doors, who cannot be captured by his enemies, who at the well of Samaria is tired and desires a drink, yet has no need of drink and has food different from that which his disciples seek?" (*ibid.*, 9). We may well ask, therefore, In what sense is Jesus "flesh"? According to Käsemann it does not mean that Jesus became man in the proper meaning of that word; rather it refers to the fact that he came down from heaven to earth. To use Käsemann's own words (*ibid.*, 12): "He (i.e. Jesus) does not really change himself, but only his place". The reason why he disguises himself in human form ("flesh") is to make communication between him and us possible. Thus Käsemann does not deny that in the Fourth Gospel Jesus is portrayed as possessing human traits; but these "represent the absolute minimum of the costume designed for the one who dwelt for a little while among men, appearing to be one of them, yet without being subjected to earthly conditions" (*ibid.*, 10). It is clear, therefore, that if one agrees with Käsemann's line of argumentation it is also logical to accept his contention that the Christology of the Fourth Gospel is docetic in nature. This does not mean that Johannine Christology is to be discarded. In Käsemann's view it has a valuable contribution to make to our understanding of Christ. If it is possible to argue that the Fourth Gospel's "acceptance into the Church's canon took place through man's error", it should also be admitted that "God's providence" was at work here (*ibid.*, 75).⁽⁶¹⁾

Whatever may be the merits or demerits of Käsemann's views as a whole⁽⁶²⁾ it clearly cannot be argued against him that because the fourth evangelist appears to emphasize the humanity of Christ he cannot therefore be called

docetic. As we have seen, Käsemann is well aware of the fact that Jesus is described as possessing human traits. But the presence of these in the gospel can, in his opinion, be explained quite satisfactorily without undermining his contention that the Fourth Gospel's Christology tends towards docetism. Further, it is important to note that when Käsemann speaks of the fourth evangelist's docetism he describes it as "naive" and "unreflected". In other words, it reflects an early stage in the development of docetism in which the evangelist tended to move in the direction of a docetic interpretation of the person of Jesus as opposed to the interpretation that later came to be accepted as the orthodox one.

Perhaps one of the most valuable contributions that Käsemann's book has made to our understanding of Johannine Christology is to highlight the important role that Jesus' divinity has in the Fourth Gospel. While in my opinion there are good reasons for believing that Käsemann has in fact over-emphasized this aspect of Jesus' nature, it cannot nevertheless be doubted that Jesus' divinity does dominate his humanity in the Fourth Gospel. This consideration alone is perhaps the most powerful argument against seeing the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose in terms of an anti-docetic polemic!⁽⁶³⁾

(B) The Fourth Gospel and the Gnostic Systems⁽⁶⁴⁾

(1) Introduction

Our discussion in the previous section leads us to conclude that it is most unlikely that the Fourth Gospel set out to refute the errors of the heretics mentioned. However this conclusion does not entitle us to conclude further that because Cerinthus and the docetists might have had much in common with what has come to be known as Gnosticism the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose is in no way related to this movement. The reason for this is that what are described as the "Gnostic" heresies should not be seen as isolated trends that sprang up as if from nowhere. Rather they should be seen as stages in a process of development the origins of which can, it is claimed, be traced much further back than the heresies themselves. If it can be proved that this is indeed the case then the question that would suggest itself is whether or not the Fourth Gospel might have been combatting an earlier or even different form of Gnosticism than those discussed in the previous section. For example, Kümmel (Introduction, 162) is one of those who believes that John is not polemicizing against Cerinthus. This does not prevent him from claiming,

however, that "John lays claim to the language of Gnosticism in order to show to Christians that Jesus is the true Revealer".

To be able to answer adequately the question we have posed above it is necessary for the sake of clarity to review, if only briefly, some of the problems that confront the student of Gnosticism, problems that seem to beset him at every turn. For example, there is still no unanimity even about the definitions of the basic terms. This lack of clarity can result in misunderstandings and incorrect assessments of the work of scholars devoted to the study of these systems. Further, while there appears to be fairly general agreement about the dating of various Gnostic texts this information does not necessarily throw much light on the question of when these systems had their origin and the shape in which they initially appeared because the Gnostic literature appears to reflect highly developed systems for the most part. Finally, there is also the question of the place of origin of these systems as well as of the ideas which they presuppose. We shall therefore turn our attention to these problems first of all in order to provide ourselves with a background against which to discuss the possible relationship of the Fourth Gospel to the Gnostic Systems.

(2) The Meaning of the terms "Gnosis", Gnosticism" and "Gnostic"

The confusion that exists with regard to the use of these terms and the meaning to be attached to them arises, for the most part, from the different ways in which British and German scholars have used them. Dodd (Interpretation, 97) pinpoints the reasons for this confusion while at the same time indicating the way in which British scholars have traditionally used the terms when he writes thus:

" The terms 'Gnostic' and 'Gnosticism' are used by modern writers in a confusing variety of senses. If they refer, as by etymology they should refer, to the belief that salvation is by knowledge, then there is a sense in which orthodox Christian theologians like Clement of Alexandria and Origen, on the one hand, and Hellenistic Jews like Philo, and pagan writers like the Hermetists, on the other, should be called Gnostics; and in this wide sense the terms are used by many recent writers, especially in Germany. In this sense the Gospel according to John should be classed as Gnostic. Ancient writers use the term 'Gnostic' sometimes as the proper name of certain sects or schools of thought, while others appear to use it loosely with a note of sarcasm. I use it here in the way in which it has been generally used for many years by theologians in this country, as a label for a large and somewhat amorphous group of religious systems described by Irenaeus and Hippolytus in their works against Heresy (Adversus Haereses and Refutatio Omnium

Haeresium), and similar systems known from other sources. This is a use of the term which has no warrant in these writers themselves, or in any ancient authorities, but it is convenient, and need not be misleading." (65)

In an attempt to overcome some of the confusion of terminology German scholars have tried to clarify the issues at stake by using the term "Gnosis". It is much more comprehensive than "Gnosticism", but because it is so comprehensive it tends to be rather vague in meaning. R. Haardt (Gnosis : Character and Testimony, 1) describes it as follows: "The term "Gnosis", in modern research, has reference to an essentially non-Christian movement occurring in late antiquity, which manifested itself in widely-scattered communities and under many different guises." Thus, if one uses the term "Gnosticism" in the way in which Dodd selects to use it, limiting its application to certain Christian heresies of the second century and later, it is clear that "Gnosticism" in this sense is only one aspect of "Gnosis".

In a footnote to the English edition of W. Foerster's book, (op. cit., 1), it is stated that "Gnosticism" is often used to translate the German "die Gnosis". It is clear that such a practice will contribute to the confusion and misunderstanding. For this reason more scholars are tending to use the term "Gnosis" in the way in which German scholars have traditionally used it. In English, however, this usage gives rise to a further difficulty, namely, the way in which the term "Gnostic" is to be used since it is the adjective for both "Gnosis" and "Gnosticism". R. McL. Wilson (Gnosis and the New Testament, 9) notes that the use of possible alternatives such as "pre-gnostic", "semi-gnostic", or "gnosticising" are not altogether satisfactory because "such terms are not always clearly defined or precisely used". In all probability, however, the use scholars make of these terms will result in a more generally accepted usage being established in time.

As far as the term "Gnosticism" itself is concerned, it should be noted, as R.M. Grant ("Gnosticism", 404) has pointed out, that it is "a modern term used to indicate a constellation of religious phenomena found during the second century and later.... Most Gnostics thought of themselves, not as Gnostics, but as Simonians, Valentinians, Sethians, Ophites, etc.".

In sum, despite the difficulties inherent in the use of the adjective "Gnostic" and the vagueness of the definition of "Gnosis", I do believe that the distinction between "Gnosis" and "Gnosticism" is the most

satisfactory. However "Gnosis" should then be so defined as to include those aspects described by other scholars as "pre-Gnostic" and "proto-Gnostic".⁽⁶⁶⁾

(3) The Nature and Essence of the Gnostic Systems

From an etymological point of view one would expect "knowledge" (γνῶσις) to be at the root of all of these systems. This, of course, is the position. But what characterizes the Gnostic systems is the distinctive nature of the content of that knowledge as well as the manner in which the individual Gnostic comes to acquire it. Theodotus gives some idea of the content of this knowledge when he indicates that it seeks to find answers to the following questions: "who were we? what have we become? where were we? into what place have we been cast? whither are we hastening? from what are we delivered? what is birth? what is rebirth?"⁽⁶⁷⁾ Different answers to questions such as these led to the development of the various Gnostic systems.

It is important to note that one speaks, not of the Gnostic system, but rather of the Gnostic systems. The reason for this is that while it might be possible to discern an overall schema in all of these systems such a schema is no more than a general outline which does not fully apply to any particular system. This general outline could be described as the basic minimum necessary for a system to be classified as "Gnostic". But in the unfolding of their respective teachings within the context of this general framework there is frequently a large degree of variation and many differences in approach. On the basis of the differences that exist between some systems and the similarities between others it is possible to group some of them into more general categories. R. McL. Wilson (The Gnostic Problem, 69) sums up the point thus:

"The characteristic of Gnosticism in all its forms is syncretism, blending together elements of every sort, and finding room for every type of thought, from the highest philosophical mysticism to the lowest form of magic. There is in consequence no one uniform set of ideas that may be singled out as Gnostic; rather is it a matter of a type of thought which manifests itself in different ways in different groups. Yet there are certain characteristic features which reappear in different forms and combinations in the different systems, ideas assimilated from various sources and not always co-ordinated into a consistent scheme."

(4) The Origins of Gnosis and Gnosticism

We have already noted that "Gnosis" in modern research generally "has

reference to an essentially non-Christian movement occurring in late antiquity...".⁽⁶⁸⁾ However, to postulate a pre-Christian origin for Gnosis and the Gnostic systems requires that two further questions be answered, namely, Where are these origins to be sought? and, What is the status to be given to each of the constituent elements of a Gnostic system?

In answer to the first question regarding the origins of the Gnostic systems, it is possible to distinguish three different schools of thought according to where the main emphasis is placed:⁽⁶⁹⁾

- i. there are those who believe that Gnosis arose out of Hellenism, with particular reference to Greek Philosophy. Those who accept this view usually considered Gnosticism/Gnosis to be primarily a Christian heresy. Thus, in the famous phrase of A. von Harnack, Gnosis was a "radical Hellenization of Christianity". Among scholars who share this view, or a similar one, mention may be made of F.C. Burkitt, A.D. Nock, H. Leisegang;
- ii. there are those who believe that the origins of Gnosis should be sought in the Eastern religions. K. Kessler highlighted the possible Babylonian influence while W. Bossuet and R. Reitzenstein looked to the religion of Iran;⁽⁷⁰⁾
- iii. there are those who emphasize the Jewish elements to be found in Gnosis, e.g. G. Quispel, R.M. Grant, K. Stürmer, and J. Daniélou.⁽⁷¹⁾

In categorizing the views of scholars as has been done above there is a very real danger of oversimplifying the issues at stake. It must not be thought, for example, that all of these scholars believe that it is possible to isolate one single source that can be considered to be the only and complete source of Gnosis. Most scholars believe that the Gnostic systems have many different elements but in this complex of elements it is possible to uncover one that has made a much greater contribution to the overall development of Gnosis than the others. R. Haardt (Gnosis : Character and Testimony, 10) expresses the point thus: "In the historical investigation of Gnosis, the history of themes takes pride of place. Generally in thematic history the phenomenon of Gnosis can be given adequate explanation by assigning, through proven affiliation, the topoi and concepts underlying Gnostic evidential strata to those

cultural backgrounds against which they first appear to be comprehensible." W.C. van Unnik (op. cit., 28, ff) has also emphasized the syncretistic nature of the age in which Gnosis and the Gnostic systems developed. Syncretism, he notes (ibid., 30), was facilitated by the fact that "all the countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea were held together by one common bond: that of the Roman Empire".

The conclusion to be drawn from the discussion of the first question posed above is that the various Gnostic systems should be viewed as a combination of various elements and concepts that have their origins in different cultural environments. This brings us to the second question, namely, the status to be given to the different constituent elements of Gnosis in general and the Gnostic systems in particular. The point at issue here will be made clearer if we restate the question thus: if it is assumed that a Gnostic system is a combination of different elements, is one entitled to call the separate constituent elements themselves "Gnostic", or do they only become "Gnostic" by being joined together with other elements to form a unified whole, a system? Would it not perhaps be better to describe them in terms of the source from which they were originally drawn, e.g. "Iranian", "Hellenistic", "Jewish", "Christian", etc.? R. McL. Wilson (Gnosis and the New Testament, 10) sums up the problem thus:

"The ideas admittedly are pre-Christian but the combination of these ideas, the way in which they are blended together, the associations which they come to have, these may only be Gnostic in the context of specifically Gnostic systems, which would mean that the ideas themselves are not necessarily Gnostic. The Gnostics adapted to their own ends the material they took over, and it is no small part of our problem to determine whether at any given point a particular term or concept carries the Gnostic connotation, whether in the New Testament, for example, a word which is a technical term in the second-century Gnostic systems should be given a Gnostic meaning, or whether this Gnostic meaning is in fact a secondary development." (72)

The problems posed by our second question have not yet been answered with any noticeable degree of unanimity, and it will be necessary for us to return to them in the course of our discussion.

(5) The Fourth Gospel in the light of Gnostic Studies

(a) Introduction

Among the scholars who accept that there is some relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Gnostics the most widely known theory suggests that

it was the 'Iranian' form of Gnosis that has had the greatest influence. In this context Mandaism and Manicheism are considered to be of considerable significance. The writings of the Mandaeans have been brought to the attention of scholars primarily through the work of M. Lidzbarski, R. Reitzenstein and Lady Drower. However it is to Rudolph Bultmann that the greatest share of the credit must go for having attempted to establish a relationship between these writings and the Fourth Gospel. Meeks (op. cit., 10) expresses the point thus: "Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that he (Bultmann) has carried the field in Johannine studies, at least in the sense that the question of the extra-biblical background for the christology of John has become unavoidable". Because of the importance of his theory and the impact it made on other scholars it is necessary for us to examine briefly the main tenets of that theory.

(b) The Question of Sources in Bultmann's Theory

Fundamental to Bultmann's understanding of the Fourth Gospel and its background is the origin of the material that has been used in its composition. Bultmann believed that he had discovered in the gospel itself evidence which indicated that the evangelist had made use of a number of written sources, independent of the Synoptics. These sources, as well as the contributions of those responsible for the Fourth Gospel as we now have it, he distinguished one from another mainly on the grounds of stylistic and contextual considerations. The most important of these are the following:

(i) The "Semeia-Quelle" (Signs Source)

In positing the existence of such a source behind the Fourth Gospel Bultmann was dependent upon the work in this field undertaken by other scholars. Of particular importance here is the contribution of A. Faure who in 1922 claimed to have discovered what he called a "Wunderquelle" from which he conjectured that the evangelist had taken all of his miracle stories.⁽⁷³⁾

Like Faure, Bultmann believes that the miracles narrated in the Fourth Gospel were taken from a Semeia-Source by the evangelist. That there were other signs in the source which the evangelist did not make use of is borne out by the assertions made in the gospel that there were indeed other signs, apart from those recorded in the gospel, of which the evangelist was aware (cf. 2:11, 4:54, 12:37, 20:30). The material from

this source that was used by the evangelist is concentrated in the first part of the Fourth Gospel (i.e. chapters 1-12).

According to Bultmann the source itself was written in a Greek style that shows Semitic influence. However he does not believe that it was a translation from the Aramaic.⁽⁷⁴⁾

(ii) The "Offenbarungsreden" (Revelation Discourses)

In an article published in 1923 entitled "Der religionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund des Prologs zum Johannes-Evangelium" Bultmann suggested that the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel had probably been a Baptist hymn which had originally glorified John the Baptist. The evangelist, Bultmann argues, took this hymn over and applied to the Logos what had originally been said of the Baptist. Further, in an attempt to down-grade the Baptist he made various insertions, in prose, which amounted to an anti-Baptist polemic.⁽⁷⁵⁾

In another article published in 1925 entitled "Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen mandäischen und manichäischen Quellen für das Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums" Bultmann claimed that the polemic against the Baptist was not confined to the Prologue but could be found elsewhere in the gospel. Moreover the discourses recorded in the gospel had many stylistic similarities with the Prologue. These considerations led him to suggest that the Prologue and the Discourses came from the same source to which he gave the name "Offenbarungsreden". Now since the Prologue had its origin among certain followers of the Baptist, and since the Prologue and the Discourses were stylistically similar, Bultmann proposed that the source in question as a whole must have originated in the same milieu as the Prologue. This milieu he described as Gnostic in outlook for it was in the Gnostic writings, especially in those of the Mandaeans and Manichaeans, and in the Odes of Solomon, that he found the closest parallels to the discourses of Jesus. Taking his argument one step further Bultmann postulated that the origins of the Mandaeans themselves should be sought among the followers of John the Baptist.

As far as the source itself is concerned, Bultmann is of the opinion that it had originally been written in Aramaic but was translated into Greek with the rhythmic and antithetic style of the original being retained in the Greek translation.⁽⁷⁶⁾

(iii) The Passion Source

Like the Semeia-Source and the Offenbarungsreden this source was also a written one and was independent of the Synoptic Gospels even though there are obviously some similarities between the account of the Fourth Gospel and that of the Synoptics. This source formed the base of the Fourth Gospel's passion-resurrection narrative (18:1-19:14).⁽⁷⁷⁾

(iv) Other Sources and Traditions

In addition to the above sources Bultmann believes that he has also detected the presence of other sources and traditions in the Fourth Gospel which are not as extensive as those mentioned already. Among these mention may be made of those which appear to be parallel to the Synoptic accounts of various incidents without being dependent on them (e.g. 2:13-22, 12:1-11, 12:12-19, 13:21-30). The section 13:1-20 (the washing of the disciples' feet) is ascribed to a "traditional written source" while 3:22-30 is attributed to a Baptist tradition.⁽⁷⁸⁾

The actual composition of the Fourth Gospel as we have it today is the work of (at least) two people, namely, the evangelist and the "ecclesiastical redactor".

(v) The Evangelist

Bultmann is of the opinion that the evangelist probably was a member of a Baptist sect and later became a Christian. Bultmann does not believe that the evangelist was an eyewitness of the events recorded in the gospel.

It was the evangelist's task to weave together the various sources, or at least material from them, so that the Gospel would give the appearance of being a unified whole. This he did by adding his own comments and interpretations at various points to the source material. Bultmann has tried to disentangle the evangelist's contributions by establishing a set of criteria which he maintains were peculiar to the evangelist. These are mainly stylistic, contextual and theological in nature.⁽⁷⁹⁾

(vi) The Ecclesiastical Redactor⁽⁸⁰⁾

The "ecclesiastical redactor" was responsible for adding to the gospel various sections and comments the purpose of which was to make the gospel more acceptable to Christian readers. Bultmann believes that it is possible to isolate these additions primarily by examining their content rather than by a consideration of their stylistic characteristics. In

the main, the additions of the redactor are contrary to what Bultmann holds to be the correct theological perspective of the evangelist.

D.M. Smith (op. cit., 214,f) groups these additions into five general categories:

- a) the sacramental (e.g. 3:5 - the words ὁ θεὸς καὶ - p. 138, n.3,⁽⁸¹⁾ 6:51c-58, p. 218,f; 19:34b, p. 677,f);
- b) the futuristic eschatological (e.g. 5:28-29, p. 161; 6:39.40,44 p. 218,f);
- c) those which attempt to harmonize the gospel with the synoptic tradition (e.g. 1:22-24,26,31,36, p. 84,ff; 3:24, p. 171, n. 2; 20:9, p. 684, n. 6; chapter 21, p. 685, f);
- d) those which lay claim to apostolic and eyewitness authority for the evangelist and therefore for his gospel (e.g. especially 19:35, p. 677,f);
- e) a miscellaneous group (e.g. 4:22, p. 189, n. 6; 7:38b,39b, p. 303, n. 5; 10:34-36, p. 389; 18:32,f, p. 640, 653).⁽⁸²⁾

Besides making additions the ecclesiastical redactor was also responsible, according to Bultmann, for the present disordered state of the gospel. Apparently it came into the redactor's hands in a confused condition and he unsuccessfully tried to restore its original order. Where he failed to do this correctly Bultmann himself has undertaken to reorganize the text.⁽⁸³⁾

It should be noted, at this stage, that from the standpoint of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose the contribution of the redactor in Bultmann's theory is of paramount importance since he it is who is responsible for the Fourth Gospel as we now have it. What has to be established here is whether or not this redactor has retained the gospel's original destination and purpose or whether he has confused the issue by attempting to reorientate it to meet different ends. R.E. Brown ("The Kerygma of the Gospel According to John", 394, n. 13), speaking of the redactor's work in the Fourth Gospel, sums up the alternatives by asking, "Was he a 'Johannine Redactor', faithful to John's thought, preserving stray Johannine material, and working to bring out ideas that were implicit in John? Or was he an 'Ecclesiastical Redactor', foisting on the Gospel a theology that was foreign to it in order to make it 'safe' and acceptable to the Church?" It seems to me that there is little doubt that in view of

the additions made by Bultmann's redactor he intended to give to the gospel a direction which it did not originally possess. This can be seen most clearly in the sacramental and eschatological additions as listed above.⁽⁸⁴⁾ If Bultmann's theory were, therefore, found to be the correct one we would have reason to believe that the gospel in its original form had a destination and purpose different from that intended by the redactor.

(c) The Gnostic Redeemer Myth and the Fourth Gospel

On the basis of the research undertaken by scholars such as Lidzbarski, Reitzenstein and Bossuet, Bultmann postulated that behind the Fourth Gospel there stands a redeemer myth which it is important to recognize if one wishes to understand the gospel correctly. This myth, traces of which can be found in the Gnostic literature, the evangelist took over and portrayed Jesus along similar lines by using its terminology.⁽⁸⁵⁾

In his article of 1925 Bultmann set out to establish that the myth to be found in the Fourth Gospel and the Gnostic literature was identical. In support of his theory he listed 28 characteristics of the myth for which there were close parallels in the gospel and the Gnostic literature referred to.⁽⁸⁶⁾

Thus, even though he relied heavily on the work of other scholars in the field, "it was", as Yamauchi (op. cit., 24) puts it, "Rudolf Bultmann who distilled the classic model of the Gnostic Redeemer myth". In this context it is important to note the aptness of the word "distilled" as the myth in question was not taken from one particular Gnostic work or system. Rather it is something that has been constructed on the basis of what is to be found in all of the Gnostic works, when taken as a whole, to which we have referred in the course of our discussion.

It is now time to turn our attention to the content of this Gnostic myth. According to its more common form man is composed of three elements, namely, the "real self", the "soul" ($\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$) and the body. The "real self" is divine in nature being a spark of light that had its origin in another, heavenly, world of light. Now, however, the "real self" finds itself imprisoned in this world. This is so because at the beginning of time there was a fall by a "primal" or "Primordial" Man who had his origin in the world of light.⁽⁸⁷⁾ After his fall Primordial Man was overpowered and divided up by the powers of this world of darkness which include the demiurge and his archons. The sparks of light thus formed were used to give order to this world of darkness

which was in a state of chaos. The world of darkness was then set up in opposition to the world of light.

Because the world of darkness would revert to its original chaotic state if the sparks of light were to be withdrawn, the demons try to make the "real self" (i.e. the sparks of light) forget its heavenly origin by stupefying it. This they do by means of the "soul". Thus unaided the "real self" cannot free itself primarily because it is not consciously aware of its present condition.

In the world of light, however, there exists a supreme Deity who is diametrically opposed to the world of darkness and to its demonic powers. This Deity is unknowable by man except in so far as he chooses to reveal himself to them.⁽⁸⁸⁾ He takes pity on mankind and sends into this world another heavenly being from the world of light, his Son, who bears his image. This Son assumes human form so as to escape the notice of the demons. His mission is to preach the knowledge ($\gamma\nu\omega\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$) that will save mankind, to reveal to them their true origins and to teach them the way to return to their heavenly home by conveying to them the secret passwords they will require to take them past the various spheres through which they will have to pass on their journey back. Not all men, however, accept what he has to say; it is only "his own" who listen to him and believe in him.⁽⁸⁹⁾ Once his work on this earth has been completed this heavenly Redeemer returns to the world of light. In so doing he prepares a way in which "his own" can follow after him. However his work is not finished once he returns to his heavenly home. It is his task to gather together all the sparks of light into their original form prior to the fall of Primordial Man. Once this has been done the world of darkness will return to the state of chaos which it knew before the original fall.⁽⁹⁰⁾

It will have been noted that, as described above, there are two different elements in the "Gnostic myth" that in a sense complement each other. The first of these can be described as "cosmological" : it attempts to explain the origin of the world in which it now finds itself, and the relation that exists between the two. The second element may be called "soteriological" : it deals with the manner in which the "real self" is to be saved.⁽⁹¹⁾

In general it is the soteriological aspect that is of primary concern in the Gnostic systems. It is in this area also that scholars have found the greatest number of similarities between the "Gnostic myth" and the Fourth

Gospel. It is to these that we must now briefly turn our attention. They have been worked out in great detail particularly by W. Bauer and R. Bultmann in their commentaries on the Gospel of John as well as in other books and articles.⁽⁹²⁾ An examination of the evidence led Bultmann to conclude that Gnostic traits are not confined to one particular part of the Fourth Gospel. He writes: "Gnostic terminology places its stamp mainly on the words and discourses of Jesus, but it is by no means confined to the Revelation-discourse source which presumably underlies them; rather it runs through the whole Gospel and Epistles" (Theology, II, 13).⁽⁹³⁾

The first point that strikes the student of the Fourth Gospel and of the Gnostic systems, especially the later, more developed systems such as Mandaism and Manicheism, is the general similarity there appears to be between the figure of Jesus as portrayed by the fourth evangelist and that of the myth of the Gnostic Redeemer / Revealer. For example, each is sent into the world by the Father where both appear as men to do the work which the Father has given them to do. Not everybody, however, accepts their word; this leads to a division among men with the "world" hating and despising both Jesus and the Gnostic Redeemer/Revealer. When their work in this world is over both "ascend" to where they were before. In so doing they prepare a way so that their "own" are able to join them.⁽⁹⁴⁾

Within the general framework of the fourth evangelist's portrayal of Jesus some scholars believe that it is possible to find certain specific Gnostic traits. The more significant of these may be briefly summarized as follows:

- i. the dualistic terminology, e.g. light-darkness, truth-falsehood, above-below, freedom-slavery, spirit-flesh, life-death.⁽⁹⁵⁾
- ii. the discourses in general and the great "I am" sayings in particular (e.g. light of the world, good shepherd, true vine) can be paralleled in the Gnostic literature.⁽⁹⁶⁾
- iii. the Logos title which, it is claimed, can be explained in the light of the Gnostic writings.⁽⁹⁷⁾

(6) Evaluations and Concluding Comments

It can hardly be doubted that there are verbal and possibly conceptual similarities between the Fourth Gospel and the Gnostic myth as outlined above. This, however, is not the crux of the problem. The point at issue is not so much concerned with the content of the myth as this is reasonably

clear. What is debated is the validity of the methodology used to establish the connection between the Gnostic systems and the Fourth Gospel. Dodd (Interpretation, 98) makes the very important point that "there is no Gnostic document known to us which can with any show of probability be dated - at any rate in the form in which we have access to it - before the period of the New Testament". The construction of the Gnostic Redeemer/Revealer myth is dependent upon the developed Gnostic systems of the second and third centuries and the literature of Mandaism, especially the Ginza, the Book of John, and the Qolasta, which were compiled in the seventh and eighth centuries,⁽⁹⁸⁾ in addition to that of Manicheism. In this regard R. Haardt (op. cit., 373) writes: "Manichaeism is said to contain the purest Gnostic tradition, so that Gnosis is sometimes described to a great extent in terms of Manichaeism, for example by R. Reitzenstein and R. Bultmann, who find there the paradigm of the myth of the Urmensch (primordial Man) as saviour"⁽⁹⁹⁾. In the light of this evidence those scholars who do not believe that the Fourth Gospel has been influenced by the Gnostic systems argue that any similarities between the two are due to the fact that the Gnostic systems themselves were, in all probability, influenced by the Fourth Gospel and not vice versa. However such an obvious objection has not gone unnoticed or unanswered by those who maintain that the Fourth Gospel is in some way dependent upon the Gnostic systems. They readily admit that the Gnostic literature known to us is to be dated in post-New Testament times. But they argue that this literature represents the terminal point in a process of development the origins of which are to be sought in pre-Christian times. This is a position that is widely accepted by scholars today. It means that Gnosis is wider in scope than the heretical systems of the second and third century which were known to the Church Fathers. Further, these same heretical systems cannot be considered to be mere deformations of the teachings of Christianity. Thus on the one hand it may be legitimate to argue that this literature represents the terminal point in a process of development and that various forms of Gnosticism and Gnosis in all probability existed long before the appearance of the written documents known to us. However when one attempts to trace the various stages of development as well as to situate these developments in a specific period of time all such attempts are no more than conjectures and must therefore remain largely hypothetical.

The problems surrounding the use that can be made of this Gnostic literature to prove a particular point are particularly acute when we come to examine the Gnostic myth of a Redeemer. This, as we have already noted,

was based on the research done by Bossuet, Lidzbarski and Reitzenstein in particular, and was used by R. Bultmann in his approach to the Fourth Gospel. Not only is the literature on the basis of which this myth has been constructed to be dated in the post New Testament era, but - and this, to my mind, is just as serious an objection - the myth as it has been used by scholars does not appear in its constructed form in any one particular Gnostic work or system. If, as has been assumed by the scholars concerned, the myth played such a fundamental role in these systems, one would expect it to shine through unambiguously and with great prominence. This, however, is not the case. In fact, more and more scholars are coming to the view that the case for the existence of a pre-Christian form of the Gnostic Redeemer myth has by no means been proved as yet. Any indications in the Gnostic literature we possess which seem to point to the existence of such a myth should, in the opinion of many, be seen as a post New Testament development. In this instance the Gnostic literature is considered to have been influenced by the Christian literature rather than vice versa. This line of argument is summed up by R.M. Grant (Introduction, 203) thus: "There seems to be no evidence for the existence of a Gnostic redeemer-revealer before the rise of Christianity. It is therefore probable that Christianity was an important factor in producing Gnostic systems."

While this is a view to which I myself would subscribe for the reasons listed above, a word of caution is in order about this line of argument. The fact that there might be "no evidence for the existence of a Gnostic redeemer-revealer before the rise of Christianity" does not, in itself, rule out the possibility that it could have existed. For example the discovery of new material could radically change the picture. However as there are no real indications that such undiscovered material does exist, it seems to me to be the more reasonable approach to use the material we do have on which to make conclusions. Schnackenburg devotes the first part of his excursus on "The Gnostic Myth of the Redeemer and the Johannine Christology" in his commentary (St John, 544,ff) to an examination of the available evidence and this leads him to note by way of conclusion "how difficult it is to speak of a "Gnostic Redeemer Myth" prior to Christianity in a clear and definite form", (op. cit., 548). It is because of investigations like the one undertaken by Schnackenburg and the conclusions that these investigations suggest that a scholar like R. McL. Wilson (Gnosis and the New Testament, 27) can claim that "this theory (i.e. of the Gnostic Redeemer-myth) is no longer so central to the modern debate

as it formerly was". In his opinion (op. cit., 28)

"the real flaw is the idea that the myth of the Gnostic Redeemer originated at some time in dim antiquity, somewhere in the remoter East (vaguely conceived as 'Iran'), and then passed across the world and down the centuries, leaving behind scattered fragments in different circles of tradition until at last it was reconstituted as a unity in Manicheism and finally disintegrated into its several components in Mandeism. Rather should we conclude, with H.M. Schenke, that there was no Redeemer-myth in the full sense before Manicheism. It is the climax and culmination of the long process of development, not its original starting-point."

In addition to the methodological difficulties involved in the construction of the Gnostic myth there are other aspects of it which make it a far from satisfactory explanation for the origin of the Johannine approach to the person of Jesus in particular and as the background for the Fourth Gospel as a whole. In the statement of his purpose (20:30-31) the fourth evangelist, as we shall see, places great emphasis on the role of "signs" in his scheme of things. It follows, therefore, that a satisfactory explanation of the purpose of this gospel must take each of these signs into account and show that they are meaningful for the readers for whom the gospel was intended.

We have had occasion to comment elsewhere⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ on the close connection that exists between the narrative and discourse material in the Fourth Gospel. Bultmann, however, as we have already seen, believes that it is possible to separate these two groups of material and because of the differences that exist between them it is his opinion that they have been drawn from different sources. According to Bultmann it is the Offenbarungsreden source which shows the greater degree of Gnostic influence. "Gnostic terminology places its stamp mainly on the words and discourses of Jesus, but it is by no means confined to the Revelation-discourse source which presumably underlies them; rather it runs through the whole Gospel and Epistles" (Theology II, 13). It seems to me that within the context of the Gnostic conceptual framework against which Bultmann interprets the Fourth Gospel it is difficult to do full justice to the importance which the evangelist apparently attaches to the "signs" in the pursuit of his purpose. As we shall see below this is particularly true of the healing of the man born blind of John 9. On the whole "signs" do not appear to have played any significant role in the Gnostic systems.

These comments lead us to the further conclusion that it is possible to explain and understand the Fourth Gospel only in part in the light of the Gnostic Myth in particular and the Gnostic systems in general. The Redeemer of the Gnostic Myth bears only a general similarity to the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel. This similarity is limited to the general outline of the presentation of their respective central figures. When one begins to analyze specific points then the similarities become somewhat forced. This is attributable, at least in part, to the fact that the Fourth Gospel undoubtedly makes extensive use of the Old Testament - something which even Bultmann would admit. Very few scholars, if any, would deny that some of the Gnostics at least were also acquainted with the Old Testament. However their knowledge was confined for the most part to the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis whereas the fourth evangelist's knowledge and use of the Old Testament and also Judaism is considerably far more extensive than this. Bultmann would account for this with the hypothesis that the author was probably an ex-Gnostic who had belonged to a Baptist sect (op. cit., 10, ff; also John, 18). While an hypothesis such as this about the identity of the author of the gospel no doubt fits neatly into Bultmann's overall theory there is, nevertheless, no real evidence to support it.

At this point it should be noted that Bultmann's overall theory has been considerably undermined on two counts by the investigations of other scholars. The first of these concerns the origin of the "Offenbarungsreden". It will be remembered that Bultmann postulated a Baptist origin for the Prologue and then subsequently for the whole of this source. In recent times, however, it has been argued, and this is a view that appears to be winning wide support, that the Prologue was originally a Christian hymn and not a Baptist one.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ If it can be proved that this is indeed the case then it would follow, according to Bultmann's line of argument, that the whole of the "Offenbarungsreden" must have originated in a Christian milieu. Moreover, the difficulties surrounding this source are not limited to the question of its origins. Problems are also encountered in ascertaining its extent in the Fourth Gospel. D.M. Smith (op. cit., 113) summing up the results of his investigation of Bultmann's source theory, writes: "Bultmann's hypothesis of a pre-Christian Offenbarungsreden source presents the greatest problems, not only because of the difficulty in separating it from the evangelist's work, but also because of its lack of intrinsic probability".

Secondly, the connection between the Mandaeans and a sect of John the Baptist's followers, which Bultmann accepted as having been established,

has also been seriously questioned, especially by K. Rudolph.⁽¹⁰²⁾

In our discussion of the Gnostic systems we had occasion to refer to the problems surrounding the use of so-called "Gnostic" terminology in the Fourth Gospel. That there are terms which appear in both the gospel and the Gnostic literature is clear. The question which concerns us is whether these terms mean the same thing in each case. In this matter, as in so many others where the Gnostic systems are concerned, there is no unanimity among scholars. It seems that the answer which an individual scholar will give to this question will depend very much on his views regarding the relationship of the Fourth Gospel to Gnosis and Gnosticism in general. In other words, it has to be admitted that it is possible to interpret these terms in the light of the use made of them in the Gnostic literature. Such an interpretation, however, brings us back to the problem of the validity of using post-New Testament literature, a problem which we have already discussed.

What scholars who follow a Gnostic interpretation of these terms have to realize is that this interpretation is not the only one possible for these terms; nor should they automatically assume that their presence in the Fourth Gospel is sufficient to situate the whole of this gospel in a Gnostic environment. There is a great difference between saying (a) that the Fourth Gospel drew upon the teachings, especially that of the myth, of the Gnostic systems or that it was written to refute their errors, and (b) that the author could have been familiar with terminology that was in common usage among educated people at the time. D. Mollat (St. Jean, 12) explains this latter point thus: "Cependant plusieurs traits de l'évangile johannique pourraient s'expliquer par un contact avec une pensée et une culture qui semblent avoir à cette époque largement pénétré certains cercles du Judaïsme."

When discussing this problem of terminology Wilson (op. cit., 47) notes how important it is to distinguish between the descriptive use of the term "Gnostic" and its derivative use. The latter use of "Gnostic" indicates that "the term, motif or concept involved was taken over from pre-Christian Gnosis" whereas its descriptive use implies that "the motif in question is Gnostic in the second century, although earlier and in a non-Gnostic context it might not be Gnostic at all" (op. cit., 24). The issues this poses for the Fourth Gospel are summed up by Wilson (op. cit., 48) thus:

"In short, we must ask whether John's Gnostic terminology is Gnostic only in the descriptive sense, in which case the later Gnostics may have borrowed from John; or implies derivation, either in the sense that John is combatting the incipient Gnosticism of his opponents with their own weapons or, more generally, and more vaguely, that he is using the language of his period, a language marked by the tendencies broadly characterised as Gnosis. And further, we must consider whether John's use of such terminology is in fact Gnostic, or whether this terminology only becomes Gnostic in a strictly Gnostic context."

There seems to be little evidence to support the view that the terminology of the Fourth Gospel can be described as "Gnostic" in the derivative sense. As we have already seen, some of these terms appear in sources other than the Gnostic systems, sources to which the evangelist was undoubtedly close and from which he could therefore have drawn his inspiration.⁽¹⁰³⁾

Of particular interest in this whole discussion of the terminology of the Fourth Gospel are its alleged affinities with the Qumran literature. Many scholars have, apparently, appealed to these writings on the assumption that if it could be established that these similarities were more convincing than those of the Fourth Gospel and the Gnostic literature, it would undermine the attempt made by Bultmann to situate the Fourth Gospel in a Gnostic milieu.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ It is interesting to note, however, that Bultmann himself believed that the Dead Sea Scrolls testify to the existence of a "pre-Christian gnosticizing Judaism".⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ In the light of these apparently conflicting views about the value of the Dead Sea Scrolls for indicating the milieu in which the Fourth Gospel came to be composed it is necessary for us to discuss, if only briefly, the deductions we may make on the basis of this body of literature.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾

Ever since the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered scholars have noted the similarities between them and the Fourth Gospel in particular. In the early days there is no doubt that some scholars overstepped the mark in this regard and were guilty of what Hunter (op. cit., 13) refers to as "Scrollomania".⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ However, time and a closer study of the texts have resulted in a more realistic appraisal being made of the similarities as well as an awareness that there are also considerable differences between the two.

As in the case of the Gnostic literature it is possible to draw up lists of concepts and phrases in the Fourth Gospel that have parallels in the Qumran literature.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Thus, phrases the same as or very similar to the

following Johannine phrases have been found in the Qumran literature: "to do the truth" (Jn 3:21), "witnesses to truth" (5:33, 18:37), "the spirit of truth" (14:17, 15:26, 16:13), "sons of light" (12:36), "the light of life" (8:12), "life eternal" (3:15,16,36, 4:14,36, 5:24,39, 6:27,40,47,54,68, 10:28, 12:25,50, 17:2,3,), "to walk in darkness" (8:12, 12:35), "works of God" (6:28, 9:3), "the Holy Spirit" (14:26, 20:22), "the wrath of God" (3:36), "the eyes of the blind" (20:21), "full of grace" (1:14), "men ... their evil deeds" (3:19). Attention has also been drawn to the dualism of good and evil in the Fourth Gospel and the Qumran writings which is expressed by means of the great antitheses of light-darkness, truth-error(deceit), spirit-flesh, love-hate. The dualism of the Fourth Gospel and Qumran is usually described as "modified" in that it is monotheistic and ethical, unlike the metaphysical, ontological dualism of Zoroastrianism and Gnosticism.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

On the basis of similarities like the ones listed above, ~~is one~~ entitled to conclude that the Fourth Gospel might have been dependent upon the Dead Sea Scrolls, if not for its theology, then at least for some of its concepts and terminology? I do not think so. First of all the actual similarities are comparatively few when one takes the whole of the Dead Sea literature into account. In fact there are undoubtedly more differences than similarities.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ These differences, as one would expect, arise from the different subject matter. For the Fourth evangelist the all-important consideration is, of course, the person of Jesus. It is this that colours his treatment of his subject matter and makes it so different from the writings of Qumran. However, what is perhaps a more important point for the purposes of our discussion is that many of the linguistic similarities between the Fourth Gospel and Qumran can also be found in other books of the New Testament (especially the Synoptics and the Pauline Letters). Further, it is possible to trace other similarities back to sources older than the Dead Sea Scrolls and therefore to sources from which the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls could have themselves borrowed ideas and terms. For example, in some of its writings the Qumran community relied on and was obviously influenced by the writings of the Old Testament. It is also possible to trace aspects of its dualism to Iranian ideas.⁽¹¹¹⁾ Finally, other features that are common to both the Qumran writings and the Fourth Gospel can be found in the works of Judaism, especially in its apocalyptic literature, which itself had been influenced by Zoroastrianism.⁽¹¹²⁾

L. Mowry postulates that ideas and terminology common to the Fourth Gospel and "early Judaism", as well as Iranian dualism came to the Fourth Gospel

primarily via the "Dead Sea Covenanters". According to Mowry, it is as if the evangelist has borrowed his ideas from their writings, but in doing so has radically modified them.⁽¹¹³⁾

However, there seems to me to be no conceivable reason why the fourth evangelist could not have drawn on and been influenced by the same sources as the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Such an explanation would account for their (limited) similarities as well as the differences in their respective presentation of themes. This is the point which Driver (op. cit., 549) is making when he states that "all these resemblances between the Scrolls and the Johannine literature, whether matters of language or matters of substance, argue some connection between the authors of these very different collections of writings. At the same time, the differences between them cannot be disregarded; they seem to preclude direct borrowing on either side. The relationship then will rather be one of using a common source or common sources. In other words, the Scrolls are not 'the native soil of the Gospel of St John' (Dupont-Sommer) but another plant growing from the same soil."⁽¹¹⁴⁾

The overall picture that emerges from our discussion of the Johannine terminology is that its antecedents cannot be confined to a specific body of literature, e.g. Gnostic, Judaistic in general or Qumran in particular. There is evidence to suggest that the Fourth Gospel has points of contact with all of this literature without there necessarily being any literary dependence.

The suggestion of E.M. Sidebottom (The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, 18, ff) concerning the existence of a "common pool" of technical terms from which the fourth evangelist and others probably drew appears to be the most satisfactory explanation of the evidence. It would help to explain why certain concepts could appear in and be familiar to readers of the different bodies of literature.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ At the same time it is important to note that there is evidence to suggest that Gnostic ideas had penetrated Judaism itself. This interpenetration of ideas seemingly influenced the shape of both movements. As far as the Qumran literature is concerned Bo Reicke ("Traces of Gnosticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls?") for example believes that "there are certainly good reasons to look upon the scrolls, and especially the Discipline of Qumran, as a stage on the way to Jewish gnostic speculations" (p.141).⁽¹¹⁶⁾

Yamauchi (op. cit., 184) concludes his review of the relevant evidence by stating that "we have seen how the imposing scholarly edifice of Reitzenstein's and Bultmann's pre-Christian Gnosticism is but little more than an elaborate multi-storied, many-roomed house of cards, whose foundations have been shaken, some of whose structures need buttressing and others have collapsed, leaving a mass of debris with but few solid timbers fit for use in reconstruction". While such a view is perhaps a somewhat extravagant assessment, it cannot be doubted that the views of Bultmann and others who share them are to a large extent hypothetical and cannot either be proved or disproved conclusively on the basis of available evidence. However in view of the arguments and observations above, it seems unlikely that the purpose and destination of the Fourth Gospel is to be explained in terms of Gnosticism in general and the Gnostic myth in particular.

III. A POLEMIC AGAINST DISCIPLES OF JOHN THE BAPTIST⁽¹¹⁷⁾

(A) Introduction: Statement of Theory

It was W. Baldensperger who, at the end of the last century, popularized the view that the fourth evangelist's primary purpose in writing his gospel was to oppose the claims of certain followers of John the Baptist who were claiming that he, and not Jesus, was the Messiah.⁽¹¹⁸⁾

While there does not appear to be any recent scholars who would go so far as Baldensperger does in maintaining that a Baptist polemic was the main purpose of the Fourth Gospel, many are prepared to accept that it was a secondary or subsidiary aim of the evangelist. They base their arguments for this on the evidence of the texts in the gospel which refer to the Baptist. Among this group of scholars we may mention R.H. Strachan (The Fourth Gospel: Its Significance and Environment, 109, ff), Wikenhauser (Introduction, 308), Howard (St John, 450, f), Schnackenburg (St John, 167, also "On the Origin of the Fourth Gospel", 227), and Brown (John, LXVII). Barrett (St John, 142, 182, etc., and The Gospel of John and Judaism, 34) also admits that it is possible that the evangelist was conducting an anti-Baptist polemic in the texts which refer to him. Finally, Bultmann too accepted that there was evidence of an anti-Baptist polemic in the Fourth Gospel. For him, however, it was one element in his theory about the origin of the gospel as a whole. He proposed that the evangelist himself had been at one time a disciple of John the Baptist but later came to believe in Jesus. In writing his gospel he took over from the Baptist sect a source which provided him with both the Prologue and the discourses which in their original form had exalted the Baptist. To make this material suitable for his own purposes the evangelist had to make various alterations, additions and excisions.⁽¹¹⁹⁾

The evidence for the existence of a sect of disciples of John the Baptist consists of certain references in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions. For example, Acts 18:25 tells us that a certain Apollos, before he came to Ephesus, "knew only the baptism of John". Acts 19:1-7 describes how Paul "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" a group of about twelve disciples of John the Baptist. The author of the Recognitions, a third century work that probably contains material from earlier sources, is also aware of the existence of such a sect. It also states that this sect held that their Master, and not Jesus, was the Christ.

As far as the evidence of the Fourth Gospel itself is concerned it is claimed that the evangelist only emphasizes those aspects of the life and work of the Baptist which show his inferiority to Jesus. Thus, it is not the Baptist but Jesus who is "the true light that enlightens every man" and to this "light" the Baptist is merely a witness (1:6-9). The Baptist emphatically denies that he is the Messiah,⁽¹²⁰⁾ or Elijah, or the Prophet (1:19,ff). The difference between John and Jesus who, we are twice told, existed before John (1:15,30), is so great that the Baptist states that he is not even worthy to untie the thong of his sandal (1:27). Jesus' superiority is further accentuated by the fact that whereas John baptized "with water" Jesus baptizes "with the Holy Spirit" (1:32-33). Because he is no more than "the friend of the bridegroom" the Baptist is quite prepared to see Jesus "increase" while he himself "decreases" (3:28-30). For this reason he accepts that Jesus is apparently more successful than he is in attracting followers (cf. 3:26, 4:1). Finally, we are told that John, unlike Jesus, "did no sign" (10:41).⁽¹²¹⁾

Almost as important for the line of argument under discussion here are those things about John the Baptist which the evangelist fails to mention in comparison with the Synoptics' accounts of his activities. These, it is claimed, tend to portray the Baptist in a more favourable light and could even be used as an argument in favour of his superiority over Jesus. For example, the fourth evangelist makes no mention of John's preaching and the impact that he had on large sections of the population. Nor is the actual baptism of Jesus by John referred to.

It is evidence such as this that leads Wikenhauser (Introduction, 308) to state that "this portrayal of John is intelligible only if the Gospel contains a polemic against circles which see and venerate in John the figure of Messianic salvation."

(B) Evaluation of the Evidence

It is clear that in the first instance the anti-Baptist polemic theory is based on the belief that there existed at the time when the gospel was written a sect of the Baptist's disciples who had set themselves up as rivals of the disciples of Jesus. That the Baptist's disciples continued to exist as a recognizable and distinct group after his death is, it seems to me, a well-founded assumption, especially when we take the evidence of the Acts of the Apostles into account. However this evidence must not be used to

prove too much. What it has to tell us is that there were at Ephesus, the generally accepted place of composition of the Fourth Gospel, disciples of the Baptist who had not heard of Christ. Initially there appears to be no evidence of a conflict between them and Christians, at least if we are to believe what Acts has to say. This is borne out by the fact that on being told about Christ and the relationship of the Baptist to him, both Apollos and the twelve disciples of John willingly accept what they are told, the latter being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.⁽¹²²⁾

What significance are we to attach to the evidence of the so-called Clementine Recognitions regarding the existence of a Baptist sect which had set up its Master as Messiah in place of Jesus? Robinson ("Elijah, John and Jesus", 49, n. 49) notes that the evidence in question is limited to two passages, the historical value of which he believes is questionable in view of other inaccuracies which appear in the work. Further, it is not possible to corroborate from any other source what the Recognitions has to say for, as Robinson points out, "none of the Fathers mention the disciples of John in their lists of heretics". Dodd (Tradition, 298, n.1) is more forthright in his rejection of the Recognitions as having any value. He writes, "To base a theory upon the evidence of the late and heretical Clementine romance is to build a house upon sand". There are, however, some scholars who are prepared to accept that the Recognitions do have some historical value. Hughes (op. cit., 194, n.2) for example, rejects Robinson's arguments as "unconvincing".⁽¹²³⁾ Schnackenburg (St John, 168) is another who accepts the testimony of the Recognitions. He writes, "Now it can be proved historically (from the Pseudo-Clementine writings) that at the beginning of the second century the disciples of John revered their master as the Messiah....".

It seems to me that the arguments brought forward by Robinson do carry some weight at least. For this reason it must be admitted that the external evidence for a Baptist sect rivalling the Christians is by no means conclusive. As we have noted, the Acts of the Apostles knows nothing of the alleged rivalry. This means that we are entirely dependent upon what the Clementine Recognitions has to say, the historical value of whose claims are at least open to question in the opinion of some scholars. These conclusions do not, however, rule out the possibility that such a sect might in fact have existed. They merely state that the evidence we have of such rivalry is far from substantial and certainly not convincing. Further evidence would be required to make this a plausible hypothesis.

In this respect the evidence of the Fourth Gospel itself could make a very valuable contribution but only on condition that it was not possible to explain the texts in question in any other way except in terms of an anti-Baptist polemic. Failure to observe this condition could mean that one is indulging in nothing more than a circular argument, namely, that because there is evidence of an anti-Baptist polemic in the Fourth Gospel a sect must have existed which propagated the views which are condemned therein.

The observations made in the last paragraph lead us to ask whether it is possible to explain the references in the Fourth Gospel to John the Baptist in a way other than that of an anti-Baptist polemic. A satisfactory answer to this question requires that we bear in mind the procedures adopted by the evangelist in the handling of his material.

Thus, the evangelist has used certain general themes about which he groups his material and which gives a specific direction to it. In our discussion of the anti-Judaistic polemic theory, for example, we had occasion to refer time and again to the fact that he goes to great lengths to emphasize the superiority of Jesus over the great figures of Israel's history and its institutions. At the same time he also wished to show that when correctly understood there was no real opposition between these and Jesus.

Reconciling these two aspects resulted in a certain amount of tension in the way the evangelist handled his material. It seems to me that we find the same tension, the same ambivalent approach on the evangelist's part in his treatment of the Baptist for here too it is necessary, in view of the gospel's stated purpose, to proclaim unequivocally that Jesus is superior to the Baptist.

There is, however, another general theme which the evangelist uses in the unfolding of which the Baptist plays an important role. This theme is that of "witness".⁽¹²⁴⁾ It is as if he selects his material on the basis of the value it has as a "witness" to Jesus. As far as the Baptist is concerned, therefore, the evangelist is only interested in those aspects of the Baptist's life and work that can be used to "bear witness" to Jesus. Thus it seems to me that this theme of "witness" underlies the choice of material made by the evangelist while at the same time providing the connecting link between the various references to the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel.

In the light of these observations it is now necessary to examine what the Fourth Gospel has to say:

(a) 1:6-8,15

If it can be proved that these verses are indeed additions that interrupt the flow of the Prologue's thought, then this would undoubtedly be a factor in favour of the anti-Baptist polemic theory, though by no means conclusive evidence of it. While it is not our intention to review all the arguments and theories brought forward by scholars to explain the origin and literary form of the Prologue there is little doubt that the weight of scholarly opinion at present favours the view that these verses were indeed added to a hymn when the Prologue came to be composed. ⁽¹²⁵⁾

For our purposes it is possible to leave aside a discussion of the question of the literary form of the Prologue. What we are interested in is the Prologue in its present form and whether the verses in question do interrupt or not the development of its theme. In this connection it must not be assumed that because these verses appear to interrupt the literary flow of the Prologue it follows that it must also interrupt the logical unfolding of its thought. Such an assumption is not warranted as these two aspects of the problem should be viewed separately. Hence while it is indeed possible that they may indeed have been added to some hymn, it is nevertheless conceivable that they serve to bring out or emphasize more clearly the meaning of the Prologue's thought. If it can be shown that this is indeed the case then they should be considered to be integral parts of the Prologue and not mere "parentheses" as Brown calls them.

One scholar who argues that these verses are not mere "parentheses" is M. Hooker. She (op. cit.) maintains that their function becomes clearer when we bear in mind that the evangelist is not interested in the Baptist for his own sake, but only in so far as he is valuable as a witness. ⁽¹²⁶⁾ This is the role in which he is cast in the Prologue, with his testimony being used to confirm what is being claimed there for the Logos. Thus in 1:6-8 we are told that the Baptist came to "bear witness" to the "light", one of the dominant themes not only of the Prologue but also of the Gospel as a whole. The significance of John's witness is that it clearly indicated who the "true light" was. In 1:15 we see the Baptist bearing witness to two other qualities of this "light" viz. his pre-existence and superiority. In so doing he confirms the truth of what we are told in 1:14, viz. that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and that this Word had the glory "as of the only Son of the Father". ⁽¹²⁷⁾

Thus it seems to me that the witness of the Baptist in the Prologue, rather than interrupting its thought, serves to confirm the themes which it

develops. The Prologue itself emphasizes Jesus' pre-existence and superiority. It stands to reason, therefore, that if the Baptist's witness in this context was to be meaningful it must of necessity emphasize the same themes. When seen in this way his witness becomes an integral part of the Prologue's proclamation about the Logos. Therefore to account for these verses by describing them as "rude interruptions"⁽¹²⁸⁾ is to misunderstand the role of the Baptist. Further it results in an unnecessary fragmenting of its thought.

(b) 1:19-36

The dominant theme in this extract is also that of witness. Despite the attempts of the Jewish envoys to find out who he was the Baptist is only prepared to define himself in terms of his relationship to Christ: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness..." (1:23). Thus his identity is completely subordinated to his role of witness (cf. 1:19-23). He even turns his inquirers' questions about the reasons why he baptizes into a form of witness to Jesus, emphasizing the latter's superiority over himself (1:24-27). However, his most explicit witness to Jesus' identity and work, and his own relationship to him, occurs in the verses which follow (1:29-36). He tells us that it is Jesus who takes away the sin of the world (and therefore, by implication, not himself or his baptism) (1:29). After repeating his previous testimony concerning Jesus' pre-existence, he claims that his own function was to reveal him to Israel (1:30-31), for the one to whom he bears witness is the one on whom the Holy Spirit descended. Thus it is that Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit whereas he himself only baptizes with water (1:32-34).

Briefly: in this extract we see the Baptist bearing the witness for which he was sent (cf. 1:6-8). It is a witness that emphasizes Jesus' identity as God's 'Chosen One',⁽¹²⁹⁾ his pre-existence and superiority. He bears witness before official Judaism (1:19-28), before all Israel (cf. 1:31), and before his own disciples (1:35,f).

(c) 3:22-31

In 1:35,f. we see the first concrete results of the Baptist's witness. Two of his disciples follow after Jesus as a result of John's testimony. When we come to 3:26 we are told that "all are going to him" even though we must make some allowance for exaggeration in the use of "all" (cf. 4:1 also). This is something that apparently upsets John's disciples. But for the Baptist it is a sign that his witnessing is meeting with success. For

him, therefore, the fact that "all" are going to Jesus instead of to himself is a cause for joy. As "the friend of the bridegroom" he "stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice" (3:29). The measure of the extent of his success as a witness is the degree to which Jesus "increases" while he himself "decreases" (3:30).⁽¹³⁰⁾

The value of these verses lie in what they have to tell us about the nature of the relationship of the Baptist to Jesus. It is true that the Baptist's disciples appear to be concerned at the increasing success of Jesus and the decreasing influence of their own Master. However I believe that it is possible to explain it apart from the alleged rivalry between the followers of the Baptist and those of Jesus. This is a point to which we shall return in our conclusions.

(d) 10:41-42

"And many came to him, and they said, 'John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true'. And many believed in him there."

These two verses, apart from highlighting once more Jesus' superiority over the Baptist in that Jesus did signs whereas John did not, corroborates the picture of the relationship between them which we described in the previous section. This it does in the following manner. It is not an unreasonable assumption to make that the people referred to in these verses were either disciples of the Baptist or, at the very least, had been greatly impressed by him. This is borne out by the fact that what he had said about Jesus had carried considerable weight with them. But in spite of their respect for the Baptist or, more likely, because of it, we are told that many of them believed in Jesus. It is clear that they came to believe in him not only because of the signs they may have witnessed, but also because "everything that John said about this man was true". In other words, once more we see people coming to believe in Jesus through the testimony of the Baptist and this, as we have seen, was the sole reason why he had been sent.

Thus the references to the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel open and close by alluding to the reason why he had come, viz. to bear witness, and to the purpose of that witness, viz. that all might believe through him. It is the same two themes that dominate the other references also where we see different aspects of the Baptist's witness being spelled out.

(e) The problem of 'omissions' in the Fourth Gospel

Here we are concerned primarily with the reasons why the fourth evangelist makes no mention of the baptism of Jesus by John. In omitting any reference to this is the evangelist deliberately playing down the role and importance of the Baptist? Undoubtedly this could be a possible explanation. But it is not the only one.

The fact of the matter is that the fourth evangelist has incorporated into his gospel what was for him the important aspects about John's baptism in general and his baptism of Jesus in particular. Like the Baptist himself, his baptism also was made to serve the purpose of witnessing: "for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel" (1:31). According to the Fourth Gospel John's baptism was not centred on repentance for it is "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29) and not the Baptist. The fourth evangelist appears to have recorded the "witness" aspect of Jesus' baptism by John in 1:32,ff. These verses describe how the Spirit descended as a dove from heaven and rested upon Jesus. This was the sign by which the Baptist recognized who Jesus was, and on the basis of what he saw he has "borne witness that this is the Son of God".

Granted that this is a correct understanding of the evangelist's thought⁽¹³¹⁾ concerning the purpose of John's baptism, there would have been no humiliation on Jesus' part in submitting himself to it. Hence to say that the fourth evangelist omits any reference to Jesus' baptism by John because it could have been misinterpreted as an indication that he was inferior to the Baptist is not correct when seen against the Fourth Gospel's understanding of the significance and purpose of John's Baptism.

(C) Conclusions

If our understanding of the texts we have discussed is correct, there can be little doubt that the primary interest of the fourth evangelist was not in the person of the Baptist himself but in his value as a witness to the claims which he (the evangelist) makes for Jesus throughout his gospel. In this the Baptist is not alone for as we saw in the first section of this Chapter the evangelist makes use of a variety of witnesses for the same purpose. But the Baptist's testimony would have been of particular significance to many of the Jews because of the great impression which he appears to have made upon all sections of the population and the respect which, as a consequence, he had won from them.

In his witness the Baptist emphasized both Jesus' superiority and his pre-existence. While it is possible that this could have been prompted by the claims made by a rival Baptist sect this is not the only explanation possible for these emphases, as we shall see. Further, when the whole context of the Gospel is taken into account it is difficult to see how these aspects of the Baptist's witness could have been omitted without making that witness meaningless. As we saw when we discussed the anti-Judaistic theory these same themes are witnessed to in other parts of the gospel, e.g. Jesus' superiority over the patriarchs, the Law, etc., as well as his claim to pre-exist Abraham (8:58). It should also be borne in mind that the fourth evangelist is not alone in emphasizing Jesus' superiority over the Baptist for the Synoptics also describe how John spoke of one "mightier" than himself and who would come after him (cf. Mt 3:11, Mk 1:7, Lk 3:16). At the same time it is true to say that in a sense the Baptist appears in the role of a witness even in the Synoptics in so far as it was an integral part of his function to prepare the people for Jesus' coming. It is in the Fourth Gospel, however, that these aspects of the Baptist's role and ministry are exploited to the full.

What significance do these observations and conclusions have for the question of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose? First of all it seems to me that we are on surer ground when we see a more positive purpose in the Baptist's witness than in reducing it to the level of a mere polemic. The evidence, both external and internal, on which this theory of an anti-Baptist polemic is based is not convincing. Moreover because it is possible to explain the references in question in a more positive and satisfactory manner in the light of the gospel as a whole, this polemic theory should be rejected as one of the explicit purposes of the Fourth Gospel, even as a secondary one. At most it could be classified as an 'indirect' purpose in that the Fourth Gospel could have been used to counter any exaggerated claims that might have been made at a later date for the Baptist. But such an approach is to read into the gospel a purpose which it did not originally have, nor was consciously intended by the fourth evangelist.⁽¹³²⁾

However, in ruling this theory out as a satisfactory explanation of the purpose of the gospel, even a secondary one, it does not follow that we must of necessity also rule out the disciples of the Baptist as a possible destination for the gospel. Because this statement might, at first sight, give the impression of contradicting itself it should be understood correctly. It is not being suggested, for example, that the Fourth Gospel was written for the Baptist's disciples alone. Yet there appears to be no reason why

they could not have been a part of its destination. Presuming that the great majority, if not all, of these disciples were Jews, and presuming, for the moment, that the gospel was addressed to a Jewish audience, these disciples would have been particularly impressed by the recorded testimony of their Master to Jesus. But, as we have noted, the Baptist made a deep impression on a much wider circle of Jews than those who could be called his disciples. For this reason they too would have found the witness of the Baptist appealing and significant.

When viewed from this angle the Baptist's witness should be seen as one example among many of a theme that runs through the gospel, for the other witnesses to Jesus employed by the evangelist would have appealed to the Baptist's disciples also. Secondly, the example of the Baptist would have been in stark contrast to that of "the Jews" who had made an end in themselves of their patriarchs and institutions, instead of having seen them as a means to an end, as pointing to Christ. The Baptist on the other hand submerges himself so completely in his work as a "witness" that he tells us absolutely nothing about himself except what can be defined in terms of his relationship to Jesus. Thus it is from Jesus and in terms of him that the Baptist's own life receives the meaning and value that it has. (133)

In brief: if one accepts the line of argument which we have been pursuing, and it seems to me to be a reasonable one, the indications are that if the audience to which the Fourth Gospel was originally addressed was Jewish, then it is more than likely that the disciples of the Baptist would have made up a part of that audience. This conclusion is, however, a long way from asserting that the purpose of the Fourth Gospel was to undermine claims made for its Master by a Baptist sect that had set itself up in opposition to and as rivals of Christians.

IV. A POLEMIC AGAINST THE CHURCH AND SPECIFIC ASPECTS
OF ITS LIFE

The Fourth Gospel has been seen by at least one scholar as a polemic against the way in which the Church was developing at the time when the gospel came to be composed. Others prefer to see it as a polemic against certain specific developments within the Church. Of particular significance here is the gospel's attitude towards the sacraments. In this section we shall discuss each of these theories, beginning with the more particular and then proceeding to the more general.

(A) A Polemic Against a False Understanding of the Sacraments⁽¹³⁴⁾

1. Introduction

Some scholars are of the opinion that the fourth evangelist set out to oppose Christian teachers who were giving too much importance to the sacraments, or, alternatively, were playing down their significance. According to Morris (op. cit., 38) among those who support the first viewpoint are J. Kreyenbühl, E.C. Colwell and E.L. Titus, while advocates of the second include O. Cullmann and K. and S. Lake.

The arguments underlying each of these two opposing theories centre on the amount and nature of sacramental teaching that there is in the Fourth Gospel. Thus, those who claim that the fourth evangelist was opposing the tendency of those who gave excessive attention to the sacraments argue that he countered this attitude either by limiting or excluding references to the sacraments. In this argument particular significance is attached to the fact that the evangelist does not record any account of the institution of the sacraments. On the other hand those who believe that the evangelist wished to emphasize the importance of the sacraments in the life of the Christian are inclined to see sacramental references and allusions throughout the whole of the gospel.

R.E. Brown (New Testament Essays, 51,f) describes the first viewpoint referred to above as the non-sacramental (or in some instances, anti-sacramental) one, and the latter as the ultra-sacramental view. In order to evaluate the theories in question it is now necessary to examine the arguments brought forward by each of these viewpoints in support of their respective positions.

2. The Non-Sacramental/Anti-Sacramental View

This is the view of R. Bultmann and many other German scholars. In Bultmann's opinion there are only three passages that can be interpreted sacramentally, namely, 3:5 (referring to Baptism), 6:51b-58 (referring to the Eucharist), and 19:34-35 (the water and blood flowing from the side of Christ, referring to both Baptism and the Eucharist). Outside of these passages Bultmann does not believe that it is possible to find any allusions to the sacraments. Even the sacramental references contained in the passages cited above cannot, in truth, be said to represent the views of the evangelist for they were, according to Bultmann, in all probability additions to the Gospel made by an ecclesiastical redactor. For Bultmann it is the "word" of Jesus that is of over-riding importance. What other scholars might claim for the sacraments he attributes to this "word". In his commentary on the Fourth Gospel (John, 472) he writes: "The truth is that the sacraments are superfluous for him (i.e. the Evangelist): the disciples are "clean" through the word (15:3), just as they are "holy" through the word, according to the prayer that takes the place of the Lord's Supper (17:17)." However, this does not mean that Bultmann denies that the Evangelist was not aware at least of the existence of the sacrament of Baptism. "John tells us without hesitation that Jesus baptized, just as the Baptist did (3:22; 4:1); furthermore, the combination of $\mu\theta\eta\tau\alpha\varsigma$ $\pi\omicron\lambda\epsilon\iota\upsilon$ and $\beta\alpha\upsilon\tau\iota\zeta\epsilon\iota\upsilon$ in 4:1 seems to show that entry into the circle of disciples was bound up with the reception of baptism. But 3:22 and 4:1 are far from being stressed, and the sacraments play no part in Jesus' proclamation. One can therefore explain the facts only by concluding that, while the Evangelist came to terms with ecclesiastical practice in regard to baptism and the Lord's Supper, it remained suspect to him because of its misuse, and that this is why he has made no mention of it." (op.cit.)⁽¹³⁵⁾

According to this line of reasoning, therefore, the evangelist wished to emphasize the over-riding importance of the "word"; to it he attributed many of those functions which were, seemingly, attributed by others to the sacraments.⁽¹³⁶⁾

3. The Ultra-Sacramental View

Perhaps the best known recent representative of this viewpoint is O. Cullmann. This author works on the assumption that the fourth evangelist's readers would have been familiar already with the basic outlines of the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist since they were integral parts of early Christian worship. With the new and clearer understanding that came to believers as a result of the coming of the Holy Spirit, Cullmann is of

the opinion that believers in the post-resurrection period were in a position to grasp more fully the deeper meaning to be attached to the sacraments. He claims that it is some of their more 'hidden' aspects which the fourth evangelist wished to emphasize in the allusions he makes to Baptism and the Eucharist in his gospel.

Cullmann himself, in his book, Early Christian Worship (59,ff) attempts to pinpoint what these allusions were. He finds them in the following episodes:

- (a) to Baptism: 1:6-8,15,19-34 (the witness of the Baptist to Jesus and the relation of the former's baptism to that of the latter); 2:1-11 (the marriage feast at Cana); 3:1-21 (the conversation with Nicodemus); 3:22-36 (the last witness of the Baptist to Jesus); 4:1-30 (the conversation with the Samaritan woman); 5:1-19 (the healing miracle at the Pool by the Sheep-Gate, Bethesda); 9:1-39 (the healing of the man born blind at the Pool of Siloam); 13:1-20 (the washing of the disciples' feet); 19:34 (the spear thrust and the water and blood from the side of Christ); and,
- (b) to the Eucharist: 2:1-11 (the marriage feast at Cana); 2:12-22 (the clearing of the Temple); 6:1-13,26-65 (the miracle of the feeding of the multitude and the subsequent discourse); 13:1-20 (the washing of the disciples' feet); 13:31 - 17:26 (the Farewell Discourses, especially the allegory of the Vine); 19:34 (the spear thrust and the water and blood from the side of Christ).

It would seem that most scholars have not been blessed with the same degree of 'understanding' that follows as a consequence of the coming of the Spirit which Cullmann would claim for himself as very few would be prepared to see sacramental allusions in all of the references which he lists.⁽¹³⁷⁾ Most scholars would, in fact, accuse him of eisegesis; as R. Brown (New Testament Essays, 55) puts it: "he (Cullmann) often seems to fall back on the principle that since a passage could have been understood sacramentally, it was intended sacramentally."

Of particular importance in attempting to ascertain whether there are any sacramental allusions in the Fourth Gospel, - and if so, how many - are the symbols that came to be used to describe the sacraments. Now while it is true that such symbolism can be found in the writings of the Church Fathers and on the walls of the catacombs it is by no means certain that the fourth

evangelist's original readers themselves made any such associations. It cannot be doubted that in the first few centuries of Christianity's history there was considerable development in the understanding of many aspects of doctrine. This is true in the case of the sacraments. However, by reading the Fourth Gospel through the eyes of a third or fourth century Christian there is the danger of giving to it an interpretation that the evangelist did not necessarily intend or which would have been beyond the grasp of his original readers. As Lindars (op. cit., 52) puts it: "What we know as baptismal or eucharistic themes from more developed theology and liturgy were not necessarily recognized as such in John's day." As an example, we may cite the case of "water" and the cleansing effect of both it and Baptism. The association between the two appears to have assumed greater prominence with the passage of time. But it cannot be argued, as Dunn (op. cit., 183, ff) has pointed out, that all the references in the Fourth Gospel to "water" (1:26, 31, 33; 2:1-11(4:46); 3:5, 22-26; 4:7-15; 5:2-9; 7:37-39; 9:7, 11; 13:1-16; 19:34) must necessarily be interpreted as sacramental allusions.⁽¹³⁸⁾ By way of illustration this author finds Cullmann's interpretation of Jn. 5 "incredible". Dunn (op. cit.) writes: "the whole point of the story is that the water of the pool did not heal the man and did not even contribute to his healing. The healing was accomplished solely by the word of Jesus (cf. 15:3)."

4. An Analysis of the Sacramental Texts of the Fourth Gospel

Most scholars occupy a position somewhere in between the two extreme views outlined above. But even among these scholars there is no general agreement about which passages should be accepted as being sacramental. As has already been noted, the problem of identifying such passages centres on the nature of the symbolism employed by the evangelist, as well as the difficulty of ascertaining which of the possible allusions to the sacraments were either consciously intended by the evangelist or would have been understood by the readers for whom the Gospel was originally intended.

The objective we must set ourselves in this chapter can best be achieved by limiting ourselves to those passages that are generally recognized as being sacramental in nature by the great majority of scholars. These are 3:1-15, 6:26, ff, 19:34-35.

(a) 3:1-15 - The Conversation with Nicodemus

That this passage is discussing at least one aspect of the nature of baptism is generally accepted by scholars even though the actual word does not appear. The main point of Jesus' remarks to Nicodemus is that if a man wishes to "see the Kingdom of God" he must be "born $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\theta\epsilon\upsilon$ (3:3)", if he

wishes to enter the Kingdom of God, he must be "born of water and the Spirit" (ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος) (3:5). In 3:3 the word ἀνωθεν can be translated in two ways, namely, "from above" and "again". According to Barrett (op. cit., 171) both meanings are probably intended by the evangelist. Schnackenburg (op. cit., 367) notes that both translations have had their supporters among the Church Fathers and modern scholars. In the light of the usage of this word in other places in the gospel he himself is of the opinion that "the only justifiable translation is 'from above'." The context makes it clear, however, that Nicodemus takes it to mean "again" and therefore misunderstands the meaning of Jesus. This is in keeping with the evangelist's frequent custom of using a misunderstanding to bring out the true meaning of Jesus' teaching.

Apart from these two references it is possible to interpret the whole discourse as referring to baptism. The idea of a "new birth" and the manner in which this takes place is the central motif of the whole section. It is also one that was frequently used in the early Church as an image for baptism (cf. 1 Peter 1:3,23).⁽¹³⁹⁾

Finally, the situation of this chapter in the gospel as a whole would seem to be a further indication of a baptismal context for the discourse with Nicodemus is followed immediately by the re-entrance of John the Baptist and the remark that Jesus was baptizing in Judaea (3:22).

(b) 6:26,ff - Jesus, the Bread of Life

The recollection of the sign of the multiplication of the loaves and fish which, we are told, took place near the time of the feast of Passover (6:4), serves as an introduction to the discourse on the "bread of life".⁽¹⁴⁰⁾

This is a discourse that has traditionally been understood as referring to the Eucharist. On this point O. Cullmann writes (op. cit., 93): "The long speech which Jesus makes in John's Gospel, after the miracle of feeding the multitude, about the meaning of this miracle, has, since ancient times, been considered by most exegetes a discourse on the Eucharist. The use of characteristically eucharistic words such as δίδόναι, ὑπερ, ἄρτος, ἄϊμα, φαγεῖν, πίνειν supports this interpretation."

Jesus tells the people that they must not labour for the bread that will perish, but rather for the bread that endures to eternal life, bread which he alone can give because he is this bread: "I am the bread of life" (6:35, 48). Two suggestions have been put forward by scholars regarding the nature of this "bread". The first of these has been described by Brown as the

"sapiential" according to which it refers to the revelation by and in Jesus or his teaching. The second interpretation is the sacramental one according to which the "bread" refers to the eucharistic bread. Some scholars believe that both themes are present throughout the whole of the discourse; according to other scholars both appear but at different stages, while still others favour either the one or the other as being sufficient to explain the meaning of the discourse in its entirety.⁽¹⁴¹⁾

It is when we come to 6:51,ff. that the eucharistic theme really comes to the fore. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh." This challenge of Jesus is taken up on a literal level by the Jews who ask: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (6:52). On other occasions when the Jews had misunderstood Jesus' words and had therefore failed to grasp their real meaning Jesus had gone to great pains to explain to them what he meant. Here, however, he appears to be aware that the Jews had understood his words in a literal, cannibalistic, way. Yet he does nothing to correct the interpretation they have put onto his words. In fact he seems to be reinforcing it in 6:53-58 where he elaborates on what he has already told them. Not only must one eat the flesh of the Son of Man; one must also drink his blood if one wants to have "life" (6:53).

Many of Jesus' disciples find his teaching to be σκληρὸς λόγος and as a consequence "drew back from him and no longer went about with him" (6:61). Jesus makes no attempt to hold their loyalty by watering down what he had said. This seems to suggest that these disciples had correctly understood Jesus' words.

There seems to me to be good reason, in view of the precise and exact nature of the language used, for believing that the Fourth Gospel wished to counter any tendency there might have been to explain away the Eucharist or to reduce its role to insignificant levels. At the same time, however, it is clear that he also wished to avoid the impression that the eucharist was some sort of magical rite by emphasizing the role that faith has to play (e.g. compare 6:47 with 6:54). Cullman (op. cit., 95) notes that the celebration of the Eucharist "was always considered a most offensive thing by those outside the Church in the early days. In the evangelist's day also there may have been many to whom the word about eating the bread seemed σκληρὸς 'hard' (v.60) and who took offence at it (v.61). It is against

these that what is said about the necessity of faith is directed. Without faith, which is a gift of God, this eating of bread has no effect."

One final point that should be noted is the use of the word σάρξ in 6:63 where we read: "It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." How is one to reconcile this apparently derogatory remark about "flesh" with the discourse that has preceded it? Is it possible to see in this verse an indication of an anti-sacramental attitude on the part of the evangelist? In answering this question it is important to bear in mind that σάρξ is an attribute not only of men but also of Jesus himself (ὁ λόγος σάρξ ἐγένετο). In the context under discussion the σάρξ of 6:63 refers not to the "flesh" of Jesus but to that of his disciples. In their case it is seen as an obstacle to their true understanding. In fact the whole verse, which Bultmann (John, 446) believes "sounds like a citation", seems to echo the thought of 3:6 where we read, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

(c) 19:34 - The Blood and Water from the Side of Christ

Barrett (op. cit., 69) states that "it is difficult to doubt that here there is at least allusion to the Christian sacraments in the blood and water that issued from the side of the dead Jesus (cf. 1 John 5:6-8)." This is a view with which most scholars would agree, even Bultmann. However this last-mentioned scholar believes that this verse could be the work of an ecclesiastical redactor.

As in Chapter 6 the evangelist wishes to emphasize that what took place on this occasion was something that was real and therefore must not be interpreted merely in a symbolic fashion. The reality of the blood and water flowing from the side of Jesus is stressed by the emphasis put on the testimony of him who saw it (19:35).⁽¹⁴²⁾

5. Evaluation of the Fourth Gospel's Sacramental Teaching

In evaluating the fourth evangelist's sacramental teaching it is necessary to bear certain points in mind. The first of these is that nowhere does the evangelist refer to their institution. That this was an accidental omission is highly unlikely. After all he does describe what must have been the Last Supper. But in the Fourth Gospel the "Farewell Discourses" occupy the place of the institution of the Eucharist as related in the Synoptic gospels.

Secondly, if one accepts that the events described in 3:1-15 and 6:26-58 are historically accurate in every detail, then one can only feel a certain degree of sympathy for Nicodemus and the Galilaeen crowd. In the case of Nicodemus one can appreciate his difficulty in understanding what Jesus' meaning was. In the Fourth Gospel this conversation between him and Jesus takes place towards the beginning of the latter's public ministry. If one assumes that this is historically accurate then Jesus and his teaching would have only been in the process of becoming known. No doubt Nicodemus would have been able to comprehend the references to the Spirit as his outpouring had already been foretold by the Old Testament prophets (cf. Is 32:15, Joel 2:28,f., Ezek 36:26,f). But rebirth by water was something that was without precedent. A similar situation applied in the case of the "bread of life" discourse. It is too much to expect that the audience which had witnessed the multiplication of loaves and fish should have been able to grasp fully Jesus' claim to be the "bread of life" himself whose "flesh" they must eat and whose "blood" they must drink if they wished to have "life" in them.

Considerations such as these about what the fourth evangelist omits about the sacraments - important points at that, such as their institution as well as the "unreality" that surrounds the two episodes described above - leads one to the conclusion that the evangelist is assuming that his readers are already in possession of the basic facts about the sacraments in question, and that they are familiar with the Church's practice in this regard. For these reasons he does not feel the need to cover ground with which his readers were familiar.

Theologically speaking, however, it is possible to offer other explanations for the evangelist's omission of any account of the institution of the sacraments. For example, Barrett (op. cit., 71) suggests that "the truth (in John's view) seems to be that they hang not upon one particular moment or command, but upon the whole fact of Christ in his life, death, and exaltation, and that they convey nothing less than this whole fact.... No one, when John wrote, questioned that Jesus had willed, and thus instituted, the sacraments; what was important was to safeguard them from petty and partial interpretations." J. Jeremias (op. cit., 125,ff) takes a completely different view. In his opinion "the fourth evangelist consciously omitted the account of the Lord's Supper because he did not want to reveal the sacred formula to the general public" (underlined words in italics in text), an hypothesis he sets out to prove in the pages which follow.(143) However, according to E. Käsemann (op. cit., 33) the main

argument that can be brought against the view of Jeremias is that it has not yet been proved that the disciplina arcani already existed when the Gospel was composed.

Lindars (op. cit., 61,f) is another scholar who disagrees with Jeremias regarding the reason why the fourth evangelist failed to mention the institution of the eucharist. He maintains that the disciplina arcani "can scarcely be the reason" in view of the fact that the evangelist had made open use of words usually associated with the eucharist in 6:51-58. This is something to which Cullmann has already drawn attention, as we noted above. The reasons which Lindars gives for the omission of any account of the institution of the Eucharist is that in chapters 13-17 the evangelist is concerned with the theme of the meaning of discipleship and not with the eucharist. Presumably, therefore, he selected only that material which suited his purposes. The value of Lindars' views is that while they do justice to the chapters in question they also tie in with what we have said concerning the knowledge about the sacraments which the evangelist seems to presume the readers of his gospel already possess.

If one accepts the general conclusions suggested so far concerning the nature of the fourth evangelist's sacramental teaching, it is not a big jump to the further conclusion that the evangelist could have been incorporating catechesis into his gospel for the benefit of those who were familiar with the basic teaching of the Church concerning Baptism and the Eucharist. This catechesis could have had its origin in the preaching of the Apostle John or his disciples.⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ Is there any textual evidence to support such a view?

It can be argued that in the discourse of chapter 3 Nicodemus is used to set the scene, so to speak, for the unfolding of the evangelist's teaching on baptism. Gradually he disappears out of sight, being mentioned for the last time in 3:10. It is significant that in 3:11 the verbs change into the plural: "Truly, truly, I say to you (sing.), we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen; but you (pl.) do not receive our testimony." No doubt most scholars would agree that the plural "you" is used in reference to those whom Nicodemus represents, i.e. "the half-believing Jews who were impressed by Jesus' signs but had not reached an adequate faith in him" (Barrett, op. cit., 176). However there is no unanimity about the use of "we" and for whom it stands.⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ Both Dodd and Barrett see the influence of the Church at work in this verse. For example, Dodd (Interpretation, 328, n. 3) writes: "The 'testimony' of

iii.11 is that of Christ, but, as occasionally elsewhere, the evangelist betrays the fact that it is mediated corporately by the Church."⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ If we are to accept such an explanation of the "we" - and it seems to be the most reasonable one - then it is quite possible that the discourse as a whole is patterned on the style of catechesis given by the Church. This, of course, is not to deny that this teaching has its origins in that of Christ himself.

As far as the Bread of Life discourse is concerned we have already noted the difficulties involved if one accepts that Jesus spoke in these exact terms to an unprepared Galilaeian audience. The whole of the discourse, but especially 51,ff., would definitely have been more intelligible in the post-resurrection situation where people were already familiar with the basic points about the nature of the Eucharist and its institution. The discourse in question builds on this knowledge by attempting to bring out its inner meaning, its essential nature and purpose, as well as the attitude of faith with which the believer must approach it.

6. Conclusion

Our analysis of the sacramental teaching of the Fourth Gospel suggests that there is much to support the view that the evangelist assumed that his readers were already familiar with the basic facts concerning the sacraments from other sources. For this reason he did not consider it necessary to repeat what was already known. Further, as far as the omission of any account of the institution of the eucharist at least is concerned, there is good reason to believe, as Lindars has noted, that in that section of the gospel where we would expect to find this, viz., the Last Supper, the evangelist is apparently treating a different theme altogether. If we accept that he usually selects⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ that material which suits his purpose it is clear that he is, in fact, being consistent by not including an account of the institution of the eucharist at this point. It seems to me, therefore, that it is false to argue that merely because the evangelist did not mention the institution of the sacraments he was thereby opposing those who attached too much importance to them.

At the same time it must also be acknowledged that the evangelist did not take the existence of the sacraments so much for granted that he felt that no reference to them was needed. What he attempts to do is to give to them an added dimension by explaining something of their purpose and meaning especially in so far as this had a bearing on the believer's relationship with Christ, the focal point of the whole gospel. Lindars

(op. cit., 63) explains the point thus: "John has no wish to belittle the importance of either baptism or the eucharist. They are practices with which his readers are expected to be familiar, so that he can simply take their existence for granted. What does concern him is that those who are brought into fellowship with Christ through baptism should have a true understanding of what is implied by the confession of faith;⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ and that those who meet for the celebration of the eucharist should fully comprehend the moral obligations implicit in the act of communion with one another and the glorified Christ. To this end the preaching of the word in connection with these sacramental acts is indispensable."

It is possible that by adopting this approach the evangelist was countering a tendency to play down the significance and role of the sacraments in the life of the believer. But there is no clear evidence that this was in fact his intention. It seems to me that those passages that can be accepted as being genuinely "sacramental" are too few and too limited in compass on which to base a claim that this was the evangelist's purpose in composing his gospel.

In brief: from the point of view of the purpose of the Fourth Gospel the evidence is unconvincing that the evangelist set out to oppose the views of those who were giving either too much or too little attention to the sacraments. However, as far as the destination of the gospel is concerned, it seems that the evangelist's treatment of the sacraments lends weight to the view that the Fourth Gospel was intended for readers who were familiar with the beliefs and practices of believers in this regard and must, therefore, have been either "believers" themselves, or at least well acquainted with the way of life of "believers".

(B) A POLEMIC AGAINST GENERAL TRENDS IN THE CHURCH

E. Käsemann, in his book The Testament of Jesus, 39, ff. argues that the Fourth Gospel should perhaps be seen as "the relic of a Christian conventicle existing on, or being pushed to, the Church's periphery". This conventicle, together with the gospel that came to be composed in its midst, was not therefore in the mainstream of the developments that were taking place in the Church at the time and to which the other writers of the New Testament presumably bear witness. This does not mean that the author of the Fourth Gospel and the conventicle to which he belonged had no contact with the situation being experienced in the rest of the Church. There was indeed some contact, but it was limited. Käsemann compares the

relationship between them with that of "a side tributary apart from the general stream, yet connected with it". The nature and extent of this contact in turn provides Käsemann with a clue to the gospel's purpose. He writes (ibid., 39): "the fact that only occasional glances are cast in the direction of the Church's situation and that many points at issue run counter to it should be interpreted as polemic on the part of John". Thus the Fourth Gospel may be seen as a sort of protest against the Church at large and in particular against the way it was developing. In this context Käsemann notes that the evangelist stresses, against the growing institutionalism and organization which he felt was enveloping the Church at the time, that "the Church is basically and exclusively the fellowship of people who hear Jesus' word and believe in him; in short, it is the community under the Word" (ibid., 40).

Käsemann does not deny that the Fourth Gospel has an ecclesiology. But it is important to note that John's "ecclesiology is not designed on the basis of the forms of church organization" (ibid.). Käsemann is aware of the fact that "no universal church organization existed at the end of the first century"; rather there were "independent and divergent communities". But these communities "were pressing toward unity and did so in various ways, with varying clarity of purpose and varying degrees of speed" (ibid., 39). It is this sort of development in early Catholicism which Käsemann believes the Fourth Gospel was opposing while at the same time remaining in contact with that Catholicism.

In support of his contention that the Fourth Gospel was opposing trends towards institutionalism and organization within the Church, Käsemann had previously (ibid., 27,ff) drawn attention to the fact that in the Fourth Gospel there is no significant emphasis on church organization as such or on aspects usually associated with it, e.g. forms of worship, the sacraments and the ministry. Ecclesial terms such as "Church", the "family" or "People of God", the "heavenly building", and "the Body of Christ" are not mentioned in this gospel. However Käsemann does admit that the Fourth Gospel "presupposes an organized communal life" in which some have ministerial functions to perform, but these "ministerial functions are not yet connected with privileges" (ibid., 29). In other words, these "functions" cannot be used to argue in favour of the existence of a hierarchical structure in the Church of the Fourth Gospel. Thus even Peter's role as leader of the Twelve is, seemingly, played down by the fourth evangelist, while the apostles as a group are described simply as

"disciples", a term which is used to describe other believers also. Käsemann argues that the use of this term to describe all the members of the Johannine community undermines any attempt to differentiate between them on other grounds. On the basis of this understanding of itself by the Johannine community Käsemann believes that "it becomes evident that the community is viewed primarily not from the aspect of its corporateness, but rather from the aspect of its individual members, while the general trend of later times is to incorporate the individual into the realm of the Church by organizational, sacramental and cultic means" (ibid., 30,f).

Thus the Church is not, according to the fourth evangelist, "the institution of salvation" (ibid., 44,f) but "the community under the Word". All its characteristic features such as its worship and its sacraments must be seen as related to the Word and are to be interpreted in the light of that Word.

The question of the nature, extent and even the existence of the Fourth Gospel's ecclesiology is perhaps one of the most important and widely discussed questions in the field of Johannine studies at the present time. That Käsemann has made a significant contribution to this debate cannot be doubted, though whether there are many scholars who are prepared to accept his theory in toto is open to question.

In my opinion his interpretation of the ecclesiological evidence does not prove conclusively or even convincingly that the Fourth Gospel arose in a community which existed on the periphery of the Church and was in some way opposed to the developments taking place therein. On this score Käsemann's views must remain conjectural and hypothetical. Further, the fact that the fourth evangelist does not stress the organizational aspects of the Church is not, in itself, proof that he was opposing them. It could equally be argued, as some scholars do⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ that he is taking knowledge of these for granted in his readers, while he concerns himself with the problem of the nature of the relationship of believers to Christ and to one another no matter what their position or function may be, within the framework of "early Catholicism".

V. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This chapter has been a long one, involving as it has a discussion of much of the material that is basic to any proper understanding of the Fourth Gospel as a whole. For this reason it is clear that it is of vital importance for the problem of the gospel's destination and purpose. This discussion has been necessary not only for the purpose of formulating meaningful conclusions regarding the various theories we have been examining in this chapter. It has also provided us with the opportunity of arriving at certain evaluative judgments about the nature of the material in question. These judgments will in turn stand us in good stead in the chapters which follow for any worthwhile investigation into the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose must take account of those aspects of the gospel which we have examined in this chapter.

But to return to the "polemical" theories themselves. It is clear that none of the theories we have discussed in this chapter offer a satisfactory explanation of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose. The most that may be claimed for two of them, viz., the polemic against the Jews and that against the Gnostics, is that these trends might have had some influence upon the way in which the material or traditions used by the evangelist in the composition of the gospel came to be shaped. This is, however, a far cry from the claim that the Fourth Gospel itself was written to refute the errors of either of these groups.

The inherent weakness of all polemical theories, when they are analyzed in isolation, is that they can never be anything more than a partial explanation of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose. The reason for this is that while a "polemic" may succinctly be defined as a "controversial discussion"⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ it should be added that a person usually engages in a polemic for a specific purpose. Now there is no reason why it should have been otherwise in the case of the Fourth Gospel. Thus it is most unlikely that the fourth evangelist entered into a discussion of this nature merely to destroy the opposition. Rather, if it were possible to prove that there are polemical features in the Fourth Gospel then the assumption must be that the evangelist, in using these, hoped to achieve another, more positive, end. The question that concerns us is the nature of this end. Was it, for example, his intention to vindicate the claims of believers against one or more of the groups we have mentioned? If the answer to this question were to be in the affirmative, then it would be

better to describe his purpose as "apologetic", being geared to strengthening the faith of believers in the face of the attacks made by these groups. If on the other hand the polemical approach was used by the evangelist in an attempt to win over the groups which he was attacking, then his purpose would be better described as "missionary" rather than polemical in intention.

Thus, while it might be convenient to group a number of theories together under the heading of "polemic" such a title and the approach implied by it must be considered to be unsatisfactory in that it cannot offer a comprehensive explanation of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose. Rather, the polemical features of the gospel, if it can be proved that these are indeed present - and our conclusions suggest that this is probably only true in the case of the "Jewish" material - should be seen as a characteristic of the method and style used by him to achieve his true purpose which, because we have now eliminated the polemical group of theories, must have been either "missionary" or "edifying". It is to these, therefore, that we must now turn our attention.

CHAPTER THREE : A MISSIONARY DESTINATION AND PURPOSE

Introductory Comment

Having shown in the previous chapter that the Fourth Gospel is not to be seen primarily as a polemical work, the question that suggests itself now is whether the gospel should rather be seen as a work intended not to destroy but rather to win over. Hence we must now turn our attention to that set of theories that can best be described as "missionary". These theories can be grouped together under the headings of "the Jews", "the Gentiles" and "the Samaritans".

I. THE JEWS

(A) R.T. Fortna

In our introductory chapter we observed that a view which appears to be winning increasing support is that behind the Fourth Gospel there stands a "Signs Source" from which the evangelist drew some of his material. If it is accepted that this is indeed the case then the uncovering of this source material and the examination of its contents could have a significant bearing on the gospel's purpose and destination. One question that would require investigation would be the reasons why the evangelist chose this particular source. Next, and of vital importance for the gospel's purpose, would be the manner in which he handled the source material. Did he, for example, alter it in such a way that he used it for a purpose different from that intended by its original author? Or did he simply take over verbatim a source which he found to be already suitable for and in agreement with his own purposes in writing his gospel? Among those who have supported the former view is R. Bultmann whose views we have already discussed, and many of those who have been influenced by this scholar's work.⁽¹⁾ However one scholar who came to very different conclusions concerning both the number of sources behind the Fourth Gospel as well as the way in which the evangelist handled the source material is R.T. Fortna.⁽²⁾

One of the most important differences between Bultmann and Fortna is that whereas the former envisaged a number of distinct sources and traditions behind the Fourth Gospel, the latter speaks only of a single source which he calls a "Signs Gospel".⁽³⁾ This he considers to have been a written⁽⁴⁾ narrative source, independent of the Synoptic Gospels,⁽⁵⁾ which includes not only the material to be found in Bultmann's "Semeia Source" but much

more besides, e.g. the passion-resurrection narrative. In extent Fortna's "Signs Gospel" comprises about a fifth of the total size of the Fourth Gospel.⁽⁶⁾

Fortna believes that his "Signs Gospel" sprang from a Jewish-Christian milieu" (*ibid.*, 223). Its author and audience, he claims, appear to have been bilingual, a conclusion he reaches on the basis of both Aramaic and Greek words which are not translated, or alternatively, are used interchangeably.⁽⁷⁾

Unlike Bultmann Fortna attributes a negligible role to the redactor. It is for this reason that he finds it possible to reconstruct the source in such great detail. And because he has been able to reconstruct it with, in his own opinion at least, such a high degree of probability the question that interests us is whether the "Signs Gospel", presuming that Fortna's reconstruction of it is substantially correct, has its own destination and purpose, and whether the evangelist has retained these in the final form of the gospel. Fortna himself has no doubts about the answer to the first part of the question posed above when he tells us that the "Signs Gospel" "is a missionary tract with a single end, to show (presumably to the potential Jewish convert) that Jesus is the Messiah" (*ibid.*, 225; see also 234). Everything contained in the source is geared to demonstrating the truth of this statement. For this reason Fortna can describe his source as being "frankly and simply christological" (*ibid.*, 228, with the underlined word being in italics in the text).

Whether the purpose of the "Signs Gospel" is also the purpose of the Fourth Gospel as a whole is a question that is beyond the scope of Fortna's work, though he believes that his characterization of the source does not rule out the possibility that "John may have had a similar purpose (among others)" to that of the "Signs Gospel" (*ibid.*, 234, n. 1).⁽⁸⁾ It has been left to other scholars to show, though independently of Fortna's work, that the Fourth Gospel could have a destination and purpose very similar to that which Fortna believes the "Signs Gospel" to have had. Among these particular mention must be made of J.A.T. Robinson and W.C. Van Unnik.

These two scholars were not the first to propose, at least in more recent times, that the Fourth Gospel was addressed to Jews in an attempt to convert them. That honour goes to K. Bornhäuser who elaborated this theory in his book, Das Johannesevangelium, eine Missionsschrift für Israel (1928). But

his arguments did not win much support and as a consequence the theory itself was not given a great deal of attention. However Bornhäuser's theory, if not all of his arguments, has been revived by the two scholars mentioned.⁽⁹⁾ It is to their views that we must now turn our attention.

(B) W.C. Van Unnik and J.A.T. Robinson

(1) An Outline of their Theories and Arguments

(a) Van Unnik, after having discussed what he considered to be the important evidence, concluded that "the purpose of the Fourth Gospel was to bring the visitors of a synagogue in the diaspora (Jews and God-fearers) to belief in Jesus as the Messiah of Israel." In his view, therefore, the Fourth Gospel was primarily "a missionary book for the Jews" who still had to be won over (op. cit., 195).

This author begins his argument by drawing attention to the importance that must be attached to the evangelist's own statement of his purpose in 20:30-31. In his discussion of the various elements of this statement Van Unnik pays particular attention to the way in which the Fourth Gospel understands and uses the term "Christ" (ibid., 174,ff). He attempts to show that "Christ" is not merely a name for Jesus but rather a meaningful title, and one that is used in the same way throughout the whole of the Gospel except in 1:17 and 17:3. Because "Christ" (or "the Anointed One", as Van Unnik would prefer to translate it) is no more than a translation of "Messiah" this author believes that it is a title which "brings us into the Jewish sphere" (ibid., 175) since this is a concept that the Jews alone would have understood. As he says, "To the Greeks it was quite unintelligible" (ibid., 176). This argument, Van Unnik claims, seems to be "a strong indication that the gospel has something to do with Jews or Jewish Christians to whom the title 'the Anointed One' was important" (ibid.).

In the pages which follow (ibid., 177,ff) Van Unnik takes up W. Bauer's contention that no importance should be attached to "Messiah" and "the king of the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel since John is merely heaping upon Jesus all the titles that were current in the Christian Church of his day. According to Bauer, John was not thinking in Jewish categories because by that stage the Church had broken away from Judaism. This contention leads Van Unnik to examine the way in which the theme of kingship is handled in the Fourth Gospel and its relationship to that of "Messiah". His analysis leads him to conclude that "although the nationalistic Messianism is not

shared by John, he stands on the ground of Jewish messianic belief" (ibid., 180). In other words, like the term "Messiah", "the king of the Jews" would have been meaningful only to the Jews.

After discussing the evidence of the Acts of the Apostles, Hegesippus, and the Dialogue of Justin Martyr that can be used in support of the view that the phrase "that Jesus is the Christ" is one that "has its roots in the Christian mission among the Jews" (ibid., 182; see also 180-183) and the value of the theme of "witness" and the "signs" for proving Jesus' Messiahship (ibid., 184-188), Van Unnik turns his attention to the other element of the evangelist's stated purpose in writing his gospel, namely the term "Son of God" (ibid., 189). He argues that it is a separate title and one that points to the divinity of Christ (cf. 5:18, 10:33,ff).

Van Unnik's final argument that the Fourth Gospel was addressed to Jews is centred on the background of the gospel. He writes: "Who else in the Roman world could be interested in the question whether the Messiah had appeared in Jesus of Nazareth except Jews or people very strongly attached to Judaism, the "God-fearers" of the synagogues? The whole background of this gospel is packed with Palestinian stories and conceptions; it smells of the soil of Palestine." (ibid., 191). At the same time, however, he notes that there is also in the gospel "much that is strange to Palestine". This leads him to discuss the particular situation for which the Fourth Gospel was written. This he sees to be "the synagogue where Christians come with their message", a fact which he believes to be corroborated by the gospel's interest in the synagogue as such. However, "the synagogue with which John had relations did not exist in Palestine, but in the Diaspora" (ibid., 192), a conclusion which Van Unnik reaches on the grounds that (i) the evangelist explains various 'Palestinian' customs, (ii) his language contains not only semitic elements but also some "typically Greek expressions", and (iii) his interest in the "scattered ones". If the synagogue in question is not to be situated in Palestine, then where was it? Van Unnik believes that we must seek the answer to this question in the gospel's references to Jesus' going to "the dispersion of the Greeks" (ibid., 193). In his view this reference can only be explained in the light of the evangelist's special interest in that part of the world. This interest can also be seen in the reference to "the Greeks" at the feast (12:20).

Thus it is that Van Unnik comes to the conclusion that the Fourth Gospel was a book used by Christians in a synagogue in the Diaspora of the Greeks

with the purpose of winning over the Jews to belief in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God.

(b) Robinson, who readily acknowledges that his position is substantially the same as that of Van Unnik (op. cit., 108), believes that the Fourth Gospel in its present form is "an appeal to those outside the Church, to win to the faith that Greek-speaking Diaspora Judaism to which the author now finds himself belonging as a result (we may surmise) of the greatest dispersion of all, which has swept from Judaea Church and Synagogue alike. His overmastering concern is that 'the great refusal' made by his countrymen at home should not be repeated by those other sheep of God's flock among whom he has now found refuge" (ibid., 125; underlined words appear in italics in the text).

Robinson begins his argument with a consideration of the statement that St John's Gospel is the most anti-Jewish of the four. While he admits that there are undoubtedly anti-Jewish elements in the gospel, he warns against assuming, for this reason alone, that the Fourth Gospel should therefore be considered to be pro-Gentile. He himself believes with J.B. Lightfoot that this gospel 'is the most Hebraic book in the New Testament, except perhaps the Apocalypse'.

In support of this contention Robinson argues first of all that Judaism is not condemned "from without" but "from within". Further, not only is Jesus portrayed as a Jew in the Fourth Gospel; "the world of the Gospel narrative is wholly a Jewish world" (ibid., 109). Unlike the Synoptics where the centre of the stage is also occupied by the Jews but where "we are conscious always of the Gentiles pressing in on the wings" (ibid., 110), 'the Gentiles' get practically no mention at all in the Fourth Gospel. The term itself does not appear, there are no Gentile witnesses to Jesus, nor is there any mention of a mission among or an appeal to the Gentiles in spite of the frequent use of the term κόσμος (cf. e.g., 1:29, 3:17, 7:4, etc.).⁽¹⁰⁾ The only Gentile to be mentioned in the Gospel is Pilate and he was "hardly the figure by whom to commend the Gospel to the Gentiles" (ibid., 109).⁽¹¹⁾

Robinson argues that, unlike Paul, John is not concerned with the relation between Jew and Gentile, but rather with "the relation of Judaism to the true Israel, the true vine - and that means, for him, to Jesus as the Christ. For to John the only true Judaism is the one that acknowledges Jesus as its Messiah. Becoming a true Jew and becoming a Christian are one and the same

thing" (ibid., 113). Following Van Unnik's lead, Robinson pays attention to the meaning to be given to the terms "Christ" and "Son of God" in this context. Further, the Old Testament images which Jesus uses to describe himself - the Manna (6:32-35), the Light (8:1), the Shepherd (10:11-16), the Vine (15:1-6) - all "represent him in his person as the true Israel of God" (ibid., 114). These considerations lead Robinson to discuss what he believes is the problem which John set out to answer, namely, how can a Jew believe in Jesus while remaining loyal to his traditional faith.

Because of the absence of any evidence of interest in the Gentiles, Robinson suggests that "the Heimat of the Johannine tradition, and the milieu in which it took shape, was the heart of southern Palestinian Judaism" (ibid., 116). Thus in his view "John's is essentially an Aramaic-speaking background". But in spite of this Robinson believes that the Gospel is for a Greek-speaking public; to be precise, for a Jewish Greek-speaking public. He arrives at this conclusion after an examination of the references to "the Greeks" in the Fourth Gospel. He argues that the phrase "the diaspora of the Greeks" in 7:35 means nothing other than "the Jews of the Greek Diaspora". "The ^{Ελληνας} are for him the Greek-speaking Jews living outside Palestine" (ibid., 116,f). For Robinson, therefore, the division in the Fourth Gospel is not between Jews and Gentiles but rather between "Jews" (i.e. the Jews of Palestine) and "Greeks" (i.e. the Jews of the Greek Diaspora). It is this division which contains the clue to the evangelist's purpose in writing his gospel. In itself it is an indication of the tension that existed within Judaism itself, and the pejorative use of the term "the Jews" should be seen in this context as referring to Palestinian Judaism (ibid., 118). Now, because the gospel must be seen as addressed to Jews and Palestinian Judaism as rejecting Jesus, it is logical to assume, in Robinson's opinion, that it must have been directed at the Judaism of the Diaspora. In support of this argument Robinson appeals to 11:51,f., where we read: "He (Caiaphas) did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad." He believes that "nation" (ἔθνος) refers to "metropolitan Judaism" and "the children of God (τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ) who are scattered abroad" refers to the Jews of the Diaspora. He also argues that the "other sheep that are not of this fold" but which must be gathered in by the Good Shepherd (10:16) is a reference to the Jews of the Diaspora. In similar fashion does he interpret the phrase, "that they may be one" which recurs in chapter 17 (ibid., 120,f).

Finally, those aspects of the Fourth Gospel that could perhaps be used to undermine his theory, namely, the explanation of various Jewish titles and

customs by the evangelist, Robinson explains either as Aramaic-speaking Judaism being interpreted for "those who know nothing of its language and ethos" or as an attempt by the evangelist to exploit as fully as possible every detail that could be significant in showing Jesus as the true fulfilment of Judaism (ibid., 123).

(2) Evaluation of the Evidence

It would be impossible in a general discussion of this nature to examine each and every argument which Van Unnik and Robinson use to prove their theory. Some of the material used by them we have discussed and evaluated elsewhere, in different contexts. We shall therefore, concentrate on those aspects that appear to be of vital importance to their theory and on which the rest of their argument is built.

The new element that this theory introduces into our investigation of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose is its attempt to prove that this gospel was addressed to the Jews of the Diaspora. These authors believe that it is possible to understand the gospel as a whole in the light of this contention. The important point, therefore, is whether or not the evidence brought forward in support of this destination is convincing. It is to this that we must first turn our attention. This evidence is primarily centred on certain specific texts in the gospel, the more important of which we shall now discuss.

- (a) "The Jews said to one another, 'Where does this man intend to go that we shall not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?' (7:35).

Robinson (ibid., 112, n. 7) believes that the phrase, "the Dispersion among the Greeks" (ἡ Διασπορά τῶν Ἑλλήνων) is ambiguous. It could mean, he says, 'the Greek-speaking Diaspora', (i.e. the Jews); in this case 'the Greeks' of the second part of the verse would be an abbreviated way of referring to the same group. Or, it could mean the 'Diaspora resident among the Greeks', in which case, he says, 'the Greeks' would be Gentiles. Because of the lack of conclusive evidence of the meaning intended, Robinson believes that "the decision between them can in fact only be made in the light of the Johannine context as a whole".⁽¹²⁾

The final comment of Robinson just quoted absolves him, in his own eyes, of any need to justify his preference for the former interpretation of "the dispersion among the Greeks" on contextual grounds. However, the context

of the verse does appear to weigh against Robinson's interpretation. After all, as Brown (John, 314) points out, what would have been the point of these Jerusalem Jews suggesting to Jesus that he should rather go off to some other Jews who happened to speak a different language. There is nothing to indicate that he would have got a better reception from them. If, on the other hand, one accepts that the Jews were suggesting to Jesus that he should go and teach the Gentiles such an interpretation would capture both the irony and the disdain of the question which the context seems to suggest was intended.

(b) "Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks" (12:20).

As we have seen, Van Unnik (op. cit., 193) believes that "the Greeks" in question were "Greek pilgrims, Jews or at least very much interested in Judaism". Robinson (op. cit., 111,f) unhesitatingly accepts that "they are Greek-speaking Jews". He believes that "there is no suggestion that they are merely 'God-fearers' or even that they had once been Gentiles". In adopting this interpretation these two authors find themselves in the minority since most scholars are of the opinion that these "Greeks" were non-Jews.⁽¹³⁾

It seems that both Robinson and Van Unnik, on the assumption that "Greeks" in 7:35 refers to Jews, feel that they are entitled to make the same conclusion in this instance. This, of course, is no more justified here than it was in 7:35. There is absolutely nothing in the context to suggest that the "Greeks" at the feast were "Jews". Van Unnik notes, it is true, that special attention is given to Philip in this episode who, together with Andrew, are the only two disciples bearing Greek names. "It is he (Philip) who brings the Greeks to Jesus" (op. cit., 194).⁽¹⁴⁾ This leads Van Unnik to speculate whether perhaps the readers of the Fourth Gospel might have had close relations with him. Clearly, even if this might have been the case, such an argument does not tell us anything at all about the identity of "the Greeks" for even if they had been Gentiles there is no reason why they too could not have a special relation with Philip, as proposed by Van Unnik.

(c) We have noted above the way in which Robinson in particular uses 10:16, 11:15,f., and 17:11,21, etc., to bolster his argument that the Fourth Gospel was written for Greek-speaking Jews of the Diaspora. Again, however, these verses by no means indicate this. Rather it is a question of Robinson,

working on the hypothesis that the Fourth Gospel was written for Jews of the Diaspora, then sets about interpreting these verses in such a way as to make them fit in with that hypothesis.

A general criticism, therefore, of the attempts of Van Unnik and Robinson at establishing the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel is that they appear to start with the hypothesis that the gospel was written for Jews of the diaspora in an effort to win them over. Then they attempt to fit the evidence into the framework of that hypothesis.

What both authors appear to have overlooked, however, is that it is possible to explain the evidence they bring forward in other ways and probably even more satisfactorily. For example, granting for the sake of argument, that the Fourth Gospel contains much that would have been intelligible and of interest to Jews alone⁽¹⁵⁾ these two authors have not shown why the Fourth Gospel could not have been written for Christian Jews in the Diaspora as opposed to unbelieving Jews. It seems to me, and this is a point to which we shall return in the next chapter, that there is much in this gospel that makes sense only if it is seen as being addressed to believers. In our discussion of the sacramental polemic theory, for example, we saw there that the evangelist seems to presume that his readers are already familiar with certain basic facts about the sacraments. Further, even Van Unnik (op. cit., 195) is forced to concede that perhaps John 13-17 were written for Christians. There is very little doubt that these chapters are centred around the question of the believer's relation to Christ and to the world and to one another, and that it is not possible to interpret them in terms of a missionary purpose for the gospel. Since these chapters form a substantial part of the gospel they cannot be overlooked.

Robinson himself comes very close to the truth about the Fourth Gospel, and in so doing undermines his own position, when he states (op. cit., 113) that for John "the simple question is the relation of Judaism to the true Israel, the true vine - and that means, for him, to Jesus as the Christ. For to John the only true Judaism is one that acknowledges Jesus as its Messiah. Becoming a true Jew and becoming a Christian are one and the same thing." Clearly, therefore, the real division should be between those who are the "true" Jews and those who are not. This is a division which surely must transcend purely geographical boundaries as is implied by the terms "metropolitan Judaism" and "diaspora Judaism" (op. cit., 118).⁽¹⁶⁾

It can, in fact, be argued against Robinson that his division of Judaism into these two clear-cut categories is somewhat arbitrary. H. Marshall, for

example, in his article, "Palestinian and Hellenistic Christianity : Some Critical Comments" notes how difficult it is to make a hard and fast distinction between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism. In his opinion "the distinction between Aramaic-speaking and Greek-speaking Jews was a fluid one" (op. cit., 279). Whatever might be the merits of this view, it must be accepted as being most unlikely that the two groups referred to by Robinson were so separate and cut off from each other that it would have been necessary to explain those aspects of "Aramaic-speaking Judaism" and the other Jewish customs to which Robinson refers (op. cit., 123).⁽¹⁷⁾ Further, and this to my mind is a very important point which neither Van Unnik nor Robinson adequately explains, the Fourth Gospel makes it very clear that even within what Robinson calls "metropolitan Judaism" there were in addition to those who did not believe in Jesus, those who did believe.⁽¹⁸⁾

Finally, when Van Unnik (op. cit., 191) says that "the way in which John formulated his purpose brings us into the sphere of the synagogue where Christians come with their message" he fails to take into account the references in the Fourth Gospel to the question of exclusion from the synagogue (9:22, 12:42, and 16:2). He also appears to be unaware of the introduction of the Birkath-ha-Minim into the Shemoneh Eshreh in approximately 90 A.D. If this development made it very difficult for believers even to attend the synagogue, it certainly meant that they would never have been allowed openly to preach belief in Jesus in the synagogue itself, as Van Unnik seems to presume, for the profession of such belief would have resulted not only in exclusion from the synagogue but also from Judaism itself.⁽¹⁹⁾

(3) Conclusion

There is much in the arguments of Van Unnik and Robinson concerning the nature of the contents of the Fourth Gospel with which we could agree, e.g. the meaning to be attached to the terms, "Christ" and "Son of God", the place of anti-Jewish elements, etc. However, these authors are far from convincing when it comes to the question of the destination of the gospel. Their arguments here are, for the most part, nothing but conjectures, while at the same time they fail to take into account other important aspects of the gospel.

II. THE GENTILES

(A) Introduction

The previous section of this chapter concentrated on those theories which suggest that the Fourth Gospel was written with a view to converting the Jews. Other scholars have, however, proposed that this gospel was addressed not to Jews but to a Gentile audience.⁽²⁰⁾ In their view the evangelist set out to explain and interpret Christianity in a way meaningful and intelligible to such an audience. Thus, in an attempt to win these people over to Christianity it is suggested that the fourth evangelist used current religious and philosophical terms and concepts with which the Gentiles would have been familiar. E.F. Scott (The Fourth Gospel, 6) elaborates the point as follows: "In order that the religion might naturalise itself in the larger Gentile world to which, since the days of Paul, it had chiefly appealed, it required to find expression in the Hellenistic modes of thought.... The writer of the Fourth Gospel, not content with employing a Greek idea here and there, attempts an entire re-statement of the Christian message in terms of current philosophy".

The scholar who has pursued this approach the most thoroughly is undoubtedly C.H. Dodd. In his book The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel he writes that this gospel was "addressed to a wide public consisting primarily of devout and thoughtful persons (for the thoughtless and religiously indifferent would never trouble to open such a book as this) in the varied and cosmopolitan society of a great Hellenistic city such as Ephesus under the Roman Empire". Dodd (ibid., 8) believes that it is a non-Christian public to whom the evangelist wishes to address his appeal. He does not, of course rule out that Christian readers would also have made great use of this gospel. On the contrary, a Christian, after his conversion and having become familiar with the life and beliefs of the Church, would "find in it vastly more than had been obvious at a first reading".⁽²¹⁾

In the first part of his book Dodd examines the Hermetic literature, the writings of Philo of Alexandria, Rabbinic Judaism, Gnosticism and Mandaism in order to see whether it is possible to establish a common background of thought and language between any of them and the Fourth Gospel, and whether it is likely that they could have influenced the way in which this gospel was composed.

Following Dodd we shall, in this section, discuss the evidence for

possible affinities between the Fourth Gospel and the Hermetic literature and the writings of Philo.⁽²²⁾ However, because it has sometimes been claimed that there are also affinities between Greek Philosophy and the Mystery Religions and the Fourth Gospel we shall also include a brief discussion of these in our inquiry.

(B) The Evidence

(1) Greek Philosophy⁽²³⁾

It has been claimed that traces of Platonism and Stoicism in particular have been found in the Fourth Gospel. Hence a brief word is necessary on each of these.

(a) Among other things Plato is famous for the theory of ideas which he developed. According to this theory there are two general categories of objects, viz., those that can be perceived by the senses, and objects of thought ("ideas"). For example, a person sees one particular triangle that has a specific size and shape out of a possibly infinite number of triangles. This means that the object perceived by the senses is both limited and imperfect. It is limited in that it is only one of many similar objects that is perceived; it is imperfect in that it is subject to change. But in addition to what is perceived by the senses the individual also possesses an "idea" of a triangle. This "idea" is considered to be both perfect and immutable in that it covers all possible triangles. According to Plato, therefore, objects that are perceived by the senses are less perfect than the "idea" that a person has of that object. Hence greater reality must be attributed to the world of ideas than to the world of sensory objects. The latter is, in fact, no more than a reflection of the former. Thus in the search for true reality one must go beyond sensory data.

When we turn to the Fourth Gospel we find Jesus at times emphasizing that that which the people perceive is not the "true" reality; rather does it point to something else. By way of example we may refer to the following:

- (i) In Chapter 4 we see Jesus discussing the relative merits of natural water and the water that he gives, water that wells up to eternal life.
- (ii) In Chapter 6:25, ff. he compares the manna given in the

wilderness with the "true bread from heaven" (Τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸν ἀληθινόν). Unlike the manna, this "bread" gives life to the world.

(iii) In Chapter 11:25 Jesus tells Martha that "he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live." Here the contrast is between ordinary human existence and "eternal" life.⁽²⁴⁾

(iv) Finally, it is possible to see Platonic influence in the fourth evangelist's use of contrast between that which is "above" and what is "of the earth" (3:31), and between the "spirit" and the "flesh" (3:6, 6:63).

(b) As far as Stoicism is concerned, the Fourth Gospel's closest contact with it is supposed to be in the use it makes of the concept Λόγος. In the Stoic system the Λόγος represented a divine reason that was immanent in the world as a whole, i.e. in both nature and man. It was considered to be the creative source of the unity and perfection that existed in the world. For this reason it was referred to as Λόγος σπερματικός. Because its task was to regulate all things it came to be identified with Fate.⁽²⁵⁾

(2) Hellenistic Judaism : Philo of Alexandria⁽²⁶⁾

Philo of Alexandria (ca 20 B.C. - 49 A.D.) was a contemporary of Christ. He set out to reconcile the faith of Israel and the tenets of Greek Philosophy; as Wilson (op. cit., 36) puts it : "Philo seeks to show that Judaism, so far from being merely a vain superstition, is not incompatible with philosophy, but in fact embraces all that is best in philosophy - if it be approached in the proper way." This he attempted to demonstrate mainly by expounding and interpreting in an allegorical fashion the writings of the Old Testament.⁽²⁷⁾ Howard (St John, 452) tells us that "this Alexandrian Jew was a prolific author whose books were for the most part allegorical expositions of the Pentateuch, in which the thoughts of Moses were interpreted according to Platonic or Stoic teaching. Others were either philosophical dialogues or apologetic works."⁽²⁸⁾

C.H. Dodd (Interpretation, 73) is of the opinion that "whatever other elements of thought may enter into the background of the Fourth Gospel, it certainly presupposes a range of ideas having a remarkable resemblance to those of Hellenistic Judaism as represented by Philo." The more

important of these resemblances may be briefly summarized as follows:

(a) The most frequently noted resemblance is the use of $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ by the Fourth Gospel and Philo. While it is confined to the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel it is to be found about 1300 times in the writings of Philo. It appears that he gives to the term a wide variety of meanings which make it difficult to give a full and yet consistent description of what he understood by the term. Howard (St John, 453) sums up the main points of Philo's teachings concerning the Logos thus: "The Logos is both the reason and the word of God; the intermediary acting in the creation of the visible world; the image of God through whom the whole universe was framed; the revealer of God who enlightens men, distributes his gifts to them, and sustains their spiritual life; the high priestly mediator and intercessor (Paraclete) for men with the Father of the world."⁽²⁹⁾

One further point that should be noted at this stage is that Philo's concept of the Logos has been influenced to some extent by the Wisdom Literature with which Philo would have been very familiar, living, as he was, in Alexandria.⁽³⁰⁾

Having outlined the nature of Philo's Logos Dodd then sets out to establish the extent of the parallelism between Philo and the Fourth Gospel which he describes as "remarkable".⁽³¹⁾ While it is true that the term Logos only appears in the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel, Dodd (ibid., 279) is of the opinion that "the substance of a Logos-doctrine similar to that of Philo is present all through the gospel, and that the use of the actual term $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ in the Prologue, in a sense corresponding to that doctrine, though it is unparalleled in the rest of the gospel, falls readily into place."

While the possible affinity between the Fourth Gospel's and Philo's use of Logos is certainly the best known, it is not the only one.

(b) Dodd (ibid., 55) believes that there is "a real affinity" between the fourth evangelist and Philo in their use of symbolism. "There is", he says, "an important range of symbolism common to both." In this context he refers to the use that both authors make of "light" "as a symbol of Deity in His relation to man and the world"; the "symbolism centred in the idea of God as the Fountain from which life-giving water streams"; and the symbolic use of the "shepherd" image". Dodd (ibid.,

57) concludes this discussion with the important observation that "all these symbols have warrant in the Old Testament, and this will be found to be true generally of the symbolism both of Philo and of the Fourth Gospel."

(c) Dodd (ibid., 58-66) also sees some similarities in the approach of the fourth evangelist and of Philo to the question of knowledge of God. For both "to know God is the chief end of man and his highest blessedness" (ibid., 58). According to the fourth evangelist the "way" to this knowledge is Jesus himself (14:5,f) whereas for Philo it is wisdom or philosophy. This does not mean that Philo believes that a man comes to a knowledge of God through the workings of the human intellect alone. Rather, he believes that God revealed himself particularly to the prophets, the greatest of which was Moses whose writings are to be found in the Pentateuch. In his search for God man makes use of this revealed knowledge.

Two other aspects of this knowledge that both Philo and the fourth evangelist stress are faith and love. Knowledge of God results in a man becoming a "son of God" not in a literal sense but at most by adoption, according to Philo; similarly, to know God is "eternal life" - an idea developed by both Philo and the fourth evangelist. In the course of his discussion Dodd shows that the source of many of the ideas listed above can be found in the writings of the Old Testament.

(d) Bernard (op. cit.) has also drawn attention to certain similarities between Philo and the Fourth Gospel; for example,

(i) In Jn 4:23 we read: "But the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him." In Philo (Quod Deterius Potiori insidiari solet, 7) we find the words, "Genuine religious services are those of a soul offering the plain and only sacrifice; viz. truth" (Bernard, ibid., I, 149).

(ii) Jn 5:19 tells us that the Son cannot do anything except what He sees the Father doing. Philo, on the other hand, speaks of the πρεσβύτατος υἱός or πρωτόγονος as one "who imitated the ways of the Father and, seeing archetypal patterns, formed certain species" (De Confusione Linguarum, 14, quoted in Bernard, ibid., I, 239).

(iii) As in the case of Jn 15:15 Philo similarly distinguishes the φίλοι of God from his δούλοι . (cf. Bernard, ibid., II, 487).

(iv) While many Jewish commentators developed the idea that manna was a symbol of heavenly food Philo alone, it seems, compares it to the θεῖος λόγος . This comparison could conceivably have had some influence on the saying found in Jn 6:35: ἐγὼ εἰμὶ ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς (cf. Bernard, ibid., I, 196,f).

(3) Hermeticism⁽³²⁾

Some scholars ⁽³³⁾ have searched the pages of the Hermetic literature for evidence of possible influence on the Fourth Gospel. These writings, frequently referred to collectively as the "Hermetica" or the "Corpus Hermeticum", consist of a series of tractates or libelli, written by different authors, that deal not only with religious and philosophical questions but also with astrology, magic or alchemy.⁽³⁴⁾ Scott (op. cit., 8) writes as follows about the overall nature of this literature: "There is no one system of Hermetic philosophy or theology, no one body of fixed dogmas; each of these numerous writers had his own manner of thinking, and looked at things from his own point of view; and there are wide differences between the teaching of one libellus and that of another. But underlying all these differences there is a certain general similarity, such as would naturally result from similar training and a common environment." Thus they all show points of contact with Greek Philosophy, especially Platonism and Stoicism,⁽³⁵⁾ while there is also some evidence of contact with Judaism.⁽³⁶⁾ Most of the tractates are in the form of dialogues in which various "revelations" are given usually by Hermes Trismegistus. While there seems to be no doubt that they are Egyptian in origin these libelli were nevertheless written in Greek.⁽³⁷⁾

It seems more than likely that these tractates, as we know them, were written in the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D.⁽³⁸⁾ It is most probable, therefore, that in this form they began to be circulated after the appearance of the Fourth Gospel. This fact has led some scholars to enquire whether it is possible to uncover traces of Christian influence in these writings. As far as the Fourth Gospel is concerned, the two tractates that provide the closest similarities to the language of this gospel are the first, "Poimandres", and the thirteenth, Περὶ Παλιγγενεσίας . While it cannot be doubted that the Genesis account of creation has influenced the author of "Poimandres", Dodd (Interpretation, 33) agrees "with Reitzenstein and Scott that there is no sufficient reason for suspecting any Christian influence."

While Dodd (op. cit., 52) is unwilling to admit that there is evidence of Christian influence in Περὶ Παλιγγενεσίας, he does not rule out this possibility. F.M. Braun (op. cit., 290) believes that we are entitled to think that Asclepius, another Hermetic work, was composed in a milieu that had already been penetrated by Christian influences and in which the Fourth Gospel had been exploited by the Gnostics. In fact, he believes that there are indications that this work was anti-Christian in purpose. However the apologetic motive, he notes, appears to be absent from Poimandres. Hence what might be true of Asclepius cannot be applied to Poimandres as the nature of each work is so different.

As a general conclusion, therefore, it can be stated that those tractates that concern us here (I and XIII), while they may have received their written form after the publication of the Fourth Gospel, do not show signs of having been influenced by this work. In the case of Poimandres it is clear that the author has, in part, used material that pre-existed the Fourth Gospel, namely, the Septuagint. Further, there is no intrinsic reason why other material in the Corpus Hermeticum could not have been in existence prior to the Fourth Gospel, even if only in an embryonic form. On this point Dodd (op. cit., 12) writes: "Most of these writings are probably later in date than the Fourth Gospel, though the earliest of them may not be very much later. But the type of religious thought they represent can be traced to an earlier period. In particular, its essentials seem to be presupposed in Philo, for while the non-Hebraic strain in Philo's thought often recalls the Hermetica quite strikingly, I can find no grounds for concluding that they were directly influenced by Philo."

It is now time to turn our attention to the two tractates which, as I have already mentioned, show the closest affinities to the Fourth Gospel. These are Poimandres (I) and Περὶ Παλιγγενεσίας (XIII).

(a) Poimandres

The first part of this tractate attempts to explain how the world came to be, and the origin and nature of man. Poimandres, "the Mind (Nous) of the Absolute" (2) undertakes to do this by means of a revelation. This revelation is followed by an explanation of how man can ascend to the Father. Once this revelation has been completed the author himself goes out to enlighten other men. Some accept him and these he instructs, but others reject him thereby giving themselves up to death.⁽³⁹⁾

The similarities between Poimandres and the Fourth Gospel that some scholars claim to have uncovered can be grouped under two headings, namely, "verbal" and "thematic".

(i) Verbal Affinities

Dodd believes that "there is an unmistakable 'Johannine' ring (if we may put it so) about much of the language" of Poimandres. In support of this contention he provides a list of "the more striking parallels to the Fourth Gospel" (Interpretation, 33).⁽⁴⁰⁾

(ii) Thematic Affinities

1. Perhaps the most striking similarity, on the thematic level, between Poimandres and the Fourth Gospel concerns the use of the term $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$. It is true that much of what Poimandres has to say about the $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ could find an echo in the Genesis account of creation. As Dodd (Interpretation, 41) puts it: "Its appearance in the creation myth of the Poimandres is probably due to the Jewish doctrine of the creative word of the Lord, since the Hermetist is here following the myth of Genesis as interpreted in Jewish-Hellenistic exegesis." However the $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ of Poimandres does appear at times to be described in terms closer to the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel than to Genesis. For example, the $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ of Poimandres is said to be "luminous" ($\phi\omega\tau\epsilon\iota\nu\omicron\varsigma$; 6) (compare Jn 1:4); it is also called $\psi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ (6) (compare Jn 1:18); by his $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ God "has constituted what exists" (31) (compare Jn 1:3).⁽⁴¹⁾

2. Poimandres (12, ff) tells us that "the Father of all, the Nous, who is life and light, bore a Man ($\text{\AA}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$) who was like him, whom he loved as his own child." God handed over to Man all his creatures. Man was not satisfied with this as "he himself also wanted to create, and his Father allowed him." As a result of this he descended into the created sphere and came to be united with Nature. Poimandres (15) concludes: "That is why man, unlike all the living things on earth, is twofold: mortal because of the body, immortal because of the essential Man ($\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\omega\delta\eta\varsigma$ $\text{\AA}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$)".

While at times it is difficult to obtain a clear picture of $\text{\AA}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ as understood by Poimandres, Dodd (Interpretation, 43, f) nevertheless believes that the expression $\delta\ \psi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ $\text{\AA}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\upsilon$ as used in the Fourth Gospel "bears some sort of relation to the $\text{\AA}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ of Poimandres. The Son of Man is God's Son, beloved by His Father, and like Him; He is the light of the world and the life of men; He descends $\epsilon\kappa$ $\tau\omega\nu$ $\text{\AA}\nu\omega$, and takes on a material body. He ascends again to His Father, and those who

are united with Him have knowledge of God and enter into life and light. The differences are obvious and will be discussed later, but it is surely clear at least that the Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel has more affinity with the Ἄνθρωπος of Poimandres than with the Son of Man of Jewish Apocalyptic."

3. It has already been noted that an important element in the Hermetics is the role played by "revelation". Closely associated with this is the concept γνώσις and the significance to be attached to the acquiring of the same. This is also an important concept in the Fourth Gospel though the noun itself is not used by the evangelist.⁽⁴²⁾

(b) Περὶ Πάλινγενεσίας (C.H. XIII)

As the title itself indicates, this tractate deals with the question of rebirth. It takes the form of a dialogue between Hermes and his son, Tat. According to Dodd (Interpretation, 44) there are indications in the text that this tractate "is dependent on the Poimandres, and is intended to supplement its teaching."

When a man becomes divine it is because he has been born again. Tat asks Hermes from what womb a man can be born again, and from what seed. It is explained to him that in this rebirth the father is the will of God, the womb is wisdom, the seed is the real Good and the offspring is a god, a child of God. Even though he himself has been reborn he cannot explain the process to Tat. However it falls to Hermes to assist Tat to experience the same rebirth through which he himself has passed. To be born again a man must cleanse himself from "the irrational torments of matter". As each of these "torments", which include ignorance, grief, lust, incontinence, injustice, etc., is expelled it is replaced by the power of God which is the opposite of the particular "torment" that has been expelled. These "powers" together constitute the Logos within man. This Logos constitutes a new organism within the reborn man that is divine. Once this stage has been reached the process of rebirth is completed and the reborn man is fit to worship God διὰ τοῦ λόγου (i.e. through the divine powers within him - Dodd, Interpretation, 48).

The passage of the Fourth Gospel that most readily springs to mind when one seeks similarities between it and Tractate XIII is the discussion between Jesus and Nicodemus on the question of rebirth (Jn 3). However the similarities between the two are not limited to this chapter of the

Fourth Gospel. Dodd (Interpretation, 50,f) provides a list of these as also does Braun (op. cit., 295).

Conclusion

Our brief review of the important Hermetic literature in so far as the Fourth Gospel is concerned has shown that there are certain verbal affinities or similarities between the two as well as a degree of similarity in their respective approaches to some themes, especially those of λόγος, υἱὸς τοῦ ἄνθρωπου / ἄνθρωπος and rebirth. The question, however, about which scholars are likely to disagree is the extent of the similarities and the ultimate source of the language and concepts used.

(4) The Mystery Religions⁽⁴³⁾

To complete our review of the religious background of the Gentile world in the light of which the Fourth Gospel could have been composed it is now necessary to add a brief note on the so-called "Mystery Religions". Like "Gnosis" and "Gnostic Systems" this term covers a wide variety of groups. However as Barrett notes (St John, 30) they were all alike in certain particulars. "Each rested on a myth, a tale of the Saviour God, which generally included his death and resurrection; each offered a means of initiation by which the neophyte was numbered among the servants of his Lord, a sacrament or sacraments by which the participant was infused with the divine life, and so assured that after his death he would successfully pass through the astral powers and win immortality in union with God." Among these mystery religions mention may be made of the cult of Attis (Asia Minor), the cult of Isis and Osiris (Egyptian), the cult of Adonis (Syrian), and Mithraism, even though this latter cult does not fulfil all the conditions laid down by Barrett. Mithraism, originally a Persian cult, was taken over by the Roman army. Thus women were excluded from membership. Further, it did not claim to offer salvation.⁽⁴⁴⁾

That there appears to be a degree of parallelism between the beliefs of the "Mystery Religions" and the Fourth Gospel is apparent. This parallelism centres around the figure of the Saviour-god and his death and resurrection, the rites of initiation (cf. Jn 3) and of communion with the god through a sacramental meal and resulting in immortality (cf. Jn 6). The extent of the parallelism existing between the Fourth Gospel and the "Mystery Religions" can, however, be only accurately assessed when seen in the light of the differences between them. Unlike the mythological saviour-god of the "Mystery Religions" the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel "had lived,

and very recently, a real human life" (Barrett, op. cit., 31). While it is possible to argue that there is a considerable amount of sacramental teaching in the Fourth Gospel ⁽⁴⁵⁾ the evangelist's references are of an indirect nature in that he does not refer to the institution of the sacraments nor does he refer to them by name. Finally, it should be noted that the fourth evangelist does not use the term μυστήριον. ⁽⁴⁶⁾

(C) Evaluation of the Evidence

In evaluating the evidence for a possible relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the literature discussed above it is not merely sufficient to establish that there might be verbal or thematic similarities between them. What must also be taken into account is the possibility that both might have drawn upon a common source for their ideas. Alternatively, it is possible that other bodies of literature might also share the similarities in question. If it can be shown that this is the case then it is incumbent upon those who propose the approach we have been discussing in this section to show that the fourth evangelist was influenced by the literature in question and not by other writings. Bearing this point in mind we may now proceed to evaluate the evidence.

(1) Greek Philosophy

That the fourth evangelist borrowed directly from Greek Philosophy in general and from Platonism and Stoicism in particular is highly doubtful. Ideas such as those that were discussed under the heading of "Greek Philosophy" had already penetrated Judaism itself. Hence if it is possible to demonstrate a similarity between some of the ideas to be found in the Fourth Gospel and in Greek Philosophy it is more than probable that the evangelist acquired his knowledge of these through Judaism. ⁽⁴⁷⁾

(2) Hermeticism

Any evaluation of the Hermetic Literature must take into account the dates when these tractates received the form in which they are known to us. It is generally agreed, as we have seen, that the greater part of this literature, at least, is to be situated in the second and third centuries. A dating as late as this obviously rules out any direct borrowing from them by the fourth evangelist. But, as in the case of the Gnostic literature, the Hermetica undoubtedly represents and reflects a developed stage of a movement whose ideas must have been in circulation before they received the written form which we have inherited. The crux of the problem, therefore, is whether the fourth evangelist could have been

influenced by ideas originating among or popularized by the Hermetists, ideas which were current when he composed his gospel. It is the ideas in the tractates I and XIII that concern us for, as we saw, it is these that bear the closest resemblances to parts of the Fourth Gospel.

It seems to me that the Corpus Hermeticum has very little light to shed on the purpose and destination of the Fourth Gospel, and this for the following reasons:

- (a) The so-called "parallels", verbal and thematic, listed by Dodd, Braun, and others are extremely limited in scope in that they refer only to very specific parts of the Fourth Gospel. Taking into account the implications of the principle of selection which guided the evangelist these limited "parallels" are not sufficient to explain the Gospel as a whole.
- (b) As a corollary of this, and bearing in mind the size of the Corpus Hermeticum, it follows that the differences between this literature and the Fourth Gospel are greater than their similarities. If the evangelist's purpose or destination was in any way influenced by the ideas of the Hermetists it is not unreasonable to assume that he would have taken more note of what they had to say.
- (c) While most scholars rule out any Christian influence on the writings of the Hermetists, they accept that the Hermetica shows knowledge of the Septuagint, especially the account of creation. At the same time there is also evidence of familiarity with Greek Philosophy, especially Platonism and Stoicism, traces of which it has been claimed can also be found not only in the Fourth Gospel but also in contemporary Judaism.

This latter point suggests the conclusion that many of the similarities and parallels between the Corpus Hermeticum and the Fourth Gospel could be explained in terms of a common source on which both drew. As far as the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and Poimandres is concerned, this seems to be the conclusion of Dodd himself, who writes (Interpretation, 33,f): "While there is nothing to lead us to infer any direct literary relationship between the two writings, it will hardly be questioned that the similarities of expression suggest a common background of religious thought." (48) Regarding the idea of "rebirth" as developed in Tractate

XIII he comes to a similar conclusion when he writes that "we have probably to regard the idea of rebirth as belonging to the common background of thought...." (op. cit., 53).

"Ἄνθρωπος and the Johannine "Son of Man"

One statement of Dodd's that deserves particular attention is that "the Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel has more affinity with the Ἄνθρωπος of Poimandres than with the Son of Man of Jewish Apocalyptic" (Interpretation, 43). If it could be proved that such an assertion is indeed correct this would be a strong argument in favour of the Fourth Gospel having been influenced by the Hermetica. For this reason it is necessary for us to discuss, if only briefly, the possible antecedents of the Johannine usage in this regard.⁽⁴⁹⁾

The "Son of Man" sayings are in many respects among the most enigmatic of the whole of the New Testament and as a result "Son of Man is the most difficult of Jesus' titles to understand" (Grant, op. cit., 347). It is a problem that cuts across all four gospels and, strictly speaking, the Johannine usage should be studied in the light of the use made of this title in the Synoptic gospels.⁽⁵⁰⁾ However such an approach would take us too far away from our main concern in this section. This is with the antecedents of the title, "Son of Man", and the influences that could have shaped the fourth evangelist's thought in this regard.

One scholar who is of the opinion that "Son of Man" is a concept that had its origin outside the tradition of Israel is C. Colpe.⁽⁵¹⁾ This is a view which apparently many other scholars share. However the question of whether or not this is a well-substantiated opinion need not detain us here because what is important is that this concept, irrespective of its origins, had found its way into the literature of Judaism before the coming of Christ. For this reason it is necessary to distinguish the two aspects of the problem, viz., the ultimate origin of the concept itself, and the use made of it in pre-Christian Judaism once it had found its way into its literature. In the light of these comments it is clear that the important question that confronts us is whether the fourth evangelist was dependent upon the use made of the concept in Judaism alone or whether he also drew primarily upon other sources, e.g. Poimandres, for his inspiration. We have already referred to Dodd's views concerning the latter hypothesis. We must therefore examine the nature of the relationship, if any, between the Johannine use of this concept and that of

apocalyptic Judaism.

The whole problem is complicated by the fact that the use which the Old Testament writers make of this term is not consistent. Thus it is possible to distinguish four different meanings that came to be attached to it, namely,

- (i) in the Book of Ezekiel the prophet is addressed as "son of man"; here "man" which is applied to an individual is used in contrast to God;
- (ii) in the Psalms "son of man" sometimes refers to 'man in general' (e.g. 8:4), or to Israel or its representative (e.g. 80:17);
- (iii) in the Book of Daniel we find a number of meanings attached to the title: in 7:13 the phrase "the one like a son of man" is used to describe the 'humanity' of a being when compared with the animals that have just been described in the previous verses (7:4,5,6,); because of his role there is something special about this "son of man"; yet in 7:27 this "son of man" appears to represent "the people of the saints of the Most High" as both are described in almost identical terms.⁽⁵²⁾ Finally, in 8:17 Daniel himself is addressed as "son of man" in much the same way as Ezekiel was;
- (vi) in 1 Enoch 46 reference is also made to the "Son of Man". Here, however, according to Dodd (op. cit., 242) "it is not entirely clear that an individual figure of any kind is intended."

To turn to the fourth evangelist's use of this title: in the Fourth Gospel we find "Son of Man" used thirteen times (1:51, 3:13,14, 5:27, 6:27,53,62, 8:28, 9:35, 12:23,34, 13:31). The greater number of these refer to the "raising-up", "glorification" and "ascending to heaven" of the Son of man (3:13,14, 6:62, 8:28, 12:23,34, 13:31); in two instances (6:53,62) the "Son of man" provides the "food" that leads to "life"; in 9:35 Jesus identifies himself with the "Son of man"; 1:51 tells us that "the angels of God ascend and descend on the Son of man", while in 5:27 we learn that the Son of man has power to sit in judgment because he is the Son of man (ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν).⁽⁵³⁾

When we compare the Johannine usage with that of the apocalyptic literature of Judaism we have to admit that the former appears to show only limited

contact with the latter. Nevertheless there does appear to be evidence to suggest that the fourth evangelist was influenced to some extent by the use made of the term in Jewish apocalyptic writings. This is something which Dodd readily acknowledges. In his book According to the Scriptures (p.122,f) he writes: "In the Fourth Gospel the idea of the Son of Man is fundamental, and while it has absorbed elements from Hellenistic thought about the heavenly or "essential Man" it is at bottom the concept which results from a combination of Ps viii, Ps lxxx, Dan vii, and Is liii. The ideas of corporate representation and of glory through suffering, which, as we have seen, are regulative from the first, here receive highly original treatment. In particular, the evangelist brings into full clarity the truth that the Servant is "exalted and greatly glorified" (Is. lii, 13 LXX) in his sufferings and death, and that it is through dying that he incorporates men in himself, "that they may all be one" (Jn xii,32 and xvii,21)."

It should be noted that one problem encountered with Dodd's approach in the above cited quotation is that it is by no means proved that the fourth evangelist's "Son of Man" must be interpreted as another name for Isaiah's "Suffering Servant". His suggestion in Interpretation, 245, that Ps 79(80) should be seen as the closest use to the Johannine "Son of Man" would be a more fruitful avenue to investigate. As noted above, there is reason to believe that in this psalm "son of man" refers to Israel's representative, a.v. to its king. J. Painter (op. cit., 53,ff) has drawn attention to the 'kingly' element in the Son of Man theme, especially in so far as it affects the fourth evangelist's understanding of Jesus. Prior to the events immediately preceding his death "the nature of Jesus' kingship is shown through the Son of Man theme" (ibid., 54). In this way the danger that people would misunderstand the nature of Jesus' kingship was at least limited. In contrast to the people's nationalistic expectations of their Messiah, the Son of Man is for the fourth evangelist "the supernatural heavenly king, revealer of heavenly secrets" (ibid., 55).

The conclusion which these brief comments suggest is that while it is possible that the fourth evangelist has been influenced to some extent at least by the use of the concept "Son of Man" in pre-Christian Judaism, he appears to have given to it a meaning that for the most part is original and one that suits his purpose and theology better. As Conzelmann (op. cit., 136) puts it: "John has evidently taken up the title Son of Man from the community tradition and shaped it afresh along the lines of his theology".⁽⁵⁴⁾

This conclusion in turn suggests another, viz., that the Fourth Gospel's use of "Son of Man" can be explained quite adequately without having recourse to the Ἀνθρώπου concept of Poimandres. If it were possible to prove beyond doubt that there are indeed certain similarities in the way these two terms are used by their respective authors, then it is also possible that these similarities have their origin in a common source from which Jewish apocalyptic and the Hermetic literature drew its inspiration. Alternatively, the idea of the Hermetic movement itself could have had some influence on the authors of the Jewish apocalyptic literature. Because of the date when the Hermetic literature came to be composed in the form known to us it is clear that any influence, in this latter instance, would have had to have been on the oral level.⁽⁵⁵⁾

As a general conclusion to our discussion of Hermeticism we can state that it has not been proved that the evangelist was even indirectly influenced by their teaching. Those ideas which it has been claimed the Fourth Gospel has in common with the Corpus Hermeticum could quite easily have come to the evangelist from other sources, specifically from Judaism itself.

(3) Philo of Alexandria

When we turn to Philo some of the comments made about the Hermetica are also applicable here while others obviously do not apply. For example, because he was a contemporary of Jesus there is no question of Philo having been influenced by Christian ideas. On the other hand, since it is quite conceivable that the fourth evangelist could have come into contact with the writings of Philo we cannot rule out Philonic influence on the Fourth Gospel simply on the grounds of the date when their respective works came to be composed.

When discussing any possible relationships between Philo and the Fourth Gospel we must remember that Philo, far more than was the case with the Hermetists, was indebted to and made use of the works of Judaism. Indeed his purpose, as we have seen, was to make that same Judaism intelligible and appealing to the non-Jew. Since the fourth evangelist also drew upon the writings of Judaism we have here a possible common source for the parallels and similarities that, according to some scholars, exist in their respective writings. Thus Dodd (op. cit., 57) admits that the symbolism which the fourth evangelist and Philo have in common is also to be found in the pages of the Old Testament. Similarly, it is possible to argue that the same is true of their respective use of the concept Logos. Because of

the importance attached by scholars who advocate a Gentile missionary destination and purpose for the Fourth Gospel to the Johannine usage of this term it is necessary for us, at this stage, to pause briefly in order to examine the evidence and arguments brought forward by those who oppose a Hellenistic interpretation and understanding of this concept. This latter group of scholars claim that the origins for the use of this term, together with the whole of the Prologue, should be sought rather in the Old Testament.

The Prologue and the Logos Concept

One of the first scholars, at least in more modern times, to look for the source of the Prologue's ideas in the Old Testament was R. Harris in his book, The Origin of the Prologue to St John's Gospel, 1917. He was particularly impressed by the resemblances to be found between the first five verses of the Prologue and certain verses of the Book of Proverbs.⁽⁵⁶⁾ Among other scholars to defend its Jewish origin were C.F. Burney (The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel, 1922) and M. Black (An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts, 1954).

In a sense the key to the determination of the background to and the possible origin of the ideas contained in the Prologue as a whole - and therefore to its interpretation also - lies in the use made of the word $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ by the evangelist. In itself $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ is not an unusual word. But it did have "an extremely extensive range of meanings" (Dodd, Interpretation, 263). The fourth evangelist himself made a wide use of it, as Dodd has shown (op. cit., 265, ff). However it is generally recognized that its use in the Prologue is unique. The whole problem therefore is to determine the source of this usage and the meaning it would have had for the first readers of the Fourth Gospel.

Those who argue for its Jewish origin usually note that "there is no one Semitic parallel that explains completely the Prologue's use of 'the Word'" (Brown, John, 520). They point to a number of usages and concepts in the Old Testament and Judaism against which its usage in the Prologue "would be quite intelligible" (ibid.). R. Brown summarizes these under the following headings:⁽⁵⁷⁾

- (a) "The Word of the Lord" (דְּבַר יְהוָה ; $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma \kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon$)

In Hebrew the term דְּבַר refers not only to the "spoken word" but also to the "action" that it prompts. It is as if it has a power of its own. This

is clearly seen in the lives of the prophets who, having received "the word of the Lord" were compelled to act in accordance with it, whether they were willing or not. (See Jer. 1:4-10, Is. 6:1-11, Ezek. 2:1,ff., Amos 7:14,15). The power of the "word of the Lord" was also manifested at creation (Gen. 1:1,ff., Ps. 33:6). In this regard the similarity between the opening verse of the Book of Genesis and that of the Fourth Gospel has frequently been noted.

The Hebrews, it is true, did not make a person of "the word of the Lord". However, according to their way of thinking, "the word once spoken has a kind of substantive existence of its own" (Dodd, op. cit., 264). This is beautifully illustrated in the words of Is. 55:10-11 where we read, "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the things for which I sent it."⁽⁵⁸⁾

(b) Personified Wisdom (ἰσοπλάγιστος, σοφία)

As has already been noted R. Harris was among the first to note the similarities between the Prologue and the Book of Proverbs. C.H. Dodd, in his book, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, 1965, took over Harris's list and expanded it, adding to it various apposite references from the Book of Wisdom (274,f). Whereas Harris confined himself to the first five verses of the Prologue, Dodd has attempted to find similarities in the Wisdom literature for the greater part of the Prologue.

R. Brown has noted (op. cit., 522) that "the title, 'the Word', is closer to the prophetic "word of the Lord"; but the description of the activity of the Word is very much like that of Wisdom". For this reason comparisons between the Logos and Wisdom are usually centred on the activities of both.

The first thing to note about Wisdom is that, unlike the "word of the Lord" as described above, it is personified. But having taken note of this basic difference it must also be pointed out that there is a close association between the "word of the Lord" and the "wisdom of God". In the Book of Wisdom 9:1,ff., for example, we read: "God of our ancestors, Lord of mercy, who by your word have made all things, and in your wisdom have fitted man to rule the creatures that have come from you" Here the

two concepts are being used as parallels to one another.⁽⁵⁹⁾

We may summarize the similarities between what the Wisdom Literature has to say about Wisdom and what the fourth evangelist has to say about the Logos thus:

- i. Wisdom herself comes from the Lord and remains with him for ever (Sir. 1:1, compare Jn. 1:18) being "pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty" (Wis. 7:25, compare Jn. 1:14). Like the Logos (Jn. 1:44) Wisdom is also described as being $\mu\omicron\nu\acute{o}\gamma\epsilon\nu\eta\varsigma$ (Wis. 7:22). Unlike God's word, Wisdom was created (Prov. 8:22,ff); however she existed "from the beginning before the earth came into being" (Prov. 8:23, compare Jn. 1:2). Not only was she present when the world was created (Prov. 8:27), she had an active role to play in its creation (Wis. 7:22, 8:5,6, 9:2, compare Jn. 1:3).
- ii. As far as mankind is concerned, Wisdom means "life" to those who find her (Prov. 8:35, compare Jn. 1:4). Similarly, being "a reflection of the eternal light" (Wis. 7:26), "she is indeed more splendid than the sun, she outshines all the constellations; compared with light, she takes first place, for light must yield to night, but over Wisdom evil can never triumph" (Wis. 7:29-30, compare Jn. 1:4-9). Just as the Logos "came to dwell among us" ($\epsilon\sigma\kappa\eta\nu\omega\sigma\epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\nu\ \eta\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$) (Jn. 1:14) so too was Wisdom instructed to pitch her tent in Jacob and make Israel her inheritance (Sir. 24:8,ff). However, according to Enoch 42:2 Wisdom found no dwelling place among the children of men (compare Jn. 1:10,f).⁽⁶⁰⁾

The question that suggests itself at this point is this: if there are so many similarities between Wisdom and Logos, why did the evangelist choose to use $\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ instead of $\xi\omicron\phi\acute{\iota}\alpha$? One answer could be that $\xi\omicron\phi\acute{\iota}\alpha$, like its Hebrew counterpart חָכְמָה , is feminine in gender whereas $\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ is masculine. J. Painter (John, 26) has also drawn attention to the fact that "there was an undesirable Wisdom tradition" with which Paul in particular had to contend. At the same time, however, the intrinsic value of the concept $\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ should not be overlooked either.

(c) Jewish Speculation on the Law (תּוֹרָה)

In later rabbinical writings and in the sapiential books of the Old Testament the Law came to be idealized. To it were attributed many of the

qualities of "the word of the Lord" and to "Wisdom" as described above. The identification that was taking place between Wisdom and the Torah can be seen, for example, in Sir. 24:23, ff., while in Is. 2:3 Torah is used as if it were interchangeable with "the word of the Lord". In fact, as Dodd (Interpretation, 269) notes, "the 'word' of God can always be conceived as having a permanent, concrete embodiment in the Torah". Like $\xi\omicron\phi\acute{\alpha}$ the (61) Torah too was considered to be the "life" and "light" of men (cf. Prov. 6:23). The author of the Prologue claims for Jesus Christ $\acute{\eta}\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \acute{\eta}\ \acute{\alpha}\lambda\acute{\eta}\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$ (1:17); this should be seen against the background of the $\aleph\ \square\ \chi\ \aleph\ \aleph\ \square\ \aleph$ which, according to the Old Testament and the rabbis, is the content of the Torah and the word of the Lord. (62)

(d) The Targumic use of "Memra" = "Word"

In discussing the question of "direct" quotations from the Old Testament that appear in the Fourth Gospel in the previous chapter, it was noted that there is evidence that the evangelist in certain instances followed neither the LXX nor the Hebrew texts. There is therefore the possibility that he might have made use of the Targums or Aramaic translations. If this was the case then it is not inconceivable that the evangelist may have been influenced by the use of Memra. According to Brown (op. cit., 524) "the Memra of the Lord in the Targums is not simply a translation of what we have spoken of as "the word of the Lord"; rather it is a surrogate for God Himself". Many scholars, however, do not accept that this concept had any influence on the Johannine Logos. For example, A. Feuillet (Introduction, 616) states that the term Memra "is merely a substitute for the divine name and plays no mediatorial role". For this reason the Johannine Logos cannot be explained in terms of it. (63)

This analysis leads us to conclude that there is ample evidence to suggest that the concept Logos and the ideas of the Prologue as a whole can be understood in a very meaningful manner in the light of the Old Testament and rabbinical writings. Our discussion has been centred on the possible influence of four different concepts that could have contributed to the formation of the Johannine Logos. All of them, except possibly Memra, can throw some light on the meaning we are to give to this term. In the course of this discussion we have also indicated the possible origins of other parts of the Prologue. While repeating our reservations about Memra, we can do no better than to quote from R. Brown (op. cit., 524) once more: "In the mind of the theologian of the Prologue the creative word of God, the word of the Lord that came to the prophets, has become personal in Jesus who is the embodiment of divine revelation. Jesus is divine Wisdom,

pre-existent, but now come among men to teach them and to give them life. He is the Memra, God's presence among men. And yet, even though all these strands are woven into the Johannine concept of the Word, this concept remains a unique contribution of Christianity. It is beyond all that has gone before, even as Jesus is beyond all who have gone before". Thus the evidence linking the Johannine Logos and the Prologue as a whole to ideas of the Old Testament is considerable and any scholar who attempts to propose another explanation cannot afford to overlook it.

To return to the Philonic Logos: just as it is possible to interpret the Johannine Logos in a meaningful way against the background of the Old Testament speculation concerning Wisdom, so too can the Philonic Logos be understood in a similar fashion. This is something that is admitted by both Dodd (op. cit., 276) and by R. McL. Wilson. This latter scholar makes the important point that the Wisdom-Logos identification was not a process that was peculiar only to Philo and the fourth evangelist. In his view it was part of a general movement of the times. He writes (The Gnostic Problem, 36,f):

"Contemporary paganism was seeking to defend itself by a synthesis of Stoic, Platonic, and Pythagorean philosophy, apparently due largely to Posidonius. This made the κόσμος a system in which one divine λόγος emanating from Zeus manifested itself in the gods, in men, and in nature. Judaism had developed a similar doctrine for Wisdom, and Philo uses the same principle: the God of the Torah creates through the λόγος, which manifests itself in λόγοι or angels or discarnate souls, in man and in nature. Christianity adopted the scheme for its own purposes, regarding Christ as the Λόγος through whom all things were created, but in this system there was no interest in the subordinate λόγοι, which accordingly tend to disappear." (64)

Alexandria, the home of Philo, played an important role in the development of the Jewish approach to this question. By Philo's time, however, the Wisdom-Logos identification had already been completed.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Philo therefore, appears to be using a concept that was in common use at that time, and one that had its roots in the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament.

Having commented on the underlying similarities that exist between the use made of the concept Logos by both the fourth evangelist and Philo it is now time to say something about the differences between them. Even the most ardent adherents of the view that the origins of the Prologue's use of Logos should be sought in the writings of Philo admit that there are

many differences in their respective approaches. This is, of course, to be expected. The fourth evangelist did not set out to transcribe slavishly the opinions of anybody. He was, after all, presenting a new revelation. However in assessing any possible Philonic influence on the Fourth Gospel's use of Logos these differences must be taken into account. Bernard (St John, cxi, f.) summarizes the more important of these thus:

- (a) The question of the Personality of the Logos receives rather vague treatment in Philo. This is especially so when he discusses the role of the Logos in creation.
- (b) Philo does not appear to accept the pre-existence of the Logos, something which the Prologue emphatically declares.
- (c) The Johannine doctrine of the connexion between Life and Light which appears in the Prologue's teaching about the Logos (1:4) does not appear in Philo's writings. However, according to Bernard, this is a line of speculation that Philo would have found congenial. As we have noted, he uses "Light" as a symbol of the Deity.
- (d) Finally, the most significant of all the differences between Philo and the fourth evangelist is, according to Bernard, that the latter's teaching rests on the doctrine of the Incarnation. This is something that would have been completely foreign to Philo, being imbued as he was with the monotheistic principles of the Old Testament.⁽⁶⁶⁾

It cannot be doubted that the differences between the nature of the Philonic Logos and that of the Fourth Gospel are substantial.⁽⁶⁷⁾ It seems to me that they far outweigh their similarities. This suggests a very weighty question: Because of the fundamental and intrinsic differences between his own use of the Logos concept and that made of it by others, would the fourth evangelist have knowingly used it if he was aware that it could quite conceivably have been misinterpreted by readers who were more familiar with other traditions in this regard? It is true that the Prologue does make clear that its Logos had attributes not possessed by the Logos of other systems. Yet it seems to me that because it is possible to detect similarities between the Johannine Logos and that of Philo and the Stoics, the use of the same word by the evangelist would tend to emphasize these similarities whereas the Johannine Logos is radically different in nature from anything that preceded it. We shall, of course, never know the answer

to the question posed above. However it is a possibility that cannot be dismissed out of hand that if the evangelist was aware of the way the Logos concept had been used by others and therefore that his own use of it would have been open to misinterpretation, one would have expected him either to have avoided its use altogether or alternatively to have guarded against possible misrepresentation or misunderstanding.⁽⁶⁸⁾

(D) Conclusions

A proper evaluation of the material we have been discussing requires that we take into account another phenomenon of the age. Our examination has dealt with the various movements and trends in isolation from each other. However one cannot afford to overlook the syncretistic nature of many of the contemporary religious movements. This is something we have already encountered in discussing the Gnostic Systems. Wilson (The Gnostic Problem, 9) tells us that "syncretism was always a strong tendency in the ancient world". In the course of our discussion, for example, we noted that both Philo and the Hermetica were influenced by Platonic and Stoic ideas. Similarly both show a greater or lesser degree of contact with the Old Testament and Judaism.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Hence while it might be possible to uncover in the Fourth Gospel traces of various contemporary trends it does not necessarily follow that the evangelist was directly drawing upon them for concepts and terminology. If it is possible to prove that there is evidence of Platonic and Stoic ideas in his gospel, it is not inconceivable that the fourth evangelist may have acquired these through his knowledge of writings such as those of Philo and the Hermetica, always presuming, of course, that there is incontrovertible evidence that he had knowledge of these writings.

It seems to me, however, that the most that can be claimed is that the fourth evangelist was familiar with terminology that appears to have been the common property of various religious movements of the period. Whether he acquired his knowledge of this directly from the sources concerned or whether it came to him via Judaism itself, which had already been influenced by and had incorporated some of these terms to a greater or lesser degree, cannot be established beyond doubt. On the basis of the available evidence the latter hypothesis seems to be the more probable, viz. that his knowledge of these terms came to him through Judaism. This conclusion is substantiated by the following considerations:

- (a) There does not appear to be any significant term or concept in the Fourth Gospel that cannot be explained in terms of the Old Testament and Judaism. While the other sources might be able to offer

plausible explanations for some aspects of the Fourth Gospel they are not able to account for the gospel as a whole.

(b) It cannot be doubted that the fourth evangelist on occasion does appear to be familiar with terms that were used more frequently in sources other than Judaism. However there is reason to suspect that he was not altogether familiar with what these terms stood for in other systems. In this regard we have already commented on his use of the concept Logos. The same can be claimed for his use of dualistic terminology for example which we discussed under the Gnostic Systems.

If one assumes that the fourth evangelist was well acquainted with the various religious movements and trends of his day then it appears that his use of terms such as the ones referred to above is bordering on the naive. Because of the radical difference in the meaning of these terms as used by him in comparison with the meaning they had in the religious movements of which we have been speaking, he must have been aware of the fact that his gospel would have been open to misinterpretation if it was intended primarily for a pagan audience.

(c) Following on from what has been said above more care is, I believe, required when one speaks of "parallels" between the Fourth Gospel and other literature. Dodd (Interpretation, 33, 49), for example, speaks of "parallels" and "verbal parallels" between the Fourth Gospel and various Hermetic writings and between the writings of Philo (p. 276). An observation already made above apropos of the so-called "Gnostic motifs" and their presence in the Fourth Gospel is also applicable in the case of the writings of Philo and the Hermetica, viz., the fact that a similar expression appears in two writings does not entitle one to assume that the fourth evangelist was aware of or borrowing from other sources.

Without wishing to impugn the scholarly reputation of those who have attempted to do so, it is, I believe, extremely difficult for us to place ourselves in the situation of a pagan and then to read and understand a work like the Fourth Gospel through his eyes. When we examine the writings of an author like Philo or the Hermetists, for example, we do so after having studied the contents of the Fourth Gospel. Armed with this knowledge it is easier for us to detect the so-called parallels, nuances of meanings, etc. But if one believes that the Fourth Gospel was written for a pagan audience, for people who were familiar with works like those of Philo or the Hermetists, then the only way to approach the gospel would be through their eyes and with their knowledge alone. It seems to

me to be most unlikely that the type of person to which we have referred would have been able to see in the Fourth Gospel what modern scholars have found there.

In brief: in the light of what has been said in this section it is most unlikely that the fourth evangelist set out primarily with the intention of convincing a Gentile audience of the fact that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God....⁽⁷⁰⁾

III. THE SAMARITANS

(A) The Evidence

In recent years increasing attention has been given to the question of possible Samaritan influence on the Fourth Gospel and its composition.⁽⁷¹⁾ So fruitful a field of study has this proved to be that one scholar, E.D. Freed, has even asked whether the Fourth Gospel might have been written "partly to win Samaritan converts".⁽⁷²⁾ With J. Bowman⁽⁷³⁾ this author believes that the fourth evangelist was "trying to make a bridge between Samaritans and Jews in Christ".⁽⁷⁴⁾ Because of the importance that this question could have for the gospel's destination and purpose it is necessary to review briefly the arguments and evidence marshalled by Freed in support of his contention.

He begins his article by commenting favourably on the two general conclusions reached by W.A. Meeks in his important work, The Prophet-King : Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology, 318, f. concerning the Johannine gospel traditions and their provenance. Meeks concluded first of all that these traditions "were shaped, at least in part, by interaction between a Christian community and a hostile Jewish community whose piety accorded very great importance to Moses and the Sinai theophany, probably understood as Moses' ascent to heaven and his enthronement. Second, it is clear that the Johannine Church had drawn members from that Jewish group as well as from the Samaritan circles which held very similar beliefs, and it has been demonstrated to a high degree of probability that the depiction of Jesus as prophet and king in the Fourth Gospel owes much to traditions which the Church inherited from the Moses piety".

Freed then refers to the evidence he had discussed in a previous article of his⁽⁷⁵⁾ which gave grounds for "suspecting possible Samaritan influence

on John". This evidence concerned (a) the appearance of Samaritan place names - Aenon (3:23), Salim (3:23), Sychar (4:5), and Ephraim (11:54);⁽⁷⁶⁾ (b) the use of the word $\tau\acute{o}\tau\omicron\varsigma$ in 4:20 and 11:48 for a religious shrine; (c) the downgrading of Abraham and especially of Moses; (d) Jesus' disassociation of himself from "the fathers" (6:49, 8:38,41,56) and the "law" (8:17, 10:34).

To this evidence Freed adds the following which in his view seems to indicate that the gospel could have been partly directed at the Samaritans:

- (i) the friendly attitude of Jesus towards the Samaritans and their acceptance of him;
- (ii) because of the importance attached to the Law of Moses in both Judaism and Samaritanism the fourth evangelist found it necessary to emphasize that Jesus was greater than the Law;
- (iii) both Jews and Samaritans accepted that the Law was of divine origin but the Samaritans claimed that the Law had actually been written down by God and then only copied by Moses. Freed argues that the fourth evangelist may have been influenced by this Samaritan belief in his choice of words in 1:17, 7:19,23. But he does note that in 1:45 and 5:46,f. the writing of the Law is attributed to Moses;
- (iv) the attributing to Jesus of the titles "prophet" (4:19) and "saviour" (4:42), epithets applied by the Samaritans to Moses and also to the "Taheb", i.e. the prophet-like-Moses who would return;⁽⁷⁷⁾ it is as if the evangelist wished to portray Jesus in the role of "Taheb";⁽⁷⁸⁾
- (v) the Johannine treatment of the theme of the kingship of Jesus, differing as it does from that of the Synoptics in that it emphasizes its non-earthly aspects, is more intelligible against the background of Samaritan theology on this point;
- (vi) the use of "I am" in the Fourth Gospel seems to recall the name used most frequently by the Samaritans for God;
- (vii) the point made in Jn 4:21,ff. becomes more intelligible when it is recalled that the Samaritans tended to avoid all anthropomorphisms in their references to God;

- (viii) much of what the Fourth Gospel has to say concerning the themes of love, the resurrection, eternal life and judgment would similarly have been intelligible to and had an appeal for Samaritans.

Such in brief are the indications of Samaritan influence in the Fourth Gospel which Freed believes he has uncovered. However he does note that there are other things in the gospel that cannot be explained on the basis of Samaritan influence or by the writer's apparent concern to make the gospel appealing to Samaritans. Among these mention should be made of the themes of the "Fatherhood" of God and the "Sonship" of Jesus. In spite of this Freed (ibid., 256) concludes that the evidence he has presented seems "to lead to a reasonable conclusion that the writer of John was influenced by Samaritanism, and that if he was not writing 'to make a bridge between Samaritans and Jews in Christ', he was attempting to make Christianity as he was presenting it appeal to Samaritans as well as to Jews in the hope of winning converts from both".

(B) Evaluation of the Evidence

One of the difficulties which faces the student who wishes to assess the degree of influence of Samaritanism on the Fourth Gospel is the unavailability of suitable texts which could give a true and comprehensive picture of Samaritan theology at the time when the gospel was composed. The earliest and most frequently cited text here is the Memar Marqah, i.e. the "Teaching of Marqah". Marqah, whom Purvis (op. cit., 163) describes as "the classical theologian of Samaritanism", lived in the fourth century A.D. This means that all other Samaritan texts post-date Marqah. Clearly, therefore, there are methodological difficulties in determining which of the traditions recorded by Marqah were current at the time of the gospel's composition.

Another point that seems to be becoming increasingly clear is that there appears to have been a variety of Samaritan traditions. This realization has led to a further one, viz., that Samaritan thought is far more complex than had appeared at first sight.⁽⁷⁹⁾

Whatever position will ultimately emerge concerning the nature of the relationship between Samaritanism and the Fourth Gospel, for it must be admitted that Samaritan studies are still in their infancy, it seems to me that the most that can be claimed on the basis of available evidence is

that some of the traditions behind the Fourth Gospel could have developed in Samaria.⁽⁸⁰⁾ This conclusion is based upon the scanty nature of the evidence that has been proposed, evidence which certainly does not do justice to the gospel as a whole. Further, our analysis in previous sections of our study has shown that some of the evidence used by Freed is quite intelligible against backgrounds other than that of Samaritan theology. Here mention may be made of the roles played by Abraham, Moses, and the Law in the gospel, and also the question of the nature of Jesus' kingship.

In brief: there appears to be no conclusive evidence to support the contention that the Fourth Gospel as a whole originated in Samaria⁽⁸¹⁾ or that it was written partly to win Samaritan converts⁽⁸²⁾ or that it should be seen as a polemic against those Samaritans who accepted Dositheus as the prophet-like-Moses.⁽⁸³⁾

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter we have examined those theories which see the Fourth Gospel primarily as missionary in purpose and destination. In this regard our analysis has been concerned with the Jews, the Gentiles and the Samaritans. As far as the Jews are concerned we saw that while it is quite possible that the evangelist may have used a source that had a Jewish missionary destination and purpose, the gospel as a whole does not appear to have had the same objective in view. In the case of the Gentiles our investigation of the relevant data led us to conclude that while it is possible to uncover evidence which indicates some points of contact between the Fourth Gospel and a Gentile milieu, there is no conclusive proof that the evangelist necessarily drew this material from an exclusively Gentile source or environment. His knowledge of this could have come to him through other channels, especially via Judaism itself. Finally, while it might not be an unreasonable hypothesis to propose that at least some of the Johannine material was influenced, in its formative stage, by Samaritanism, there are no real grounds for accepting that the gospel itself was intentionally addressed to a Samaritan audience, even partially, with a view to winning them over to Christianity.

(A) Introduction

When one speaks of a "Christian" destination and purpose for the Fourth Gospel it is assumed that the readers to whom the gospel was addressed were already believers in Jesus and that the gospel was therefore written in order to 'strengthen their faith'.

Because the wording of Jn 20:31 does not settle the issue of the gospel's destination for us⁽¹⁾ scholars have had to look elsewhere for indications of what that destination might have been. Among those who have supported the theory of a "Christian" destination and purpose attempts have been made to prove it by the use of both internal and external evidence. In the course of this chapter we shall examine both of these approaches.

At the outset of our discussion, however, a word of caution is in order regarding the use that can be made of the contents of the Fourth Gospel to "prove" a Christian destination and purpose. Nobody would deny that a Christian would be able to find much in this gospel that would serve to strengthen his faith. But this is clearly a very different matter from saying that the gospel was written specifically for Christians and that this intention was in the mind of the evangelist. Dodd (Interpretation, 8,f.), for example, is one of those who believe that "the evangelist has in view a non-Christian public to which he wishes to appeal". But at the same time this author acknowledges that if a non-Christian was led "to associate himself with the Church and to participate in its fellowship, its tradition and its sacraments, he would be able to re-read the book and find in it vastly more than had been obvious at a first reading". Hence the presence in the gospel of material that might be meaningful to Christians does not necessarily prove that it was written for them. On the other hand, if the gospel was indeed addressed to a Christian audience one would naturally expect to find in it much "Christian" material. Clearly, therefore, the presence of this type of material should not be used to prove too much. But at the same time it should not be overlooked either. What is required is that it must be assessed in the context of the gospel as a whole.

Another question that will require investigation is that of whether the gospel was addressed to Christians in general, i.e. to both Jewish and Gentile Christians, or to one specific group, i.e. to either Jewish or

Gentile Christians.

If it can be proved that the Fourth Gospel does indeed have a Christian destination then the next question that will have to be tackled is that of the gospel's "specific" purpose(s). In other words, it is not sufficient to say that the Fourth Gospel set out 'to strengthen the faith of believers'. What will be of particular interest to us is the manner in which this was done and the contemporary situations that prompted the evangelist to write his gospel.

Having outlined the questions that require investigating it is now time to turn our attention to some of the important suggestions that have been made in an attempt to answer them.

(B) The Fourth Gospel Addressed to Christians in general

(1) R. Schnackenburg

Most scholars who accept a Christian destination for the Fourth Gospel have done so without apparently drawing a clear distinction between Jewish and Gentile Christians.⁽²⁾ It is only in more recent times, as we shall see, that there has been a tendency to isolate a particular group of Christians, viz. Jewish Christians, as the ones to whom the gospel was addressed.

Among present-day scholars R. Schnackenburg is perhaps the one who has elaborated the most fully the arguments for a Christian destination for this gospel that includes both Jewish and Gentile Christians. His ideas were, in the main, worked out in an article published in 1963 entitled "Die Messiasfrage im Johannesevangelium"⁽³⁾ in which he questioned the views of Van Unnik and Robinson concerning the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose.⁽⁴⁾ Briefly, Schnackenburg argued that a correct understanding of the titles "the Christ" and "Son of God" in Jn 20:31 does not necessarily prove that the gospel was written for non-Christian Jews. In fact, in Schnackenburg's opinion, the gospel could quite easily have been written to strengthen the faith of those who were already Christians, and this is a view which he himself prefers to accept.⁽⁵⁾

As we saw when discussing the views of Van Unnik and Robinson, one of the main arguments used by Schnackenburg against them and in support of a Christian destination was the evidence of chapters 13 to 17 which seem to

indicate a Christian audience.⁽⁶⁾ Van Unnik himself ("The Purpose of St John's Gospel", 195) admits that these chapters were probably written in the first place for Christians, but this did not prevent him from seeing the gospel as a whole as "a missionary book for the Jews".

It seems to me that Schnackenburg's contention about the significance of these chapters for determining the destination of the Fourth Gospel must be given due consideration and weight. They cannot be overlooked nor can their importance be played down, and this for the following two reasons:

- (i) as a unit they comprise a substantial part of the gospel - 155 verses out of a total of 842 (excluding 5:4, 8:1-11, and chapter 21); and
- (ii) they contain much of the teaching that is central to the gospel's message and this teaching is clearly aimed at strengthening the faith of the disciples.

In the context of a Christian destination Schnackenburg, while admitting that some of the things in the gospel could have been addressed to Jewish Christians, nevertheless believes that the gospel should be seen as having a much wider destination. On this point he writes as follows: "im letzten spricht er nicht einzelne Gruppen an, seien es Juden/oder Heidenchristen, Palästinener oder Menschen in der Diaspora, Samariter, Greichen oder andere Hellenisten, sondern alle Glaubenden als solche, alle "Kinder Gottes" (vgl. i 12), alle zu Christus und Gott Gehörigen".⁽⁷⁾

Schnackenburg does not deny that there is a missionary perspective in the Fourth Gospel. But in his view this should be seen as part of the task and mission of the Church.⁽⁸⁾

Schnackenburg's general conclusion, therefore, is that "das Joh-Ev. ist ein Buch für die Kirche und erschliesst nur in der Kirche seinen wahren Sinn und Gehalt".⁽⁹⁾

In brief: by using much the same material as Van Unnik has done, except of course for chapters 13 to 17, Schnackenburg comes to the conclusion that the Fourth Gospel was written for people who already believed in Jesus. Jesus was indeed the Messiah that was expected by the Jews, but he was far more than this. It is in the Church, under the guidance of the Spirit, that the believer will come to that full understanding of

whom Jesus is. The missionary elements that do exist in the gospel should be seen in terms of the Church's task both to defend itself against attack and also to show the Jews that Jesus is indeed the one for whom they had been waiting. However, in Schnackenburg's view, the gospel's primary aim is to strengthen the faith of those who already believe.

Evaluation

It is clear from our comments in the last paragraph that one of the pillars on which Schnackenburg bases his theory of a Christian destination for the Fourth Gospel is the role which he believes that the Church plays in it.⁽¹⁰⁾ Against the views of scholars like Käsemann⁽¹¹⁾ he believes that "it is in fact impossible to deny that John is deeply rooted in the thinking of the Great Church, or that the Church is present in the theology of John" (St John, 163). However, Schnackenburg's views in this regard are by no means universally accepted; as R.E. Brown (John, CV) puts it: "the question of whether there is a theology of the Church in John has become a burning issue in Johannine studies".

These remarks are sufficient to indicate that it is possible to distinguish two general approaches to the question of the extent and nature of the Fourth Gospel's ecclesiology. Firstly, there is the viewpoint represented by Schnackenburg and shared to a greater or lesser degree by, for example, Barrett (St John, 78, ff), Braun (Jean le Théologien, III, especially 75, ff), Brown (op. cit., CV, ff) and Dodd. This last-mentioned scholar sums up this viewpoint succinctly when he writes (Interpretation, 6): "the evangelist presupposes the existence of the Church itself with its $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$, under the leadership of 'the Twelve'".

On the other hand, in addition to Käsemann other scholars, following different approaches, have tended to emphasize the importance given to the individual as an individual in this gospel, e.g. C.F.D. Moule ("The Individualism of the Fourth Gospel") and R. Bultmann (John, *passim*). It should be noted that these scholars do not deny out of hand that the fourth evangelist was aware of the existence of the Church; it is rather a question of the degree of importance to be attached to it in Johannine theology. In their view it is the individual's relationship to Jesus in faith that is of paramount importance in the Fourth Gospel.

W.G. Kümmel (The Theology of the New Testament, 319) attempts to steer a middle course between these two positions when he writes that "it is certainly correct that the Johannine proclamation with its call for faith

and its confession of the eternal life that is received is oriented primarily to the individual (cf. e.g. John 3:18, 5:24). But here too the contrast with the world shows John conceives of Jesus' disciples as a unity: 'When the hour had come that he (Jesus) should depart from this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he showed them his love in perfect fashion' (13:1; cf. 15:18-19). Thus John's lack of interest in the outward form of the Christian community is balanced by his strong emphasis on the significance of the church for the salvation event".

Whatever may be the merits and demerits of the various arguments about the nature of the fourth evangelist's ecclesiology - and there seems to be much that is hypothetical and conjectural here - it is by no means certain that the concept of the Church and his treatment thereof has the importance or extent which Schnackenburg attributes to it. For this reason it is necessary to be cautious in the use one makes of it to support a Christian destination for the gospel. Because the Fourth Gospel arose in the Church in general and the Johannine community in particular, and because its author had no doubt been influenced by the way of life of that church, it is not unreasonable to expect that some reference would be made to it in the pages of the gospel itself. But this would be true irrespective of what the destination of the gospel might have been.

In brief: it seems to me that the important contribution that Schnackenburg has to make to the discussion of the Fourth Gospel's destination is the significance to be attached to chapters 13 to 17 in this regard. Clearly these presuppose a Christian audience. Whether, however, the same can be claimed for the rest of the gospel is a different question.

(2) E.C. Hoskyns

A scholar who has approached the problem of the Fourth Gospel's destination from a completely different angle is E.C. Hoskyns. While accepting that this gospel was addressed originally to a particular group of people this author claims that it can, nevertheless, be read with meaning by people of every age because the attitudes reflected therein are common to the whole of mankind. He writes (The Fourth Gospel, 49) as follows: "The Fourth Gospel is a universal, a catholic book. Though it was no doubt originally addressed to particular men and women, yet its

author does not for one moment intend these especial readers to suppose that his work concerns them only".

However despite the "universal significance" of this gospel it is first of all necessary, Hoskyns argues, for the modern reader "to place himself in the position of those for whom the gospel was originally written" (*ibid.*). This, he maintains, is the key to the correct understanding of the gospel. But the problem is that it is "extremely difficult to gain from the gospel any direct information concerning its original readers" (*ibid.*, 50). For this reason Hoskyns turns elsewhere for clues about their identity. "In the First Epistle of John, which must be assumed to have come from the same hand as the gospel, a somewhat stronger light is thrown upon the readers of the epistle, and therefore, presumably, upon the original readers of the gospel also" (*ibid.*). Hoskyns then proceeds to examine the contents of the epistle in an attempt to uncover the situation and circumstances that led to its composition (*ibid.*, 50,ff). He argues that the author of the First Epistle assumes that his readers have knowledge of certain basic facts and therefore that there is no need to elaborate on these points in the Epistle itself. Because of the importance of this point for his hypothesis one can do no better than to quote Hoskyns's own words:

"The pressing question now arises, What did his readers already know?.... The Epistle provides us with very scant material for answering this all-important question. We are made aware that the readers of the Epistle knew that Jesus had died, that He had summed up His teaching in one commandment, namely that His disciples should love one another. They knew, moreover, that He had come into the world as the Son of God, that He was the Christ, that He came through water (whatever that may mean), that He overcame the world (whatever that may mean), that He would come again, and that men would stand before Him with boldness or in fear and trembling. But these are fragments, significant fragments of course, but, nevertheless, fragments of a larger whole. The readers must have known more than that to which definite reference is made in the Epistle. This further knowledge is indeed assumed in the author's use of the plural commandments. Jesus did not merely give one commandment; He was the teacher who gave commandments (ii.27; iii.23,24). But the Epistle gives no inkling of what these commandments were. It is assumed that the readers know them" (*ibid.*, 55,f).

It is Hoskyns's contention that the readers of the Epistle must have got this knowledge upon which the author of the Epistle builds from the Fourth Gospel. In support of this hypothesis he notes that "the gospel is built upon the very themes which hold the Epistle together." Further, according

to Hoskyns, the common themes of the Gospel and Epistle are expressed in language that is almost identical. This leads him to conclude: "Therefore it must be assumed not only that the two works came from the same hand, but also that they were originally written for the same group of Christians." (ibid., 56).

Briefly, therefore, the various steps in Hoskyns' argument appear to be the following:

- (1) The same author was responsible for both the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle of John. This conclusion is based primarily on the similarity that exists between the themes and language of the two works.
- (2) The author of I John assumes that his readers are acquainted with the contents of the Fourth Gospel on many points.
- (3) Therefore it is logical to conclude that the readers of both the Gospel and I John are the same.
- (4) Now an analysis of the contents of I John indicates that the author was writing for a group of people who were already Christians but were in danger of being led astray.
- (5) Because the readers of the Gospel and I John are assumed to be the same, and because the latter are Christians, Hoskyns concludes that the readers of the Fourth Gospel must also have been Christians.

Evaluation

The overall difficulty with Hoskyns' theory is that his line of argument appears to be based on too many debatable points and non-sequiturs. The first of these is that the Fourth Gospel and I John were written by one and the same person. While the more common and traditional opinion has tended to support this view there have been some scholars who in recent times have contested it. Among these Kummel (Introduction, 311) lists the following: Moffatt, Dibelius, Goguel, Windisch, Wilder, Dodd, McNeile-Williams, Klijn, Bultmann, Conzelmann and Haenchen.⁽¹²⁾

But even if, for the sake of argument, one were to assume that the author of the Fourth Gospel and I John was the same person, this does not thereby entitle one to assume also that the readers of both works were necessarily the same. Hoskyns bases his own conclusion in this regard on the

assumption that the author was presuming that his readers were familiar with the contents of the Fourth Gospel. It is quite possible, however, that the knowledge in question could have come to the readers of I John from other sources or it could have been the common property of the church in which the letter was composed and/or to which it was addressed.

Again, for the sake of argument, if one were to assume that the readers of both the gospel and I John were the same, it is not impossible that one of these works could have been addressed to them before their conversion to Christianity and the other one after that conversion. This consideration alone, were it found to be true, would mean that both works were not addressed to Christians even though the group of people in each instance was the same.

Thus it can be seen that there are too many questions about the theory of Hoskyns for which there are no satisfactory answers. Because of its highly conjectural nature, therefore, we are forced to reject as valueless the evidence and line of argument employed by this scholar to establish that the Fourth Gospel had a Christian destination.

(3) The Fourth Gospel as a Theological Re-interpretation

In general terms the phrase "theological re-interpretation", when applied to the Fourth Gospel, implies that it was written in order to re-interpret the gospel message along new lines in an attempt to provide deeper insights and to correct supposedly mistaken ideas. Theories that have seen the Fourth Gospel fulfilling this role have ranged from those which believe that this gospel set out to reinterpret the gospel message as it had been expressed in the Synoptic Gospels either on a large scale or only particular aspects of it. To the former group of theories belong those which have tried to establish an extensive relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics. Among the latter mention may be made of those theories which see in the Fourth Gospel a re-interpretation of the Church's sacramental or eschatological teaching. Having already discussed the Fourth Gospel's attitude to the sacraments elsewhere⁽¹³⁾ this section will be concerned with the Fourth Gospel's relation to the Synoptics and with the question of eschatology.

The theories we are about to discuss generally assume that the re-interpretation in question was undertaken for the benefit of those who were already familiar with the Synoptic Gospels or the Church's teaching on the particular points under consideration. Hence the audience for whom

the re-interpretation was being undertaken was presumably "Christian".

As we shall see, various theories have been proposed each of which sees the "theological re-interpretation" as having taken place along differing lines. But as far as the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics is concerned, at the root of all of these theories lies the question of whether in actual fact it can be said that the fourth evangelist either knew or was in any way dependent upon the Synoptics. Hence this is a question to which we shall have to give considerable attention in the discussion which follows.

(a) The Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics⁽¹⁴⁾

The question of the Fourth Gospel's relationship to the Synoptic Gospels has been one of the major problems in the field of Johannine studies in the present century. In 1925 B.H. Streeter published his work, The Four Gospels, in which he argued the case for the dependence of John on Mark's Gospel and, to a lesser extent, on the Gospel of Luke. The views he expressed were those that were commonly held by scholars at that time. In 1938, however, P. Gardner-Smith's work, Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels, appeared. The author examined those passages on which the supposed dependence of the Fourth Gospel on the Synoptics was based. He concluded that the fourth evangelist had in fact followed a different tradition from that of Mark and Luke and must therefore be considered to be independent of them. The debate that this book started has continued ever since.

At the present time perhaps the most respected scholar who maintains that there is a relationship of some kind between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics is C.K. Barrett. It is his opinion (St John, 34) that "John had read Mark, and was influenced both positively and negatively by its contents - that is, that he reproduced in his own way some Marcan substance and language and also emended some of the Marcan material - and that a few of John's statements may be most satisfactorily explained if he was familiar with matter peculiar to Luke." This, Barrett adds, "is the most that may be claimed." In the view of those who argue for the Fourth Gospel's independence from the Synoptics, Barrett is indeed claiming a considerable amount. For this reason we shall have to return to this question.

From the point of view of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose the importance of the question of whether this gospel was dependent or not

upon the Synoptic material lies in the fact that, as we have already noted, there are a group of theories which attempt to explain the Fourth Gospel in terms of the Synoptics. Underlying all of these theories is the assumption that the fourth evangelist and his readers were not only aware of the existence of the Synoptics but were also familiar with their contents. It stands to reason, therefore, that if it can be shown that the Fourth Gospel is not dependent upon the Synoptics then the foundation on which these theories are based will have been destroyed and the theories themselves will, as a consequence, fall away.

Before proceeding to an examination of the evidence which favours the dependence of the Fourth Gospel on the Synoptics it is first of all necessary to outline briefly the theories to which we are referring.

(i) Theories which explain the Destination and Purpose of the Fourth Gospel in terms of the Synoptics

The relationship of the Fourth Gospel to the Synoptics has been conceived of in a variety of ways. It has, for example, been claimed that the evangelist's intention in writing his gospel was to "complement", or to "improve", or even to "replace" the Synoptic Gospels.

Theories such as these concerning the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel have a long history. In essence they can in fact be traced back to Clement of Alexandria who, as we have already seen, claimed that John wrote a "spiritual" gospel after having perceived that the "corporeal" facts had been recorded by the other evangelists.⁽¹⁵⁾ This was a view that was endorsed by Eusebius himself,⁽¹⁶⁾ by Epiphanius,⁽¹⁷⁾ and by the great Augustine who exercised considerable influence in the centuries which followed.⁽¹⁸⁾

1) According to the complement theory the purpose of the Fourth Gospel was to supplement the Synoptic accounts of the life of Jesus with additional material. This would explain, according to those who advocate this theory, why the fourth evangelist concentrates in the main on material not to be found in the Synoptics while at the same time omitting important facts treated adequately by the latter, e.g. events surrounding the birth of Jesus, the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, the transfiguration, the institution of the Eucharist, etc.

A. Wind (op. cit., 34) lists as defenders of this hypothesis in recent times the following scholars: Goguel, Sigge, Grosheide, Schäfer, Boismard, Cassian and Neil.

2) Advocates of the improvement or correction theory, while noting the differences in the nature of the material used by the fourth evangelist and the Synoptics, maintain that his intention was to correct the Synoptic accounts in so far as they were open to misinterpretation. Thus it is claimed that the fourth evangelist's intention in writing his gospel was to "improve" upon the Synoptic presentation of Jesus by creating a new picture of him in which some Synoptic material is used but in a refashioned manner in addition to new material introduced by the fourth evangelist.

A. Wind (ibid., 34) mentions E. Stauffer as one of those who have proposed this theory in recent times. To this name we can add that of E.C. Colwell who, in his book John Defends the Gospel, maintained that the fourth evangelist set out to "correct" the Synoptics.⁽¹⁹⁾

Under this theory mention should also be made of the view of Hoskyns and Richardson who would not, however, go so far as to maintain that the fourth evangelist set out to "correct" the other gospels. Hoskyns (The Fourth Gospel, 58,ff) is of the opinion that the fourth evangelist set out rather to interpret material contained in the Synoptic tradition. The word "tradition" is used here advisedly as Hoskyns does not believe that the fourth evangelist knew the Synoptics in their present form. He writes (ibid., 82): "That the author of the Fourth Gospel had the three synoptic gospels before him when he composed his gospel is most improbable, for his relation to them is not that of an editor. But that he was familiar with the synoptic material, and even with its form, is certain." It is this material, or at least sections of it, which Hoskyns maintains the fourth evangelist refashioned in his own gospel.

Richardson's views follow a similar line. He writes (St John, 25,f): "Our view is that the Fourth Gospel presents a profound and original meditation upon the tradition about Christ which was contained in the received (i.e. Synoptic) tradition concerning him. It is best regarded as itself a theological commentary upon the Synoptic tradition". Like Hoskyns he believes that it is more probable that "St John knew the content of the Synoptic tradition". He is not prepared to say whether he had also read the Synoptic Gospels as we know them.

3) A more extreme form of the above theory is that known as the displacement theory according to which the fourth evangelist's intention was not merely to "correct" or "improve" the Synoptic accounts but rather

to replace them completely. In other words, the contention is that the fourth evangelist intended that his gospel should take the place of the other three so that there would be only one official and acceptable gospel in use in the Church, viz. his own.

The best known propagator of this theory was H. Windisch who elaborated it in his book Johannes und die Synoptiker. Among others who "went in this direction" Wind (op. cit., 35) mentions the names of W. Bauer, Riddle-Huston and R.M. Grant.

Before we can assess these theories it is necessary to evaluate the evidence brought forward in support of the contention that the Fourth Gospel was dependent upon the Synoptics since this is the assumption that underlies all of them.

(ii) Evaluation of the Evidence in favour of the Fourth Gospel's Dependence on the Synoptics

Barrett, whose views concerning the nature of this dependence we have already referred to above, argues for a "literary relationship" between the Fourth Gospel and Mark and, to a lesser degree, Luke. In support of his view he first of all lists those passages which "occur in the same order in both Mark and John".⁽²⁰⁾ The passages in question are the following (op. cit., 34,f) :

- (a) The work and witness of the Baptist (Mk 1:4-8, Jn 1:19-36)
- (b) Departure to Galilee (Mk 1:14,f., Jn 4:3)
- (c) Feeding of the Multitude (Mk 6:33-44, Jn 6:1-13)
- (d) Walking on the Lake (Mk 6:45-52, Jn 6:16-21)
- (e) Peter's Confession (Mk 8:29, Jn 6:68,f)
- (f) Departure to Jerusalem (Mk 9:30,f., 10:1,32,46, Jn 7:10-14)
- (g) The Entry, The Anointing (transposed in John) (Mk 11:1-10 & 14:3-9,
Jn 12:12-15 & 12:1-8)
- (h) The Last Supper, with predictions of betrayal and denial
(Mk 14:17-26, Jn 13:1 - 17:26)
- (i) The Arrest (Mk 14:43-52, Jn 18:1-11)
- (j) The Passion and Resurrection (Mk 14:53 - 16:8, Jn 18:12 - 20:29).⁽²¹⁾

Barrett concludes his list with the comment that while the cleansing of the Temple occurs in both gospels it occurs at a different point in each (Mk 11:15-17, Jn 2:14-16).

It is clear that for Barrett's argument the fact that these passages occur "in the same order" is of great significance. However when we examine the order in which they occur in the two gospels we are, it seems to me, forced to conclude with L. Morris that Barrett's list is not very impressive. Morris (Studies in the Fourth Gospel, 16,ff) points out that in Barrett's list (a) obviously had to come first in both gospels. Presuming that Galilee was to be mentioned at all this means that (b) would have to come somewhere after (a). That too much emphasis should not be placed on the actual positioning of the "Departure to Galilee" is shown, according to Morris, by the fact that in Mark it comes only 6 verses after "the work and witness of the Baptist" whereas in John it appears 79 verses later. Because the "Feeding of the Multitude" took place in Galilee it is clear that (c) had to follow (b). It is when we come to the conjunction of (c) and (d) that Morris finds Barrett's argument more impressive. It is, he says, "the kind of sequence out of which a case might be built up were there enough examples". As far as (e) is concerned Morris believes that there is "grave doubt" that the two evangelists are in fact describing the same event. He himself rejects the identification and therefore does not believe that this incident should be included. Because the "departure to Jerusalem" marks the end of the Galilaean ministry (f) could not appear anywhere else on the list. Similarly in both gospels (g) of necessity must follow (f). Barrett himself notes that the episodes listed under (g) are "transposed in John", a fact which seems to weaken his argument. Finally when we come to the events listed under (h), (i) and (j), it is difficult to see how they could have been arranged in any order other than that which we find in both Mark and John.

Morris sums up the significance of Barrett's list thus: "It boils down to a single sequence of two events as alone worth notice, and considering the length of the two Gospels this is not remarkable."

It seems to me that Morris's criticisms of Barrett's line of reasoning does undermine in no small measure the importance which Barrett attaches to the fact that the events listed occur "in the same order" in both Mark and John. But Barrett's argument for a "literary relationship" between the two gospels does not rely entirely on the similarity of outline to be found in them. He also believes that it is possible to uncover various "close verbal resemblances" in several of the passages which he listed.

He makes a list of twelve of these which for the most part consist of single verses. But taking into account once more the length of the two gospels and also the fact that most of the resemblances are not very close, I do not believe that this evidence adds much weight to his argument.

In fairness to Barrett it should be noted that he does not claim that the data he has listed proves "that John knew and used as a source our second gospel". But he adds that "they do seem sufficient to make plausible the view that John had read Mark, thought that it contained a suitable gospel outline and often - perhaps involuntarily - echoed Mark's phrases when writing about the same events" (op. cit., 36).

As far as Luke is concerned Barrett (ibid., 36,f) believes that "it is a plausible hypothesis" that John had also read him. He reaches this conclusion on the basis of the use of certain names by John and Luke alone, viz. Mary and Martha, Lazarus (even though the "Lazarus" in each gospel is a different person), another Judas in addition to Judas Iscariot, and Annas. Further, in the passion-resurrection narrative Barrett notes that John has various details in common with Luke (against Mark), viz., the betrayal is due to the possession of Judas by Satan; the prediction of Peter's denial is made at the Supper and not after it as in Mark; the language of Jn 13:38 is closer to Lk 23:34 than to Mk 14:30; the right ear of the High Priest's servant is cut off; there were two angels, not one (as in Mark), at the tomb on Easter morning. Finally, Barrett adds (ibid., 37) that "the details of the Johannine anointing story recall the Lucan as well as the Marcan narrative."

In commenting on this evidence Morris (op. cit., 18) points out that there are also some "discounts" that should be taken into account when assessing its value. For example, according to Luke Satan entered Judas before he first sought out the priests (22:3) while in John Satan and Judas are linked at the Supper (13:2,27); also, the language of the prediction of Peter's denial, even though it is closer to Luke than to Mark, does not resemble either of them very much.

It does not seem that the evidence used to establish some sort of relationship between the Fourth Gospel and that of Luke is very convincing. But even if it could be established that there was such a relationship, there is another possibility that could explain it which has been proposed by some scholars, viz. that Luke was in some way dependent on John rather than vice versa. Cribbs, for example, in an article entitled "St Luke and the Johannine Tradition", suggested the hypothesis that "Luke was influenced by

some early form of the developing Johannine tradition (or perhaps even by an early draft of the original edition of John) rather than vice versa, and that possibly one of Luke's motives in attempting to write a 'vita Jesu' was an attempt to reconcile the differing Matthean/Markan and Johannine traditions, and thus to write, as Luke himself declared in the preface to his gospel (Luke 1:1-4) an 'orderly account' of the 'things which have been accomplished among us'."⁽²²⁾

In attempting to undermine Barrett's hypothesis much could, of course, be made of the "differences" that exist between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics. Barrett is not unaware of the existence of these but he believes that it is possible to reconcile them with his general theory. He groups the differences together under the following headings:

Historical

That there are differences in the accounts of the ministry of Jesus as recorded by Mark and John cannot be doubted. Barrett notes the following:

- (i) In Mark it is Galilee that is the centre of Jesus' ministry whereas in John it is Judaea and, in particular, Jerusalem;
- (ii) There are divergencies in their treatment of John the Baptist;
- (iii) In Mark and John the motive for the final and successful plot of the Jewish authorities against the life of Jesus is not the same; and
- (iv) John differs from the Synoptics in his dating of the crucifixion and consequently about the nature and date of the Last Supper also.

Barrett believes that some of these differences can be explained in the light of the theological interests of the Fourth Gospel and therefore in his opinion too much cannot be made of them when arguing for John's independence from the Synoptics.

Theological

While noting that John has omitted several of the most important incidents recorded by the Synoptics (e.g. the Virgin Birth, the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist, the temptation in the wilderness, the transfiguration, the words explanatory of the bread and wine at the Last Supper, and the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane), Barrett (op. cit., 41, ff) is of the opinion that John has incorporated the theological substance of these

incidents into his gospel. "John probes into the meaning of the synoptic narratives and expresses it in other terms. It follows on the one hand that the differences between John and the synoptic gospels must not be exaggerated. John does not so much import foreign matter into the gospel as to bring out what was already inadequately expressed in the earlier tradition." (p.44).⁽²³⁾

Briefly, therefore, Barrett is of the opinion that "John's treatment of the synoptic material, though by no means irresponsible, is certainly free." (ibid., 15). He believes that the evidence he has brought forward indicates that the fourth evangelist had read Mark and Luke, even if only in an earlier draft.

While Barrett's hypothesis that the fourth evangelist had read Mark and Luke may be true - for it would be extremely difficult to prove the contrary - it does not seem to me that his arguments are convincing that either the outline or the contents of the Fourth Gospel were in any significant way influenced by what he might have read in Mark or Luke. Certainly there is very little evidence of the "literary relationship" of which he speaks. Further, no matter how he attempts to explain the presence of the "differences" in the Fourth Gospel they remain "substantial" for all that.

Morris (op. cit., 19), I believe, makes a valid point when he argues that some resemblances are to be expected because each of the evangelists was, when all is said and done, writing a "gospel". This, it seems, imposed certain limitations on the evangelists as to which material could be included and the manner in which it was to be handled. This meant that, in Morris's words, "as far as we know if a man wished to write a gospel he would have to produce a document with some resemblances to other examples of this genre".

It is also important to remember that the gospel message was preached before it came to be written down. This obviously led to the development of oral traditions. Because they were all traditions about the same person it is only natural to expect that they would share certain common material. At the same time it was inevitable that differences should arise between them, differences that no doubt had their origin in local circumstances and problems that required attention. Thus it is quite conceivable that

the fourth evangelist was familiar with some of the material underlying the Synoptics without necessarily being aware of the existence of these gospels in the form known to us. Brownlee⁽²⁴⁾ admirably sums up the significance of this for the Fourth Gospel's relationship to the Synoptics when he writes: "As for Synoptic material in general, it seems likely that the Fourth Gospel and its sources reflect some acquaintance with the traditions which lie behind those Gospels, without knowing the Synoptics themselves. In fact, one should conceive of this Johannine witness as born within a milieu where many people were intimately acquainted with the deeds and words of Jesus not mentioned in this Gospel. Therefore the Evangelist is apologetic about not including many familiar stories. The Fourth Gospel is not to be thought of as intentionally supplemental to the Synoptics, though it is supplemental to their underlying traditions."

(iii) The Argument for the Fourth Gospel's Independence from the Synoptics

We have already referred to what might be described as Gardner-Smith's pioneering work in this field. His position has been taken up by A.J.B. Higgins in his book, The Historicity of the Fourth Gospel, 1960. His view is that "John is independent of all the Synoptic Gospels, but is familiar both with traditions at points similar to theirs, and with widely different traditions." (*ibid.*, 82). He arrives at this conclusion after a critical examination of the following data:

- (i) a comparison of two passages in the Fourth Gospel (4:46-54 and chapter 6) with similar episodes in the Synoptic Gospels;
- (ii) the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist as portrayed in the Fourth Gospel and in the Synoptics;
- (iii) the problem of the number of visits made by Jesus to Jerusalem, including a consideration of the Cleansing of the Temple, the use made by John of the settings provided by the Jewish feasts, and the raising of Lazarus from the dead;
- (iv) The Passion Narrative, especially the dating of the Last Supper and the Crucifixion, and the question of who was responsible for condemning Jesus to death; and
- (v) the "considerable difference between John and the Synoptics in the use of personal names". (*ibid.*, 53).

He also argues that those "sayings" of Jesus which appear to be more or less close parallels to Synoptic sayings in fact "belong to a tradition which preserved them in a closely similar though not identical form to their Synoptic counterparts, rather than that they are simply borrowings and adaptations by the evangelist" (*ibid.*, 70,f). Similarly, Higgins maintains that the fourth evangelist is also independent of the Synoptic Gospels in the use he makes of the Old Testament.

In similar vein C.H. Dodd, in his Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel, argues that it can be maintained with a high degree of probability that "behind the Fourth Gospel lies an ancient tradition independent of the other gospels." (p. 423). Dodd believes that it is possible to uncover certain characteristics of this "pre-canonical tradition" which he assumes to have been oral. It shows contact with an original Aramaic tradition and "was shaped (it appears) in a Jewish-Christian environment still in touch with the synagogue, in Palestine, at a relatively early date, at any rate before the rebellion of A.D. 66" (*ibid.*, 426). While this tradition is independent of the Synoptic Gospels there is a relationship between it and the tradition behind the Synoptics. But this relationship, according to Dodd, is limited to similarities in the forms of oral tradition, while on other occasions Johannine units often provide a supplement or complement to Synoptic material. Finally Dodd (*ibid.*, 429,f) provides a "summary account of what the tradition we are seeking probably contained".⁽²⁵⁾

Kümmel (Introduction, 143,f) tells us that "since Gardner-Smith's investigation (1938), the view that John knew none of the Synoptic Gospels and drew upon a completely independent tradition has won many supporters (e.g. Michaelis, Manson, Menoud, J.A.T. Robinson, Sanders, Wilkens, Higgins). Still more widespread is the view that John knew none of our Synoptic Gospels, but he did know the tradition reproduced by these Gospels (e.g. Feine-Behm, Connick, Noack, Mendner, Feuillet in Robert-Feuillet, Klijn, Heard, F.C. Grant, The Gospels ..., Bultmann, Dodd, Hunter, Käsemann, Borgen, Haenchen, Grundmann; Buse and Temple advocate John's knowledge of one of Mark's sources)". Thus it cannot be denied that in the 38 years since Gardner-Smith published his book the view that the Fourth Gospel is independent of the Synoptic Gospels has gained considerable importance in the field of Johannine studies.

(iv) The Relation of the Synoptics to the Fourth Gospel's
Destination and Purpose

We have noted above that those theories which attempt to explain the Fourth Gospel in terms of the Synoptics do so on the assumption that the fourth evangelist had some knowledge of them and that he took a specific attitude towards them. Our discussion has shown that it is possible to produce evidence that points to the existence of both "similarities" and "differences" between them. The question that concerns us now is whether this evidence is sufficient to show that the fourth evangelist had the Synoptics in mind when he wrote his gospel.

At the root of the problem of the nature of the relationship of the Fourth Gospel to the Synoptics are the concepts of "dependence" and "independence". To answer satisfactorily the question posed in the previous paragraph it is necessary that these two concepts be clearly defined. Yet this is something that is, apparently, very rarely done. In other words, what is required before it can be said that one work is "dependent" upon another? It is true that most of the authors who discuss the question of the relationship of the Fourth Gospel to the Synoptics appear to be aware of the various "similarities" and "differences" that exist between them; yet they reach different conclusions about the nature of the relationship in question. The reason for this can only be that they have different criteria for determining what "dependence" involved. It is possible, for example, to use the term "dependence" in this context much in the same way as it is used when speaking of "dependence" among the Synoptic Gospels. In this latter instance it is generally held that Matthew and Luke were "dependent" on Mark and Q. Such a conclusion is arrived at by a critical examination and comparison of the three gospels in question. However it is clear that the Fourth Gospel cannot be held to be "dependent" on the Synoptics in the same way or to the same degree.⁽²⁶⁾ Does such a consideration, therefore, rule out the possibility of all "dependence" between them?

There is no doubt that it is possible to make an impressive case out of both the "similarities" and the "differences" that exist between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics. Yet the mere acceptance of one of these lists as being more convincing and conclusive than the other does not solve the problem as any satisfactory solution will have to take both groups of data into account. In other words, if one maintains that the Fourth Gospel is "independent" of the Synoptics this does not dispose of the "similarities"

that do exist. Their presence in the Fourth Gospel requires some explanation. Similarly, acceptance of a dependent relationship must also acknowledge that there are substantial "differences" that must be accounted for.

In my opinion in a matter like the one under discussion the onus is on those scholars who maintain that there is "dependence" between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics to prove that this is the case. Thus the assumption must be in favour of non-dependence until the contrary is proved beyond reasonable doubt. And as we saw when evaluating the evidence provided by Barrett the case for "dependence" is not very convincing. The most that can be claimed to have been shown is that there are what might be called "points of contact" between the Fourth Gospel and either the Synoptic Gospels themselves or, more likely, the traditions behind them.

Briefly, therefore, if by the term "dependence" is meant that the Synoptic Gospels or the traditions behind them have had a direct influence on the structure and contents of the Fourth Gospel, I believe that such "dependence" has not yet been proved. This is not to deny that they have material in common. But the fourth evangelist has used this in such a unique way that it is hard to believe that he borrowed it from the Synoptics. Such a conclusion is borne out by Barrett's own comment (op. cit., 15) when he writes: "If we did not possess Mark it would be quite impossible to separate the apparently Marcan sections from the rest of John and recognize their origin in a distinct source."

What does this mean for the theories discussed above which attempt to explain the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose in terms of the Synoptics? It seems to me that the differences between these gospels are of such a nature that there was clearly no conscious attempt on the part of the fourth evangelist to harmonize his account with those of the Synoptics. This is something one would be entitled to expect and to find in his gospel if he had deliberately set out to supplement the latter. On the contrary, as we have seen, there are instances in which he appears to contradict them, e.g. regarding the date of the Last Supper, the Cleansing of the Temple. Here he does not attempt to explain or justify his choice.

At the same time it should be noted that the differences that exist between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics do not radically affect the basic message of each. Thus there is no fundamental contradiction between the

Jesus of the Fourth Gospel and the Jesus of the Synoptics. There are obviously differences in emphasis in their respective presentations of Jesus but this does not mean that their accounts are irreconcilable. This appears to be the false assumption under which advocates of the displacement theory labour. Nor is it suggested anywhere in the Fourth Gospel that the differences between its portrayal of Jesus and that of the Synoptics are intended to correct or improve upon that of the latter.

(v) Conclusion

Our discussion of the nature of the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics leads us to conclude that there is no evidence to suggest that the fourth evangelist was consciously aware of either the existence of the Synoptic Gospels as known to us or of their contents as a whole. Further, and as corollary of this, there is no evidence to suggest that he wished to "supplement" or to "improve" upon or to "replace" the Synoptics. It can, of course, be argued that the new material provided by the fourth evangelist does in a sense "improve" upon and "supplement" the knowledge we have about Jesus from the Synoptic accounts.⁽²⁷⁾ But the important point that has to be borne in mind for the purposes of our discussion is that there is no indication in the gospel itself that any of these objectives was in the mind of the fourth evangelist when he composed his gospel.

At the most it seems to me that those theories we have been discussing in this section belong to that group of purposes that came to be attributed to the Fourth Gospel at a later date. In other words the Fourth Gospel and its differences from the other gospels apparently created certain difficulties in the early Church. In an attempt to rationalize these the theories we have been discussing were developed by the Fathers and elaborated by later scholars.⁽²⁸⁾ It seems to me that the difficulties in question arose only after the Fourth Gospel had been completed and had been officially accepted by the Church. To maintain, therefore, that the Fourth Gospel was written in an attempt to clear up any confusion that existed because of different presentations of the gospel message is to argue in a circular fashion for it was the Fourth Gospel itself that apparently contributed most to the confusion. Hence the most significant contribution the fourth evangelist could have made to the avoiding of this confusion would have been by not writing his gospel at all!

In brief: the conclusion that our investigation suggests is that the fourth evangelist did not set out to re-interpret the Synoptic presentation

of the gospel message. Hence such a line of argument cannot be used to prove that the Fourth Gospel's destination must as a consequence have been "Christian".

(b) The Fourth Gospel and the Question of Eschatology⁽²⁹⁾

It has long been recognized that the fourth evangelist's eschatological perspective is different, in some respects at least, from that of the Synoptic Gospels. Barrett (op. cit., 115,f) suggests that the reason for the fourth evangelist's unique approach to eschatological questions was determined in part by the fact that "the earliest Christians expected the parousia of Christ to take place suddenly and soon, at least within their own lifetime". However the passage of time and the failure of the parousia to materialize necessitated a reappraisal of the situation by the Church. The eschatological teaching of the Fourth Gospel should be seen, it has been claimed, as part of the Church's attempt to come to terms with the realities of the new situation.

A superficial comparison between the approach of the Synoptic Gospels to eschatology and that of the Fourth Gospel shows that while the former have emphasized the apocalyptic elements in the teaching of Jesus the latter has concentrated, in the main, on what Dodd refers to as "realized eschatology". This same author (Interpretation, 7) writes: "It is in its treatment of the eschatological setting of the facts that the Fourth Gospel departs most notably from earlier renderings of the kerygma. The eschatology of the early Church has two sides. On the one hand we have the belief that with the coming of Christ the 'fulness of time' has arrived, the prophecies are fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is inaugurated on earth. On the other hand we have the expectation of a consummation still pending in the future.... In the Fourth Gospel the language of 'futurist eschatology' is little used." Thus in the Fourth Gospel the emphasis is on the actualization of eschatology. On two occasions, for example, do we read, ἔρχεται ἔφρα, καὶ νῦν ἐστίν (4:23, 5:25);⁽³⁰⁾ similarly on many occasions we also read, ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον, or its equivalent (cf. 3:15,16,36; 5:24, 6:40,47, 11:25, 20:31). This "eternal life" of which the evangelist speaks is something that is possessed here and now.⁽³¹⁾ D. Mollat (op. cit., 21) makes the further point that the Synoptic conception of the Son of Man's return on the clouds at the end of time is replaced in the Fourth Gospel by the coming of Jesus into the world at the time of the Incarnation, his 'lifting up' on the Cross, and his return to his own disciples through the coming of the Holy Spirit; the final judgment of the Last Day is likewise replaced by a judgment which

takes place here and now within the individual; finally, the eternal life already referred to and which is already possessed by those who have faith takes the place of the Kingdom of Heaven of the Synoptics.

While it is true, as Dodd has pointed out, that "the language of 'futurist eschatology' is little used", it is nevertheless unmistakably present in the Fourth Gospel. For example, we are told, inter alia,

- (i) that there will be another coming of Jesus (21:22, f);⁽³²⁾
- (ii) that there will be a raising up of the dead at the "last day" (6:39, f., 44, 54, 11:24), and
- (iii) that "those who have done good (will come forth) to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (5:29);
- (iv) it will be Moses that will accuse the unbelieving Jews before the Father, and not Jesus, at the appropriate time (5:45);
- (v) those who do not "abide in" Jesus will be cast forth and, like branches, will wither; "and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned" (15:6).

That there are some points of contact between the eschatological teaching of the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics cannot be doubted. However Bultmann insists that the fourth evangelist was only interested in "realized eschatology". Those expressions that reflect "futurist eschatology" must, according to Bultmann, be viewed as additions of a redactor who wished to harmonize the Fourth Gospel's eschatology with more traditional teaching.⁽³³⁾

Most scholars, however, would agree that there is a twofold approach in the Fourth Gospel to the question of eschatology. Nor can it be doubted that there is a degree of tension between these differing approaches. But this does not mean that there is an inherent contradiction in his teaching. Barrett (op. cit., 57) explains the point thus: "It was necessary to find a new way of expressing the fundamental Christian affirmation of the Christian faith, that in Jesus Christ the new age had come, but had done so in such a way that it still remained to come, so that Christians live both in this age and in the age to come."⁽³⁴⁾

The "futurist", apocalyptic types of eschatology would have been intelligible to those familiar with contemporary Judaism. But for this same group of

people the "realized eschatology" perspective would have been nothing less than revolutionary in spite of the fact that in the fourth evangelist's view it is a fundamental aspect of the life of the believer. Yet it had received scant attention in the other New Testament writings. In his approach the fourth evangelist appears to presuppose in his readers a knowledge of the eschatology reflected in the Synoptic Gospels, and Pauline corpus. This does not mean, of course, that he himself was directly dependent upon these sources for his information as he could have been drawing upon the common teaching of the Church in these matters. What is clear is that there are some points of contact between the teaching of his gospel and that of the Synoptics. But at the same time his own eschatological teaching is much wider than that of the other gospels. This development is something that could very well have been prompted by the events referred to by Barrett (op. cit., 115, f).

In the light of what we have said it seems clear that the Fourth Gospel's eschatology unfolds and develops against the background of Jewish apocalyptic hopes. The language and ideas used here and reflected in the synoptic tradition would have been familiar to and easily grasped by the Jew, whether he was a Christian or not. But the additional element introduced by the Fourth Gospel, viz. that of 'realized eschatology', startlingly new in its approach though it might have been, would have been the most meaningful to and the most easily understood by those who were already believers. In going beyond what the Synoptics have to say in this regard it is not unreasonable to assume, as Barrett suggests, that the evangelist intended to meet the challenge facing believers caused by the delay in the parousia.

(C) The Fourth Gospel Addressed to Jewish Christians

As we have already noted, there has been a tendency in more recent times to see the Fourth Gospel as addressed to Jewish Christians. In this section we shall discuss the proposals put forward in this connection by two scholars, viz. A. Guilding and J.L. Martyn.

(1) A. Guilding

In her work The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship Guilding attempts to show that "the Fourth Gospel appears to be a Christian commentary on the Old Testament lectionary readings as they were arranged for the synagogue in a three year cycle. The order of the Gospel follows the cycle of the Jewish

lectionary year, which was so arranged that a suitable portion of scripture was read at each of the feasts, and the Evangelist's many allusions to Jewish festivals are not merely casual references but are fundamental to the structure of the Gospel" (ibid., 3).

Guilding states that the arrangement and themes of the Fourth Gospel as well as the evangelist's evident interest in Jewish worship "seems to lead to the conclusion that his purpose in writing was twofold:

- (a) To set forth Jesus as the fulfilment of the whole Jewish system of worship.
- (b) To preserve a tradition of Jesus' discourses and synagogue sermons in a form suitable for liturgical use in the churches" (ibid., 54).

As far as the destination of the gospel is concerned Guilding writes: "The evangelist seems to have wished to preserve a tradition of Jesus' synagogue sermons that has found no place in the Synoptic Gospels, and to present them in a form which would be familiar and acceptable to Christian Jews who had been recently excluded from the synagogue" (ibid., 231).

Guilding's theory has come in for much criticism from scholars. As far as the lectionary cycle itself is concerned, which is an important aspect of her theory, L. Morris (The New Testament and the Jewish Lectionaries, 34) notes that there are too many "conjectures and uncertainties". For example, it is by no means clear when systematic readings of the type envisaged by Guilding began nor the form they first took. There is also the question of whether there might not have been more than one triennial cycle, and then the matter of the relation of the triennial cycle to the annual one. Haenchen, on the other hand, attacks Guilding's claim that the Fourth Gospel preserves "a tradition of Jesus' discourses and synagogue sermons...." (35) W.A. Meeks (The Prophet-King, 92, n. 2) comments that Guilding "begins with a hypothesis that is not implausible but her procedure can only be called fantastic.... Her exegesis of the Fourth Gospel is marked by a curious blend of a radical application of the 'myth and ritual pattern' to the text, a naive historicism which finds in the discourses collections of Jesus' actual sermons, delivered in synagogues on the assigned texts in various years, and the most superficial concordance and scholarship".

Clearly Guilding's theory has found more antagonists than followers.

Seemingly from every angle her approach has been criticized. Yet it seems

to me that she is correct when she states that John wished "to set forth Jesus as the fulfilment of the whole Jewish system of worship". This was a conclusion which we ourselves reached in a previous discussion.⁽³⁶⁾

However the main point of her theory, namely, that the fourth evangelist wished to preserve a tradition of Jesus' synagogue sermons that had found no place in the Synoptic Gospels for the benefit of Christian Jews who had recently been excluded from the synagogue, has by no means been proved by Guilding. In fact there are many scholars, as we have seen, who would agree with Kimmell's comment (Introduction, 163) that her attempts in this direction amount to no more than "pure fantasy".

(2) J.L. Martyn

Another scholar who has made an important contribution to the theory that the Fourth Gospel was written for Jewish Christians is J.L. Martyn. In his book History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel this author argues that the gospel arose in a city in the Diaspora where the evangelist was living and in which there was a Jewish community and a Christian community in close proximity with each other. As a result of conversions from the former to the latter an element of rivalry entered into their relationship which resulted in heated controversies taking place. In turn this led to the introduction of certain measures by the Jews directed against the Christians that eventually caused an irrevocable split between the two communities. It was in response to the challenges facing the Johannine church as a result of this situation that the Fourth Gospel came to be composed. Martyn himself puts this point in the form of a question: "May one sense even in its (i.e. the Fourth Gospel's) exalted cadences the voice of a Christian theologian who writes in response to contemporary events and issues which concern, or should concern, all members of the Christian community in which he lives?" (ibid., xviii; the underlined words are in italics in the text). This is a question which Martyn will answer in the affirmative.

In emphasizing the contemporary significance of the Fourth Gospel Martyn does not thereby wish to question or belittle the historical value of the traditions about the life and teaching of Jesus that are contained in the pages of this gospel. In a sense it is the fourth evangelist's great achievement that he has been able to preserve that tradition and yet make it meaningful in the situation in which he found himself. "Consequently, when we read the Fourth Gospel, we are listening both to tradition and to a new and unique interpretation of that tradition" (ibid., xix,f).

Martyn explains the relationship that exists between the actual historical events of the life of Jesus and the bearing they have on contemporary issues by distinguishing between "two levels in John's way of presenting certain parts of his gospel". The first of these levels he describes with the word "einmalig" which he does not believe it is possible to translate adequately into English. But "the reader will not go far wrong if he renders my use of einmalig by the expression 'once upon a time'" (ibid., 9, n. 21). The second level which he describes as "the contemporary level" refers to "a witness to Jesus' powerful presence in actual events experienced by the Johannine church" (ibid., 10). In the pages which follow Martyn proceeds to examine the miracle of the healing of the blind man and subsequent events (Jn 9:1,ff) in the light of this two-fold dimension. On the einmalig level we have a man born blind and healed by Jesus; because of his belief in Jesus as the Messiah he is eventually cast out of the synagogue. On the contemporary level, however, this man represents, in Martyn's view, Jews living in the Jewish quarter of the city in which the evangelist was residing at the time. Like the man born blind they find that they too have been excluded from the synagogue because they were prepared to confess that Jesus was the Christ. Martyn is thus led to conclude that there is a large measure of parallelism between the events described in John 9 as far as the exclusion from the synagogue is concerned, and the events surrounding the introduction of the "Benediction Against Heretics", a method used by the Sages of Jamnia to separate Jewish Christians from the main body of Judaism. However the parallelism is not limited to the question of exclusion from the synagogue alone. Martyn believes that it is possible to discover other similarities. Thus he suggests that the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem is paralleled by the Gerousia (i.e. the ruling body of Jewish elders) in John's city; similarly, the street in Jerusalem where the events described in John 9 took place has its parallel in the Jewish quarter of John's own city. (37)

Martyn sums up the conclusions of his investigation into John 9 as follows:

"Thus the Fourth Gospel affords us a picture of a Jewish community which has been (recently?) shaken by the introduction of a newly formulated means for detecting those Jews who want to hold a dual allegiance to Moses and to Jesus as Messiah. Even against the will of some of the synagogue leaders, the Heretic Benediction is now employed in order formally and irretrievably to separate the church from the synagogue. In the two-level drama of John 9 the man born blind plays not only the part of a Jew in Jerusalem healed by Jesus of Nazareth, but also the part of Jews known to John who have become members of the separated church because of their messianic faith and because of the awesome Benediction" (ibid., 40,f).

In the remaining sections of his book Martyn applies the two-level-drama approach to other parts and themes of the Fourth Gospel, especially to the question of the identity of and the measures taken against the "Jewish-Christian Beguiler", the Jewish expectation of the Prophet-Messiah like Moses, and Jesus as the Son of Man.

There are certain limitations about Martyn's work that should not be overlooked in any assessment of his views. The most important of these is that he has applied his two-level approach only to certain sections and themes of the gospel, and presumably to those which he found to be the most suitable and advantageous to his line of argument. For this reason it is to be doubted that he would be equally successful in interpreting the rest of the gospel in the same fashion.

It cannot be denied, however, that Martyn, within the limits of the material chosen by him, has argued his case persuasively. If it is possible to question the validity of certain of the identifications which he makes⁽³⁸⁾ this, it seems to me does not detract from the overall significance of his theory. As Martyn himself (*ibid.*, 77) puts it: "One may be confident that he (i.e. the evangelist) did not intend his readers to analyze the *dramatis personae* in the way in which we have done it. Indeed, I doubt that he was himself analytically conscious of what I have termed the two-level drama, for his major concern in this regard was to bear witness to the essential integrity of the einmalig drama of Jesus' earthly life and the contemporary drama in which the Risen Lord acts through his servants" (words underlined are in italics in the text).

The important point of Martyn's theory consists in the general similarity that he is able to establish between the "drama" on the einmalig level and what was happening on the contemporary level. In this the exact correspondence of the *dramatis personae* of the one level with those of the other level is not a vital aspect of the theory and therefore there is no need to labour over this point.

(3) Exclusion from the Synagogue

From what has been said of Martyn's theory it should be clear that the question of exclusion from the synagogue has an important part to play in it. This scholar was not, of course, the first to explore this theme⁽³⁹⁾ but his book did serve to highlight its importance once more for an understanding of the Fourth Gospel and the possible influence this could have

in determining its destination. As Dodd (Tradition, 412) puts it: "In the Fourth Gospel the followers of Christ are threatened with excommunication from the Synagogue - a menace which would have no terrors for any but Jewish Christians".

In this section we shall discuss first of all what the Fourth Gospel itself has to say about exclusion from the synagogue. We shall then examine possible contemporary events at the time of the gospel's composition, following the lead given by Martyn, events which in a sense might reflect this theme and at the same time have served as a precipitating cause of the gospel having been written.

(a) The Fourth Gospel and Exclusion from the Synagogue

The Fourth Gospel makes three references to an exclusion (ἀποσυνάγωγος) of this nature:

- (i) After the man born blind has been healed by Jesus the "Jews" summon his parents in order to question them about their son and how he had come to receive his sight. They refuse to say anything beyond admitting that he is indeed their son. The evangelist tells us that the reason why they would not comment on how he had received his sight was "because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue (ἀποσυνάγωγος γένηται)" (9:22). That this was no idle threat appears to be borne out by 9:34 where we are told that the blind man himself was "cast out" by the Jews.
- (ii) The theme of "confessing" - "expulsion from the synagogue" appears again in 12:42, f. where we read: "Nevertheless many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue (ἵνα μὴ ἀποσυνάγωγοι γένηνται) : for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God".
- (iii) Finally, in 16:2 Jesus tells his disciples that "they shall put you out of the synagogue (ἀποσυναγωγὸς ποιήσουσιν ὑμᾶς)".

The person with a logical frame of mind and concerned about the accuracy of detail will notice certain anomalies about the evidence quoted above. First

of all we are told in 9:22 that the Jews had already agreed that anybody who confessed Jesus to be the Christ should be excluded from the synagogue and the man whose sight had been restored to him by Jesus is apparently "cast out" in accordance with this ruling. It could be argued, however, that the prime candidates for exclusion from the synagogue would have been Jesus' own disciples. That they had not been excluded from the synagogue during the life-time of Jesus is borne out by the fact that Jesus foretells that this is something which will happen in the future. The opening chapters of the Acts of the Apostles appear to corroborate this. They describe how the apostles and believers used to go up to the Temple to pray even after Pentecost (cf. 2:46, 5:12, 13:48; see also Lk 24:53).⁽⁴⁰⁾ Paul, in the opening stages of his missionary work always proceeded to the synagogue whenever he arrived in a new town (cf. Acts 13:5, 14:1, 16:13, 17:10,17, 18:4,19, 19:8). In all of this there is no hint of there being a formal, official decree expelling from the synagogue those who confess Jesus to be the Christ even though Paul does come in for some rather rough treatment at the hands of the Jews when he has provoked them to anger with his preaching (cf. Acts 13:45,ff., 14:2-6,19, 17:5,ff.,13, 18:6-7,12-17, 19:9, 21:27,ff., 23:12,ff.; see also 2 Cor 11:24). Considerations such as these bring us face to face with the larger problem of the nature of the relationship that existed between Judaism and Christianity in the early days of the latter's history. Martyn (op. cit., 27,f) sums up the evidence of Acts thus: "All the way from the arrest of Peter and John in chapter 3 to Paul's appearance (now as a Christian) before the Sanhedrin in chapter 23, Acts paints a picture in which Jewish authorities view the church as essentially subject to Jewish law. That is to say, the church is viewed by the Jewish authorities as a sect, a bothersome one to be sure, but still a sect which remained within the bosom of Judaism. This is nowhere more apparent than in the case of Paul's activity as a persecutor....". When Paul himself is eventually brought before the Sanhedrin in chapter 23 it is interesting to note that he still identifies himself with the Pharisees (23:6,ff).

(b) The "Birkath ha-minim"

Martyn's approach to the anomalies referred to above was, as we have seen, to view the gospel material from two different levels. If we take our cue from him and pursue the general similarity between the einmalig level and the (wider) contemporary level of the drama of John 9, it cannot be denied that the decision by the Jews, on the einmalig level, to expel from the synagogue anybody who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah was an important element. It is therefore necessary to establish the existence of a

similar ruling on the contemporary level. Most commentators would find such a parallel in the Birkath ha-minim (ברכת חמינים).⁽⁴¹⁾ This is the twelfth blessing in the prayer known as the Shemoneh Esreh and it formed a part of the chief prayer of the synagogue service. In the earliest form of it known to us it reads as follows:

"For the rênegades let there be no hope, and may the arrogant kingdom soon be rooted out in our days, and the Nazarenes and the minim perish as in a moment and be blotted out from the book of life and with the righteous may they not be inscribed. Blessed are thou, O Lord, who humblest the arrogant."⁽⁴²⁾

In its earliest original form this blessing did not contain the phrase beginning with the words "and the Nazarenes...." and ending with ".... may they not be inscribed." The addition of this phrase, according to the evidence of the Talmud, was the work of Samuel the Less at the instigation of Rabban Gamaliel II.⁽⁴³⁾

There seems to be some dispute among scholars as to whether the words "and the Nazarenes" (הנרצרים) should be considered to be a part of the original text as supplemented by Samuel the Less. It is argued by some that the phrase "the minim" (חמנים) alone would be sufficient to cover Christians as well as any other heretics that were intended to be included.⁽⁴⁴⁾ However in the context of our discussion this question need not detain us long. W.D. Davies (op. cit., 276) sums up what is for our purposes the important point: "In any case, a petition, either against heretics, including Jewish Christians, or against heretics and specifically Jewish Christians, was introduced into the Tefillah at Jamnia, at what date exactly we cannot ascertain".

As regards the date when the enlarged form of the 12th Blessing was introduced, Davies (ibid.) is of the opinion that "it was probably somewhere around 85 A.D." Other scholars, following Strack-Billberbeck, would put it at about 90 A.D. What is beyond doubt is that it was composed during the period when Rabban Gamaliel II presided over the Sages at Jamnia. This, according to Martyn (op. cit., 34) extended from approximately A.D. 80 to A.D. 115, and, as Barrett (op. cit., 48) notes, "anything that occurred in the period of Gamaliel occurred in the period of the Fourth Gospel".⁽⁴⁵⁾

The introduction of the Birkath ha-minim into the liturgy of the synagogue marked a turning-point in the relations between Judaism and Christianity.

We have already noted that according to the picture painted for us by the Acts of the Apostles Christians were considered to fall within the ambit of Judaism and in some way under the authority of its leaders. The Christians constituted just another sect within Judaism even if, at times, it proved to be an extremely troublesome one.⁽⁴⁶⁾ By introducing the Birkath ha-minim, however, it appears beyond reasonable doubt that the intention of the Sages at Jamnia was in some way to separate and isolate Jewish Christians from the main body of Judaism. This it did "simply, but effectively", as Davies (op. cit., 276) describes:

"In the Synagogue service a man was designated to lead in the reciting of the Tefillah. As he approached the platform, where stood the ark containing the Scrolls of the Law, the congregation rose. The leader would recite the Benedictions and the congregation, finally, responded to these with the Amen. Anyone called upon to recite the Tefillah who stumbled on the 12th Benediction could easily be detected. Thus the Birkath ha Minim served the purpose of making any Christian, who might be present in a synagogue service, conspicuous by the way in which he recited or glossed over this Benediction."

This presumably resulted in him being "drummed out" of the synagogue fellowship, to quote Martyn's phrase (op. cit., 38,f).

Among scholars there is some dispute about the exact nature of the ban in question.⁽⁴⁷⁾ There is no unanimity either about the exact nature of its effects. Martyn (op. cit., 31) for example, states that "the formal separation between church and synagogue has been accomplished in John's milieu by means of the Jewish Benediction Against Heretics". G.F. Moore (Judaism, I, 91) on the other hand states that the effect that the Birkath ha-minim had in driving the Nazarenes out of the synagogues is unknown. On the previous page (ibid., 90), however, he had also stated that "one incidental result" of the war which followed Bar Cocheba's revolt was that "it brought about the final separation of the Nazarenes from the rest of the Jews". Perhaps greater justice would be done to all the evidence if one were to speak of the Birkath ha-minim as having initiated a process that finally resulted in the total separation of church and synagogue after the rebellion of 132-135 A.D. Such issues are, however, concerned with what might be called the global aspects of the problem whereas the Fourth Gospel is more interested with its implications on the level of the individual.

When we bear in mind the importance that the synagogue had come to assume not only in the religious life of the Jew but also on the national, social,

and even economic levels, it is not difficult to imagine that the inclusion of the Birkath ha-minim must have led to much soul-searching on the part of many Jewish believers. The situation had all the ingredients of a traumatic experience for many of them. In such a situation it is easy to see how the Fourth Gospel would have played a very important supportive role, emphasizing as it did that the true Jew was in fact that one who accepted that Jesus was the Messiah and that in him everything that was of importance in Judaism found its meaning and fulfilment. This, as we have seen, was the pattern which the evangelist used throughout the whole of his gospel.

To appreciate fully, however, what the evangelist was attempting to do and the appeal that his gospel would have had to those Jews who, as a result of the Birkath ha-minim found themselves confronted by the need to make a decision for or against the claims of Jesus, it is necessary to take into account the major developments within Judaism that followed upon the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. That these developments had a bearing on the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim cannot be doubted.

In this period, introduced as it was by "a tragedy of earth-shaking proportions" for the Jews, "the major threat to Judaism was that of disintegration" (Martyn, op. cit., 33). To this threat, and inextricably bound up with it, Davies (op. cit., 258) adds another, "the contemporaneous, insidious attraction of forces from without, that is, of paganism in general and, especially, of Christianity and Gnosticism in some form or other". As a counter-measure to these threats there took place at Jamnia the establishment of a body of learned men under the leadership of Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Within this assembly the Pharisaic party quickly gained the upper hand largely at the expense of the Sadducees and the priests.⁽⁴⁹⁾ Gradually the Bet Din of Jamnia, as the assembly came to be called, assumed many of the prerogatives and powers that had once belonged to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem so that its authority came to be recognized and accepted by Jews in general. In this regard Epstein (Judaism, 113) notes that one of the most direct means it had at its disposal for the extending of the exercise of its authority over world Jewry "was the prerogative, hitherto reserved for the Jerusalem Sanhedrin, of regulating month by month the calendar, and communicating to most distant communities the day of the new moon on which the whole of the Diaspora no less than the Palestinian Jews depended for the celebration of the ensuing feasts and fasts". It should be noted that the

nature of the Bet Din's authority was basically religious. In the new situation following the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple it obviously did not possess the political power that had belonged to the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem. (50)

The events of 70 A.D. created turmoil within Judaism. It resulted in the need for a reappraisal and reformulation of certain fundamental Jewish beliefs and practices. This task the Bet Din of Jamnia undertook always with a view, however, to the preserving and the strengthening of the unity of Judaism. As a weapon in its quest for unity the Law assumed more importance than ever. Attention was given to its codification and modification, something that was necessitated by the altered circumstances. (51)

The destruction of the Temple which had always been a unifying force of great significance within Judaism resulted in added importance being attached to the synagogue and its liturgy. Thus the aim of some of the changes in the ritual of Judaism was, according to Davies (op. cit., 269), "to concentrate in the Synagogue, when this was possible, forms previously associated with the Temple, so that they would continue to evoke memories of the Temple through the Synagogue, and thus still exercise their unifying power".

Like the Sages of Jamnia the fourth evangelist also devoted a relatively large amount of space to treating these same themes. We saw, for example, how he "re-interpreted" the Law in terms of Jesus. He also emphasized the over-riding importance of the commandment to love one another as the only means of assuring true unity (as opposed to the series of takkanot that were beginning to be issued from Jamnia?). Similarly in the Fourth Gospel the Temple and its liturgy, the great festivals of the Jewish calendar no longer have a meaningful role to play after the coming of Jesus. Hence there is no need to maintain them.

It cannot, of course, be proved that the fourth evangelist was aware of the trends and emphases in Judaism that were initiated prior to the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim. But in view of all that has been said it does not appear to be an unreasonable assumption that he did know of these developments for many sections of the Fourth Gospel receive an added importance and meaning when seen in this context. (52)

(D) Conclusions

From our discussion of a sample of the theories that give to the Fourth Gospel a Christian destination and purpose a number of basic facts have emerged which it seems to me we cannot overlook. Schnackenburg, for example, has shown that at least John 13 to 17 should be seen as being addressed to those who already believe, be they Jews or Gentiles. However the reference to exclusion from the synagogue in 16:2 must be seen as being of significance to Jews alone. Similarly our examination of the gospel's eschatology led us to conclude that the evangelist's teaching in this regard would have been most meaningful to those who were already familiar with the Church's teaching on this as reflected in the synoptic tradition and the Pauline literature. Martyn, on the other hand, following the lead given by other scholars, has shown that the question of exclusion from the synagogue has received particular attention from the evangelist. This, he contends, was due to the events that were taking place at the time of the gospel's composition, or perhaps because of which it came to be composed, viz. the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim and the consequences that flowed from this. Because this ban would have created a problem that would have been of vital concern only to Jews, the conclusion that this suggests is that the gospel itself, or at least those parts of it that deal with the question of exclusion from the synagogue, must have been written for those Jews who were intimately affected by the Birkath ha-minim. Against the background of the rivalry and the controversies this must have generated it is possible, however, to account for the way in which the evangelist has handled and developed much of the other material included in the gospel.

As far as the Fourth Gospel's destination is concerned, therefore, we are led to conclude that there are certain aspects of and themes in the gospel that point to a Christian audience. Other aspects become more intelligible and meaningful if the gospel is seen as being addressed to Jewish Christians. But having stated that, it is also important to note that none of the theories we have discussed have in actual fact accounted for the whole of the gospel in terms of these destinations. Each has served to highlight one or more particular aspect of the gospel.

What conclusions may we draw about the Fourth Gospel's purpose from our discussion in this chapter? In our introductory comments we noted that we

are not concerned with what we termed the "general purpose" of the gospel. Rather our interests lie in its "specific purposes", in other words, in the manner in which the evangelist encourages belief in his readers.

If we presume for one moment that the general purpose of the gospel was to strengthen the faith of those who already believed, then, looked at objectively, there are various ways in which the evangelist could have set about achieving this. He could, for example, have adopted a direct approach, addressing words of exhortation and encouragement to the believers. On the other hand the same end could very well have been achieved by the use of more indirect methods; for example he could have attacked the arguments of those who were responsible for undermining the faith of believers in the first place, or he could have set out to provide his readers with clearer and more convincing "proofs" and evidence of the correctness of their own beliefs. In the two "indirect" methods we have just described the objective is the same but the emphasis in each case is different. The former we may describe as being "polemical" in nature and approach while the latter is more "apologetical".

To return to the Fourth Gospel and the theories we have been discussing in this chapter. It seems to me that there are undoubtedly traces of what we have described as the "direct" method of strengthening the faith of believers. But by and large these elements are concentrated in Farewell Discourses with their words of comfort (14:1,ff.,18,ff), the promise of another Counsellor who would remain with the disciples for ever (14:16,ff., 26,ff., 16:7,ff), exhortations to love (13:34,f., 14:21,ff., 15:9,ff) and to remain faithful (15:1,ff., 16:1,ff), words of encouragement and the promise of peace and joy in the face of persecution by the "world" (14:27,ff., 15:18,ff., 16:20,ff) and, finally, Jesus' own prayer not only for his disciples (17:1,ff) but also for "those who believe in me through their word" (17:20). But what of the rest of the gospel? Martyn, as we have intimated, would see the evangelist strengthening the faith of believers by the use of a polemical approach in the controversies that raged between the Jewish community and the Johannine church. In this, of course, Martyn is not alone. But in combining an "edifying" or "Christian" purpose with that of a polemical approach Martyn introduces us to another problem which, because of its potential importance for our enquiry, must be discussed in a separate chapter. The problem to which we refer is the possibility that the fourth evangelist might have had more than one purpose and destination in mind when composing his gospel.

CHAPTER FIVE : THEORIES OF MULTIPLE PURPOSES AND DESTINATIONS

Introduction

Our investigation up to this point has been concerned, in the main, with those theories which have attempted to understand the Fourth Gospel in terms of a single purpose and destination. In the course of our discussion we had reason to mention some of the difficulties inherent in such an approach. This was particularly the case with the polemical group of theories. These, we noted, were unsatisfactory when taken by themselves for the simple reason that a person usually engages in a polemic for a specific purpose. In the case of those theories which attribute a "Christian" purpose to the gospel we saw that there was also a danger here of defining this purpose in such general terms that it is of little value in helping to determine the point under investigation, viz. the "specific" purpose(s) of the gospel. Because of these difficulties some scholars have attributed several purposes and/or destinations to the Fourth Gospel. In this chapter we shall examine some of the more important and representative of these, and especially the evidence usually quoted in support. For the sake of convenience we shall divide our discussion, where possible, into theories which propose "multiple purposes" and those which propose "multiple destinations" for the gospel.⁽¹⁾

(A) Theories of Multiple Purposes

(1) An Outline of the Theories

Most authors who suggest that the Fourth Gospel has more than one purpose are inclined to draw a distinction between the gospel's "primary" purpose and its "secondary" or "subsidiary" ones.⁽²⁾ In this section we propose to give a resumé of the views of a few of those who fall into this category.

W.G. Kümmel, in his Introduction (162,f), believes that John was "primarily written in order to establish and secure the faith of Christians". In the light of this "primary" purpose Kümmel is of the opinion that it is possible "to understand the polemical features which John exhibits". Among these he includes the following:

- (a) While rejecting that the Fourth Gospel contains a polemic against Cerinthus, he does not deny that "John contains a polemic against Gnostic thoughts";
- (b) the polemic against John the Baptist which, however, Kümmel believes "is only a relatively slightly emphasized motif"; and
- (c) the polemic against Judaism.

A. Wikenhauser (Introduction, 307) is another scholar who believes that while the Fourth Gospel was written for "believing Christians" the evangelist wrote it "in silent controversy with certain opponents of the Christian Church in his day". Among these Wikenhauser includes "the Jews", the followers of the Baptist, and Cerinthus.

R. Schnackenburg, who, as we have seen, accepts that the Fourth Gospel was written for Christians, believes that the evangelist's "major interest" is Christology (St John, 153, ff). "The evangelist found in the person of Christ, as he grasped it in faith, the theological principle which enabled him to re-think the revelation of Christ proclaimed by the primitive Church and to disclose its depths" (ibid., 164). But in addition to this "major interest" of his, Schnackenburg states that there are in the Fourth Gospel "a number of practical interests at work" (ibid., 165). Thus he finds an apologetical and/or polemical attitude to Judaism, the disciples of John the Baptist and baptist groups, and to Gnostic trends.⁽³⁾

Leaving aside for the moment Barrett's views on the question of whether the Fourth Gospel had a "destination" or not⁽⁴⁾ this scholar suggests that the gospel's purpose may be "defined in terms of two problems which beset the Christian faith at the end of the 1st cent." (John, in "Peake's Commentary", 846). The problems in question were those of eschatology and Gnosticism.⁽⁵⁾ Against the background of the difficulties created by them the evangelist "wrote to reaffirm the fundamental convictions of the Christian faith in the full light of new circumstances, new terminology, and new experiences" (St John, 117). Barrett also acknowledges that certain elements in the gospel may owe something "to polemic against those who rated the Baptist too highly" (ibid., 144; also 142). As far as the fourth evangelist's attitude to Judaism is concerned Barrett states that

"it is probable that the controversial dialogues in the gospel reflect the course of Christian anti-Jewish polemic; Jewish objections to Christian theology, and especially to Christian views of the person of Christ, are stated, and strongly, sometimes fiercely (e.g. 8:39-59), rebutted" (ibid., 79).⁽⁶⁾

In his book, History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel, J.L. Martyn, as we indicated in the previous chapter, believes that there is evidence of an anti-Jewish polemic in the Fourth Gospel. In a more recent article entitled "Source Criticism and Religionsgeschichte in the Fourth Gospel" this author has taken up the question once more but has approached it from a different angle and placed it in a wider context.

Taking into account the findings and conclusions reached by R.T. Fortna (The Gospel of Signs), E. Käsemann (The Testament of Jesus) and W.A. Meeks (The Prophet-King) Martyn formulates two hypotheses in the light of which he examines certain aspects of the Fourth Gospel. The hypotheses in question are -

- (i) "Fortna's Signs Gospel (SG) is reasonably similar to the Fourth Evangelist's narrative source".⁽⁷⁾
- (ii) "Between the production of the SG and the writing of the Fourth Gospel (4G) lie dynamic developments of various sorts which played important roles in causing the Fourth Evangelist to handle SG as he did" (ibid., 248).

This means that in Martyn's view there are at least three stages in the composition of the gospel, viz., "the writing of SG, subsequent and thus chronologically intervening developments, including activities on the part of "opponents"; and the writing of 4G" (ibid., 250).

What could be significant about Martyn's approach for the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel is the importance he attaches to "intervening developments" between the writing of the Signs Gospel and the writing of the Fourth Gospel since these developments could have exercised considerable influence on the shaping of the ultimate destination and purpose of the completed work. As Martyn himself puts it: "an adequate understanding of the third stage will require careful consideration of both its predecessors" (ibid.).

We have already had occasion to discuss Fortna's Signs Gospel elsewhere, at least in so far as this might have had a bearing on the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose.⁽⁸⁾ What interests us at this stage are the "intervening developments" which Martyn suggests in his second hypothesis "played important roles in causing the Fourth Evangelist to handle SG as he did". Following the commentaries of Schnackenburg and Brown, and the works of Meeks and Käsemann cited above, Martyn offers the following suggestions as examples of the type of developments he has in mind:

- a) a struggle with followers of John the Baptist
- b) a hardening of battle lines between synagogue and church
- c) inner-church problems, such as:
 - (1) over-emphasis on the anticipated glories of Jesus' future coming
 - (2) loss of a sense of contact with and memory of the earthly Jesus, with concomitant danger that Christianity might devolve into a mystery religion
 - (3) docetism
 - (4) growth of a hardening and institutionally oriented orthodoxy which pits itself with increasing fervor against the growth of Hellenistic enthusiasm in the church
 - (5) theological developments which are not truly christocentric (ibid., 252).

Martyn himself postulates that developments such as these did influence the evangelist in the writing of his gospel and therefore the way in which he handled the material of the Signs Gospel. Clearly if this is what did happen then the Fourth Gospel had a destination and purpose very different from that of the Signs Gospel as reconstructed by Fortna.⁽⁹⁾

Two other scholars who have argued along lines similar to Martyn but from different starting-points are R.E. Brown and B. Lindars. In his commentary Brown (John, XXXIV, ff) posits five stages in the composition of the Fourth Gospel, a number which he believes is the minimum "for we suspect that the full details of the Gospel's prehistory are far too complicated to reconstruct" (ibid., XXXIV). Briefly the five stages he posits are the following:

- (1) "The existence of a body of traditional material pertaining to the words and works of Jesus - material similar to what has gone into the Synoptic Gospels, but material whose origins were

independent of the Synoptic tradition."

- (2) "The development of this material in Johannine patterns." This, according to Brown, took place over several decades and "was probably accomplished through oral preaching and teaching". It should be noted that more than one person was responsible for this development. Brown prefers to think of the existence of "a close-knit school of thought and expression" which had a "principal preacher" who was responsible for the main body of the Gospel material.
- (3) "The organization of this material from Stage 2 into a consecutive Gospel. This would be the first edition of the Fourth Gospel as a distinct work." According to Brown "it seems logical to suppose that it was he (i.e. the principal preacher) who organized the first edition of the Gospel".
- (4) "The secondary edition by the evangelist." The purpose of this edition was "to answer the objections or difficulties of several groups, for example, the disciples of John the Baptist, Jewish Christians who had not yet left the Synagogue, and others." This necessitated, according to Brown, the introduction of new material into the gospel.
- (5) "A final editing or redaction by someone other than the evangelist and whom we shall call the redactor." Brown believes that this redactor was "a close friend or disciple of the evangelist, and certainly part of the general school of thought to which we referred in Stage 2." This redactor included Johannine material from Stage 2 that had not yet found its way into the Fourth Gospel.

Briefly, therefore, Brown believes that the Fourth Gospel as we have it is the end product of two editions of the gospel and a final redaction by a disciple.

In his discussion of Stage 4 Brown lays the foundation of his approach to the problem of the gospel's destination and purpose. In the light of what he has to say there he believes that "it is perfectly legitimate to speak of the several aims of the Gospel" (ibid., LXVII). Thus in his view there is evidence in the Fourth Gospel that entitles one to see it as being :

- (a) an "apologetic against the sectarians of John the Baptist" (LXVII, ff);
- (b) an argument with the Jews involving "justification of Christian claims against Jewish unbelief" and an "appeal to Jewish Christians in the Diaspora Synagogues" (LXX, ff);
- (c) an "argument against Christian heretics" (Gnostics, Ebionites, Docetists) (LXXV, ff); and
- (d) an "encouragement to believing Christians, Gentile and Jew" (LXXVII, ff).

B. Lindars (Behind the Fourth Gospel, 38) argues against the view that the "traditional material" in the Fourth Gospel came from a single source. In his opinion this material came rather from "a mass of unrelated traditions or from several short collections (or perhaps both: some short collections and some individual items)". In fact he believes that the Fourth Gospel began life as separate homilies which John subsequently used as the basis for a continuous gospel (ibid., 77, f). In other words John took this mass of amorphous material and imposed his own pattern and some unity on it. Lindars believes that the Fourth Gospel underwent two editions, the purpose of the second edition being to meet various new developments.

(2) Evaluation

Perhaps the first thing that strikes the student of Brown's views is the hypothetical and conjectural nature of the greater part of his theory. He himself sees its limitations when he admits that "there remain many inadequacies and uncertainties in such a theory" (ibid., XXXIX). He notes the difficulties involved in distinguishing what belonged to the first and second editions and what must be attributed to the hand of the redactor. Such admissions on his part do not take away from the fact that in spite of these difficulties he has attempted, on insufficient grounds, to make such a division of material and then to build on it. He accepts that the gospel has "a uniform style" (apart from chapter 21); therefore it is difficult to see how such distinctions in the material could be made on the grounds of language and style. Further, what he calls "the secondary edition" of the Gospel was, according to him, prompted by the need "to answer the objections or difficulties of several groups" (see above). At this stage the question that springs to mind is this: what grounds does Brown have for concluding that all of the objections and difficulties referred to were answered in a "secondary edition"? Is it not possible that the Gospel

could have undergone many more editions, with each one being aimed at meeting a specific situation or problem? It is hard to believe that the several groups for whom the "secondary edition" of the gospel was intended existed in the same area as the gospel was composed, at the same time as the "secondary edition" was written, and in sufficiently large numbers to merit special treatment in that particular edition of the gospel.

The similarities of Lindars' views with those of Brown are patent. Both believe that the Fourth Gospel underwent two editions, though Brown does, of course, add that there was a final redaction by a disciple of the evangelist. As we have already seen that there is convincing evidence that the Fourth Gospel was edited before it came to be circulated in the form known to us, it is clear that we would have no quarrel with the theory of two editions, though whether there was a final redaction is another question.⁽¹⁰⁾ So too is the nature of the changes and additions made to the gospel when it was edited. Both Brown and Lindars believe that the second edition was necessitated by developments after the first edition had been completed. We would not wish to quibble about this assumption either as we have already pointed out that there must have been specific reasons why it was thought necessary to edit the Fourth Gospel.

Perhaps the redeeming feature of Lindars' approach, when compared with that of Brown, is that he does not attempt to prove too much about the manner in which the Fourth Gospel evolved to its final form on the basis of proven evidence. At the same time, however, it cannot be denied that even in the case of Lindars we enter the realm of hypothesis and conjecture when we come to the question of the nature and contents of the body of material which, it is claimed, is at the root of the Fourth Gospel.

Martyn is probably on much surer ground when he uses a Signs Gospel similar to that reconstructed by Fortna as his starting-point. As we have noted, there is substantial evidence to support the existence of such a source behind the Fourth Gospel. However despite the support such a theory has won the existence of this source is still doubted by some scholars. But even among those who accept the existence of such a source there is considerable doubt about whether it is possible to reconstruct its contents, and attempts to do this are therefore frequently considered to be largely conjectural and hypothetical.⁽¹¹⁾ Thus any conclusions based on such hypothetical foundations are of necessity open to question.⁽¹²⁾

We are concerned, however, with the manner in which the gospel came to be composed only to the extent that this might shed some light upon its purpose and destination. Martyn proposed in this regard that certain developments between the writing of the Signs Gospel and the Fourth Gospel influenced the approach of the author of the latter work and must therefore have had some bearing on the material to be found in the gospel and the treatment of this by the evangelist. The assumption is that the Fourth Gospel was written to meet the new situation created by the developments in question.

On the matter of what these "developments" or influences were Martyn's views have much in common with those of Schnackenburg and Brown (to whom he referred), Kümmel, Wikenhauser, and to a lesser extent, Barrett,⁽¹³⁾ all of whom see the Fourth Gospel directed at a variety of problems and situations and intended to meet or counteract the impact they were having on the faith of believers.

What conclusions may we make about the various suggestions that have been made in this regard? It seems to me that our discussion up to this point entitles us to state that -

- (1) there is some evidence in the gospel of a polemic against the Jews;⁽¹⁴⁾
- (2) there is no clear evidence that the fourth evangelist was pursuing a polemic against the Gnostics although the Gnostic Systems might have had some influence upon the way in which the material or traditions used by the evangelist in the composition of the gospel came to be shaped, and that
- (3) there is no real evidence of an anti-Baptist polemic in the Fourth Gospel.

While acknowledging that there is evidence of an anti-Jewish polemic in the Fourth Gospel it must not be assumed that we are thereby proposing that this was one of the purposes of the gospel. In our concluding comments to chapter two we noted that when taken in isolation "polemical" theories concerning the purpose of the gospel are unsatisfactory and inadequate for the reasons discussed there. In view of this it seems to me that we are forced to conclude that this polemical feature of the Fourth Gospel should rather be seen as one of the tools or methods used by the evangelist to achieve what was intended to be the purpose of the gospel.

(B) Theories of Multiple Destinations(1) An Outline of the Theories

As we noted in the previous chapter, most scholars who give to the Fourth Gospel a "Christian destination" include under it both Jewish and Gentile Christians.⁽¹⁵⁾ However one scholar who veers towards the view that the Fourth Gospel was missionary in purpose (while stressing the importance given to the individual in the gospel), and who also believes that it was written for both Jews and Gentiles is C.F.D. Moule. In his book, The Birth of the New Testament, he puts it as follows: "Perhaps it (i.e. the Fourth Gospel) is the evangelist's explanation of Christianity to the cosmopolitan people of Ephesus, Jew and Greek alike" (ibid., 94).

Those who support both a Jewish and Gentile destination for the Fourth Gospel acknowledge the presence in it of much that is Jewish. But at the same time they emphasize that there are certain non-Jewish traits that would not have been necessary if the audience intended had been exclusively Jewish. To quote once more from Moule (ibid., 93,f): "it is almost impossible to explain certain phenomena if it was meant for Jews exclusively: that the Passover was a Jewish Festival is scarcely a gloss that such would need. It is easier to see it as meant for Jew and Gentile alike, and to read the glosses - so painfully elementary even for Jews of the dispersion - as put in for the benefit of Gentiles".

F.L. Cribbs ("A Reassessment of the Date of Origin and the Destination of the Gospel of John") is another scholar who has given to the Fourth Gospel a "double" destination. But he suggests that it was addressed to two distinct groups of Jews, viz. to :

"(1) non-Christian Jews in areas where the church was attempting to carry on a mission to the Jews in an effort to persuade them that Christianity was a genuine extension of historic Judaism and that Jesus was a devout Jewish rabbi who was actually the promised "prophet like Moses" whose Messiahship had been confirmed by the resurrection and (2) to certain Jewish Christian communities which were experiencing growing opposition from orthodox Jews and an influx of gentile Christians into their fellowship in an endeavour to strengthen their faith in Jesus as the Messiah and their love for their fellow Christians whether they be gentiles or Jews" (ibid., 55).

Fundamental for Cribbs' theory is the question of the date of origin of the Fourth Gospel. He argues that it was written "during the late 50's or

early 60's" (ibid) primarily on the grounds that "John seems to have been completely ignorant of the developing synoptic tradition that found its fullest development in Matthew and Luke" (ibid., 39) and also the fact that the gospel appears to reflect a time when the Church and temple were still in dialogue and when the Church was engaged in a mission to the Jews, rather than to the period when the Birkath ha-minim was introduced. In support of this last contention Cribbs states that :

"the concerns found in John are those that were typical of the church prior to A.D. 70 (e.g. church unity, brotherly love, the Messiahship of Jesus, the relationship of the church to Israel, the mystery of Israel's unbelief, Jewish persecutions), while the important concerns towards which the late first-century churches directed their attention (e.g. the rise of false prophets within the church, the loss of early enthusiasm, apostasy, the antichrist, church discipline and organization, Roman persecutions) are totally lacking in John" (ibid., 54).

Briefly, therefore, theories have been proposed which suggest that the Fourth Gospel was addressed to (a) Jewish and Gentile Christians, (b) non-Christian Jews and Gentiles, and (c) Jews, both Christian and non-Christian.

(2) Evaluation

(a) As we indicated above, the validity of Cribbs' argument depends to a large extent on the possibility of giving an early dating to the gospel's composition. However conclusions reached elsewhere in this thesis cause us to disagree with him on a number of points.

The first thing to be noted is that it is not possible on purely external historical grounds to rule out an earlier dating for the gospel's composition than that which is generally accepted by scholars at the present time. The reason for this is that while evidence might exist which entitles one to fix a terminus ante quem with a reasonably high degree of certainty, the same cannot be said for the gospel's terminus post quem for obvious reasons.⁽¹⁶⁾ Hence any investigation of this question must first of all examine the contents of the gospel itself and then attempt to situate it in a concrete historical situation. This in fact is what Cribbs has attempted to do, but unsuccessfully in my opinion, and this for the following reasons.

Firstly, the truth of his statement that "John seems to have been completely ignorant of the developing synoptic tradition" is open to question. Our

discussion of the nature of the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics led us to conclude that while the fourth evangelist was not directly dependent on or even consciously aware of the Synoptic Gospels themselves when he wrote his own gospel, it is nevertheless possible to establish that there are some "points of contact" between the Fourth Gospel and the traditions behind the Synoptics. In any event, irrespective of the position adopted on this particular question, independence from the Synoptics cannot be considered to have much value for proving an early date of origin for the gospel because such independence can be explained quite adequately even if a later date for the Fourth Gospel's composition is decided upon. Clearly, however, if it were to be accepted that the fourth evangelist was indeed dependent upon the Synoptics this would of course undermine the whole of Cribbs' argument. Hence the need he has to prove that the Fourth Gospel is independent. The most that can be claimed from this line of reasoning, therefore, is that an early date of origin is not ruled out on this score; but in itself it makes no contribution to proving that an earlier date is the more likely one.

Of more significance for Cribbs' argument is his claim that "the concerns found in John are those that were typical of the church prior to A.D. 70". Now it is quite possible and indeed quite likely that the "concerns" he lists in this regard were "typical" of the church at that time. But if one attributes to the Fourth Gospel - if only for the sake of argument - the degree of interest in ecclesiological questions that Cribbs apparently does, it seems to me that there is no reason why all of these "concerns" would not have been just as true and applicable in the situation created by the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim. Certainly the question of the "Messiahship of Jesus" would have been of equal, if not greater, concern at this time. Similarly, the question of "Jewish persecutions" would have in fact been more relevant at that later date. This is not to deny that there were no "Jewish persecutions" before A.D. 70. But they should not be limited to that period, as Cribbs appears to be doing. Moreover, Cribbs' views on this point does not adequately account for the references to exclusion from the synagogue, a theme which, as Martyn and others have shown, is of considerable importance in the Fourth Gospel.

Cribbs' contention that "the important concerns towards which the late first-century churches directed their attention.... are totally lacking in John" must also be treated with circumspection. It is indeed highly

questionable whether all of these "concerns" are "totally lacking in John". Käsemann, as we have seen, argued that the fourth evangelist was deeply aware of the question of "church discipline and organization". It could also be argued, and to my mind quite convincingly, that the fourth evangelist's treatment of the eschatological question was geared to counteracting the disappointment and "loss of early enthusiasm" occasioned by the delay in the parousia. Likewise, if it is held that the Fourth Gospel was directed at a "Christian" audience in order to strengthen their faith - a view to which Cribbs himself subscribes in part - then it is a legitimate assumption that there must have been a danger of "apostasy". Clearly, this would have been just as true, if not more so, in the situation created by the Birkath ha-minim. To claim therefore that these "concerns.... are totally lacking in John" is a statement that does not stand up to close scrutiny.

On this matter of the "concerns" of the Fourth Gospel one further comment is in order. The fact that the evangelist does not, in Cribbs' view, discuss those questions which were mentioned under the latter group of "concerns" cannot really be used to prove anything about the Fourth Gospel for the simple reason that if he was writing in accordance with a specific purpose then there would have been no point in incorporating material into his gospel that had no bearing on this purpose. This could very well account for the absence from the gospel of themes such as those of "the rise of false prophets within the church", "the antichrist", and "Roman persecutions".

Cribbs' claim that the Gospel of John seems to "belong to a time when church and temple were still in dialogue" (ibid., 51) is also open to question. Our investigation into the importance that is attached to the temple and its liturgy in the Fourth Gospel indicated that they had been replaced by the person of Jesus. From this we may conclude that they had probably disappeared from the scene by the time the gospel came to be written or at the very least that they were in the process of ceasing to play any significant role in the lives of Jewish believers. (17)

In brief: Cribbs has failed to show that the Fourth Gospel's origin should be situated in "the late 50's or early 60's", and consequently that the gospel should be seen as being addressed to certain Jews of that time, Christian or non-Christian. Much of the evidence he proposes in support of

his theory would have had equal, and at times greater, applicability in the post A.D. 70 era, especially in the context of the situation brought about by the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim. In arriving at this conclusion, however, we do not rule out the possibility that the Fourth Gospel might have been addressed to both Christian and non-Christian Jews. Both of these positions we have already examined and shall return to them later. The point at issue at this stage is that if it is held that the Fourth Gospel does indeed have a Jewish destination the evidence suggests that it would be better to situate it in the post A.D. 70 period.

(b) We noted above that those who propose a Jewish and Gentile destination for this gospel do so on the grounds that while there are undoubtedly Jewish elements in the Fourth Gospel there are also non-Jewish traits, the presence of which appears to be intelligible only if they are seen as having been included for the benefit of Gentile readers. We are told, for example, that the Passover (2:13, 6:4, 11:55) and the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2, cf. also 5:1) are festivals "of the Jews". We are also told that "Rabbi" and "Rabboni" (1:38, 20:16) mean "Teacher", that "Cephas" means "Rock" (1:42) and that "Messiah" means "Christ" (1:41, 4:25). The gospel explains that on the occasion of the marriage feast at Cana "six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification...." (2:6), that the Jews do not associate with the Samaritans (4:9), that the Day of Preparation was a "Jewish" Day (19:42) and that the sabbath which followed it was a "high day". Finally, we are informed that it is "the burial custom of the Jews" to bind the body in linen cloths with spices (19:41).

Various explanations have been offered to account for the presence of this material in the Fourth Gospel. None of them are, however, completely satisfactory.

J.A.T. Robinson ("The Destination and Purpose of St John's Gospel", 123) believes that "in the majority of such passages John is interpreting Aramaic-speaking Judaism to those who know nothing of its language and ethos". He continues: "And by the very regularity with which he renders into Greek the most obvious words, like Μεσσίας (1:41; 4:25), or Ραββει (1:39) and Ραββουει (20:16), which Mark never even bothers to translate for his Gentile public (Mark 9:5, 10:51, etc.), we know that he is not a man who fears being redundant. Indeed, his whole system bears this out: he would rather give superfluous explanations than fail to make his meaning clear". He accounts for the references to the festivals "of the Jews" by

claiming that it was necessary for Jesus, a Galilean, to travel into the country of the Jews in order to celebrate their feasts. Finally, the explanations of the customs of purification and burial are, Robinson believes, details that are seen by the evangelist as being "supremely significant for the sign and the interpretation".

Martyn (History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel, 80) adopts a similar position with regard to the translation of the title "Messiah". He asks whether Jews, of all people, would not have been well acquainted with this title in its original form (reproduced in Greek transliteration). He replies as follows: "One may answer, of course, that he offers the translation for the sake of his non-Jewish readers. But it is also possible that even among his Jewish readers are persons for whom the Hebrew tongue is a foreign language. It is well known that one of the most creative Jewish thinkers of the first century, Philo of Alexandria, was not able to read or write the sacred tongue; it is not difficult to imagine that the same thing is true of a number of the Jews in John's city. Perhaps for them, therefore, as well as for others, John translates the Hebrew title "Messiah"."

In spite of the cautious nature of Martyn's reply I find it hard to believe that even Jews of the Diaspora would not have been familiar with "Messiah" in its transliterated form in view of the growing importance it was beginning to assume in Judaism. If there were any Jews who were not familiar with this concept then one wonders how much more meaningful its Greek equivalent would have been to them. The same is true of Robinson's explanation of this and, to a lesser degree, of the other terms he mentions. His claim that the translation of these words shows that the evangelist "is not a man who fears being redundant he would rather give superfluous explanations than fail to make his meaning clear" proves nothing. This argument could conceivably carry some weight if the evangelist had explained all of the Jewish names, etc. but that he does not do this we shall show below. Robinson's explanation of the festivals "of the Jews" is equally unconvincing. In the same article he had argued in favour of Judaea being considered as the $\pi\alpha\tau\rho\iota\varsigma$ of Jesus according to the Fourth Gospel (op. cit., 118). Now he describes Jesus as a Galilean going to Judaea to celebrate the feasts "of the Jews". In these instances Robinson seems to be equating "Jews" and "Judaeans". While the latter may be an acceptable translation of $\beta\omicron\upsilon\delta\alpha\iota\omicron\iota$ in some cases⁽¹⁸⁾ it cannot be argued that Passover, for example, was a Judaeans feast alone. It was also celebrated by the Jews of the Diaspora and they certainly did not need to

be told that it was a "Jewish" feast.

Another approach to this problem is that of J. Painter. He too (John, 14) believes like those whose theories we are discussing that Jewish names and customs are explained for the benefit of gentiles. However, he adds that "statements about 'Jewish festivals' also reminded Jewish Christians that the festivals were Jewish and not Christian". In support of this interpretation it is interesting to note that when he speaks of the Feast of Dedication the evangelist does not refer to it as a feast "of the Jews" (cf. 10:22). This could have been an oversight on his part (though this is something that Robinson would not readily admit!). On the other hand, is it not perhaps possible to explain this omission on the grounds that such a feast had little relevance after the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. and did not therefore feature prominently in Jewish life when the Fourth Gospel was composed?

Painter is of the opinion that while the material of the gospel came to be composed "in a situation of conflict between Jewish Christians and Judaism, the publication of the gospel took place after gentiles had joined the community". He adds that the explanations referred to above "were probably added with the editorial appendix (chapter 21) when the Gospel was published". This seems to me to be the most likely explanation for the presence of this material in the Fourth Gospel.

Thus we are led to agree with Moule that "it is easier to see it (the Fourth Gospel) as meant for Jew and Gentile alike". But having said that it is necessary to be clear about what is implied by such a conclusion. If by this phrase Moule believes that the Fourth Gospel would have been equally meaningful for both Jew and Gentile and that the evangelist intended it for both indiscriminately, then our inquiry so far would lead us to disagree with this view. All the evidence we have examined suggests that the evangelist intended his gospel to be read by a Jewish audience while it was the editors who in all probability added the explanatory comments that are so obviously out of place in what is clearly a Jewish-oriented book. Apropos of the question of these 'explanatory comments' it must be frankly admitted that the editors did not do an exceptionally good job at explaining the Jewish elements in the gospel for the Gentiles for they failed to explain many other things that would have been just as unintelligible to the Gentiles as the ones they did explain. We have already referred to the fact that no explanation was given for the Feast of

Dedication. But by way of further illustration of the point that we are making here one needs only to look at 1:19-31 which comes so close to the opening of the gospel and where therefore one would expect explanations if these were thought to be necessary. Yet here we read of "Levites", "Elijah", "the prophet", "Isaiah", "the Pharisees", "the Lamb of God". It cannot be doubted that these are very Jewish names and concepts; yet no explanation is provided for them. We could use the same approach to other parts of the gospel. Against this, however, it might be argued that it would not have been necessary to explain these names and terms since even a Gentile Christian would have some knowledge of the Old Testament and hence would at least know who Isaiah and Elijah were, and possibly would also have been familiar with the other terms from his knowledge of Judaism. But by the same token it could be counter-argued that a Gentile who had acquired this basic knowledge would not have needed to be told that the Passover was a festival "of the Jews".

In sum, while no completely satisfactory explanation has yet been offered to account for the presence of the so-called non-Jewish explanatory comments in the Fourth Gospel, this material cannot be used to support the claim that the Fourth Gospel was intended primarily or even equally for a non-Jewish audience. With the passage of time there is no doubt that gentile readers would have increasingly found the Fourth Gospel to be more meaningful and intelligible as their knowledge of the Old Testament in particular increased. Further, the issues which the Fourth Gospel faces up to are issues which, *mutatis mutandis*, every man and woman has to come to terms with. This is what gives to the gospel its universal appeal, as Hoskyns so rightly pointed out. However it must be recognized that this aspect was a development that was not in the mind of the evangelist as he wrote his gospel, but was one that was grasped at a later date by the editors of his work. Hence their desire to present it to the world at large, to both Jew and Gentile alike.

(A) Introduction

No study of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose is complete without an analysis of what the gospel itself has to say in this respect. Indeed this becomes the ultimate yardstick against which all the theories we have discussed must be judged.

It is generally accepted that John 20:30-31 provides us with a statement of what the gospel was intended to achieve. Here we read:

(30) Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν [αὐτοῦ], ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ.

(31) Ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύ[σ]ητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

It is important to see and understand the various terms, concepts and ideas contained in this statement of purpose and destination in the light of the gospel itself and what it has to say about them for many of the words and concepts which the Fourth Gospel uses with such great frequency are so common in everyday speech that one might think that it is not even necessary to examine and define them. Among such concepts mention may be made of "believing", "life", "word", "witness", "love" and "truth". Yet, in a very real way the word "belief" or "faith", for example, probably means something different for most Christians of the present-day when compared with the way in which it was understood by the early Christians. Such developments, nuances of meaning, and changes in emphasis can be attributed in part at least to the various heresies and theological controversies that the Christian Church has witnessed during the past twenty centuries. However, if we wish to acquire a true understanding of what the fourth evangelist set out to achieve in composing his gospel it is necessary for us to go back in time, so to speak, and to examine the way in which he understood and used this and other concepts in his gospel.

What follows, therefore, in this chapter is an attempt to understand what the Fourth Gospel has to tell about its purpose and destination when examined in isolation, in so far as this is possible, from contemporary events and currents of thought that might have had a bearing on its composition. It must, however, be remembered that an analysis of this nature will obviously not be totally satisfactory since any author must in some sense be considered to be the product of the age and environment in which he lived - a point we made when discussing the possible impact of the evangelist's own "background" on the composition of the gospel.⁽¹⁾

(B) An Analysis of John 20:30-31⁽²⁾

(1) The Principle Enunciated by John 20:30

The first point to note is that Jn 20:30 emphasizes that the evangelist has selected various "signs" (σημεῖα) with a specific purpose in mind in doing so. He is aware of the existence of "many other signs" which Jesus did but which he has not included. Thus it is clear that the evangelist did not set out to give us a comprehensive biography of Jesus in the generally accepted meaning of this term. What he did was to choose carefully those "signs" which he considered to be the most appropriate and suitable in the context in which he was writing. Without wishing to enter into the question of the historical value of the Fourth Gospel as a whole, it should be noted that the fact that the evangelist has exercised a degree of subjectivity in the choice of his material does not in itself necessarily diminish the historicity of the material he has chosen.

The author of 21:24-25 also seems to consider it to be of sufficient importance to mention that the evangelist has deliberately selected certain "things" while omitting others. The reason given for the selection is, however, different. 21:25 leads us to believe that it was primarily a question of space that necessitated a choice being made! Now it is generally accepted that these two verses, together with the rest of chapter 21, were not written by the original evangelist but were probably added by an editor.⁽³⁾ However, there are those who accept that the person who wrote these verses also wrote the rest of the Fourth Gospel as we now have it.⁽⁴⁾ As far as the matter under discussion in the present context is concerned, however, it matters little who wrote them. Their value consists in that they emphasize the point that a conscious choice of material has been made.

In view of the fact that specific material has been chosen by the evangelist it is sometimes assumed that the Fourth Gospel was written in accordance with some overall plan that determined its present structure. It is suggested that it was this plan that dictated which material would be best suited to the achieving of the objective the evangelist had set himself in 20:31. As to what this plan is, if it does exist at all, there is no general agreement among scholars. Various suggestions have been made which have been summarized by D. Mollat in St Jean, 27, f. There are those, for example, who believe that the evangelist was working from a plan based on chronological or geographical details in the life of Jesus. Others maintain that the plan used was dictated by the importance they believe the evangelist attached to specific themes, e.g. life, light, or numbers, e.g. three and seven, or to Jewish liturgical feasts and the lectionary readings used on these occasions, or to the use the evangelist makes of symbolism and typology. In this last-mentioned instance "l'évangile de saint Jean est alors considéré comme l'expression symbolique d'une grande idée: par exemple l'idée de l'Exode". Others prefer to see the gospel constructed after the manner of a drama, while others point to the logical or cyclical treatment of his material by the evangelist.⁽⁵⁾

It should be noted that there is no inherent reason why the Fourth Gospel should have had a detailed preconceived overall plan. M. Goguel, for example, prefers to regard it simply as "une collection d'episodes qui illustrent différents aspects de la vie chrétienne".⁽⁶⁾ Yet if it could be verified that the Fourth Gospel does indeed have a plan, this could throw some light on specific aspects of the evangelist's purpose and destination. For example, it might indicate more clearly how he hoped to achieve his purpose. This in turn could give us some clues as to the identity of those to whom the gospel was addressed. Thus, if it could be shown that the plan in question makes use of Jewish ideas, concepts, ways of arguing and writing, this could point to a Jewish audience. If, on the other hand it could be shown that the evangelist has relied on non-Jewish material and that he has developed this material in ways that would have been more familiar to those who had been educated in the principles of Greek philosophy and culture or current religious movements, this too could be a pointer to the audience which the evangelist wished to address.⁽⁷⁾

As it is, each of the plans suggested above highlights a different aspect of the gospel, none of which should be totally disregarded in a consideration of the Fourth Gospel. However, in so far as each of them only

emphasizes one particular aspect to the neglect of the others, none of them provides an adequate or satisfactory explanation of the structure of the gospel when taken as a whole.

(2) The Use of σημεῖα (8)

In order to achieve his purpose the evangelist makes use of σημεῖα. Hence it is clear that these "signs" must occupy an important place in the Fourth Gospel as a whole. For this reason it is necessary for us to have a clear understanding of what the gospel itself has to say about them.

The first thing that strikes the reader of the gospel in this connection is that these signs are actions that are "done" or "performed". The verb used to describe this is ποιεῖν (cf. 2:11,23, 3:2, 4:54, 6:2,14,30, 7:31, 9:16, 10:41, 11:47, 12:18,37, 20:30). All of these instances indicate that the "signs" are actions that are performed by Jesus.

On the few occasions when ποιεῖν is not used (2:18, 4:48, 6:26) the evangelist speaks of the "signs" as "things" that are seen. The "seeing" of the "signs" is, in fact, considered to be a very important characteristic of all the signs and is closely linked with their performance. To be "seen" it was clearly necessary that the "signs" should be "done" or performed. Further, unless they could be "seen" they would obviously have had no meaning for Jesus' contemporaries.

It should be noted that the "seeing" of the "signs" was merely a stage in the achievement of their primary objectives. This was to provoke a suitable response in those who "saw" them performed. However, not everybody who saw them reacted in the same way. Brown (John, 530,f) sums up the various reactions under the following headings:

- (a) those who refused to "see" the signs with any faith (e.g. Caiaphas, 11:47);
- (b) those who saw the signs as "wonders" and believed in Jesus as a wonder-worker sent by God (2:23-25, 3:2-3, 4:45-48, 7:3-7);
- (c) those who saw the true significance of the signs and thus came to believe in Jesus and to know who he was and his relation to the Father (4:53, 6:69, 9:38, 11:40); and
- (d) those who came to believe in Jesus without having seen the "signs" (20:29).

Of these four different reactions only the last two are in any way "satisfactory", according to Brown.

It thus becomes clear that there were different levels on which the signs could be "seen". And here it is important to note that the Fourth Gospel distinguishes between physical sight, i.e. seeing only with the eyes, and a "seeing" that involved an understanding of the meaning of the sign. It is this distinction that helps to bring out the true nature of the signs in the gospel. These "signs" point to another reality beyond that which is visible to the eye and it is this other reality which is the true reality. In the gospel it is usually the function of the discourses that follow the performance of the signs to elaborate and to explain their true meaning and the deeper reality behind the external events witnessed by those who actually "saw" the sign being worked. A good example of this is to be found in Jn 6 where Jesus attempts to raise the people's thoughts above the food which he had provided and which they had eaten to another type of food which gives eternal life (6:26,ff). Jn 9 is, of course, the most extensive treatment of what was meant by true sight and real blindness. Those who claimed that they could "see" the best of all were in reality the truly "blind" ones.

The question is sometimes raised as to whether all the "signs" of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel must be seen as miracles or not. The answer to this question will depend to a large extent on which incidents are to be classified as "signs".

The word σημεῖον occurs 17 times in the Fourth Gospel; on 5 of these occasions the word is clearly being used to describe miracles of Jesus. These are the changing of the water into wine at Cana (2:11), the healing of the official's son (4:54), the feeding of the multitude (6:14), the curing of the man born blind (9:16) and the raising of Lazarus (12:18).

The evangelist does not refer to any other specific event or action of Jesus as being a σημεῖον. Some scholars, however, e.g. R. Brown (John, CXXXIX), add the curing of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda (5:1-15) and the walking upon the sea of Galilee (6:16-21) to the five miracles listed above and thus conclude that there are seven σημεῖα in the Fourth Gospel. Other scholars, e.g. J.N. Sanders and B.A. Mastin (St John, 183) do not accept that the walking on the sea of Galilee is a σημεῖον because they do not believe the evangelist intended it to be considered as a miracle.⁽⁹⁾ Thus in their outline of "The Contents and

Structure of the Fourth Gospel" (op. cit., 1,ff) these authors list only six signs.⁽¹⁰⁾

In contrast to those who accept that the σημεῖα are miracles and that all the miracles of Jesus should be seen as σημεῖα, there is the approach of C.H. Dodd who gives to the word a much wider connotation. According to him the fourth evangelist treats all the "significant events" of his gospel as σημεῖα, be they miraculous or not. He traces the Fourth Gospel's use of this word to the Old Testament usage of נִּיּוֹן , which, he says, "does not necessarily connote the miraculous. It is used by itself for a pledge or token, between man and man or between God and man; sometimes for a token of things to come, an omen. It is applied in particular to symbolic acts performed by the prophets" (Interpretation, 141). By way of illustration Dodd refers to Ezekiel 4:1,ff. where the prophet is ordered to portray on a brick the city of Jerusalem in a state of siege. While acts such as these were considered to be symbolic, nevertheless "in the symbol was given also the thing symbolized" (op. cit., 141). Dodd believes that the evangelist considered many of the acts of Jesus to be symbolic in this sense.

In addition to the similarity with the Old Testament usage of this concept, Dodd also sees some similarity between the evangelist's use of σημεῖον and Philo's use of the term as well as his use of the verb σημαίνειν. According to Dodd σημεῖον is a synonym for σύμβολον in Philo's writings. At the same time he sees a difference between Philo's usage and that of the prophets: "In the prophets, the σημεῖον, or significant act, is usually a 'sign' of something about to happen in the working out of God's purpose in history. In Philo, the σημεῖον, or σύμβολον, points to a hidden meaning, on the abstract, intellectual level" (op. cit.). While admitting that "the Johannine σημεῖον is nearer to the prophetic" he also admits that Philonic usage has exercised some influence on the evangelist's use of the term.

Dodd sums up his conclusion thus:

"Those acts to which the term is explicitly applied in the gospel are in point of fact all such as are also regarded as miraculous; but as we have seen, the miraculous is no part of the original connotation of the word, nor is it in usage always applied to miracles. We can hardly doubt that the evangelist considered such acts as the cleansing of the Temple and the washing of the disciples' feet as σημεῖα. In both cases he suggests a symbolical interpretation.

I conclude that the events narrated in the Fourth Gospel are intended to be understood as significant events, σημεῖα". (op. cit., 142).

Despite the fact that Dodd argues his case with great erudition, it has to be admitted that much of what he says is based on conjecture. No one would doubt that acts such as the cleansing of the Temple and the washing of the disciples' feet were "significant" and "symbolic" acts in some sense. However, the evangelist does not refer to them as σημεῖα nor is there any clue in the Gospel that they should be so regarded. Thus we are confronted with the undeniable fact that the acts which he does treat as σημεῖα are also miracles - a fact which Dodd himself also admits (op. cit., 142).

A word that is closely associated with σημεῖα in the Fourth Gospel is ἔργα ("works"). In this regard Brown (John, 526) states, "Jesus himself consistently refers to them (i.e. the "signs") as 'works' (17 times Jesus employs the singular or the plural of ergon; only in vii 3 do others speak of his 'works'). Other characters in the Gospel and the editor refer to Jesus' miracles as 'signs', a term that Jesus does not use of his miracles". It should be noted that the last phrase of this quotation, "... as 'signs', a term that Jesus does not use of his miracles", is not exactly correct because in 4:48 and 6:28 the evangelist does put the word "signs" on to the lips of Jesus. However the point Brown is making remains substantially true as in these two verses Jesus is speaking of "signs" from the point of view of those who see them and not from the point of view of the one who performs them, i.e. himself. In this latter instance he uses the word ἔργον or the plural ἔργα. The concept ἔργον is, however, wider in meaning than that of σημεῖον. ἔργα seems to include not only everything Jesus did (and therefore the σημεῖα), but also even his very words. "Work/works" in this sense are attributed by Jesus to his Father (cf. 5:17, 14:10-11).

It has already been noted above that an important characteristic of the "signs" of Jesus is that they should have been seen. Jn 20:30 offers a refinement of this idea when it indicates that they were performed ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν. This does not mean that only the disciples saw Jesus' signs as the gospel makes it very clear that most of them were performed in the presence of the crowds. However in the case of the disciples the "seeing" of the signs had a twofold significance. Firstly, like the crowds they too had to be led to believe in Jesus. In this the σημεῖα played a very important role, manifesting as they did Jesus' "glory" (δόξα)⁽¹¹⁾ and thus stimulating belief in him.⁽¹²⁾ Secondly, it was to be by their "witness" to these σημεῖα that others, in the post-resurrection era, would be led to believe in Jesus without having seen for themselves the "signs" which he had worked (20:29).

This theme of "witness", especially "eye-witness", is of great significance in the Fourth Gospel. So important, for example, does J. Painter consider this concept to be that in his view "the Gospel is best understood as a Book of Witness" (op. cit., 10). While noting that there is a concentration of witness in chapters 1-12 "because these chapters deal with Jesus' public ministry", he states that witness is not restricted to this section but can be found throughout the whole of the Gospel. He groups together the various "witnesses to Jesus" as follows: the Baptist (1:7,8,15,32,34, 3:26, 5:33), the Woman of Samaria (4:39), Jesus (5:31, 8:18, 18:37), Jesus' works (5:36, 10:25), the Father (5:37, 8:18), the Scriptures (5:39,ff), the crowd (12:17), the Paraclete (15:26), the Apostles (15:27), the 'beloved disciple' (19:35, 21:24).⁽¹³⁾

If during his lifetime the words and works of Jesus were subject to misunderstanding, how much more was this likely to happen after his death. For this reason his disciples must be able to give genuine testimony to what they have seen and heard Jesus doing and saying. Thus it is that the evangelist, by the extensive use he makes of this theme of witness, encourages belief in Jesus in those who have not "seen" (20:29) but have come to accept the testimony of the disciples as being authentic.

In 20:31 the evangelist elaborates some of the more specific aspects of the purpose of the σημεῖα. By using these signs the evangelist hoped to stimulate belief. Now the "content" of this belief is ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ. Before discussing what the evangelist meant by "believing" I propose to discuss the manner in which he uses the designations ὁ Χριστὸς and ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ.

(3) The Use of Χριστὸς ⁽¹⁴⁾

The word Χριστὸς appears 19 times in the Fourth Gospel. On two occasions it is used together with Ἰησοῦς (1:17, 17:3). In these two cases it is used merely as a name. In the other 17 instances Χριστὸς is always preceded by the definite article ὁ, except in 9:22. But even here the omission of the article does not seem to indicate a different usage.

On two occasions the evangelist equates Χριστὸς with the transliterated form of the Aramaic/Hebrew word for "Messiah" (ΧϞϞϞϞ/ϞϞϞϞ) (1:41, 4:25). Is it therefore legitimate to conclude that the Fourth Gospel always uses ὁ Χριστὸς, when it stands alone, as the Greek equivalent for "Messiah", and therefore that belief in Jesus as Messiah is one of the objectives of the

Gospel? There seems to be little doubt that from an analysis of the relevant texts this question must, for the most part, be answered in the affirmative. At the outset of the Gospel the evangelist concerns himself with the question of whether this title could be applied to John the Baptist. All such claims are denied by John himself (1:20, 3:28). On the contrary it is a title which the Baptist applies, by implication, to Jesus (1:25, ff., 3:28, ff). Thus having disposed of any claims that might have been made on behalf of John the Baptist to this designation, the Fourth Gospel examines whether Jesus' own claims were better founded. This involves a discussion of some of the popular beliefs about the Messiah. For example, in 7:25-31, and 7:40-52 we see the Jews discussing among themselves whether the circumstances surrounding the origin and birth of the Messiah were actually fulfilled in the case of Jesus. On this point it is significant that the Fourth Gospel discusses what appears to be two different and contradictory beliefs concerning the appearing of the Messiah. Thus in 12:34 we find a reference to the Jewish belief that the Messiah would remain for ever (cf. also 9:22, 10:24).

The clearest textual proof that the fourth evangelist understood Jesus to be ὁ Χριστός, the Messiah, comes in the discussion with the Samaritan woman where Jesus appears to claim this title quite openly, (4:25,26). At the same time, however, it should be noted that he never makes such an explicit claim before a Jewish audience. Could the reason for this be that Jesus believed that the popular expectations of the Jews in respect of the Messiah were false and therefore any claim he might openly make to this title would be misunderstood? There does appear to be some evidence in the Gospel that this in fact was the case.

Apart from those aspects of popular belief referred to above concerning the origin and end of the Messiah, the Gospel also brings out clearly that the Jews expected their Messiah to be a king. Nathanael, for example, refers to Jesus as "the King of Israel" (1:49). The context makes it obvious that Nathanael believed Christ to be the Messiah (cf. 1:45). 6:15, f. indicates that the Jews were quite prepared at that stage to make Jesus king in accordance with their understanding of what the Messiah should be. Again, in 12:12, ff. we see the crowds taking up Nathanael's acclamation - "king of Israel" - when they welcome Jesus with palms on his entry into Jerusalem (see also 19:3,15).

Jesus does not deny that he is a king. However his understanding of what this involved was very different from popular expectations. This is clearly

brought out in 18:33-37 in his reply to Pilate's question, $\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\ \delta\ \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\text{-}\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma\ \tau\omega\upsilon\ \iota\omega\delta\alpha\iota\omega\upsilon\upsilon$; It can be argued that Pilate's conception of "king", as a Roman governor, was very different from that of the Jewish concept of "Messiah-King". However the Fourth Gospel does not concern itself with this question, even if it were true. Jesus' own reply indicates that there were more similarities between the ideas of the Jews and Pilate than between his own conception and that of the Jews. Both the Jews and Pilate appear to have been more concerned with the temporal and political aspects of kingship whereas Jesus claims that his kingdom "is not of this world" (18:36). Thus it is, I believe, significant that while Jesus does not deny that he is a "king" at no stage does he suggest that he is the "King of the Jews". On this point it is noteworthy that in the Fourth Gospel Jesus is never called the "Son of David", a title to be found fairly frequently in the Synoptics.⁽¹⁵⁾ The reason for this is probably the evangelist's attempts to counteract popular beliefs about the nature of the Messiah's kingship.⁽¹⁶⁾

One final point should be noted about the Fourth Gospel's treatment of the kingship theme. Only once does the fourth evangelist use the phrase "Kingdom of God" (3:3,5) in contrast to the Synoptics in whose gospels it is a dominant theme. This should be seen as yet another attempt by the fourth evangelist to counteract contemporary popular ideas concerning the nature of the Messiah's kingship and the kind of kingdom over which they expected him to reign.

(4) The Use of $\delta\ \upsilon\iota\delta\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ (17)

The second title given to Jesus in 20:31 is that of $\delta\ \upsilon\iota\delta\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$. The problem that immediately confronts us here is this: is $\delta\ \upsilon\iota\delta\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ to be taken as a new and distinct title, or must it be seen as standing in juxtaposition to $\delta\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ and therefore synonymous with it? 20:31 itself does not answer this question decisively; hence it is necessary to examine how this designation is used elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel.

Apart from 20:31 $\delta\ \upsilon\iota\delta\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ appears a further eight times (1:34,49, 3:18, 5:25, 10:36, 11:4,27 and 19:7).⁽¹⁸⁾ Of these eight instances Jesus uses the title in reference to himself four times (3:18, 5:25, 10:36, 11:4) while on the other occasions it occurs on the lips of different people (1:34 - John the Baptist, 1:49 - Nathanael, 11:27 - Martha and 19:7 - the Jews in the presence of Pilate). In these latter instances it is, however, also being used in reference to Jesus.

When spoken by John the Baptist and Nathanael it is difficult to see in the phrase ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ anything more than a Messianic title. In 1:49 there seems to be little doubt that, in the context, "Son of God" and "King of Israel" are being used in much the same way as synonyms or descriptions of the same reality, and, as has already been noted above, Nathanael appears to be using "King of Israel" as a title for the Messiah. In the case of John the Baptist's witness the giving to Jesus of the title "Son of God" takes place against the background of the discussion as to whether he himself might be ὁ Χριστὸς. Even though, as we have already noted, the reading ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ is the more probable, nevertheless it seems to mean much the same thing as the variant reading, ὁ ἑκλεκτός τοῦ Θεοῦ, another of the messianic titles. Hence even on the lips of John the Baptist ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ is no more than a synonym for ὁ Χριστὸς. There is not the slightest indication that he viewed Jesus as being divine. Such an awareness was to develop only gradually.

In 11:27 Martha addresses Jesus with the titles ὁ Χριστὸς and ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ just as they appear in 20:31. However, unlike 20:31 she adds the phrase ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος. These words are to be found elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel but they are not, seemingly, always applied to the same person. For example in 6:14 we read: "When the people saw the sign which he had done, they said, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world' (οὗτος ἐστὶν ἀληθῶς ὁ προφήτης ὁ ἐρχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον)." Who is 'the prophet' referred to here? In 7:40, f. he is distinguished from ὁ Χριστὸς while in 1:19, ff. he is distinguished from both ὁ Χριστὸς and Elijah. Yet, to return to 6:14, the following verse (6:15) seems to indicate that by 'the prophet', at least in this context, the Messiah is meant in view of the fact that the people wanted to take Jesus and make him king. In 11:27 Martha also appears to be using the phrase ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος in reference to ὁ Χριστὸς. Hence there is nothing to suggest that Martha viewed Jesus as being anything more than the Messiah, without necessarily attributing to him some of the more temporal characteristics that were popular among the Jews.⁽¹⁹⁾

The meaning to be given to ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ in 19:7 is difficult to ascertain from the text itself. By this point in his public life the Jews have obviously heard and clearly understood Jesus' own explanation of his Sonship and his relation to the Father and in their eyes his attitude amounted to blasphemy. Because of this they believed that he ought to die in accordance with their law. However when Pilate hesitates in passing

sentence upon Jesus, the Jews bring up the charge that Jesus had made himself king. There is no doubt that they realized that Pilate would interpret this in a political sense - an interpretation they reinforced by claiming to have "no king but Caesar" (19:15). The charge that he claimed to be a king was secondary from their point of view, but they were shrewd enough to realize that such a charge would, in all probability, get a conviction of Jesus from Pilate and this, after all, was their primary objective. Thus as far as the Jews were concerned there is no indication that divine Sonship was an attribute of the Messiah.

In sum, when the title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ is applied to Jesus by others, the evidence of the gospel as a whole seems to indicate that they understood this title to be no more than a descriptive synonym for ὁ χριστὸς without any connotation of divinity being thereby implied.

Jesus' own references to himself as ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ as well as other references to his Sonship give us a very different picture of what the evangelist of the Fourth Gospel understands the term to mean. Jesus' relationship with God is one of the central themes of this Gospel and the references to it are many and extensive. For our purposes it will be sufficient to indicate the main lines of the evangelist's thought in this respect.

No doubt the first thing that impresses the reader of the Fourth Gospel about Jesus' relationship with God is the frequency with which he addresses him as "Father". This is a title he jealously guards as his own. Thus in 8:41-44 we see him explicitly rejecting the claims of the Jews that God is their Father. It is true that on one occasion Jesus does refer to God as the Father of his "brethren" (ἀδελφοί) - "Go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (20:17). It is clear that in the post-resurrection era Jesus' disciples enjoy a new and more intimate relationship with God. Yet at the same time it is, I believe, significant that Jesus did not say "our" Father in the verse just quoted. The implication of this would seem to be that while he wishes to emphasize the disciples' new relationship with God, at the same time he indicates that their relationship to God is different from his own. Similarly, it should also be noted that according to 1:12 to those who believe in his name Jesus "gave power to become children (τέκνα) of God" and not "sons of God".

The uniqueness of Jesus' Sonship is emphasized by the use the evangelist makes of the adjective $\mu\omicron\nu\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\nu\eta\varsigma$ (1:14,18, 3:16,18), a word which seems to signify not merely that he is the only son of God but also that he is "begotten" by God.⁽²⁰⁾ The unique nature of his relationship with God as Father is also clearly stated in those instances where in the Fourth Gospel he refers to himself as "Son of God" (3:18, 5:25, 10:36, 11:4) or simply as "the Son" (3:16,f.,35,f., 5:19-23,26, 6:40, 8:36, 14:13) or "thy Son (17:1).

That Jesus was not merely calling upon God as his "Father" much in the same way as a pious man might do in times of distress was clearly understood by the Jews. In fact it was "because he not only broke the sabbath but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God ($\dot{\iota}\sigma\omicron\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\omega\tau\omicron\nu\ \pi\omicron\iota\omicron\nu\ \tau\omicron\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$)" (5:18) that the Jews sought all the more to kill Jesus. In 8:55,ff. this truth is brought out very graphically. Jesus claims not only to have existed before Abraham but by his use of $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega\ \acute{\epsilon}\dot{\iota}\mu\dot{\iota}$ he is claiming a type of existence that transcended time and was therefore like God's own existence. Whether the $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega\ \acute{\epsilon}\dot{\iota}\mu\dot{\iota}$ of 8:59 is, however, to be taken as the use of the divine name itself is disputed.⁽²¹⁾ But most scholars would probably agree with Barrett (St John, 282,f) when he states that in this context "the is a properly continuous tense implying neither beginning nor end of existence." Thus the $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega\ \acute{\epsilon}\dot{\iota}\mu\dot{\iota}$ of 8:55 "(i) indicates the eternal being of Jesus; (ii) thereby, and in itself, places Jesus on a level with God" (op. cit., 283). Whatever the interpretation one gives to the $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega\ \acute{\epsilon}\dot{\iota}\mu\dot{\iota}$ of 8:58 the following verse makes it clear that the Jews considered Jesus to have been guilty of blasphemy in claiming for himself an attribute that belonged to God alone.

In 10:30 Jesus sums up his relationship with the Father with the simple phrase, "I and the Father are one" (see also 14:8,ff). Jesus claims to have come forth from the Father (16:28) for it is the Father who has sent him into the world (3:17, et passim).⁽²²⁾ Once his work has been completed, it is to the Father he will return (16:28), to be glorified with the glory ($\delta\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\alpha$) which he had in the presence of God before the world was made (17:5).

Enough has been said to show that in the Fourth Gospel Jesus' claim to be the "Son of God" meant far more than was commonly understood of the Messiah in contemporary Jewish thought. Hence the conclusion reached at this stage is that the designation $\acute{\omicron}\ \upsilon\dot{\iota}\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ is not a mere paraphrase of $\acute{\omicron}\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ in 20:31, but rather refers to a different reality altogether. In this context 20:28-29 is significant. Thomas has expressed his faith in

Christ with the words, "My Lord and my God", to which Jesus replies that those who have not seen and yet believe will be blessed. It is towards belief such as Thomas's that the Fourth Gospel is directed. Thus between the Thomas episode and the conclusion of the gospel in 20:30-31 there appears to be a logical connection.

Regarding the "content" of belief, therefore, we may summarize the conclusions we have reached on the basis of our examination of the text thus: the fourth evangelist wishes to lead his readers to belief in Jesus both as δ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ and as δ $\upsilon\iota\acute{o}\varsigma$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$. We have seen that both terms are, however, used in different ways and with different meanings. On the one hand we have the popular ideas and expectations of Jesus' contemporaries. There is, for example, some evidence in the Fourth Gospel to suggest that they expected the Messiah to be some sort of earthly king, specially chosen and blessed by God (the significance of the title "Son of God" on the lips of others). Opposed to this conception we have Jesus' own understanding and explanation of these titles and the realities behind them. In most respects these two viewpoints are incompatible with each other. For this reason the Fourth Gospel is directed at leading people to a belief in Jesus according to his own understanding and explanation of his own person and mission. It is as if the evangelist wished to show his readers how inadequate and mistaken their beliefs were and the need there was to replace these with a truer picture of whom Jesus was.

(5) The Use of $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$ (23)

Having examined the "content" of belief according to 20:31 it is now necessary to review what the Fourth Gospel has to tell us about the process of believing itself and what it involves. The word used to express this is $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$. This verb, in its various forms, occurs 98 times in the Fourth Gospel, while the corresponding noun, $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$, does not appear at all in this gospel although it is used 243 times elsewhere in the New Testament. Because $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ was used so widely in the other writings of the New Testament one presumes that it was a popular concept in the preaching of the gospel message. The fact that it is not used at all in the Fourth Gospel in spite of the great emphasis this gospel gives to "believing" must be seen as more than coincidence. The fourth evangelist has obviously deliberately chosen not to use it; it would appear that he believes that the verb expresses better the idea he wished to convey.

Dodd (op. cit., 182, ff) distinguishes five different usages of $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$ in the Fourth Gospel. They are the following:

- (a) "the characteristically Greek use" where πιστεύειν means "to trust". This trust is based on an intellectual judgment that who or what the person is being asked to "trust" is indeed credible. In classical Greek πιστεύειν can be used both transitively and intransitively, and there are examples of both usages in the Fourth Gospel. When used transitively it normally means "to entrust" (e.g. 2:24); intransitively it has two meanings, viz. (i) "to give credence to", "to believe", and (ii) "to have confidence in", "to trust" (cf. 4:21, 14:11);
- (b) πιστεύειν + the dative: in most places where this construction appears in the Fourth Gospel the verb means "to believe" in the generally accepted sense of the word, as opposed to ordinary Greek usage where it means "to trust" as in (a) above: e.g. 2:22, 5:46, 8:31-47. It is used both for believing in some person (e.g. Moses, 5:46, Jesus, 4:21, 5:46, 6:30, 8:31, 45, 46, 10:37, 38, 14:11 and the Father, 5:24) and for believing in some 'thing' (e.g. the "word", Scripture, 2:22, 4:50, 5:47, 10:38, 12:38).
- (c) πιστεύειν + a ὅτι - clause: here πιστεύειν means "to believe" in the sense of "to have confidence". The ὅτι - clause elaborates some aspect of the "content" of belief, especially the nature, mission and status of Jesus (8:24, 13:19, 9:27, 20:31, 14:11, 11:42, 17:8, 16:27, 30);
- (d) πιστεύειν + εἰς + the accusative: this construction appears 36 times in the Fourth Gospel (1:12, 2:11, 23, 3:16, 18, 36, 4:39, 6:29, 35, 40, 7:5, 31, 38, 39, 48, 8:30, 9:35, 36, 10:42, 11:25, 26, 45, 48, 12:11, 36, 37, 42, 44, 46, 14:1, 12, 16:9, 17:20). It appears to have no parallel in ordinary Greek and Dodd (op. cit., 183), as also do Moulton and Howard following Burney (op. cit., 463), seems to recognize Semitic influence in the evangelist's use of this construction. Basically, according to Brown (op. cit., 512) it appears to be used with reference to "believing in(to) a person". In this sense it twice governs "the Father", 31 times it governs Jesus and 4 times it governs "the name of Jesus". This same author (ibid., 513) sums up the uses of this construction as follows: "Thus, pisteuein eis may be defined in terms of an active commitment to a person and, in particular, to Jesus. It involves much more than trust in Jesus or confidence in him; it is an acceptance of Jesus and

of what he claims to be and a dedication of one's life to him".

- (e) the absolute use of ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ, i.e. where the verb is used alone (3:18, 12:39, 6:36,47). When used thus ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ basically means "to believe", though even here it might be possible to distinguish various shades of meaning. In many instances when ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ is used in this way it is used together with various verbs of "seeing" (6:36,46-47, 11:40, 20:25-29).⁽²⁴⁾

Of the remaining uses of ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ its usage with διὰ (1:7, 4:41,42, 14:11, 17:20) should be noted. The preposition διὰ, meaning "on account of", introduces the reason or grounds for believing, e.g. the words or the works of Jesus.

As far as the distribution of the uses of ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ is concerned, of the 98 instances in which it is used in the gospel as a whole, 74 of these occur in the first twelve chapters - that section of the Fourth Gospel commonly referred to as the "Book of Signs" because these are the chapters that contain the accounts of the σημεῖα of Jesus.⁽²⁵⁾

The initial, overall impression that one gets from such a review of the various uses of ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ is that this word refers to something that is active. In its various shades of meaning it indicates an active and continuous commitment to a person on the part of the one believing. Its corresponding noun on the other hand, viz. ΠΙΣΤΙΣ, is frequently used elsewhere in the New Testament to refer more to the internal disposition of the believer and to the content of what is believed. "To have faith" suggests a process that is more passive than active, whereas in the case of "to believe" the contrary is true. It is as if "faith" is something that must merely be held on to once possessed. This, of course, is not to say that the other New Testament writers used ΠΙΣΤΙΣ in this way. It is merely to suggest that the use of ΠΙΣΤΙΣ is more readily open to such an interpretation than is the verb ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ. By using only the verb it is not improbable that the fourth evangelist wished to emphasize the active nature of "believing". Whether or not this was indeed his intention cannot be proved. However it can be maintained without fear of contradiction that the Fourth Gospel does use the verb "to believe" in this way.

This active nature of believing is indicated in a variety of ways. For example, to "believe" in Jesus means to "receive him" (1:12, 5:43) and his

"testimony" (3:11,32,f) and his "sayings" (12:48, 17:8); it means to "come to him" (5:40, 6:35,37,65, 7:37), to "come to the light" (3:21, 8:12) and to "walk" in it (12:35,f); it means to "abide in him" (6:56, 15:4) and in his "word" (8:31); it means to "hear" or to "listen to" Jesus (10:16) and to his "word" (5:24, 8:47, 12:47); finally, it means to "love" him (8:42, 14:15,21,23,f.,28, 16:27). It is the individual's response to the Father's "drawing" of him (6:44).⁽²⁶⁾

One word in the Fourth Gospel that is frequently used in association with "believing" is that of "knowing". "To know" translates γινώσκειν (56 times) and εἰδέναι (85 times). As in the case of πιστεύειν the Fourth Gospel only uses the verbs for "knowing" and never the corresponding noun, i.e. γνῶσις.

R. Brown (op. cit., 514) quotes Abbott to the effect that γινώσκειν means "to acquire knowledge" whereas εἰδέναι means "to know all about something". However this is a distinction that cannot always be maintained, at least as far as the Fourth Gospel's use of these verbs is concerned since the evangelist is not always consistent in this regard. Thus in some instances γινώσκειν is used as a synonym for πιστεύειν. For example, in 17:8 we read: "for I have given them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them and know (ἐγνώσαν) in truth that I came from thee; and they have believed (ἐπίστευσαν) that thou didst send me". In this instance ἐγνώσαν and ἐπίστευσαν are being used as synonyms for each other, as if they were interchangeable (see also 6:69, 8:24,28, 14:7,10). However it is not true to say that "to know" always means much the same thing as "to believe". Thus in 10:15 Jesus is said to "know" the Father and to be "known" by the Father. Yet nowhere in the Fourth Gospel is it claimed that Jesus "believes" in the Father, or vice versa.⁽²⁷⁾ Perhaps 10:37-38 gives us a truer picture of the relationship between "knowing" and "believing". Here we read: "If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me (μὴ πιστεύετε μοι); but if I do them, even though you do not believe me (καὶ ἐμοὶ μὴ πιστεύετε), believe the works (τοῖς ἔργοις πιστεύετε), that you may know (γινώτε) and understand (γινώσκητε) that the Father is in me and I am in the Father". These verses seem to indicate that even though there is a close relationship between the two concepts, nevertheless "knowing" appears to be the result and aim of "believing".⁽²⁸⁾

In the Fourth Gospel it is possible to distinguish different ways in which people come to "believe". These can be grouped together under the following four headings:

- (a) those instances where the process of believing is initiated by some external act, usually a σημεῖον : e.g. Jesus' disciples "believed in him" after he had worked the first of his "signs" at Cana, and thus manifested his glory (2:11);
- (b) those instances where a "word" of Jesus initiates belief (e.g. 4:50); and
- (c) those instances where the "words" or "testimony" of others are responsible for initiating belief: e.g. 4:39 tells us that many Samaritans believed in Jesus "because of the woman's testimony". However, according to 4:41-42, we are told that many more believed in him because of his own "word";
- (d) those instances where both a "word" and a "sign" have a part to play in the developing of belief. An example of this is the cure of the official's son who was ill (4:46-53). When Jesus told him that his son would live the official "believed the word that Jesus spoke to him". It will be noted that this is the same verse used to illustrate (b) above. However, after he had heard the news of his son's recovery we are told that he himself believed and all his household (4:53). In his own case the "sign" served to strengthen belief while at the same time it initiated belief in his household. Something similar happened in the case of the man born blind (Chapter 9). He too at the outset believed in Jesus' "word" (9:7). But the miracle that followed and subsequent events led him to exclaim in 9:38, "'Lord, I believe'; and he worshiped him".

The above categories refer primarily to the ways in which belief is initiated. However, once this has taken place, "belief" being the active process that we have seen it to be, must be developed and strengthened. This comes about by the fostering of those characteristics of belief we have listed above. ⁽²⁹⁾

Of the four categories listed above three of them, viz. (a), (b) and (d) involve some sort of direct contact with Jesus. However the fact that it is not required in those instances listed under category (c) shows that it is not an essential condition for belief. Further, direct contact with Jesus does not necessarily lead to belief, though it did in some way probably facilitate it. This is illustrated by Thomas's reaction following the resurrection of Jesus. On the same occasion, however, Jesus proclaims

as "blessed" those who have not seen and yet have believed (20:29). This is the type of belief that is described in category (c) and is the most praiseworthy form of belief. It is towards encouraging this form of belief, which is in fact the only type possible in the post-ascension era, that the Fourth Gospel is directed. This it does by calling upon the testimony of others to what Jesus did (especially the σημεῖα) and said, i.e. his "word".

At this stage it is necessary to comment briefly on the textual variants to be found in 20:31 and the significance of these for the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel. Two readings for the verb are to be found both of which are reasonably well attested to. These are the present tense form, ΠΙΣΤΕΥΗΤΕ, and the aorist tense form, ΠΙΣΤΕΥΣΗΤΕ.⁽³⁰⁾ According to Barrett (St John, 479) the former reading is "probably right". It certainly seems to be the reading that is favoured by most scholars. Barrett translates ΠΙΣΤΕΥΗΤΕ by "that you may continue to believe, be confirmed in your faith", while he translates ΠΙΣΤΕΥΣΗΤΕ by "that you may here and now believe, that is, become Christians". It is this author's opinion that "this variant raises acutely the question of the purpose of the gospel: was it written to confirm the faithful, or as a missionary tract, to convert the Hellenistic world?" It would appear that he assumes that one of the alternatives he postulates must be correct. This is an assumption which other authors are also inclined to make. In turn this influences their choice of reading.

Barrett himself (op. cit., 114) does not believe that a solution of the textual problem can be achieved with certainty. However, even if a solution was possible it still would not solve the question of the purpose of the gospel "since", as the same author continues, "John may have used his tenses inaccurately". An analysis of the evangelist's style and use of Greek would lend some weight to Barrett's conclusion.⁽³¹⁾

Two authors in particular have probably made the most valuable contribution to this discussion by their attempts to place this problem of the textual variants in its proper perspective. Both C.H. Dodd and R. Bultmann note that too much importance should not be placed on the actual tense used by the evangelist in 20:31. Dodd (op. cit., 9) is of the opinion that "the continuous present tense could be justified, even as addressed to those who were not yet Christians....". For this reason grammatical considerations alone are not conclusive when it comes to deciding the purpose of the

gospel and those for whom it was written. Bultmann (John, 698,f) in similar vein, states that "so far as the Evangelist is concerned it is irrelevant whether the possible readers are already 'Christians', or are not yet such; for to him the faith of 'Christians' is not a conviction that is present once and for all, but it must perpetually make sure of itself anew, and therefore must continually hear the word anew". In a footnote (no. 7) he explicitly states that "it is (therefore) without significance" which reading one adopts.

Briefly, therefore, the position adopted by both Dodd and Bultmann is that it is not possible to understand the destination of the Fourth Gospel exclusively in terms of 20:30-31, and more particularly according to the reading given to the verb. However we must disagree with Bultmann that it was "irrelevant" to the evangelist whether its readers were 'Christians' or not.

(6) The Use of ζωή (32)

20:31 concludes with the words καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ. These words introduce another very important concept in the Fourth Gospel, namely, that of ζωή. An analysis of 20:30-31 shows that there are three fundamental ideas being employed by the evangelist and about which he makes various statements. These three concepts are σημεῖα, πιστεῦεν and ζωή. It follows from what the evangelist says in 20:31 that his primary concern is that his readers should have ζωή. But having said that it should also be noted that in the evangelist's statement of purpose it cannot be denied that these three ideas are closely connected with each other to such an extent that they are inter-dependent and must be seen as such if they are to be correctly understood. The association between these three fundamental themes can be explained thus:

- (a) the primary concern of the evangelist is that his readers "may have life";
- (b) but to achieve this "life" it is necessary that they "believe";
- (c) however belief is possible only on the evidence of the σημεῖα of Jesus, either "seen" directly or accepted by the believer on the "testimony" of others.

When Bultmann (op. cit., 698) commenting on 20:31 states that "he (i.e. the evangelist) announces the purpose of his book as he directly addresses the reader; its purpose is to awaken the faith that Jesus is the Messiah, the

Son of God", and Dodd (Tradition, 130), in similar fashion, says that "the purpose for which he wrote his gospel was to lead its readers to believe that Jesus is the Son of God (xx, 21)", nobody would wish to argue with them that they have not fully grasped what the Fourth Gospel's purpose was simply because these authors have emphasized the role of "believing". In a sense ζωή can be viewed as the result and reward of "believing". This being the case, it is clearly the evangelist's most important task to assist his readers to "believe".

Having noted the importance of ζωή in the Fourth Gospel's statement of its purpose and destination it is now necessary to examine what the evangelist has to say about its nature. The word itself appears 36 times in the gospel. On 17 of these occasions it is qualified by αἰώνιος (3:15, 16, 36, 4:14, 36, 5:24, 39, 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68, 10:28, 12:25, 50, 17:2, 3). On 14 occasions the phrase ἔχειν (αἰώνια) ζωήν is used (3:15, 16, 36, 5:24, 26, 39, 40, 6:40, 47, 53, 54, 10:10, 20:31). To these should be added the 16 times the verb ζῆν is used as well as the three times ζῶσαίτω occurs.

Between ζωή and ζωή αἰώνιος there appears to be no difference in meaning. Both are used in contradistinction to ψυχὴ which is the term used in the Fourth Gospel for natural human life. This distinction is brought out clearly in 12:25 where we read: "He who loves his life (ψυχάν) loses it, and he who hates his life (ψυχάν) in this world will keep it for eternal life (ζωήν αἰώνιον)". Clearly, life-in-this-world (ψυχὴ) is very different from eternal life (ζωή αἰώνιος). When speaking of laying down his "life" Jesus also uses the word ψυχὴ (cf. 10:15, f).

Having established that there is a difference between these two forms of life it is now necessary to examine how ζωή differs from ψυχὴ. This we shall do by looking at some of the instances in which ζωή is used.

When speaking about the sort of "life" which the Father enjoys the Fourth Gospel has very little to tell us except that he is "the living (ζῶν) Father" (6:57) and that he "has life in himself" (ἔχει ζωήν ἐν ἑαυτῷ) (5:26).

This "life" of which the evangelist speaks so much is closely associated with the person of Jesus. The Fourth Gospel tells us that he is "the life" (ἡ ζωή) (11:25, 14:6) and that "life was in him (ἐν αὐτῷ ζωή ἦν)" (1:4). Jesus also describes himself as "the bread of life (ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς)" (6:35, 48) and as "the living bread (ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ζῶν)" (6:51). Like the

Father the Son also has "life" in himself, but this has been granted to him by the Father (5:26; see also 6:57).

This "life" that is Jesus has been made known to us. In fact the very reason for the sending of the Son into the world was that "they may have life". Thus in 10:10 we read: ἐγὼ ἦ λαθὼν ἵνα ζωὴν ἔχωσιν, (cf. also 5:40). Thus as far as believers are concerned, the burden of the Fourth Gospel's message is that Jesus himself is the source of "life" for them. He it is who gives "life" "to those whom he will" (5:21), but especially to those who "come to him" and "believe in" him (3:15,16,36, 5:24,40, 6:33,35,40,68, 8:12, 10:28, 11:25).

17:3 sums up what this life consists in from man's point of view. It states: "And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent". We have already had reason to comment on the relationship between "knowing" and "believing".⁽³³⁾ It was noted on that occasion that "knowing", in some instances at least, appears to be both the result and aim of "believing". This is true in the case of the use of the verb "know" in 17:3. The person who truly "knows" has eternal life, just as those who "believe" have eternal life. Thus man attains to eternal life by believing in Jesus, by believing that he is the Son and the One Sent by the Father (3:15,f.,35, 6:40,47, 11:26), by "hearing" his word (5:24) and by following him (8:12). Those who "have eternal life" are saved from the wrath of God (3:36) and from judgment, having already passed from death to life (5:24).

It thus becomes apparent that according to the Fourth Gospel man can already possess "eternal life" even while he is on this earth.⁽³⁴⁾ This prompts the question as to the way in which "life" can be "eternal". First of all it should be noted that in the Fourth Gospel "death" is spoken of only in terms of ψυχῆ. Further, it seems that the evangelist is not using the term αἰώνιος exclusively in a temporal sense. Αἰώνιος also refers to the quality of the "life" in question. That there is a difference between natural human life (ψυχῆ) and the life of which Jesus is the source (ζωὴ) is highlighted by the different terms used to describe each, as we have already noted. However the reason for the difference in the quality of ζωὴ when compared with ψυχῆ is due to the fact that ζωὴ is the life by which God himself lives; it is also the life which the Son has received from the Father (5:26, 6:57). It is this same ζωὴ in which the believer shares. For this reason a person who has this life shall never die (11:26).

Thus, even though ζωή and ζωή αἰώνιος seem to refer to the qualitative nature of true life, nevertheless 11:26 does indicate that there is also a temporal aspect to it. In this context the fourth evangelist sees room for development and progress culminating in the glorious "resurrection of life" (cf. 5:29, 6:40,54). Hence, while ψυχὴ ends in physical death such death has no effect on ζωή except in so far as it opens up room for greater development. Dodd (Interpretation, 151) admirably sums up the evangelist's understanding of "life" thus: "He means by it life perfect and absolute, timeless in quality and therefore exempt from death. He conceives it as possible for men here and now, but to be realized in its fullness beyond the grave".

(7) The Use of ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ

The final phrase of 20:31, viz. ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ, has also given some difficulty to exegetes. Some prefer to link it with πιστεύοντες and would then translate it "... that believing in his name you may have life". In support of this interpretation they appeal to a similar construction in 1:12, 2:23 and 3:18. However it should be noted that in these instances the preposition used is εἰς and not ἐν. A phrase very similar to that we are discussing, viz. ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι μου does appear elsewhere in the gospel, e.g. 14:13,14, 15:16, 16:23,24,26 where Jesus is speaking of "asking" and "giving" in his name. However it seems to me that these instances cannot be cited as true parallels with context under discussion since "asking and giving in the name of" someone is obviously very different from "believing in the name of" a person.

In the Fourth Gospel the verb πιστεύειν is usually followed by εἰς and not by ἐν. However in 3:15 we read: ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον. Grammatically ἐν αὐτῷ can best be translated with πιστεύων, i.e. "... believing in him ...". The order of the words themselves suggest this translation as the obvious one.⁽³⁵⁾ Therefore, while the construction of 20:31 might not be the usual one in the Fourth Gospel, this is not sufficient grounds for maintaining that ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ cannot be construed with πιστεύοντες. In fact the similarities between 20:31 and 3:15 are quite patent, with the ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ of 20:31 replacing the ἐν αὐτῷ of 3:15.

Further evidence in support of the adoption of this construction may be found in Mk 1:15 where we find πιστεύειν followed by ἐν. While this

might prove that ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ἔν was used, even if only rarely, at the time when the gospels were written, it is not in itself sufficient indication that the fourth evangelist had this construction in mind when composing 20:31. In fact a closer parallel to what we have in 20:31 can be found in 1 John 5:13 where we read: ΤΑΥΤΑ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ἵνα εἰδῆτε ὅτι ζωὴν ἔχετε διὼντων, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ. Here it will be noticed, however, that ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ is followed not by ἔν but by εἰς. This latter construction is one with which the fourth evangelist was quite familiar.⁽³⁶⁾ In view of its fairly frequent use in the Fourth Gospel itself and also in 1 John 5:13 one is led to ask why the fourth evangelist should have decided to use such a comparatively rare construction in 20:31 instead of the more familiar one if indeed it was his intention that the phrase ἔν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ should be construed with ΠΙΣΤΕΥΟΝΤΕΣ. In view of the importance of 20:31 as a statement of his purpose in composing his gospel one would have expected the evangelist to make his meaning as clear as possible.

It seems to me, therefore, that there are no valid reasons why ἔν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ must be construed with ΠΙΣΤΕΥΟΝΤΕΣ in 20:31 especially in view of the fact that it is possible to translate the verse quite satisfactorily by following the word-order as it stands - "that you may have life in his name". This translation emphasizes that it is Jesus who is the source of this "life" and that it is given by him to those who believe. As we have seen, these are two aspects of ζωὴ that are elaborated and highlighted throughout the gospel.

(8) A Comment on the "Destination" of the Fourth Gospel in the light of 20:31

In itself 20:31 has nothing to tell us about the "destination" of the Fourth Gospel apart from the important fact that it does appear to have one. The evangelist's use of the 2nd person plural, ΠΙΣΤΕΥ[Ε]ΤΕ, "... you may believe", places this question beyond all reasonable doubt. It comes somewhat as a surprise, therefore, to read in a book of the calibre of Barrett's commentary on the Gospel of St John that "it is easy, when we read the gospel, to believe that John, though doubtless aware of the necessity of strengthening Christians and converting the heathen, wrote primarily to satisfy himself. His gospel must be written: it was no concern of his whether it was also read. Again, it is by no means necessary to suppose that he was aware of the historical problems imposed upon later students by his treatment of the traditional material. It cried

aloud for rehandling; its true meaning had crystallized in his mind, and he simply conveyed this meaning to paper" (op. cit., 115).

Before rejecting Barrett's views out of hand it should be noted that this author is concerned primarily in the passage quoted above with the possible reasons why the Fourth Gospel came to be accepted at a much slower rate than the Synoptics. One of the reasons he offers for this is an apparent lack of interest on the part of the evangelist to make his gospel known: "it may be doubted whether he (the evangelist) was very interested in its publication" (ibid.).

Barrett's views on the reasons why the Fourth Gospel came to be generally circulated only at a comparatively late date are, of course, no more than conjecture. He himself would be the first to admit this. However it is a conjecture which, it seems to me, does not do full justice to all the facts. If the fourth evangelist "wrote to reaffirm the fundamental convictions of the Christian faith in the full light of new circumstances, new terminology, and new experiences", as Barrett himself believes, (ibid., 117), and if "the traditional material cried aloud for rehandling" (ibid., 115), it is hard to believe that the evangelist would not have been anxious to share with others his own insights.⁽³⁷⁾

If we may be permitted to return to the distinction we made in the introductory chapter between the "reason" why a person writes a book and the "purpose" of the book itself,⁽³⁸⁾ it seems to me that it is quite conceivable that one of the "reasons" why the evangelist wrote his gospel was the 'personal satisfaction' it gave to him to put down in writing ideas and insights that, in the words of Barrett, "had crystallized in his mind" (op. cit., 115). But in addition to this we must hold that the gospel itself had a different purpose and destination that dictated the choice of material and the way in which it is presented in the gospel.

(C) Summary and Conclusions

Our analysis of 20:30-31 against the background of the Fourth Gospel as a whole leads us to make certain conclusions which we shall have to take into account in coming to any decision as to what the purpose and destination of this gospel is.

(1) The first of these conclusions is that the evangelist selected various "signs" out of the many that were known to him. Further, his choice of material was not a haphazard one; rather the "signs" in question were selected in accordance with a specific principle which he enunciates in 20:31: "these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,". This means that the "signs" chosen had a function to perform in the gospel and that their meaning and value are to be assessed in the light of the stated principle.

Because there was a conscious process of selecting his material on the part of the evangelist we cannot accept, contra Goguel, that the Fourth Gospel is no more than a mere "collection of episodes which illustrate different aspects of the Christian life". At the same time, however, it must be admitted that there is no general agreement among scholars as to what the underlying plan of the gospel is; but this lack of agreement should not be interpreted to mean that the gospel does not have a plan.

(2) In addition to being the "principle" in accordance with which the evangelist selected at least some of the material used by him in the composition of the Fourth Gospel, 20:31 also explains what the "purpose" of that gospel is. Clearly, in the light of what we have said above, σημεῖα have a very important role to play in the achieving of this purpose.

While it is generally accepted that the "signs" contained in the Fourth Gospel are also "miracles", this gospel, in comparison with the Synoptics, is to all intents and purposes unique in the choice of the term σημεῖα to describe these events. Moreover, it does not explain the origin of the term or the meaning to be given to it. It is as if the evangelist presumed that his readers were already familiar with the word.

These "signs" were intended to provoke a suitable response in those who "saw" them. However it was not sufficient or even necessary to see the "signs" being worked with one's own eyes. What was important was that the true meaning of the "signs" should be "seen" and understood.

The "signs" worked by Jesus had meaning not only for his contemporaries but for people of all subsequent ages too. Naturally these people would not have "seen" the "signs" for themselves in the physical sense. Hence for an account of what happened as well as for the true meaning of the "signs" they would be dependent upon the "testimony" of others, especially

of Jesus' disciples in whose presence the "signs" had been performed. Because of this the concept of "witness" plays a very important role in the gospel.

(3) The purpose of the "signs" was to encourage belief in Jesus. The Fourth Gospel makes it clear that the "believing" it wished to encourage was an active, on-going process that involved a trust in, acceptance of, and a commitment to the person of Jesus. It manifests itself, as we saw, in a variety of ways, e.g. by listening to Jesus and his "word", by accepting him and his "testimony", by loving him, etc.

The evangelist never uses the word ΠΙΣΤΙΣ although it is a common enough term in the rest of the New Testament. Instead he shows a preference for the verb ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ which probably highlighted the active nature of believing which he wished to emphasize. The actual word ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ is concentrated in the first twelve chapters of the gospel. Nevertheless the theme implied in it is spread throughout. This is particularly clear when we take account of the different manifestations of belief to which we referred in the previous paragraph.

(4) It is the evangelist's intention to encourage belief in Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of God". "The Christ", which is no more than a translation of "the Messiah", is obviously a very Jewish concept. Moreover it is a theme that unfolds in the gospel itself against the background of Jewish beliefs concerning the Messiah's origin, destiny and mission, as well as the questions of whether he was also a "king" and/or "the prophet".

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the evangelist's treatment of this theme is excessively "Jewish" in the sense that the problems treated by him would have been of most interest to and meaning for a Jewish audience. In fact it can be argued that the prominence he gives to these questions is a clear indication of the audience to which he was addressing his gospel.

It was not a part of Jewish messianic belief that the Messiah would be a divine being, though obviously he would have been highly favoured by God. According to the evidence of the gospel the title, "Son of God", on the lips of Jesus' contemporaries appears to have been no more than an honorific appellation, without any connotation of divinity being implied. But on the lips of Jesus himself, however, it was a designation that was to be under-

stood literally. He was both in name and in fact truly the "Son of God". In developing this theme in the Fourth Gospel the evangelist, as in the case of "the Messiah", treats it against the background of Jewish beliefs, especially those concerning the nature of God.

In brief: because acceptance of Jesus as "Messiah" did not involve an acceptance of his divinity per se, the evangelist makes it clear that these two titles, and the realities they represent, apply to the person of Jesus. Not only is he the "Messiah"; he is also the "Son of God". Both of these themes are discussed in a Jewish context and with emphasis on those aspects that would have been of particular concern to Jewish readers.

(5) It is only by "believing" that Jesus is both "Messiah" and "Son of God" that one will receive the "life" which is the end result of "believing". This "life" in which the believer is called to share is different from ordinary human life. In fact it is the same "life" as that which the Father and Jesus also possess. For believers Jesus is both the source of this "life" as well as the one who alone can give it.

(6) It is clear that the Fourth Gospel does indeed have a "destination" and that its intended readers were uppermost in the mind of the evangelist when he wrote his gospel. However no matter which reading of $\mu\omicron\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$ is accepted in 20:31 it is not possible purely on the grounds of the tense used to answer the question of whether the intended readers were Christians or not.

Introduction

Having completed our examination of the various theories that have been proposed to explain the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose, as well as what the gospel itself has to say in this regard, it is now time to bring together the conclusions we have reached in an attempt to arrive at some decision regarding the matters under investigation.

Jn 20:31, even though it clearly presumes that the Fourth Gospel does indeed have a destination, does not indicate whether it was addressed to Jews or to Gentiles or to both groups. Nor does it settle the question of whether its intended readers were Christians or not. For this reason it is necessary to seek for possible clues in the body of the gospel itself as to the identity of those to whom it was being addressed.

As far as the purpose of the gospel is concerned, while this is not identical with the question of its destination, it is nevertheless very closely related to it. In fact it would be true to say that the one must complement the other. Clearly the purpose of the gospel would have been shaped by its destination since each of the differing destinations we have discussed would, on the whole, have required from the evangelist a different purpose and method of proceeding. The first question that has to be answered, therefore, is that of the Fourth Gospel's destination. Once this has been done the ground will have been cleared for a precise formulation of its purpose(s).

(A) The Destination of the Fourth Gospel

As we have indicated above, there are basically two questions that have to be answered about the Fourth Gospel's destination. The first of these is: Was the gospel written for Jews, or Gentiles, or both? The second is: Were its intended readers Christians or non-Christians?

To answer both of these questions adequately and satisfactorily it is important that the evidence of the whole gospel is taken into account. It is not sufficient, for example, merely to highlight those aspects that might have been appealing and intelligible to a specific group of people and then use these to show that the gospel must have been addressed to

then, while at the same time overlooking or failing to offer any explanation for the presence of other material in the gospel that cannot so easily be accommodated. This might appear to be an all-too-obvious statement to make. And yet, in Barrett's view at least, there are a number of scholars who fail to apply the principle which it entails. "It seems to me", he writes (The Gospel of John and Judaism, 62), "that one commentator after another has described some features of the gospel with a clarity and forcefulness which he was able to acquire only by closing his eyes to others".

In the two sections which follow we shall attempt to answer the questions which we have posed above, while at the same time we shall try to situate the gospel's readers in the particular situation that will help to identify them more closely.

(1) Was the Gospel written for Jews, Gentiles, or both?

Our investigation of the evidence proposed by those who support a Gentile destination showed that while it might be possible to establish that there are certain similarities and points of contact between the Fourth Gospel and contemporary Greek philosophy, the Gnostic Systems, the Hermetica, and/or the writings of Philo, they are limited to specific aspects and sections of the gospel. Further it was shown that it was possible to explain their presence in the Fourth Gospel in ways that were quite adequate and at times even more satisfactory than by direct contact with or influence by these movements and their literature. This was due, at least in part, to the religious syncretism of the age. For example, Judaism itself appears to have been influenced by contemporary non-Jewish trends and concepts while in other instances it had apparently made a significant contribution to the development of the movements in question. A good illustration of this latter point is the impact which Judaism had upon the development of Gnosticism.

When we turn to the evidence in support of a Jewish destination the picture that confronts us is a very different one. The Fourth Gospel, from beginning to end, is saturated with Jewish material. This in itself does not, of course, "prove" that the gospel has a Jewish destination for, as we have repeatedly emphasized, this could be no more than an indication of its "background" and of the milieu in which the evangelist himself grew up or in which the gospel material came to be composed.

Thus the presence in the Fourth Gospel of "Jewish material" is not necessarily significant for determining what the destination of the gospel was. But at the same time it cannot be denied that this material could be a pointer to the readers which the evangelist had in mind when composing his gospel.⁽¹⁾ It seems to me that what is of paramount importance in deciding what the value of this material is for establishing the gospel's destination is first of all the choice of material made by the evangelist, and then the way in which he has used and developed it. Because of the importance of this point for our argument it is necessary that we elaborate it a little more fully.

When we discussed the evangelist's use of the Old Testament we noted that his approach was essentially christological.⁽²⁾ Indeed Jesus is, as Schnackenburg and others have so rightly pointed out, the focal point and "major interest" of the whole gospel. That this should have been so is understandable whether the Fourth Gospel was being addressed to Jews or to Gentiles. But what is significant, I believe, for the gospel's destination is that the evangelist centres his whole presentation of Jesus around the great figures of Jewish history, viz. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses. To these we should add the name of John the Baptist, a person who had obviously created a deep impression on large numbers of the Jews. The extent of this impression can be gauged from the fact that some of them even thought that he might be the Messiah. The evangelist's intention, as we have seen, was to show that Jesus was superior to all of these great men but at the same time between him and them there was no question of any real opposition. Any apparent opposition between them and Jesus was a result of a misconception on the part of the Jews about the true nature of the relationship that existed between Jesus and these great figures. Moreover, Jesus is also described in terms of various images that are deeply rooted in the Old Testament, e.g. the Logos, the Good Shepherd, the True Vine, ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, the Living Water, the Bread of Life, the Son of Man. Further, it is to him that the Law bears witness and it is in him that it finds its fulfilment, as do the Jewish feasts and the Temple itself. Thus, for a Jew to accept and to believe in Jesus does not involve a rejection of his beliefs and history. Rather it is this very belief in Jesus that gave to all of these other things their true meaning and value.

Similarly, it is the person of Jesus who stands at the centre of the evangelist's own statement of purpose in 20:30-31 and his elaboration of

this throughout the gospel. Here we saw that the concepts "Christ/Messiah" and "Son of God" in a very real way dominate the evangelist's portrayal of Jesus.

As far as Jesus' Messiahship was concerned, the evangelist elaborated and developed the true meaning of this against the background of popular Jewish beliefs about his origins and birth, destiny, and the nature of the kingship he would enjoy. It has to be admitted that these are questions that would, in the main, be either practically meaningless for, or of little interest to, the majority of Gentiles whereas for the Jews they were at the very centre of all their hopes.

The title "Son of God" was one with which the Jews were not unfamiliar. But it could be argued, as Schnackenburg does, that such a designation was equally intelligible to the Gentiles also. Yet the evangelist's whole treatment of it seems to place it quite definitely in a Jewish context. He clearly indicates, for example, how it was understood by Jesus' contemporaries, on whose lips it was no more than a synonym for "Messiah".

The evangelist is not, of course, satisfied with the popular understanding of these two titles when applied to Christ. Rather he takes up the current beliefs and opinions of the Jews to show that in the end they lead to a misrepresentation of the true nature of the person and work of the Messiah. Hence their views must be both corrected and supplemented. In doing this the evangelist does not dispense with the title "Messiah" but rather by means of the works and words of Jesus and of others he attempts to give to it its true meaning. And here it is a question of the reality far exceeding the people's expectations for not only is Jesus in truth the "Messiah", he is also the "Son of God" in the literal sense of that word.

We would therefore agree with Van Unnik and Robinson (contra Schnackenburg) that the evangelist's use of the titles "Messiah" and "Son of God" point to an exclusively Jewish audience and not to a Jewish and Gentile one. Well-disposed Jews would have found it comparatively easy to accept that Jesus was the Messiah. The gospel itself gives us examples of this.⁽³⁾ However, that he was also the "Son of God" in the literal meaning of that phrase would have proved to have been a stumbling block of enormous proportions for many of the Jews with their strict adherence to monotheism. For this reason the evangelist felt compelled to show that Jesus' claim to this title was both in deed and in word well-founded.

In addition to the fourth evangelist's presentation of Jesus against the background of Jewish questions and in the light of Jewish terms and categories there are other elements in the gospel that indicate that it was being addressed to Jews alone. Of particular significance here is the question of exclusion from the synagogue. This was, as we have already seen, a threat that would have held no fears except for Jews.

Thus it seems to me that there is in the Fourth Gospel a degree of "Jewishness" far in excess of what we may legitimately expect to find in any book that had its origin in a Jewish environment. This is the conclusion that inevitably forces itself upon the student of the gospel who attempts to evaluate all the evidence as objectively as possible and in the light of the restrictions which the evangelist places upon himself in 20:30-31. It is the "Jewish material" alone which gives to the whole of the gospel a unity and coherence that its purpose demands. This material is spread throughout the gospel, it requires on the part of the reader a reasonably detailed knowledge of the Old Testament and Judaistic practices and beliefs if it is to be understood, and it covers topics that would have been unintelligible to, or largely without meaning for, the non-Jew.

In claiming, however, that the Fourth Gospel was written for Jews we cannot afford to overlook the presence of those explanatory comments that appear to have been included for the benefit of Gentile readers.⁽⁴⁾ Not for one moment do we wish to deny that the reasonably well-educated Gentile reader would have been able to find much that was of value to him in the Fourth Gospel. But this is not the same as saying that the gospel was written for him in the first place.

The most likely explanation, as we saw, for the presence of these "non-Jewish" comments in the gospel is that they should be attributed to the hand of an editor who, recognizing the universal appeal and significance that the gospel had beyond the situation for which it was specifically written,⁽⁵⁾ attempted to explain those customs, names and feasts that would not have been understood by those who had no previous contact with or knowledge of Judaism and its practices.⁽⁶⁾

We may summarize our conclusions this far as follows: the Fourth Gospel was originally intended by the evangelist for a Jewish audience. At a later stage, however, an editor or editors gave to it a wider destination by adding various explanatory comments that were considered to be

necessary in order to make the gospel more intelligible to the Gentiles.⁽⁷⁾

(2) Was the Gospel written for Christians or Non-Christians?

In the previous chapter we noted that according to Bultmann (John, 698,f) it was "irrelevant" to the Evangelist whether the readers of the gospel were 'Christians' or not. Even though much of the gospel material that is relevant in the context under discussion should not, in Bultmann's opinion, be attributed to the Evangelist at all but rather to a Redactor, we find that we cannot agree with the implications of his view as far as the destination of the gospel is concerned. Our inquiry has led us to see that the fourth evangelist had a very definite destination in mind when composing his gospel. What remains for us to do is to attempt to identify that destination as closely as possible. We have already established that the evangelist intended his gospel to be read by Jews. The question that we must now attempt to answer is whether these Jewish readers were Christians or not.

Two scholars to propose that the evangelist had non-Christian Jews in mind when writing his gospel are, as we have seen, Van Unnik and Robinson. The former suggested that "the purpose of the Fourth Gospel was to bring the visitors of a synagogue in the diaspora (Jews and God-fearers) to belief in Jesus as the Messiah of Israel", while the latter proposed that the Fourth Gospel should be seen as an appeal addressed to that "Greek-speaking Diaspora Judaism" which was outside the Church.⁽⁸⁾

Our analysis of the views of these scholars led us to conclude that there was much in their line of argument with which we could agree, especially in so far as this indicated a Jewish destination for the gospel. Whether, however, it should be seen as being addressed only to Jews of the Diaspora and whether it is legitimate to speak of them as being "outside the Church" are two questions about which we must have certain reservations, especially in so far as the latter is concerned.

The emphasis of these two scholars on the Jews of the Diaspora is perhaps understandable if one situates the Fourth Gospel's composition in the post - A.D. 70 era. The war did not, of course, result in the depopulation of Palestine, as Robinson seems to imply; but it did result in an exodus of many of the Jews, some leaders among them, as well as in the almost total liquidation of some of the groups that had exercised considerable influence on Palestinian Judaism (e.g. the Zealots, and also many of the Essenes, Sadducees, members of the priestly families). Because of the

reversals which Palestinian Judaism had experienced as a result of the war the Judaism of the Diaspora gradually came into its own in the subsequent period. But the significance of this comment must be tempered with the recollection of the fact that in this same period there was, as we have seen, a move on the part of the Sages at Jamnia to achieve a greater degree of unity and uniformity among Jews in general. The destruction of the Temple which had, for obvious reasons, played a much more important role in Palestinian Judaism than in the Judaism of the Diaspora, must have facilitated this new development.

For these reasons it seems to me that while one would not wish to reject the claims of Robinson and Van Unnik who see the Fourth Gospel as being addressed to Jews of the Diaspora, it should not thereby be assumed that the evangelist was excluding Palestinian Jews or that these Jews would not have found the gospel as meaningful and as valuable as their co-religionists elsewhere. In other words, Palestinian Jews cannot be excluded from the gospel's destination purely on the grounds of differences in religious beliefs and practices between themselves and Jews living in the Diaspora.

At the same time, however, it is legitimate to assume that the Fourth Gospel was composed in a particular city or area and that the evangelist could not have been completely unaware of what was going on around him at the time. Now while it is possible, and indeed likely that some of the material used by the evangelist may have originated in Palestine itself, tradition and the weight of scholarly opinion clearly situate the place of the gospel's composition in a city of the diaspora. Yet knowledge of the exact location and identity of the city in question, while it may provide us with corroborative evidence, is not essential for determining what the gospel's destination was.⁽⁹⁾

It is on the question of whether the Jewish readers of the gospel were Christians or not that we have reason to disagree most of all with the views of Van Unnik and Robinson. In the course of our investigation we have shown that there are clear indications that a "Christian" audience was being addressed at least in certain sections of the gospel. Particular stress in this respect was placed upon the evidence of John 13-17. We also concluded that in his treatment of certain themes in the gospel the evangelist appears to be presuming that his readers were already in possession of knowledge that one would have expected to find in Christians.

The themes in question were the sacraments, eschatology and the Church. In each of these instances the evangelist seems to be selecting only specific aspects of the theme, as if these were the ones that required particular attention in the circumstances in which he was writing, or, alternatively, best suited the achieving of the purpose he had in mind. What he has to say about those aspects chosen by him would have been intelligible only to those who were already familiar at least with the broad outlines of apostolic teaching.

Thus, that there are indications in the Fourth Gospel which point to a "Christian" audience (as opposed to elements that Christians would have been able to read with profit) seems to me to be beyond reasonable doubt. Does this entitle us, however, to claim that the whole of the Fourth Gospel was written for Jewish Christians? To be able to answer this question it is necessary for us to be clear in the first instance about the way in which the word "Christian" is being used and what it is supposed to represent. To say, for example, that because the Fourth Gospel arose out of and belongs to the "Christian" Church and because it is concerned exclusively with the person of Christ it is therefore a "Christian" book is, of course, true but it does not answer our question. With the passage of the centuries the word "Christian" has come to be applied to a large variety of things. Not only is it used in reference to certain people; it is also used to describe various institutions, objects, practices, etc., all of which, it is claimed, have some contact with Christ and his teachings. Thus one speaks of the "Christian" Church or Churches, "Christian" Missions, the "Christian" era, a "Christian" society or country, "Christian" education", "Christian" associations and societies, "Christian" rites of marriage and burial, and so on.

In the context under discussion, however, our concern is clearly only with people who claim to be or are described as "Christians". At the present time it is generally assumed that a "Christian" is a person who belongs to one of the "Christian" churches. Whether, however, it is possible to be a "Christian" without belonging to such a church is a question that does not call for an answer in this thesis. Against the background of 20:30-31 and in the context of the overall discussion concerning the Fourth Gospel's destination, for our purpose we may define a "Christian" in general terms as "one who believes in Jesus".

By thus reducing the definition of a "Christian" to its basic minimum, so to speak, are we now able to decide whether this gospel was intended for

"Christians" or "non-Christians"? Unfortunately our answer must still be in the negative. The reason for our difficulty in this respect lies in the different ways in which the fourth evangelist uses the word "believe". In our review of the evangelist's own statement concerning the purpose and destination of the gospel we commented on the various ways in which people come to believe in Jesus, and what it was that initiated that belief, namely, a $\sigma\mu\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$, a "word" of Jesus himself, the "words" or "testimony" of others, or a combination of these elements. We also emphasized the active nature of Johannine belief. It involves a continuous and ever deeper commitment to the person of Jesus and not merely an acceptance of certain beliefs on an intellectual level about the nature of the person and work of Jesus. ⁽¹⁰⁾

The problem that confronts us in deciding whether the Fourth Gospel was intended for a (Jewish) Christian audience or not is this: what level of belief, what degree of commitment to the person of Jesus, would have been required by the fourth evangelist before he would have described a person as a "Christian", presuming that he was accustomed to using this term? John 9, perhaps the most graphically and impressively in the whole of the gospel, describes for us the various stages through which this particular person's faith in Jesus progressed from his acceptance of him as a "prophet" (9:17) to his ultimate acceptance of him as "Son of Man" (9:35, ff). There is no doubt that such a man would quite rightly have been described as a "Christian" in the post-Resurrection era. Yet this episode illustrates how it is possible to "believe in Jesus" at different levels.

To qualify as a "Christian", however, the fourth evangelist would require of a person that he believe in Jesus as "the Messiah, the Son of God" (cf. 20:30-31). True belief in Jesus also requires that a person is prepared to confess it in public as the circumstances demand. This conclusion is borne out by what we read in 12:42, f. Here we are told that "many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God". It should first of all be noted that the evangelist does not indicate in what sense the authorities "believed in" Jesus. However one vital difference between their attitude and that of the man born blind is that the latter, unlike the former, is prepared to confess his belief in public in spite of the consequences of this to him.

On the basis of these observations it seems to me that if the fourth evangelist had offered a definition of what he meant by a "Christian" he would have emphasized not only the necessity of "believing" in Jesus in the full sense of that word but also - and this is something that should follow from and be inextricably bound up with a true commitment to him - the importance of being prepared to "confess" that belief when circumstances demanded it. What the fourth evangelist has to say about Joseph of Arimathea in this regard is illuminating: "After this Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews...." (19:38). While the evangelist does not appear to show any antagonism towards Joseph as a person, as he does to the "authorities" of 12:42, f., there can be no doubt that he does not approve of the secrecy in which Joseph shrouded his belief.⁽¹¹⁾

The question of the public confession of one's belief in Jesus would have become a very live issue with the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim into the liturgy of the synagogue. Prior to this date Jewish "believers" were allowed to attend the synagogue unhindered even though there was undoubtedly a gradual build-up of tension between them and official Judaism. But the Birkath ha-minim changed this situation radically in that it tended to emphasize the differences between Christianity and Judaism. Believers were now called upon to declare their allegiance either to Judaism or to Christianity. The manner in which individuals were selected to lead the congregation in the Shemoneh Esreh ensured that at least the majority of them would not have been able to avoid making this choice.⁽¹²⁾

The fact that an individual was called upon to read the Birkath ha-minim also fits in well with the Fourth Gospel's emphasis on the importance of the individual's relationship to Jesus in faith. It was as an individual that the believer was, on these occasions, required to make a decision for Jesus.⁽¹³⁾ It should not be forgotten however that it is an individual who in making that decision thereby chose to associate himself with the Church. E. Käsemann (The Testament of Jesus, 40) admirably sums up the nature of the relationship between the individual and the Church as seen by the Fourth Gospel thus:

"For John, the Church is basically and exclusively the fellowship of people who hear Jesus' word and believe in him: in short, it is the community under the Word. All other ecclesiological definitions are oriented on this one and significant only in so far as they give

"expression to it. But this also means that the Church is viewed here with strange emphasis from the perspective of its individual members. To hear, to believe and to follow is something that only the individual himself and not his representative can and must do, even if he does it within the Christian brotherhood. Pointedly, but not exaggeratedly, we take note that John, as the first theologian, passionately rejects the principle that it is sufficient to believe with the Church, and to be supported by the Church as the mother of the individual."⁽¹⁴⁾

When viewed against this background it does not appear that questions regarding the nature of the Church were of vital importance to the readers of the Fourth Gospel. It is true, as we have pointed out, that the evangelist does presume its existence in his gospel and that his readers are aware of it and various of its practices, especially those concerning the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist. Further, it needs hardly to be said that Jews could come to the Church in ways other than as a consequence of the Birkath ha-minim. For example, submitting to Baptism or taking part in the celebration of the Eucharist amounted to public acts of belief in Jesus and as such would have been recognized as "Christian" rites.

It is not an unreasonable assumption, however, to believe that in the years following the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim greater attention would have been given by Jewish Christians to the development of a richer ecclesiology.⁽¹⁵⁾ Their exclusion from the synagogue and everything that this entailed on a personal level would, of necessity, have led them to reappraise their situation vis-à-vis Judaism. In the atmosphere of increasing confrontation between "Church" and "Synagogue", to which events surrounding the Birkath ha-minim would have contributed immensely, "believers" began more and more to see themselves corporately as the "true" Israel in contrast to those Jews who had rejected Jesus. This would have been an understandable - and human - reaction on their part. After all, it was necessary to fill the vacuum created in their lives by their exclusion from the Synagogue and Judaism itself. The Fourth Gospel itself laid the foundations for this type of ecclesiological development, emphasizing as it did that those who believed in Jesus and accepted him as the Messiah were the ones who were being true to the teachings of the Law and the Prophets, and as such constituted the "true Israel".⁽¹⁶⁾

To return to the problem of whether the Jews for whom the Fourth Gospel was written are to be described as "Christians" or not. The fourth

evangelist himself does not use the term "Christian" but speaks rather of "believing". In view of the way we have defined "Christian" above it might appear, at first sight, that the two terms "Christian" and "believer" could be used interchangeably. But if we examine closely the way in which the Fourth Gospel uses the term "believing" we will notice that it is used to describe different categories of people. For the sake of convenience we may group all of those who are described as "believing" in Jesus in the gospel into two main groups, viz., "true believers" and those whom M. de Jonge ("Jewish Expectations about the 'Messiah' according to the Fourth Gospel", 265, f) refers to as "sympathizing Jews" or "Jewish sympathizers". That which distinguishes the "true believers" from the others is the fact that they were prepared to confess their belief in Jesus in public, as we have already explained above. For this reason we could aptly describe the latter group as "secret believers" for it was their unwillingness to make a public confession of their faith that prevented them from being classified with the community of "true believers".

Among these "secret believers" we find people like Joseph of Arimathea, although he is even described as a μαθητῆς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ (cf. 19:38-42), Nicodemus (cf. 3:1-2, 7:50-52, 19:38-42),⁽¹⁷⁾ many among the ἄρχοντες (cf. 12:42-43) and even some of the Pharisees (cf. 9:16). As far as the common people were concerned we find that many of them were also favourably disposed towards Jesus (cf. 2:23-25, 6:2, 7:40-41, 10:42, 11:45, 47-48, 12:11; see also the references to a σχίσμα among the Jews over Jesus in 7:43, 9:16 and 10:19).⁽¹⁸⁾ Whether, however, the common people in these instances should be classified as "true believers" or merely as "sympathizers" is not clear from the texts in question in spite of the fact that on certain occasions their attitude is described as one of belief (cf. 2:23, 7:31, 8:31, 10:42, 11:45, 48, 12:11).

Because of the comparative prominence Nicodemus enjoys in the Fourth Gospel it is not unreasonable to argue, as M. de Jonge does in his article "Nicodemus and Jesus: Some Observations on Misunderstanding and Understanding in the Fourth Gospel" (p. 338) that he "is not pictured as an individual person, but as a representative of a larger group". In the light of the role played by Nicodemus, de Jonge argues further that "the evangelist wants to make clear in what respects the faith of the group represented by Nicodemus fell short of true Christian faith and why their understanding was in fact misunderstanding, putting them outside the community of the true believers of Jesus Christ" (ibid., 349). Because the faith of these "secret believers" was defective, especially when it

came to a public confession of it, all of them fall under the condemnation of 12:42-43 (cf. also 5:44). It is from the consequences of this condemnation that the fourth evangelist wishes to save them.

This discussion brings us to the conclusion that the Fourth Gospel should be seen as being addressed not only to those who may be described as "Christians" in the strict sense of that word, i.e. the "true believers", but also to those other "secret believers" who, though sympathetic towards Jesus, were not yet ready to make that public confession of their faith that "true belief" required of them. The particular group of "believing" Jews that the evangelist had in mind when composing his gospel were those who were affected by the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim with the public acceptance or disavowal of the person of Jesus that it involved.

(B) The Purpose of the Fourth Gospel

Having established what the destination of the Fourth Gospel is all that now remains to be done is to determine in precise terms what its purpose was in the light of the conclusions we have reached above.

Granted that the Fourth Gospel was written for Jewish "believers" it is clear that its "general purpose"⁽¹⁹⁾ must have been to 'strengthen the faith' of these believers and not, therefore, to initiate belief. This, however, is not a completely satisfactory answer to the question of the gospel's purpose because what is also of particular interest to us is the way in which the evangelist did this. In other words, what were the gospel's "specific purpose(s)"?

To answer this question we have to bear in mind the considerable differences there were both in the nature and extent of the "belief" of the two groups of Jewish believers to which we have referred. Because of the situation in which the members of each of these two groups found themselves the evangelist had to adopt a varied approach in an attempt to meet the differing problems and difficulties that were being experienced.

We have shown above that the Fourth Gospel was written for those Jewish "believers" whose faith, in one way or another, was being tested in the situation created by the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim. In this context the question that now concerns us is the way in which the fourth evangelist set out to strengthen their faith. First of all, he does this

by what we have referred to elsewhere as the "direct appeal" method.⁽²⁰⁾ While this would have had value for both "true" and "secret" believers it seems to me that it would have been particularly apposite in the case of the former who, having made their public confession of faith in Jesus, found themselves being rejected and even persecuted by their former co-religionists and countrymen. Those methods we described as "indirect", viz. the polemical and the apologetical, would in the main have been directed at the "secret" believers who still needed to be finally convinced of the correctness of professing their belief in Jesus irrespective of what the consequences might be as far as official Judaism was concerned. At the same time this approach on the part of the evangelist would also have served to re-inforce the commitment of "true believers".

In brief: the evangelist strengthens the faith of "believers" by the use of both direct and indirect methods. The former should be seen as being directed primarily, though not exclusively, at "true believers" while the latter were intended mainly for "secret believers" but again, not exclusively so.

What of those "polemical features" which we acknowledged were indeed present in the gospel? Our discussion of the polemical theories showed that in themselves they prove to be inadequate as explanations of the gospel's purpose. For this reason, while it might be legitimate to refer to these features of the gospel as "secondary" or "subsidiary" purposes, it seems to me that it would be more in keeping with the evangelist's approach and style to describe them rather as one of the means or techniques used by him to strengthen the faith of "believers". They are, in a manner of speaking, the indirect consequences of the method chosen by him to achieve the purpose which he had set for his gospel.

We have shown that the evangelist displays a polemical attitude only in his treatment of a certain section of the Jewish people. But his main interest is centred on those who were well disposed towards Jesus and accepted him for what he was. The other "Jews", who in the gospel are so diametrically opposed to Jesus, are the very ones who, in the situation in which the gospel came to be composed, were responsible for submitting the faith of "believers" to the test. Clearly there was no question of winning over the antagonistic section of the Jewish people and the evangelist does not even attempt to do it. Rather he considered it to be his duty to protect "believers" as far as possible from their onslaughts and arguments and in this case he obviously felt that the best form of defence was to attack!

The line of argument we have been pursuing rules out any "missionary" purpose for the gospel in the strict sense of that word. Those aspects in the gospel which have been used by some scholars to attribute to it a purpose of this nature were, in actual fact, intended by the evangelist to strengthen the faith especially of those who were hesitating and faltering in their commitment. All the arguments used and the evidence employed by the evangelist had as their purpose to prove that Jesus was indeed "the Christ, the Son of God" and that therefore they should believe in him irrespective of the consequences to themselves.

In the pursuit of his objective the evangelist selected only what he considered to be useful for the purpose in hand. In this respect the "witness" value of the material was of paramount importance. On this point Käsemann (The Testament of Jesus, 38), commenting on the way in which the evangelist handled the material which he had received from the primitive Christian tradition, notes: "Whatever does not serve as a witness for Christ is cast away, regardless of how important it may have been historically".⁽²¹⁾ A good illustration of this principle at work in the gospel is the way in which the evangelist handled the question of John the Baptist. That any polemic was intended here is clearly unproven.⁽²²⁾

(c) Conclusion

By way of summary, therefore, we conclude by stating that our inquiry has shown that the destination of the Fourth Gospel was Jewish "believers" - both the "true" (i.e. Jewish Christians strictly so called) and the "secret" ones - whose faith was being sorely tested by the introduction of the Birkath ha-minim into the synagogue service in the city where the evangelist was residing. The purpose of the gospel was to strengthen the faith of both of these groups of believers. This the evangelist did by selecting and using material that had a direct, exhortatory, appeal and by the use of more indirect methods that involved a polemical and apologetical approach.

At a later date, however, because of the universal appeal that the gospel was found to have, an editor (or editors) attempted to present it in a form that would have been more intelligible to Gentile readers. This he did by adding various explanatory comments before it began to be circulated on a wide scale.

It seems to me that this explanation of the Fourth Gospel's destination and purpose is the only one that does full justice to the gospel as a whole as well as to all of the different elements to be found therein.

1. Cf. Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., VI, 14,7. For a discussion of the possible meanings that Πνευματικόν could have in this context, see R.M. Grant, "The Origin of the Fourth Gospel", 305,ff., and R.V.G. Tasker, The Gospel According to St John, 24,ff.
2. Most of the larger commentaries on the Fourth Gospel devote a number of pages to a discussion of the Greek text of the gospel, to its origins and sources, e.g. Bernard, St John, xiii,f.; Brown, John, CXXXI; Barrett, St John, 120,f.; Schnackenburg, St John, 173,ff. In his work, The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration, B.M. Metzger gives a comprehensive survey of the factors that have influenced the history of the text of the New Testament in general. A more concise discussion of these points may be found in E. Hoskyns and N. Davey, The Riddle of the New Testament, 35-50 as well as in the various Introductions to the New Testament, e.g. Wikenhauser, 62-149 and Kummel, 360-386. Finally, for an evaluation of the variant readings for the Fourth Gospel see B.M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 198,ff.
3. See below, pp. 232,f.
4. Cf. Barrett, St John, 18,ff.; idem, "John" (Peake's Commentary), 845; Bernard, St John, xvi-xxx; Brown, John, XXVI,ff.; Bultmann, John, passim; Dodd, Interpretation, 289,f.; W. Groussouw, Revelation and Redemption; Guthrie, Introduction, 312,ff.; Howard, St John, 446, 460,f.; idem, The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation, 111,ff., 297,ff.; Kummel, Introduction, 146,f.; Lightfoot, St John, 7,ff.; Marsh, St John, 43,f.; Mollat, St Jean, 25,ff.; P. Parker, "Two Editions of John"; Sanders, "John", 935; Sanders and Mastin, St John, 3,f.; Schnackenburg, St John, 44,ff., 53,ff.; Wikenhauser, Introduction, 305,f.
5. For a more meaningful discussion of the evangelist's manner of thinking and expressing himself (on the assumption that he was of Semitic background) as compared with Western, more logically oriented thought patterns, consult Groussouw, op. cit., 8-17.
6. Cf. Barrett, St John, ad loc.; Bernard, St John, ad loc.; Brown, John, 332,ff., 1065,ff.; Bultmann, John, 700,ff.; Guthrie, Introduction, 315,f., 334,f.; Kummel, Introduction, 147,ff.; Lightfoot, St John, 336,ff., 345,ff.; Marsh, St John, 653,ff., 681,ff.; B.M. Metzger, The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration, 223,f.; idem, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament; P. Parker, "Two Editions of John"; Richardson, St John, 214,ff.; Sanders and Mastin, St John, 440,ff.; Schnackenburg, St John, 181,f.; Wikenhauser, Introduction, 304,f.
7. Cf. Brown, John, 207.
8. Cf. Barrett, St John, 83,ff.; idem, "John" (Peake's Commentary), 844; Bernard, St John, xxxiv,ff.; Braun, Jean le Théologien, I, 301-392; Brown, John, LXXXVII,ff.; Bultmann, John, passim; Guthrie, Introduction, 241,ff.; Howard, St John, 440,f.; Kummel, Introduction, 165,ff.; Lightfoot, St John, 1,ff.; Marsh, St John, 20,ff., 78,f.; Mollat, St Jean, 50,ff.; Painter, John, 3,f.; P. Parker, "John and John Mark"; Richardson, St John, 14,ff.; Sanders, "John", 944,f.; Sanders and Mastin, St John, 24,ff.; Schnackenburg, St John, 75,ff.; Wikenhauser, Introduction, 283,ff.

9. Traditionally the author of the Fourth Gospel has been identified with the "beloved disciple" who in turn has been identified with the apostle John. However the evidence in favour of this tradition is not of such a compelling nature as to exclude other possibilities. Among these mention may be made of the identification of the author with "John the Elder", a certain "John of Jerusalem" and John Mark. Sanders and Mastin, op. cit., 50, on the other hand, identify the "beloved disciple" with Lazarus and therefore do not accept that the "beloved disciple" was the author. The question is further complicated by the fact that editor(s), in addition to the author, apparently made a contribution to the composition of the gospel. See Braun's discussion of the identity of 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' (op. cit., 301,ff.) and the question of the two Johns (ibid., 357,ff.).
10. Cf. Barrett, St John, 105,ff.; idem, "John" (Peake's Commentary), 845; Brown, John, CIII,f.; Howard, St John, 441; Kummel, Introduction, 175; Marsh, St John, 41,f.; Schnackenburg, St John, 149,ff.; Wikenhauser, Introduction, 319.
11. Cf. Barrett, St John, 105,ff.; idem, "John" (Peake's Commentary), 845; Brown, John, LXXX,ff.; Guthrie, Introduction, 282,ff.; Howard, St John, 441; Kummel, Introduction, 175; Marsh, St John, 25,ff.; Wikenhauser, Introduction, 319,f.
12. Cf. Barrett, St John, 22,ff.; idem, The Gospel of John and Judaism, esp. chapter 1; Brown, John, LII,ff.; Bultmann, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting; Dodd, Interpretation, Part One; Guthrie, Introduction, 319,ff.; A.J.B. Higgins, The Historicity of the Fourth Gospel, 15,ff.; W.F. Howard, Christianity According to St John, 29,ff., 34,ff.; idem, St John, 449,ff.; A.M. Hunter, According to John, 23,ff.; Kummel, Introduction, 141,ff., 154,ff.; Lightfoot, St John, 42,ff.; Marsh, St John, 31,ff.; S. Neill, The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861-1961, 292,ff.; Richardson, St John, 22,f.; Sanders, "John", 941,ff.; Schnackenburg, St John, 119,ff.; Wikenhauser, Introduction, 309,ff.
13. See also 209,ff. in particular.
14. Cf., for example, Barrett's comments on this in his commentary, p.115.
15. On the topography of the Fourth Gospel see especially the following works: W.F. Albright, "Recent Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of John"; Barrett, The Gospel of John and Judaism, 36,f., 60; Bernard, St John, lxxix,ff.; R.E. Brown, New Testament Essays, 158,f.; Dodd, Interpretation, 452,f.; idem, Tradition, passim; Robert and Feuillet, Introduction, 625,f.; Guthrie, Introduction, 250,ff.; A.J.B. Higgins, The Historicity of the Fourth Gospel, 78,ff.; Howard, St John, 448; A.M. Hunter, According to John, 49,ff.; Schnackenburg, St John, 15,f.; D.J. Wieand, "John V.2 and the Pool of Bethesda".
16. Cf. Dodd, Interpretation, 452,f., and Tradition, 244,f.
17. See the comments on the "Pool of Bethesda" in the conclusion to this section.
18. See, for example, L.H. Vincent's investigations into the Antonia Fortress and the Lithostrotos, the excavations at Bethesda.

19. See Robert and Feuillet, op. cit., 653; Schnackenburg, op. cit., 15. However W.A. Meeks in his The Prophet-King gives a more favourable assessment of Kundzin's hypothesis.
20. See J.A.T. Robinson, "The Destination and Purpose of the Fourth Gospel", and A.J.B. Higgins, op. cit., 78.
21. Cf. Dodd, Tradition, 240, and Brown, New Testament Essays, 158.
22. See the commentaries, ad loc.; also D.J. Wieand, op. cit.
23. Clearly the question of the Fourth Gospel's place of composition and that of its destination are distinct although if it was possible to throw some light on the former this might assist us in determining what the latter was. See our discussion of the "Place of Composition" above.
24. On this question see especially the following works: Barrett, St John, esp. 10,ff.; idem, The Gospel of John and Judaism, 20,ff.; M. Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts; Brown, John, CXXIX; S. Brown, "From Burney to Black: The Fourth Gospel and the Aramaic Question"; Dodd, Tradition; Grant, Introduction, 149,ff.; Guthrie, Introduction, 316,ff.; A.M. Hunter, According to John, 18,ff.; C.F.D. Moule, An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek, esp. 171,ff.; J.H. Moulton and W.F. Howard, A Grammar of New Testament Greek, Vol. 2, esp. the Appendix; Robert and Feuillet, Introduction, 644,ff.; Schnackenburg, St John, 105,ff.
25. For a list of the words used most frequently by the fourth evangelist, as opposed to their comparatively limited use in the Synoptics, see Barrett, St John, 5,f.
26. See below, pp. 32,ff.
27. Cf. S. Brown, op. cit., 324,f.
28. The distinction between "actual" and "virtual" translation was first made by J.H. Moulton. "By 'virtual translation' is meant that the author, who had only an imperfect mastery of the Greek language in which he wrote, inadvertently used constructions which were common in his native Semitic tongue without realizing that they were unacceptable in Greek" (S. Brown, op. cit., 326).
29. See below, pp. 83,ff.
30. Cf. M. Black, op. cit., 61,f.
31. Cf. Schnackenburg, op. cit., 106, and S. Brown, op. cit., 337.
32. Regarding the significance of the use of $\kappa\eta\phi\alpha\varsigma$ see Dodd, Tradition, 308. He notes: "That this was the name by which the apostle was known by Aramaic-speaking Christians in the earliest days does not admit of doubt, in view of the evidence of the Pauline epistles".
33. See Bultmann, John, 105, note 2.
34. However the possibility that some of these could have been the work of an editor should not be ruled out entirely.

35. The phrases are Schnackenburg's, op. cit., 107, who also gives us a list of such words, phrases and constructions without, however, informing us by what criteria they were selected.
36. See also his examination of the Prologue in The Gospel of John and Judaism, 22,ff. where he finds "that no one of the alleged Semitisms of the prologue is truly convincing" (ibid., 28).
37. Such a practice would not be confined to the fourth evangelist if it could be proved that this is what actually happened. In similar fashion, for example, it is possible to argue that earlier translations of the Bible into the vernacular were at times more interested in keeping as close as possible to the wording and style of the original texts even at the expense of what might be called "good" English. Moule (op. cit., 172) for example, notes that "it is instructive to study the impact of Semitic languages on our English versions". That these languages have exercised some influence on the English of the Bible - and as a consequence on 'spoken' English - is more than probable. It should be noted, however, that the comparison between the English translations of the Bible and the Greek of the Fourth Gospel cannot be taken too far. To do so would be to postulate the existence of an Aramaic original behind the Fourth Gospel from which the Greek text was translated much in the same way as modern translations are made from the Greek text. The purpose of the comparison we have made above is merely to show how the language of the original sayings in isolated cases could have had some influence on the Greek text of the Fourth Gospel.
38. See our discussion of this on pp.7,8 above. It is also important to note that this editor or other editors may have made further additions to the gospel before it was released for circulation.
39. Cf. M.F. Wiles, The Spiritual Gospel, esp. Chapter 1, 7,ff.
40. See our discussion of the authorship question above, pp. 8,f.
41. For a discussion of Bultmann's Source Theory, see below, pp.83,ff. For a brief chronological and yet comprehensive review of all of the important source theories see, for example, H.M. Teeple, The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John, 30-51.
42. See his Ego Eimi, 108, quoted by Schnackenburg, St John, 52. For a further discussion of Schweizer's work see, i.a., R.T. Fortna, The Gospel of Signs, 203,ff.; T.W. Manson, "The Life of Jesus: A Survey of the Available Material, (5) The Fourth Gospel", 321; and H.M. Teeple, op. cit., 19,f.
43. For a list of these characteristics see W. Nicol, The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel, 16,ff., and D.M. Smith, The Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel, 68, note 45. Braun, Jean le Théologien, I, 401,ff. also has an appendix entitled "Les Caractéristiques Johanniques" in which he provides a comprehensive list of these characteristics in the light of the suggestions made not only by Schweizer and Ruckstuhl but also by Menoud, Jeremias and Howard.
44. For a brief discussion of Ruckstuhl's views and conclusions see Teeple, op. cit., 20,f.

45. See, for example, R.T. Fortna's discussion in The Gospel of Signs, 15,ff. of "ideological", "stylistic" and "contextual" criteria and the importance of each in analyzing the narratives of the Fourth Gospel.
46. See the discussion of this in J.M. Robinson, op. cit., 54,ff., 242,ff., Schnackenburg, St John, loc. cit., and Bultmann, John, loc. cit. It is interesting that even Schweizer admits that 2:1-10 contains no Johannine traits while 4:46-53 contains practically none. Cf. J.M. Robinson, 236. A slightly different approach is advocated by S. Temple in "The Two Signs in the Fourth Gospel". While maintaining that the two episodes in question are connected, he holds that they "come from a different tradition to that which provided the main source for the Fourth Gospel and that in writing the gospel the evangelist inserted the two at appropriate places in his main source" which the author refers to as "the Core" (p. 174). Finally, those who argue that these two miracles have not been taken from a source point out that the evangelist indicates that 4:46,ff. was the second sign done in Cana, and therefore the use of "second" here does not contradict what 2:23 and 4:45 say. Among those who hold this view mention may be made of Ruckstuhl. See D.M. Smith, op. cit., 66.
47. One author who has tried to argue that there is a move towards more agreement among scholars about the actual extent of such a source is R. Kysar. In an article entitled, "The Source Analysis of the Fourth Gospel. A Growing Consensus?", he analyzes John 6 in the light of "nine major source theories" (viz. R. Bultmann, R. Fortna, H. Becker, W. Wilkens, W. Hartke, E. Broome, O. Merlier, S. Schultz, and M.E. Boismard). His analysis leads him to conclude that it is "evident that a growing consensus as to the sources utilized by the fourth evangelist is emerging" (p. 152). While he has limited his own analysis to John 6 he suggests that "a substantial agreement might indeed exist among the critics with regard to the entire gospel". It seems to me that in this statement considerable emphasis should be placed on the word "might" in view of the differences of opinion among scholars concerning the content of the Source(s) used. In a footnote Kysar himself (ibid., 152) does admit "the existence of a sizable body of scholars who continue to maintain that source analyses of the fourth gospel of any kind are fruitless and impossible speculation".
48. Quoted by J.M. Robinson, op. cit., 236, note 10; see also the comments of B. Lindars, in similar vein, on Bultmann's theory, in Behind the Fourth Gospel, 22,ff.
49. See above, pp. 20,f.
50. Cf. Wikenhauser, Introduction, 307.

1. See, i.a., E.L. Allen "The Jewish Christian Church in the Fourth Gospel"; C.K. Barrett, "The Lamb of God"; idem, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel"; idem, St John; Bernard, St John; P. Borgen, Bread from Heaven : An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo; Braun, Jean le Théologien, II; Brown, John; Bultmann, John; H. Conzelmann, An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament; F.L. Cribbs, "A Re-assessment of the Date of Origin and the Destination of the Fourth Gospel"; M. de Jonge, "Nicodemus and Jesus: Some Observations on Misunderstanding and Understanding in the Fourth Gospel"; Dodd, Interpretation; idem, The Bible and the Greeks; idem, Tradition; E.D. Freed, Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John; T.F. Glasson, Moses in the Fourth Gospel; C. Goodwin, "How did John Treat his Sources?"; R.M. Grant, A Historical Introduction to the New Testament; E. Grässer, "Die antijüdische Polemik im Johannes-evangelium"; A. Guilding, The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship; Guthrie, Introduction; A. Hanson, "John's Citation of Psalm LXXXII Reconsidered"; A.J.B. Higgins, The Historicity of the Fourth Gospel; W.F. Howard, Christianity According to St John; idem, St John; idem, The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation; A.M. Hunter, According to John; J. Jeremias, "Μωϋσῆς" (TDNT); Lightfoot, St John; T.W. Manson, "The Old Testament in the Teaching of Jesus"; Marsh, St John; J.L. Martyn, History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel; W.A. Meeks, The Prophet-King : Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology; L. Morris, The Gospel According to John; C.F.D. Moule, The Birth of the New Testament; A. Negoitsa & C. Daniel, "L'Agneau de Dieu est le Verbe de Dieu (Ad Jo. i 29 et 36)"; Painter, John; S. Pancaro, The Law in the Fourth Gospel; Richardson, St John; Robert & Feuillet, Introduction; J.A.T. Robinson, "The Destination and Purpose of St John's Gospel"; R.A. Rosenberg, "Jesus, Isaac, and the 'Suffering Servant'"; Sanders, John; Schnackenburg, St John; E.M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel; R.H. Smith, "Exodus Typology in the Fourth Gospel"; R.V.G. Tasker, The Old Testament in the New Testament; G. Von Rad, K.G. Kuhn, W. Gutbrod, "ἡσφορηλα, etc." (TDNT); W.D. Wead, "We have a Law".
2. This should be seen in the context of the description of the Torah as "bread", a point to which we shall return.
3. See Bultmann, John, 273, and Barrett, St John, 261, for the interpretation of this verse.
4. This is a disputed point - cf. Dodd, Tradition, 105, f., Brown, op.cit., 794, 848, f., Barrett, op. cit., 445, f., Morris, op. cit., 786, ff.
5. See Dodd, op. cit., 104, ff.
6. In this connection D.W. Wead (op. cit.) argues that "when Jesus was accused of being the Son of God he was not only accused of blasphemy but also of being a false prophet who brought signs to authenticate his claims and led the true Jew away from the Mosaic law. On both counts he was worthy of death".
7. Dodd believes that "all through the trial the issue was political. Everything turns upon the title βασιλεύς" (op. cit., 112). If this is the impression that the fourth evangelist's account gives it is because, in my opinion, the "Jews" realized the only chance they had of getting a death sentence passed on Jesus was to press a charge of this nature. In other words, the "Jews" were shrewdly manipulating Pilate's own fears rather than obviously pressing the charges for which they thought that Jesus should die.

8. In addition to 13:33, see also 18:20,36.
9. Interesting in this connection is 18:15. The identity of the disciple who "was known to the high priest" (γνωστὸς τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ) is something of a mystery although various suggestions have been made, e.g. the evangelist himself and/or the "beloved disciple". What is clear is that he must have been a person of some influence. This could have been because he was related to the high priest or because he enjoyed a position of authority among the Jews, in all probability being a priest himself. Dodd, Traditions, 86,f., who discusses the possible meanings of γνωστὸς, notes that it would not have been impossible for this disciple to have been a priest since Acts 6:7 tells that many priests (πολλοὶ ὄχλος τῶν ἱερέων) were numbered among the early Christians.
10. The question of who are the true descendants of Abraham is a theme that Paul also discussed in Romans 4, esp. 13-25. According to him they are those who have faith in Christ irrespective of whether they are Jew or Gentile. See also Galatians 3:6,ff.
11. For a discussion of the meaning to be attached to the ἐγὼ εἰμί of Jesus in this context, see below, page 226, and note 21 to chapter 6.
12. See the reference to Th. C. Kruijf's discussion of the meaning of μονογενῆς in the Fourth Gospel in note 20 to chapter 6.
13. For a discussion of the points raised here and also of the importance attached to the sacrifice of Isaac in Jewish literature and elsewhere in the New Testament, especially in Heb. 11:17-19 and Rom. 8:32, see Braun, Jean le Théologien, II, 179,ff.; see also R.A. Rosenberg, op. cit., who comments on the traditions that Isaac's sacrifice took place at the time of the year when the feast of Passover came to be celebrated. Rosenberg concludes that "students of Christian origins have come increasingly to realize that the view of Jesus as the רַב־צַדִּיק , the 'Righteous One' of Isaiah 53, and the Gospel of John's concept of Jesus as the Passover lamb reflect one fundamental concept, viz., that the sacrifice of Isaac was to be re-enacted by the 'new Isaac' who, like the old, was a 'son of God' (p.388).
14. See the note on this in Barrett, St John, 195, where he discusses the Old Testament background to this theme. See also Glasson, op. cit., 53,ff., who comments on "the song of the well" in Num. 21:17,f. and the significance of the "well" in Jn 4 in the light of this. He also refers to the interpretation that "the well is the law". Further, he detects certain verbal similarities between the account of Jn 4 and that of the meeting between Isaac's servant and Rebekah by the well in Gen. 24. While it is no doubt possible that the evangelist's familiarity with the Old Testament may have had an indirect influence on him in certain instances when composing his gospel, for example by calling to his mind certain well-known expressions or turns of phrase, it is difficult to believe that he consciously intended to imitate the account of Gen. 24 when writing Jn 4 as there is no real reason why he should have done so.

15. Glasson, op. cit., 33,ff. is of the opinion that "the reference in John 3 to the brazen serpent is not just a passing allusion". He comments on the significance of the "seeing" of the brazen serpent in Num 21:8 and the importance attached to "seeing" in the Fourth Gospel as a whole, and on the "lifting up" and setting on a "standard" (semeion) of the serpent.
16. Cf. ibid., 45,ff.
17. Cf. ibid., 48,ff., also Braun, op. cit., 16. Glasson, op. cit., 74,ff. also argues for a connection between "the light of the world" saying and the pillar of fire in the wilderness with the latter, in all probability, being one of the themes underlying the light ceremony which took place during the Feast of Tabernacles. On reading Glasson's book one is left with the impression that the author has gone to great lengths to uncover as many parallels as possible between the Fourth Gospel and the Moses-Exodus theme. Some of these parallels are, however, so hidden that it requires a great deal of imagination and ingenuity on his part to draw them out. While it cannot be doubted that such parallels are possible it must also be admitted that the evidence he uses is, at times, largely hypothetical and therefore unconvincing. The parallel between "the light of the world" saying and the pillar of fire is a case in point. See also Meeks' comments (op. cit., 287, n. 1) on Glasson's book.
18. See Barrett, op. cit., 264.
19. See the section below devoted to a discussion of the Law.
20. See Schnackenburg, op. cit., 276,f.
21. The problem of whether the prophet-like-Moses of Deut. 18:15,ff. is identified with the Messiah in the Fourth Gospel is a difficult one to solve and as such is beyond the scope of the present thesis apart from the general references made to it in the context under discussion. For a discussion of the question as a whole and of the differing attitudes of specific groups in the gospel, see J.L. Martyn, History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel, 95,ff. The contribution of W.A. Meeks is of particular importance in this connection. This author (op. cit., e.g. 89) notes that $\delta \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ and $\delta \pi\rho\omicron\phi\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ are carefully distinguished in the Fourth Gospel, (cf. 1:21,24, 7:38-52). However, both titles are attributed to Jesus by the fourth evangelist, according to Meeks. See esp. 21,ff., and Chapter Two.
22. Barrett, op. cit., 240, notes that this is probably the correct way to understand the verse. He points to the fact that "the name Moses is in an emphatic position, and the οὐ is placed so as to negative it".
23. See also Glasson, op. cit., 26.
24. Cf. Smith, op. cit., 334.

25. F.-M. Braun, Jean le Théologien, II, 187,ff., treats the same theme but from a different angle. He sees the Fourth Gospel's use of $\sigma\eta\mu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ as being based on the use made of this concept in the Wisdom literature, especially the Book of Wisdom.
26. Glasson argues that it is possible to establish some sort of connection between certain themes of the farewell discourse and prayer of Jesus and the Book of Deuteronomy (op. cit., 74-78), various Johannine terms, e.g. "know", "sent me", "do these works", "not of myself", and the language of the Pentateuch in general (pp. 79-81), and the delegation of Joshua as the successor of Moses and Jesus' commission of his disciples (pp. 82-85). However the exact nature of the connection between this material is difficult to assess. Glasson himself, in one place, refers to "striking coincidences" between the farewell discourse and prayer of Jesus and the Book of Deuteronomy (p. 78). Perhaps such "coincidences" should rather be attributed to the evangelist's knowledge of and familiarity with the Pentateuch as a whole, which, in all probability, influenced him while composing his gospel but at an unconscious level.
27. By "directly" in this instance we mean that the evangelist wishes to give the impression that he is quoting the exact words of Scripture. It is not, however, thereby being implied that he is quoting accurately, as we shall see.
28. An informative discussion of the way in which the fourth evangelist uses the Old Testament is contained in the article of Barrett, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel".
29. See Brown, John, 321,ff.
30. Braun, Jean le Théologien, II, 21, believes that such an explanation is "très possible".
31. See Barrett, op. cit., 24.
32. e.g. Schnackenburg, St John, 122. Another scholar who argues that John probably quoted from memory is C. Goodwin in his article, "How did John Treat his Sources?".
33. See Brown, op. cit., 320; Bultmann, John, 302,f.; Glasson, op. cit., 50,f.
34. A. Hanson ("John's Citation of Psalm LXXXII Reconsidered"), referring to the fourth evangelist's use of Ps 82 in 10:34, suggests that "no explanation of this passage is adequate which does not show how the Son being described as God fulfills the scriptures".
35. See Braun, op. cit., 28.
36. Schnackenburg, op. cit., 123.
37. The comments we made above regarding the nature of the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Moses-Exodus theme as treated in the Old Testament are also applicable here.

38. Regarding Moses' role as a "shepherd" see Meeks, op. cit., 311,f. and Glasson, op. cit., 86,ff.
39. The word "mistranslation" is used by Dodd in referring to the suggestion of C.J. Ball. It is, however, inaccurate since $\lambda\mu\nu\delta\varsigma$ is indeed one of the meanings of the Aramaic $\lambda\mu\text{ܘܢܘܣ}$ and therefore it cannot be called a "mistranslation". At the same time it should be noted that $\lambda\mu\nu\delta\varsigma$ does not cover all the meanings of the Aramaic word. Hence it might be better to refer to it as an "inaccurate translation" rather than as a "mistranslation".
40. For a criticism of Dodd's view that "Lamb of God" should be understood and interpreted apocalyptically, see the article of Barrett, "The Lamb of God".
41. See p. 224.
42. It is worth noting that in the opinion of some scholars the fourth evangelist probably intended to incorporate more than one idea by his use of the phrase $\delta\lambda\mu\nu\delta\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$. See, for example, Barrett, St John, 146,f., Marsh, St John, 124,f., Richardson, St John, 48, f.; also Brown's treatment of the whole topic, John, 58,ff., and that of Braum, op. cit., 69,ff.
43. See also the same author's work, The Bible and the Greeks, chapter 2, for a more comprehensive discussion of the ways in which the fourth evangelist uses the term $\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma$ in contrast to the meaning it had in ordinary Greek usage. Also S. Pancaro, The Law in the Fourth Gospel, 514,ff.
44. In the view of some scholars the phrases $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \nu\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \epsilon\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\epsilon\upsilon$ and $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \nu\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma\ \upsilon\mu\omega\upsilon$ are indications that the evangelist was disassociating himself from the Jewish Law and could therefore have been a Gentile himself. Against this view it should, however, be noted that it is Jesus who speaks the words in question. Alternatively it is sometimes argued that this usage shows that the gospel was addressed to Gentiles. See, for example, Dodd, op. cit., 84. However, I do not believe that these two phrases can be isolated and then used to show what the evangelist's overall attitude was to the Law. To understand his attitude to the Law it is necessary to take into account his total treatment of this concept in his Gospel. See Glasson's comment on this, op. cit., 92.
45. See M. de Jonge, op. cit., 344,f.
46. See Dodd's Interpretation, 83,ff., for quotations from the various rabbinic sources which describe the Law in these terms; also Pancaro, op. cit., 452-487.
47. Another unnamed festival is referred to in 5:1; it could be either Pentecost or Tabernacles.
48. See Brown, op. cit., 326, and also Glasson, op. cit., 49,f., 58,f., for a description of the rites surrounding the feast.
49. According to Brown, op. cit., 404, the verbs $\alpha\chi\iota\lambda\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$ and $\epsilon\nu\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\iota\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$ can be considered to be synonyms.

50. See above, p. 65.
51. Cf. Barrett, op. cit., 39,ff.; Dodd, Interpretation, 423, ff.; Lightfoot, op. cit., 39,ff.; Guthrie, Introduction, 295,ff.
52. See also the views of Brown, op. cit., 121,ff.; Braun, op. cit., 89,ff.
53. The meaning of this term, together with other related concepts, will be discussed in another context. See pp. 78,ff.
54. R.M. Grant, "The Origin of the Fourth Gospel", 309,f., mentions Gaius of Rome (in Eusebius's H.E., III, 28, 2) and the Epistula Apostolorum, 1, 7, as other possible sources of information in this regard. But these, according to Grant, do not provide us with any new evidence regarding the teaching of Cerinthus.
55. Op. cit., I, 26, 1. The translation is taken from Documents of the Christian Church, selected and edited by H. Bettenson, p. 37.
56. See what Irenaeus, op. cit., 26, 2, has to say in this regard.
57. See what the Codex Toletanus as quoted by R.V.G. Tasker, The Gospel According to St John, 24,ff. has to say on this point. In his article on "Ebionism" in The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 5, 139-145, V. Beveridge discusses the origin of the name, the various types of Ebionism, the nature of their beliefs and their association with Jewish Christianity. See also the article of J.A. Fitzmyer, "The Qumran Scrolls, the Ebionites and their literature", 437,ff., in which the author discusses what we know of the Ebionites ("relatively little") from patristic sources and their own literature.
58. In this connection it would, perhaps, be more accurate to speak of Cerinthus as sharing "docetic" views with others, rather than of Docetism as having much in common with Cerinthus. As R.H. Strachan, The Fourth Gospel : Its Significance and Environment, 18,f., puts it: "it (i.e. Docetism) cannot properly be regarded as a sect, or identified exclusively with any particular name like Cerinthus. It rather represented a tendency of thought which appears and re-appears in the theology of many schools".
59. Hence the origin of the name "Docetist", the intransitive use of the verb $\delta\acute{\omicron}\kappa\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ meaning to "seem", to "appear".
60. See Käsemann, op. cit., esp. 6,ff.
61. Käsemann's emphasis on the $\delta\acute{\omicron}\xi\alpha$ of Jesus is, in large measure, a reaction against Bultmann's emphasis on Jesus' $\alpha\lambda\omicron\phi\theta$. For Bultmann the key to the Fourth Gospel was "The Word became flesh" (1:14); this interpretation led him to emphasize the humanity of Jesus. He expresses the point thus in his Theology, II, 69: "the Revealer is nothing but a definite historical man, Jesus of Nazareth". In addition to the discussion which precedes this quotation, see also Bultmann's commentary on the gospel of John, esp. 60,ff. for a detailed elaboration of his views in this regard.

62. See Guthrie, Introduction, 332, note to p. 277, for a brief comment on this.
63. One scholar who agrees with Käsemann that the Fourth Gospel is docetic is J.L. Martyn. On this point see his History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel, 117, n. 173; also his "Source Criticism and Religionsgeschichte in the Fourth Gospel", 272, note 32. Another scholar who appears to believe that the Fourth Gospel presents a docetic picture of Jesus is E.L. Titus. This author (in The Message of the Fourth Gospel (1957), 33, quoted in L. Morris, The Gospel According to John, 37, note 90) writes: "with the descent of the Spirit - the point of the Incarnation - that humanity ceased to operate, except in terms of the physical organism: he walked about, used the voice mechanism, etc., but the mental and spiritual qualities were no longer those of a man. From the point of the Incarnation, the continuum of the human element remained only in the minds of the Jews". Morris's own comment on this quotation is that "if this is not Docetism it is Apollinarianism. Either way Titus makes our author a heretic".
64. The literature on the Gnostic Systems and related topics is enormous. I.a. see the following: Brown, John, LII,ff.; Bultmann, John; idem, Primitive Christianity in Its Contemporary Setting, 193,ff.; idem, Theology of the New Testament, I, 164,ff., II, 3,ff.; R.P. Casey, "Gnosis, Gnosticism and the New Testament"; J.H. Charlesworth, The Odes of Solomon; C. Colpe, "New Testament and Gnostic Christology"; J. Danielou, The Theology of Jewish Christianity, 69,ff., 365,ff.; Dodd, Interpretation, 97,ff.; W. Foerster, Gnosis : A Selection of Gnostic Texts. I. Patristic Evidence; R.M. Grant, Introduction, 202,ff.; idem, "Gnosticism" (Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible); idem, Gnosticism and Early Christianity; R.M. Grant, and D.N. Freedman, The Secret Sayings of Jesus; R. Haardt, (the following articles in Sacramentum Mundi) "Gnosis", "Gnosticism", "Mandaeism", "Manichaeism"; idem, Gnosis : Character and Testimony; W.F. Howard, The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism; H. Jonas, The Gnostic Religion; W.G. Kümmel, Introduction, 158,ff.; W.A. Meeks, The Prophet-King; S. Neill, The Interpretation of the New Testament : 1861-1961, 173,ff.; W. Nicol, The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel; J. Painter, "Gnosticism"; Richardson, Saint John, 30,ff.; J.M. Robinson and H. Koester, Trajectories through Early Christianity, esp. 260,ff.; Schnackenburg, St John, 138,ff., 543,ff.; E.M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel; D.M. Smith, The Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel; H.M. Teeple, The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John; W.C. van Unnik, Newly Discovered Gnostic Writings; A. Wikenhauser, Introduction, 309,ff.; R. McL. Wilson, Gnosis and the New Testament; idem, The Gnostic Problem; E.M. Yamauchi, Pre-Christian Gnosticism.
65. It should be noted that Dodd himself has contributed to the confusion to which he refers in the opening sentence quoted above. As Painter, John, 15, points out, Dodd, in his commentary on the Johannine Epistles, gave to the term a much broader meaning than he attached to it in Interpretation.
66. Concerning the meaning to be given to these latter terms, see below, note 72. For a review of the different approaches to the whole problem of the definition of the terms involved here, see E.M. Yamauchi, op. cit., 13,ff.

67. Clement of Alexandria, Excerpta ex Theodoto, 78,2, in W. Foerster, op. cit., 230. See also W.C. van Unnik, op. cit., 21,f.
68. See the definition given above on p. 79.
69. Cf. R. Haardt, Gnosis : Character and Testimony, 11,ff., and H. Jonas, op. cit., 33,f.
70. For a discussion of the work of Bossuet and Reitzenstein see E.M. Yamauchi, 21,ff., and 74,ff.
71. Cf. R. McL. Wilson, The Gnostic Problem, 172,ff., 261,ff.; R. Haardt, "Mandaeism", op. cit., 372, discusses the origin of Mandaeism and the evidence that indicates that there might have been a relationship between it and Judaism and Christianity; see also E.M. Yamauchi, op. cit., 135,ff., who discusses the views of K. Rudolph. Rudolph holds that Mandaeism is derived from 'a heretical Jewish Gnosticism uninfluenced by Christianity'. In support of his contention he argues that "in the Mandaic texts we find: (1) allusions to the Old Testament; (2) parallels to the ethics of Judaism; and (3) a high regard for marriage as in Judaism".
72. The ideas expressed by Wilson here are at the root of the distinction between what is known as proto-Gnosticism and pre-Gnosticism: "On the one hand the pre-Gnostic is prepared to recognize the existence of themes and motifs, concepts and ideas in the pre-Christian and pre-Gnostic period, which are preparing the way for the development of Gnosticism proper. The proto-Gnostic view however would find the essence of Gnosticism already in the centuries preceding the second century A.D. and also outside of the strictly Christian Gnosticism of the second century". Wilson, op. cit., 17; see also E.M. Yamauchi, op. cit., 18,f. and our discussion above regarding the definition of terms.
73. H.M. Teeple, The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John, 38,ff. notes that according to Faure the source in question may have been called a "Book of the Signs of Jesus". For a discussion of Faure's source, as well as the suggestions made by other scholars in this connection see, for example, J.M. Robinson, op. cit., 237,f., and W. Nicol, op. cit., esp. 9,ff.
74. For a discussion of the nature of this source as well as for a reconstruction of its contents following the indications given by Bultmann in his Commentary, see D.M. Smith's, The Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel, 34-44.
75. See the section which follows this for a discussion of the anti-Baptist polemic theory.
76. For a discussion and reconstruction of this source see D.M. Smith, op. cit., 23-34.
77. See D.M. Smith, ibid., 48,ff., for a reconstruction of this source.
78. See ibid., 51,ff.
79. See ibid., 3,ff.

80. Even though it has become customary to speak of an "ecclesiastical redactor", Bultmann himself prefers to speak simply of Redaktion. This obviates the need to decide whether more than one person was responsible for editing the gospel. Cf. D.M. Smith, ibid., 213.
81. The page references are to Bultmann's The Gospel of John.
82. The examples given are not exhaustive; further, it should be noted that Bultmann does not state categorically in every instance that all of these can be attributed to the redactor. At times he suggests that this is only "possibly" or "tentatively" the case.
83. See D.M. Smith's very comprehensive treatment of this particular aspect of Bultmann's theory, op. cit., 116,ff.
84. These are points which we shall discuss elsewhere. See pp. 109,ff and 183,ff.
85. Cf. Bultmann's Theology, II, 12,ff.
86. For a list of these characteristics, apart from Bultmann's own article, see W.A. Meeks, op. cit., 7, n. 3. For a brief review of the history of "Bultmann's identification of the Gnostic background of the Fourth Gospel", see D.M. Smith, op. cit., 16, n. 55. On Bultmann's views in general see, i.a., E.M. Yamauchi, op. cit., 24,ff.
87. According to some Gnostic systems there were two principles opposed to each other from the very beginning, namely, light and darkness, good and evil, God and matter. Cf. W. Foerster, op. cit., 10,f., and R. Haardt, Gnosis : Character and Testimony, 6,f.
88. Cf. W. Foerster, op. cit., 4,f., who notes that this unknown God is usually described in terms of various negative expressions, e.g. 'ineffable', 'unspeakable', 'non-existent'. See also R.M. Grant, Gnosticism and Early Christianity, 97,ff.
89. This is the "call" which awakens the divine element in man and is an integral part of all the Gnostic systems. Cf. W. Foerster, op. cit., 9,f.; H. Jonas, op. cit., 74-91.
90. In the context of the Gnostic myth the concept of the "redeemed Redeemer" sometimes occurs. Meeks, op. cit., 15, following Colpe, comments thus on this concept: "This term never in fact occurs in gnostic sources, although it can be deduced logically from the various versions of gnostic myth. The term expresses the fact that the redeemer is often identified, implicitly or explicitly, with the primaeval man and thus also with the individual man or souls to be saved". For Colpe's criticism of this concept see Meeks, op. cit. See also W. Foerster, op. cit., 16,f.
91. See Wikenhauser, op. cit., 312,f.
92. See esp. Bultmann's article of 1925, already referred to.
93. For a brief account of the views of Bauer and Bultmann, see W.F. Howard, The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation, 78-82.

94. See the 28 characteristics referred to above, note 86.
95. The extent and implications of Johannine dualism are discussed by Bultmann, Theology, II, 15-32. Cf. also H. Jonas, op. cit., esp. Chapter 3, "Gnostic Imagery and Symbolic Language", 48,ff.; Dodd, Interpretation, 103,ff., and Schnackenburg, op. cit., 139,f.
96. Bultmann pays particular attention to these as they are at the basis of what he calls the "Offenbarungsreden".
97. Cf. Bultmann, John, 24,ff.
98. Cf. R. Haardt's article on "Mandaëism", op. cit., 371, also Dodd, Interpretation, 115,ff., and E.M. Yamauchi, op. cit., 117,ff.
99. Cf. also E.M. Yamauchi, op. cit., 79,ff.
100. See above p. 33.
101. See the discussion of this point in note 119 in the next section of this chapter.
102. For a brief resumé of Rudolph's views see Meeks, op. cit., 13.
103. For a discussion of some of these terms, see Schnackenburg, op. cit., 548,ff.
104. See E.M. Yamauchi, op. cit., 152,f.
105. Cf. Bultmann's Theology, II, note on p. 13.
106. The literature on the Dead Sea Scrolls is extensive. The following works were consulted with profit: W.F. Albright, "Recent Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of St John"; idem, New Horizons in Biblical Research; J. Allegro, The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Reappraisal; C.K. Barrett, The Gospel of John and Judaism, 56,ff.; O. Betz, "Dead Sea Scrolls"; Brown, John, LXII,ff.; idem, "The Qumran Scrolls and the Johannine Gospel and Epistles" (New Testament Essays); M. Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls; idem, More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls; J.H. Charlesworth, "A Critical Comparison of the Dualism in IQS III, 13 - IV, 26 and the 'Dualism' contained in the Fourth Gospel"; idem (ed.) John and Qumran; F.M. Cross, Jr., The Ancient Library of Qumrân and Modern Biblical Studies, esp. 153-162; J. Daniélou, The Dead Sea Scrolls and Primitive Christianity; G.R. Driver, The Judaean Scrolls, esp. 544-550; W.R. Farmer, "Essenes"; A.M. Hunter, According to John, 27,ff.; Kummel, Introduction, 156,ff.; Marsh, Saint John, 37,ff.; L. Mowry, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Background for the Gospel of John"; S. Neill, The Interpretation of the New Testament, 296-313; B. Reicke, "Traces of Gnosticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls?"; Schnackenburg, St John, 108,ff., 128,ff.; H.M. Teeple, "Qumran and the Origin of the Fourth Gospel"; G. Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English.
107. See also Brown, "The Qumrân Scrolls and the Johannine Gospel and Epistles"; 103,ff.
108. See, for example, Charlesworth, op. cit., 414,f.; Cross, op. cit., 153,ff.; Driver, op. cit., 544,ff.; Schnackenburg, op. cit., 108,f., 128,ff.; Brown, John, LXII,ff., and "The Qumran Scrolls and the

- Johannine Gospel and Epistles"; Hunter, op. cit., 27,ff.; Daniélou, op. cit., 108,ff.
109. For a discussion of the dualism of Qumran and the Fourth Gospel, their similarities and differences, see especially the article of Charlesworth.
 110. For a discussion of these differences see Hunter, op. cit., 30; Driver, op. cit., 546,ff.; Schnackenburg, op. cit., 131,ff.
 111. For a discussion of the influence of Zoroastrian dualism on the Fourth Gospel, see W.F. Howard, Christianity according to St John, 81,f.
 112. According to Schnackenburg, op. cit., 129, "there is no doubt that the Qumran sect belonged to the apocalyptic trend".
 113. See Mowry's article, op. cit., especially her schema on p. 86.
 114. Much the same point is made by other authors, e.g. Albright, "Recent Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of St John", 169,f.; F.H. Borsch, The Son of Man in Myth and History, 257, note 3; Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls, 338,ff., and More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls, 130,ff.; Neill, op. cit., 306-313; Richardson, Saint John, 23,f.; Sanders, "John", 943. See also H.M. Teeple, "Qumran and the Origin of the Fourth Gospel", who contests the view that the Fourth Gospel has been influenced by Qumran.
 115. Sidebottom's suggestion of a "common pool" of technical terms should be seen against the background of the syncretism of the age. See our comments on this point above, pp. 81,ff.
 116. See Yamauchi, op. cit., 159,ff. for a discussion of various views that have been proposed which suggest a connection of some sort between Judaism and Gnosticism.
 117. In addition to the Introductions of Grant, Guthrie, Kümmel, Robert & Feuillet, Wikenhauser and the Commentaries of Barrett, Brown, Bultmann, Howard, Lightfoot, Marsh and Schnackenburg, see also the following: Barrett, The Gospel of John and Judaism; J.M. Boice, Witness and Revelation in the Gospel of John; R.E. Brown, "John the Baptist in the Gospel of John"; M. de Jonge, "Jewish Expectations about the 'Messiah' according to the Fourth Gospel", esp. 252,ff.; Dodd, Interpretation; idem, Tradition; M. Hooker, "John the Baptist and the Johannine Prologue"; W.F. Howard, The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation; J.H. Hughes, "John the Baptist : The Forerunner of God Himself"; L. Morris, The Gospel According to John; Painter, John; J.A.T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus : An Essay in Detection"; idem, "The Baptism of John and the Qumran Community"; idem, "The Relation of the Prologue to the Gospel of St John"; R. Schnackenburg, "On the Origin of the Fourth Gospel"; A. Wind, "Destination and Purpose of the Gospel of John"; W. Wink, John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition.
 118. Cf. Baldensperger's Der Prolog des vierten Evangeliums, sein polemisch-apologetischer Zweck (1898). For a brief discussion of his views see Howard, op. cit., 57, f. This same author, in St John, 451, has also drawn attention to the fact that the theory propounded by Baldensperger had already been suggested by Hugo Grotius as early as the seventeenth century, and also by G.C. Storr in the eighteenth.

119. We have already discussed Bultmann's source theory above. Suffice it to say at this point that his hypothesis regarding the origin of the material in question is not widely accepted today. A more commonly held view now is that the Prologue did not originate in some baptist hymn but rather in a Christian hymn. This is the view of both Käsemann and Haenchen among others, both of whom were former students of Bultmann. See Brown's discussion of this whole question in his commentary, and also H. Zimmermann, "Christus-hymnus und johanneischer Prolog". As is well known, Bultmann also asserted that the origins of the Mandaeans, with whose literature he claims that the Fourth Gospel has certain affinities and similarities, is to be found among the followers of the Baptist. See, for example, his article "Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen mandäischen und manichäischen Quellen für das Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums", 143. However the tendency among scholars in more recent times is to reject any connection between John the Baptist and the Mandaeans. This is the conclusion of K. Rudolph, for example, who made a thorough study of the question in his work, Die Mandäer, Vol. I, Prolegomena: Das Mandäerproblem.
120. Note the use of $\epsilon\gamma\omega$ in 1:20.
121. Brown, in the appropriate places in his commentary, refers to the evidence of the Clementine Recognitions which could suggest that the fourth evangelist was directing his comments against specific claims made by the Baptist's disciples for their Master, e.g. that he, and not Jesus, was the Messiah, and that because he came before Jesus he was greater than he.
122. See the discussion of these verses in Dodd, Tradition, 300.
123. This author, however, also notes that there is "no need to accept the departure (of the Johannine account) from the Synoptic picture was part of a fierce polemic against a Johannine sect. The Fourth Evangelist" he continues, "simply and properly exercised freedom with the details of the ministries of John and Jesus in order to indicate the close relationship which did in fact exist between them". Yet in a footnote (218, n. 1) he goes on to say that "this is not to deny that there is a sharpness about the Evangelist's references to John which probably owes something to a clash with those who made extreme claims about John's status". The people in question are not "Johannites" but seemingly another group. He says that the case for this will be put in a further article. On the basis of what he has written here, however, Hughes' views seem to be inconsistent in that he attributes freedom to the evangelist in the handling of his material and yet maintains that the way he handled it was dictated by a polemic of some sorts.
124. See our comments on this below, p. 221.
125. For an analysis of the more important theories in this regard see, for example, Brown, John, 3, ff., esp. 22 where he tabulates the opinions of various scholars on this point. Brown himself has his own theory about the format of the Prologue, but as Barrett, The Gospel of John and Judaism, 33, notes, it does not differ essentially from the others. Barrett himself, St John, 125, f., rejects the idea of a poetic structure behind the Prologue. He believes that this view "is confirmed by the fact that the whole passage shows, on

careful exegesis, a marked internal unity, and also a distinct unity of theme and subject-matter with the remainder of the gospel; and by the variety of the attempts which have been made to restore the original form of the Prologue". This is a position which he has reaffirmed in his recent book already referred to, The Gospel of John and Judaism, 34.

126. Even though, it should be noted, the Baptist is never referred to as μάρτυς.
127. Another scholar who argues that 1:6-8 is only an "apparent" interruption and not a real one is Marsh, St John, 98.
128. The phrase is that of J.A.T. Robinson, "The Relation of the Prologue to the Gospel of St John", and is quoted by M. Hooker.
129. See our comment of the variant readings for 1:34 in note 18 to chapter 6. Irrespective of which reading is accepted both mean much the same in the context.
130. It is a disputed point among scholars whether 3:31-36 were spoken by the Baptist, or by Jesus, or written by the evangelist as a comment. Of the three suggestions, the merits and demerits of each of which are discussed by Brown, John, 159, f., it seems that the one that they were spoken by the Baptist is the weakest of all. The main reason for this is that the general tenor and language are so different from that used by the Baptist in the gospel up to this point, while on the other hand it does bear certain similarities with Jesus' own style in the gospel.
131. It should be noted that we are not concerned with the question of whether the fourth evangelist's understanding of the baptism of John and its purpose is more accurate, historically speaking, than the Synoptics.
132. See our comments on this type of "purpose" above on p. 37, ff.
133. See W. Wink, op. cit., 105, f., who believes that the fourth evangelist sets out to portray the Baptist as the ideal witness to Christ and the model of what the Christian's own relationship to Jesus should be like. While there are good reasons for accepting the argument that the Baptist was an "ideal" witness there does not appear to me to be any convincing indications in the Fourth Gospel that the evangelist wished to present him as a model for Christians, though undoubtedly Christians would have been able to learn from the Baptist's example.
134. In addition to the commentaries ad loc., see also Barrett, St John, 69, f.; Bernard, St John, clxii, ff., clxvi, ff.; Braun, Jean le Théologien, III, 137-199; O.S. Brooks, "The Johannine Eucharist: Another Interpretation"; Brown, John, CXI, ff.; idem, New Testament Essays, 51, ff., 77, ff.; Bultmann, Theology, II, 58, f.; O. Cullmann, Early Christian Worship; J.D.G. Dunn, Baptism in the Holy Spirit, 183, ff.; W.F. Howard, Christianity According to St John, 143-150; J. Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, passim, esp. 125-137; E. Käsemann, The Testament of Jesus; B. Lindars, "Word and Sacrament in the Fourth Gospel"; Mollat, Saint Jean, 14, ff.; L. Morris, The Gospel According to John; Schnackenburg, St John, 160, f.

135. Cf. also Bultmann's Theology, II, 58, f.
136. We have already had occasion to discuss the role of the "Redactor" in Bultmann's theory; see above, pp. 85, ff. There we noted that if one accepts Bultmann's views in this respect one must also accept, in view of the nature of the additions made by the redactor to the gospel, that this redactor gave to it a direction which it did not originally possess. Our conclusion, however, was that the gospel, apart from obvious editorial comments and additions, should be seen as the work of one man. This conclusion was based primarily on the fact that there appears to be a uniform use of language and style throughout the whole of the Fourth Gospel. If however it could be shown that the content of the sacramental texts referred to by Bultmann was at variance with the teaching of the rest of the gospel, then there might be a case, on the grounds of a lack of "thematic unity" (see above p. 34), that these were indeed additions which the redactor or editor made, at the same time being careful to imitate the language and style of the rest of the gospel. This lack of "thematic unity" is, however, something that has still to be proved. The evidence we propose to discuss in the remaining part of this section will show that Bultmann's contention, even on the level of "thematic unity", is without foundation.
137. Another scholar who tends, to some degree at least, in the same direction as Cullmann is Barrett. In addition to 3:1-15 he believes that it is possible that there are allusions to baptism in the washing of the feet (13:1-11) and in 20:23; and to the eucharist, in ch. 15 (the allegory of the Vine) in addition to ch. 6.
138. Dunn himself believes that in chapters 4, 7, 19, "water" is being used as a metaphor for the Spirit. He does not even believe that a Christian reader would have found a reference to baptism in 3:5. Cf. op. cit., 188, ff.
139. For this reason even if one accepts with Bultmann and others that ὑδατος is a later addition, I do not believe that this alone undermines the baptismal significance of the chapter since it is possible to view the "new birth" image and that of water - cleansing as emphasizing two separate aspects of the rite of Baptism. See the discussion of this point in Braun, op. cit., 139, and Brown, John, 141-144.
140. Many scholars have argued that even in the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fish it is possible to uncover eucharistic features both in content and language. R. Brown, (John, 248) sums up his own conclusion thus after a review of the evidence: "even if we cannot be sure of every detail, the eucharistic coloring of the Johannine account of the multiplication seems beyond doubt." See also the other commentaries ad loc.
141. Cf. Brown, New Testament Essays, 272, ff.
142. As has already been mentioned, it is possible that other passages allude to the sacraments. For a discussion of these, as well as a list of the relevant texts, see R. Brown, New Testament Essays, 56, ff. However, because of the lack of unanimity among scholars in this regard I have omitted them for reasons given above.

143. For a similar explanation see also Richardson, St John, 47.
144. In his hypothetical construction of the various stages that preceded the final writing and editing of the gospel, R. Brown postulates a stage in which "a body of traditional material about Jesus which had come down from John" "was preached, developed, and formed over a number of years by John and disciples under his guidance". Cf. New Testament Essays, 87, footnote 26; also John, XXXIV.
145. Cf. Schnackenburg, op. cit., 376, for a list of the various suggestions that have been made by scholars in this regard.
146. For the views of Barrett, see his commentary, ad.loc.
147. See our discussion of this in Chapter 6, p. 215.
148. Earlier in the same article, Lindars had suggested that 20:31 "may well be precisely the form of baptismal confession in John's circle", p. 55.
149. See, e.g. Brown, John, CV,ff., esp. CX,f.
150. According to the Oxford Dictionary.

CHAPTER THREE

1. By way of example, mention may be made here of the views of E. Haenchen. Contra Bultmann's multi-source theory Haenchen accepts the existence of only one source. But like Bultmann he believes that the contribution of the redactor, whom he calls the "Ergänzer", i.e. the "Supplementer" (see H.M. Teeple, The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John, 102), was considerable. He was in fact responsible for the references to the sacraments, futuristic eschatology, the beloved disciple, chapter 21, as well as for the few references that seem to be dependent upon the Synoptics.

In assessing the significance of Haenchen's theory for the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel we come up against the same problems we encountered in the case of Bultmann's theory. This is so because even though Haenchen reduces the sources behind the gospel to one he nevertheless attributes to the redactor much the same as Bultmann had done with similar consequences for the gospel as we know it. See our comment on this aspect of Bultmann's theory on pp. 86,f. For a general discussion of Haenchen's views see J.M. Robinson in Trajectories Through Early Christianity, 250,ff.

2. See his The Gospel of Signs and "Source and Redaction in the Fourth Gospel's Portrayal of Jesus' Signs"; also E.D. Freed and R.B. Hunt, "Fortna's Signs-Source in John".
3. Cf. The Gospel of Signs, 221,f.
4. Ibid., 223.
5. Ibid., 226,ff.
6. For a reconstruction of the text of this source see ibid., 125,ff. For a discussion of the source itself and the assumptions on which it is based, see B. Lindars, Behind the Fourth Gospel, 28,ff. and Freed and Hunt, op. cit.
7. Ibid., 223.
8. Another scholar who, in some respects, follows a similar line of argument is W. Wilkens. In his Zeichen und Werke, Wilkens, according to M. de Jonge ("Nicodemus and Jesus: Some Observations of Misunderstanding and Understanding in the Fourth Gospel", 354,f) argues that "the original gospel must have been a missionary 'signs-gospel' intended for the Hellenistic-Jewish communities existing in the area of the Johannine Church. This was later taken up (by the same author) into the present gospel which may be characterized as an 'esoteric' gospel, written with the intention to correct docetic errors within the Johannine congregations and to fortify and deepen the Christian faith". See also Fortna's own discussion of Wilken's views in "Wilhelm Wilken's Further Contribution to Johannine Studies - A Review Article". It will be noted that while Fortna and Wilkens both posit the existence of an original "Signs Gospel" they disagree on the question of its authorship and that of the Fourth Gospel. Fortna would attribute the two works to different authors whereas Wilkens believes that one and the same person was responsible for both. They do, however, agree in attributing a missionary purpose to the "Signs Gospel".

9. See W.C. Van Unnik, "The Purpose of St John's Gospel", and J.A.T. Robinson, "The Destination and Purpose of St John's Gospel".
10. Robinson believes that "the κόσμος is not the world outside Judaism but the world which God loves and the world which fails to respond, be it Jew or Gentile" (*ibid.*, 112). According to Robinson, however, it is only the Jewish world with which the gospel is concerned.
11. Robinson argues that the βασιλικός of 4:46, ff., was presumably a Herodian and therefore a Jew. Similarly "the Greeks" of 12:20 were "Greek-speaking Jews". See the discussion of this below.
12. On p.116, note 12, Robinson refers to a letter of R. Gamaliel I in which a similar phrase is to be found. But it seems to me that the value of this parallel is somewhat dubious in that Gamaliel refers to "the sons of the diaspora of the Greeks" and not merely to "the diaspora of the Greeks". Contra Robinson it could well be argued that the phrase in question, on being paraphrased, could refer to the "sons" living among the diaspora of the Greeks. In any event, in Gamaliel's letter there is little doubt who is being addressed because of his use of "the sons", words which do not appear in 7:35. For Van Unnik's interpretation of this verse, which is similar to that of Robinson, see *op. cit.*, 193. Van Unnik could be accused of being inconsistent in the way in which he himself understands and uses the term "the Greeks". We have already noted how, when discussing the term "Christ" he had pointed out that it was a concept that would have been understood only by the Jews. Then he added, "To the Greeks it was quite unintelligible" (*ibid.*, 176). Obviously in this context Van Unnik is equating Greeks with Gentiles.
13. According to H.B. Kossen, "Who were the Greeks of John XII 20?", 97, notes 1 and 2, Bernard, Bauer, Büchsel and Dodd believe that they were "proselytes" while Strack-Billerbeck, Windisch, Strathmann and Schnackenburg describe them as "Godfearers".
14. In actual fact there is no record in the gospel that this is what happened. The gospel merely states that Andrew and Philip told Jesus (12:22) about the request of "the Greeks".
15. In this regard there is much in the articles of Van Unnik and Robinson with which we would agree, as our discussion in Chapter 2, Part 1, and Chapter 6 would indicate.
16. Contra Robinson's and Van Unnik's interpretation of 11:50-52, Dodd, Interpretation, 282, thinks that it is unlikely that the τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ refers only to the Jews of the Dispersion. In his view they are rather the 'other sheep not of this fold' that have to be gathered in, among whom Dodd includes the Samaritans of Chap. 4 and the Greeks of Chap. 12. Schnackenburg also rejects the theory that τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ refers only to dispersed Jews. He argues that "ἔθνος ist ein völkischer, kein geographischer Begriff"; the phrase τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ, therefore, should be seen as having a wider meaning than ἔθνος, including more than Jews. In his opinion it is a theological term (cf. 1:22 where it appears once more) and refers to the whole Church, to believing Jews and Gentiles. (For Schnackenburg's views, see H.B. Kossen, *op. cit.*,

106,f., n. 2, and A. Wind, "Destination and Purpose of the Gospel of John", 35. Schnackenburg's article, "Die Messiasfrage im Johannes-evangelium" was not available in South Africa). Another scholar who argues along similar lines is S. Pancaro. In his article, "'People of God' in St. John's Gospel" he examines the meaning to be given to the terms ἔθνος, λαός and τέκνα τοῦ Θεοῦ against the background of the way in which they are used in 11:50-52. He believes that in the Fourth Gospel λαός stands for the new 'People of God', the Christian community. The "children of God" of 11:52 are neither the Gentiles nor the Jews of the dispersion as such, but rather all those, whether Jew or Gentile, who would be united into this new People by the death of Christ. See op. cit., 129; also his article, "The Relationship of the Church to Israel in the Gospel of John", and his book, The Law in the Fourth Gospel, 290,ff.

17. This question will be dealt with more fully in the next section.
18. This is a point to which we shall return in Chapter 6, pp. 227,ff.
19. The Birkath-ha-Minim and the question of exclusion from the synagogue will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.
20. For a list of the names of some of these scholars see A. Wind, "Destination and Purpose of the Gospel of John", 28,f.
21. See also his article, "The Background of the Fourth Gospel", esp. 332,f.
22. Concerning the relation of the Fourth Gospel to Judaism, Gnosticism and Mandaism, Dodd's other areas of investigation, see the previous chapter.
23. See Barrett, St John, 28,ff.; idem, The New Testament Background : Selected Documents, 54,ff.; Bernard, St John, I and II; Brown, John, LVII; Bultmann, John; idem, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting, 147,ff., 161,ff., 176,ff.; Dodd, Interpretation; W.F. Howard, Christianity According to St John; A. Debrunner, H. Kleinknecht, O. Procksch, G. Kittel, "ἀέγω," (TDNT).
24. Cf. Dodd, Interpretation, 149,f., who notes that the fourth evangelist's use of ἀέγιος with its qualitative connotation as opposed to the purely quantitative meaning that could be attached to this term, appears to have much in common with Platonic usage.
25. See Bultmann, John, 24; idem, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting, 114,ff.; Barrett, Selected Documents, 61,ff.
26. Cf. Barrett, The New Testament Background : Selected Documents, 173,ff.; Bernard, St John, I & II; Brown, John, LVII,f.; Bultmann, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting, 111,ff.; Dodd, Interpretation, esp. 54-73; idem, "The Background of the Fourth Gospel", 339,ff.; E.R. Goodenough, "Philo Judeus"; W.F. Howard, Christianity According to St John; idem, St John, 452,f.; Schnackenburg, St John, 125,f.; E.M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, esp. 26-49; R. McL. Wilson, The Gnostic Problem, 30-63.

27. Cf. Bultmann, op. cit., 112.
28. For a brief review of his writings see E.R. Goodenough, op. cit., 796,f.
29. Cf. Dodd, Interpretation, 66,ff., for a discussion of the points mentioned here by Howard. It is important to note, as Dodd points out, that Logos is never personal in Philo "except in a fluctuating series of metaphors" (p.73). In other words, in those instances where Philo appears to be personifying the Logos this "personification must not be taken seriously" (p.67).
30. Cf. Dodd, ibid., 276; R. McL. Wilson, op. cit., 36,ff.
31. Op. cit., 71,f; see also 276,ff. where the author first of all lists passages from Philo's writings that appear to have an affinity with the thought of the Prologue before attempting to show how Philo's use of Logos makes the Prologue, according to Dodd, more intelligible than any other approach.
32. See, i.a., Braun, Jean le Théologien, II, "Essénisme et Hermétisme" (Appendix II, 253-276), and "Saint Jean et les Grecs" (Appendix III, 277-300); Brown, John, LVIII,f.; Dodd, Interpretation, 10-53; idem, The Bible and the Greeks, 99,ff.; idem, "The Background of the Fourth Gospel", 336,ff.; W. Foerster, Gnosis : A Selection of Gnostic Texts, 326-335; Schnackenburg, St John, 136-138; W. Scott, Hermetica, esp. Vol. 1, 1-16. It is possible to argue that at least part of the Hermetica should be discussed in the section devoted to the Gnostic Systems because certain Gnostic motifs can be found in this body of literature. Indeed this is the approach of certain authors. For example, W. Foerster (op. cit., 326,ff) includes "Poimandres" in his "Selection of Gnostic Texts". R. McL. Wilson (Gnosis and the New Testament, 22) is of the opinion that the Hermetica "are at least semi-Gnostic". Similarly R.M. Grant (Gnosticism and Early Christianity, 148) does not accept that they are completely Gnostic. He writes: "They know no saviour, and they are only slightly dualistic; saving gnosis is not exclusively knowledge of the self, but is knowledge of the world as well". He is prepared to accept, however, that they are "semi-Gnostic". He, too, in his Gnosticism : An Anthology includes extracts from the Hermetica. Undoubtedly there are many points of contact between the Hermetica and Gnosis as we have defined it in the previous chapter. But there are also considerable differences between the two and it is because of these that this body of literature is treated as a separate entity in this section.
33. See, for example, the comments of A. Loisy in this regard in the 2nd edition of his Quatrième Évangile, quoted in Braun, op. cit., 255.
34. Cf. Braun, op. cit., 254,f.
35. Scott, op. cit., 8,f.
36. Ibid., 11,f.
37. Scott, notes that the writers of this body of literature "were, some of them certainly, and probably almost all, Egyptians by race, though Greek by education". It is "the fervour and intensity of religious emotion" which is to be found in the Hermetica "that is the distinctively Egyptian element" according to Scott.

38. Dodd, Interpretation, 11, notes that "a date in the first century is perhaps not excluded for one or two tractates, and it is possible that some of the citations may be from Hermetica later than the third century". The conclusion of Scott (op. cit., 10) is much the same. See also E.M. Yamauchi, Pre-Christian Gnosticism, 71,f.
39. For a translation of the text see, for example, Foerster, op. cit., 326-335; Dodd, The Bible and the Greeks, 99,ff.; see also this latter author's Interpretation, 30,ff. for a resumé of Poimandres.
40. See 34-35 for the "parallels" in question. F.M. Braun, op. cit., 290-291, reproduces Dodd's list with, however, some omissions and additions.
41. For a more complete discussion of the λόγος theme in Poimandres see Dodd, Interpretation, 37,ff., idem, The Bible and the Greeks, 115-121, and Braun, op. cit., 291,f.
42. See our comments on this, p. 230.
43. See, i.a., Barrett, St John, 31,f.; idem, The New Testament Background : Selected Documents, 91,ff.; G. Bornkamm, "μυστήριον, μυσω" (TDNT); Bultmann, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting, 185,ff.; W.F. Howard, St John, 454; S. Langdon, H.A.A. Kennedy, A. Moret, P. Gardner, "Mysteries" (in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics); Marsh, St John, 36,f.; R.H. Strachan, The Fourth Gospel : Its Significance and Environment, 46,ff.
44. Cf. Bultmann, op. cit., 186; S. Neill, The Interpretation of the New Testament : 1861 - 1961, 153,ff.
45. See the discussion of this in the previous chapter.
46. It seems that scholars have, on the whole, seen more similarities between Paul and the Mystery Religions than between the latter and the Fourth Gospel. See, for example, S. Neill, op. cit., 157,ff., G. Bornkamm, op. cit., and S. Langdon, op. cit.
47. See Dodd, Interpretation, 139.
48. In fairness to Dodd it should be noted that he does not make it absolutely clear whether this "common background" is shared only by the Fourth Gospel and Poimandres, or whether it is also shared by other movements.
49. The literature on this topic is considerable; apart from the commentaries, ad loc., see, for example, Barrett, St John, 60,ff., F.H. Borsch, The Son of Man in Myth and History, esp. 257-313; C. Colpe, "ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου" (TDNT); idem, "New Testament and Gnostic Christology"; H. Conzelmann, An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament, 131,ff.; Dodd, Interpretation, 241,ff.; E.D. Freed, "The Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel"; R.M. Grant, Introduction, 343,ff.; J. Massingberd Ford, "'The Son of Man' - A Euphemism?"; Painter, John, 53,ff.; Schnackenburg, St John, 529,ff. (Excursus V, "The Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel"); E. Schweizer, "The Son of Man"; E.M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, 69,ff.; S.S. Smalley, "The Johannine Son of Man Sayings"; H.M. Teeple, "The Origin of the Son of Man Christology".

50. See, for example, Schnackenburg's discussion, op. cit., 535,ff.
51. Cf. C. Colpe, TDNT, op. cit., 406.
52. See Dodd, op. cit., 241.
53. See Bultmann, John, 260,f., on the possibility that this might be the work of an editor.
54. That the evangelist has taken the title from a "common tradition behind the gospels" is a view that is shared by Dodd also in his Interpretation, 241.
55. Our approach to this question presupposes that the "Son of Man" title is something more than a mere euphemism for "Son of God" (contra Massingberd Ford, op. cit.) or a variation for "Son of God" or "Son" (contra Freed, op. cit., 403, who denies that there is any separate Son of Man Christology in the Fourth Gospel.)
56. For a list of these see Braun, Jean le Théologien, II, 127,f.
57. See also W.F. Howard, Christianity According to St. John, 47,ff., T.W. Manson, On Paul and John: Some Selected Theological Themes, 136,ff.; L. Morris, The Gospel According to John, 115,ff., and E.M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel in the Light of First-Century Thought, 26,ff.
58. See also Ps. 147:15,18.
59. Cf. also the Book of Sirach 24:3.
60. It is possible to uncover "wisdom motifs" behind the Fourth Gospel's presentation of Jesus not only in the Prologue but also throughout the whole of the Gospel. For a discussion of these see Brown, op. cit., cxxii,ff., 522,f.; Braun, op. cit., 127,ff.; A.M. Hunter, According to John, 33,ff.; E.M. Sidebottom, op. cit., 203-207.
61. For a discussion of the rabbinic sayings in support of this, see Dodd, op. cit., 82,ff., and Braun, op. cit., 142,ff.
62. Cf. Dodd, op. cit., 82, 175,f. G. Kittel in the article on $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ in the TDNT lists parallels in rabbinic literature about the Law for the following phrases in the Prologue: $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta\grave{\iota}, \pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\varsigma \tau\acute{\omicron}\nu \theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\nu, \theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma \eta\grave{\iota} \delta\acute{\omicron} \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma, \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha \delta\iota' \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\epsilon}\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron, \zeta\omega\grave{\eta}, \phi\acute{\omega}\varsigma, \pi\lambda\acute{\eta}\rho\eta\varsigma \dots \acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta \theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma.$
63. Both G. Kittel, op. cit., 132, and Schnackenburg, St John, 485, reject the influence of Memra on the Johannine Logos. See also Dodd, Interpretation, 68, footnote, and E.M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, 38,ff.
64. It should be noted, however, that the concept $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\iota$ can be found in the Gospel of Truth, which was in all probability an early Valentinian work.
65. Cf. Wilson, op. cit., 43.
66. See also Dodd, op. cit., 60,f.

67. What is said in this respect is true, even to a greater degree, of the Logos concept as used by others, e.g. the Stoics.
68. See the comments of Painter, op. cit., 20,f., in this regard.
69. On the question of religious syncretism see, i.a. H. Jonas, The Gnostic Religion, Chap. 1, esp. 14,ff., and above pp.81,ff.
70. In fairness to Dodd it should be noted that this scholar, while emphasizing Hellenistic influences in the Fourth Gospel, does not neglect the Jewishness of the material used. In his Interpretation, (p. 133), for example, he notes that the fourth evangelist "is well aware of Rabbinic Judaism" even if he is, in Dodd's words, "only partly sympathetic to it". Again, in his book Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel, Dodd also emphasizes the Palestinian nature of the material used by the evangelist even if it does have a Hellenistic flavouring. For Dodd the Fourth Gospel is an example of the interpenetration of Judaism and Hellenism. On this point it should not be forgotten, as Barrett (St John, 32) rightly comments, that Palestine itself was part of the Hellenistic world. For a discussion of the extent of Hellenistic influence on Palestine see W.D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, 1,ff.
71. See, for example, the works listed by J.D. Purvis in "The Fourth Gospel and the Samaritans", 161, note 1.
72. See this author's article, "Did John Write His Gospel Partly To Win Samaritan Converts?".
73. See his article, "Samaritan Studies".
74. See J. Bowman, op. cit., 302.
75. "Samaritan Influence in the Gospel of John", Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 30 (1968).
76. Purvis, op. cit., 168,ff., following the views of Meeks elaborated in his article, "Galilee and Judea in the Fourth Gospel" and in The Prophet-King, 313,ff. has commented on what he considers to be the important role played in this gospel by Samaria and Galilee taken as a unified entity. Purvis argues that in the Fourth Gospel the Galileans are closer to the Samaritans than to the Judaeans. In fact the Galileans and Samaritans, together comprising the northern part of Palestine, represent the "Israelites", a title used by the Samaritans to describe themselves. Against this background Purvis (ibid., 172) contends that "in this Gospel, Jesus is not rejected by Jews, to be accepted by Gentiles, but accepted by Israelites (i.e. Samaritans and Galileans) to be rejected by Jews".
77. The Samaritans did not accept the existence of any prophet after Moses except the "Taheb".
78. Recent studies have tended to show that Moses is not the only person in Samaritan theology on which the Fourth Gospel's christology could have been modelled. Purvis, op. cit., 177,ff., refers for example to the possible roles that Joseph, Elisha and Joshua could have played as eschatological figures here.

79. See Purvis, ibid., 162, ff.
80. On this point see Meeks' comments on Kundzin's thesis, in The Prophet-King, 314, ff.
81. See G.W. Buchanan, "The Samaritan Origin of the Gospel of John".
82. As Freed would have us believe.
83. This is Purvis's own "tentative proposal", op. cit., 191, ff.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. See our comments on the importance to be attached to the textual variants for this verse on p.3 and pp.232, f.
2. For a detailed list of those scholars who have accepted a Christian destination for this gospel see A. Wind, "Destination and Purpose of the Gospel of John", 30, ff.
3. Regarding this article see the comment made above under note 16 of the previous chapter. See also his commentary on St John, 154, ff.
4. For an outline of the views of these scholars as well as for some of the criticisms levelled against them by Schnackenburg, see above pp.124, ff.
5. For a summary of Schnackenburg's views on the points mentioned here see his commentary, 154, f. and also H.B. Kossen, "Who were the Greeks of John XII 20?", 101, f.
6. See above, p.132.
7. Ex "Messiasfrage", 262, quoted by A. Wind, op. cit., 62; see also H.B. Kossen, op. cit., 103.
8. See the references to "Messiasfrage" in A. Wind, op. cit., 30, f., n. 3. See also Schnackenburg's comments on this in St John, 163.
9. Ex "Messiasfrage", 263, quoted by A. Wind, op. cit., 49.
10. On this point see also his comments in St John, 162, ff.
11. See above, pp. 119, ff.
12. For a general review of the theories and evidence see, for example, Guthrie, Introduction, 867, ff. and 876, ff., and W.F. Howard, The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation, esp. 276, ff. For a resumé and analysis of the views of C.H. Dodd, see Painter, John, 104, ff. It should be noted that those scholars who do not accept that the authors of the gospel and I John are identical do, nevertheless, admit that there is a relationship of some kind between them. Dodd for example believed that the author of I John was a disciple of the evangelist while Bultmann (The Johannine Epistles, 1) stated that "the author of I John had the Gospel before him and was decisively influenced by its language and ideas".
13. See above, pp. 109, ff.

14. See i.a., Barrett, St John, 14,ff., 34,ff.; Bernard, St John, xciv,ff.; Brown, John, XLIV,ff.; idem, New Testament Essays, 143,ff.; C.L. Cribbs, "A Reassessment of the Date of Origin and the Destination of the Gospel of John"; idem, "St Luke and the Johannine Tradition"; O. Cullmann, "The Plurality of the Gospels as a Theological Problem in Antiquity"; Dodd, Interpretation, esp. 289,ff.; idem, Tradition, esp. 434,ff.; E.D. Freed, "The Entry into Jerusalem in the Gospel of John"; C. Goodwin, "How Did John Treat His Sources?"; Guthrie, Introduction, 253,f., 287,ff.; A.J.B. Higgins, The Historicity of the Fourth Gospel; Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, esp. 58,ff.; Howard, St John, 439,f., 458; A.M. Hunter, According to John, 36,ff.; Kummel, Introduction, 142,ff.; Lightfoot, St John, 26,ff.; Marsh, St John, 42,ff.; L. Morris, Studies in the Fourth Gospel, 15,ff.; W. Neil, One Volume Bible Commentary, 401,ff.; Richardson, St John, 25,ff.; Robert & Feuillet, Introduction, 661,f.; Sanders, John, 935,ff.; Sanders & Mastin, St John, 6,ff.; Schnackenburg, St John, 26,ff.; D.J. Selby, Introduction to the New Testament, 208,ff.; D.M. Smith, "John 12:12,ff. and the Question of John's use of the Synoptics"; H.B. Teeple, "Methodology in Source Analysis of the Fourth Gospel"; idem, The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John; idem, "The Oral Tradition that Never Existed"; Wikenhauser, Introduction, 299,ff.; M.F. Wiles, The Spiritual Gospel; F.E. Williams, "The Fourth Gospel and Synoptic Tradition : Two Johannine Passages"; A. Wind, "Destination and Purpose of the Gospel of John".
15. See Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., VI, 14,7.
16. Ibid., 24, 7-13.
17. In Panarion, 51.
18. See his De Consensu Evangelistarum. For the attitude of the Fathers in general to this whole question see M.F. Wiles, The Spiritual Gospel, 7-21.
19. See the reference in D.M. Smith, op. cit., 82.
20. The underlined words which appear on page 34 and are repeated on page 37 are in italics in Barrett.
21. Earlier in the Introduction to his commentary (p.18) Barrett had stated his views on the Johannine passion narrative thus: "the Johannine passion story is an edited version of the Marcan, into which John has introduced some fresh material. He has retold the story from his own point of view, giving full place to his own special interests; but he does not offer a complete independent passion narrative".
22. A similar view is suggested by Sanders, John, 937, and also, apparently, by F.C. Grant in his article, "Was the Author of John Dependent upon the Gospel of Luke?" referred to by Robert & Feuillet, Introduction, 663.
23. It will be noted that the views expressed by Barrett in this instance are similar to those of Hoskyns and Richardson to which we have referred above.
24. See his article, "Whence the Gospel According to John" in John and Qumran, ed. by J.H. Charlesworth, 184,f.

25. H.M. Teeple, in an article entitled "The Oral Tradition that Never Existed", challenges the whole concept of an "authentic oral tradition" behind the gospels in general and Gardner-Smith's and Dodd's positions with regard to the Fourth Gospel in particular. Teeple maintains that both these writers "lost" their objectivity because of their zeal to find some material in John that is authentic and independent of synoptic traditions", ibid., 59.
26. See J.M. Robinson, op. cit., 238,f.
27. See, for example, our discussion of the eschatological question in the next section.
28. See M.F. Wiles, The Spiritual Gospel, 11,f., 13,ff., and O. Cullmann, "The Plurality of the Gospels as a Theological Problem in Antiquity".
29. Literature: Barrett, St John, 56,ff.; Brown, John, cxv,ff.; Bultmann, John; idem, Theology, II; Dodd, Interpretation; Howard, Christianity According to St John, 106,ff.; E. Käsemann, The Testament of Jesus, esp. chap. 2; Mollat, Saint Jean, 20,ff.; Painter, John; Schnackenburg, St. John, 159,f.
30. Cf. Barrett, op. cit., 56, for an explanation of the "superficial contradiction" that this phrase implies.
31. On this point, see Painter, op. cit., 43-46.
32. See, however, our discussion above, pp. 7,f., for the value of this chapter for our study.
33. See, for example, Bultmann's comments on 5:28,f. in John, 261,f., the other references listed on p.86, as well as our comments on Bultmann's "redactor".
34. See also Barrett's comments on the attitude of Christians to Jewish apocalypticism in The Gospel of John and Judaism, 42,ff., 73,f.
35. See the brief comments on Haenchen's views in Guthrie, Introduction, 333, and in Kümmel, Introduction, 163.
36. See above, pp.65,ff.
37. Martyn is rather vague about the identity of the city in question. He notes (op. cit., 58, n. 94) that "there were separate Jewish communities in each of the first three cities of the empire" viz. Rome, Alexandria and Antioch. While he also admits that the structure of the Jewish community in question as well as the conditions prevailing in the evangelist's own city could have been found in "a number of other cities" Martyn himself seems to prefer Alexandria as the place where the Fourth Gospel was written.
38. For example, M. de Jonge, "Nicodemus and Jesus: Some Observations on Misunderstanding and Understanding in the Fourth Gospel", 338, n. 1, does not believe it is possible to substantiate Martyn's claim that $\sigma\upsilon\chi\epsilon\upsilon\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ is always used in the Fourth Gospel for those members of the Sanhedrin who believed secretly. Cf. Martyn, op. cit., 74,ff.

39. See, for example, the various commentaries ad loc.; also, K.L. Carroll, "The Fourth Gospel and the Exclusion of Christians from the Synagogue" and W. Schrage, "Ἐπιτομή" (TDNT).
40. It is true that here it is a question of visiting the Temple and not the synagogue. However, because of the greater degree of reverence and importance attached to the Temple, is it unreasonable to assume that what would deserve exclusion from the synagogue would, a fortiori, also result in exclusion from the Temple? It should be noted that the episode described in John 9 is situated in Jerusalem but no mention is made of exclusion from the Temple. Is it possible to see any significance in this omission? We shall give the probable reason for this in the paragraphs which follow.
41. Martyn, op. cit., 148, lists the following authors: Hoskyns, Büchsel, Howard, Lightfoot, Bernard, Schlatter and Bultmann. To these we may add the names of Brown and Barrett. In the comments that follow on the Birkath ha-minim I am dependent largely upon Martyn, op. cit., 22-41, and W.D. Davies, The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount, 275,ff.; Carroll, op. cit.; Schrage, op. cit.; S. Pancaro, The Law in the Fourth Gospel, 245,ff., 494,ff.
42. Barrett, Selected Documents, 167; see also Martyn, op. cit., 36,ff.
43. Cf. Davies, op. cit., 275,ff.; Martyn, op. cit., 34,f., and Barrett, The Gospel of John and Judaism, 47,f.
44. R.T. Herford, Christianity in Talmud and Midrash, 379, believes that the term "Minim" was intended to designate Jewish Christians. See the whole of Herford's discussion, esp. 361,ff. Carroll, op. cit., 20, also believes that the "Minim" were Jewish Christians.
45. Most scholars would not perhaps be prepared to admit that anything that occurred as late as A.D. 115 occurred "in the period of the Fourth Gospel"; see our discussion above, page 11,ff. on the question of the date of the Fourth Gospel. What is beyond doubt is that anything that happened in the earlier part of the presidency of Gamaliel at Jamnia occurred during the period of the Fourth Gospel.
46. See the discussion in Carroll, op. cit., esp. 23-31, of the various references in the Mishnah that point to the close connection that existed between the Christians and the Jews.
47. See Martyn, op. cit., 39, note 74, as well as Excursus B, 148,ff.
48. On the work of reconstruction that took place at Jamnia (Yavneh) and the role of Johanan ben Zakkai in this, see J. Neusner, A Life of Rabban Yehanan Ben Zakkai Ca. 1-80 C.E., esp. Chap. 8, 147, ff.; see also Davies, op. cit., 256-315 who discusses Jamnia and its work in the context of the light it might throw on the Gospel of Matthew but which nevertheless, contains much general information about Jamnia; Moore, op. cit., 83-92, and I. Epstein, Judaism, 111,ff.
49. Other notable parties within Judaism such as the Zealots and the Essenes were no longer major forces to be reckoned with as they had, to a large extent, been wiped out in the recent rebellion.

50. See Davies, op. cit., 294.
51. See Davies, ibid., 265. 271,f.
52. Another writer who believes that the Fourth Gospel was written in order to counteract the confusion caused by the Birkath ha-minim among Christians is H. Mulder. For a discussion of his views see A. Wind's article, "Destination and Purpose of the Gospel of John", passim.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. In the context under discussion the word "multiple" is being used to mean 'more than one'.
2. See our comments on this distinction in the introductory chapter, pp. 39,f.
3. See also this author's brief comments on these points in his article, "On the Origin of the Fourth Gospel", 227,ff. Here he states quite clearly that "apologetic against the contemporary followers of the renowned baptist must be accepted as one of the Gospel's secondary purposes".
4. See the discussion of this below, pp. 237,f.
5. On these see also his commentary, 115,ff.
6. For a fuller discussion of Barrett's views on the question of the Fourth Gospel's relation to Judaism see his book, The Gospel of John and Judaism.
7. Martyn points out that he does not accept Fortna's reconstruction in its entirety, choosing to disagree with him in a few places. Two other scholars who argue in favour of "the independent existence of a signs-source similar to the one reconstructed by Fortna" are E.D. Freed and R.B. Hunt in their article, "Fortna's Signs-Source in John".
8. See above, pp. 124,ff.
9. Concerning the destination and purpose of Fortna's Signs Gospel see above p. 125; in the pages of his article which follow (253,ff) he gives some examples of the application of his two hypotheses and the "intervening developments" to the text of the Fourth Gospel itself.
10. Other scholars have also attempted to establish that the Fourth Gospel underwent various editions. We have already referred to the views of W. Wilkens in his Zeichen und Werke, but see also the discussion of his views in his book, Die Entstehungsgeschichte des vierten Evangeliums by J.M. Robinson in his review of the same; P. Parker, "Two Editions of John"; S. Temple, "A Key to the Composition of the Fourth Gospel"; M.E. Boismard, in Schnackenburg, St John, 70,f. These theories are, in general, based on what we

have seen to be the well-founded assumption that an editor has made a contribution of some sort to the composition of the Fourth Gospel. The point at issue in them is the nature and extent of that contribution.

11. See our discussion of this point in chapter one, pp. 28,ff.; cf. also W. Nicol, The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel, esp. chap. 1, 8,ff.
12. Martyn himself refers to his own starting point as a "hypothesis". But his examination of the gospel in the light of the two hypotheses postulated by him leads him to suggest that there are grounds for "increased confidence in the hypothesis of SG" (op. cit., 259).
13. Regarding the question of eschatology in the Fourth Gospel and Barrett's views on this see above, pp. 183,ff.
14. See above, pp. 41,ff.
15. See above, p. 163.
16. See above, pp. 11,ff.
17. See above, pp. 65,ff.
18. See above, p. 44.

CHAPTER SIX

- 1, See above, pp. 14,ff.
2. In addition to the commentaries, *ad loc.*, for a brief and yet concise review of the various elements of these verses see, for example, G. Campbell Morgan, The Gospel According to John, 9,ff., and M.C. Tenney, John : The Gospel of Belief, 27,ff.
3. See our discussion of this, pp. 7,f.
4. See, for example, Sanders & Mastin, St John, 47,f.
5. Contra Mollat's presentation the "dramatic", "logical" and "cyclical" treatment of the material should not really be grouped under "plans" in the accepted sense of this word. It would be better to view them as characteristics of the author's style.
6. In Bible du Centenaire, quoted by D. Mollat, op. cit., 28.
7. See, however, our discussion of the question of the "Background" of the Gospel and the relation between this and the gospel's destination and purpose, pp. 13,ff.
8. In addition to the discussion of the various σημεία in the commentaries, see also Barrett, St John, 62,ff.; Brown, New Testament Essays, 168,ff.; idem, John, 525,ff.; W.D. Davies, Invitation to the New Testament, 440,ff.; Dodd, Interpretation, 133,ff.; R.T. Fortna, "Source and Redaction in the Fourth Gospel's Portrayal of Jesus' Signs"; A.M. Hunter, According to John, 66,ff.; W. Nicol, The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel, esp. 62,ff.; 113,ff., 116,ff.; Painter, John, 22,ff.; K.H. Regenstorff, "σημείον..." (TDNT), esp. 243,ff.; Richardson, St John, 62,f.; Schnackenburg, St John, 515,ff.

9. Following the use of ἐπὶ in the phrase ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς in verse 21 which Sanders and Mastin translate "by the land", they translate the phrase ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης in verse 19 "by the sea"; similarly Bernard (St John, 186), who does not accept that this event is miraculous. See, however, R. Brown's treatment of this event, op. cit., 251,ff., where he translates ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης "upon the sea".
10. However, on page 55 they refer to the Resurrection as "the final, seventh, and so perfect sign."
11. The theme of the "glory" of Jesus is an important one in the Fourth Gospel occurring as it does a number of times. For a discussion of this theme see, for example, Brown, John, 503,f., W. Nicol, The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel, 119,ff., 124,ff.; Painter, John, 50,ff. Of particular significance here is the valuable contribution of E. Käsemann's book, The Testament of Jesus, in which the author understands the Fourth Gospel as a whole in the light of this theme.
12. Cf. 2:11 and below under ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ.
13. For a comprehensive analysis of the theme of "witness" see J.M. Boice, Witness and Revelation in the Gospel of John; see also F. Mussner, The Historical Jesus in the Gospel of St John, 35,ff., and S. Pancaro, The Law in the Fourth Gospel, 194,ff.
14. In addition to the Commentaries, see also M. de Jonge "Jewish Expectations About the 'Messiah' According to the Fourth Gospel"; idem, "The Use of the word Χριστός in the Johannine Epistles"; Dodd, Interpretation, 213,ff.; S.E. Johnson, "The Davidic-Royal Motif in the Gospels"; T.W. Manson, On Paul and John : Some Selected Theological Themes, 153,ff.; W.A. Meeks, The Prophet-King, esp. 32,ff., 61,ff.; Painter, John, passim.
15. See S.E. Johnson's article, op. cit.
16. On the way in which the Fourth Gospel handles the question of Jesus' kingship see Painter, John, 53,ff. This author writes: "Only when Jesus' death was imminent did he accept the kingship ascription, because misunderstanding was ruled out by the situation. Prior to this, the nature of Jesus' kingship is shown through the Son of Man theme, thus bringing a corrective to bear on the misconceptions". (op. cit., 54). T.F. Glasson in his book Moses in the Fourth Gospel, 31,f. notes, in the context of the Moses/Christ typology which he develops, that on occasion Moses himself is referred to as King in Jewish writings. He believes that this could have been one of the strands in the Fourth Gospel's presentation of Jesus' kingship. He writes: "If Moses was a king, he had little resemblance to an ordinary king. The kingship of Jesus is of the Mosaic type and is in even greater contrast with the kingdoms of this world". For a more complete study of the theme of Jesus' own kingship as well as that of Moses and the possible relationship between the two see W.A. Meeks, The Prophet-King.
17. Besides the general commentaries, see also C.K. Barrett, "'The Father is greater than I' (Jo. 14:28): Subordinationist Christology in the Fourth Gospel"; J. Blinzler, "Sonship"; E. Boismard, "Jésus, le Prophète par excellence, d'après Jean 10:24-39"; G.H. Boobyer, "Jesus as 'Theos' in the New Testament"; Dodd, Interpretation, 250,ff.; T.W. Manson, On Paul and John : Some Selected Theological Themes,

- 131,ff.; B.A. Mastin, "A Neglected Feature of the Christology of the Fourth Gospel"; W.A. Meeks, The Prophet-King; Painter, John; T.E. Pollard, Johannine Christology and the Early Church, esp. 15,ff.; E.M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, 149,ff.
18. A less probable reading for 9:35 also has ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ; similarly, a less probable reading for 1:34 has ὁ ἐκλεκτός in place of ὁ υἱὸς . See the comments of B.M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 228,f., and 200 respectively.
19. For a discussion of the various texts that deal with 'the prophet' in the Fourth Gospel see Boismard and Meeks, op. cit. See also T.F. Glasson, Moses in the Fourth Gospel, 27,ff. This author notes that while there are several explanations possible for the Fourth Gospel's apparently inconsistent approach to the question of the identity of the prophet, "there can be little doubt that the Evangelist himself regards Jesus as (among other things) the true fulfilment of the hope for 'the prophet that should come into the world'". (op. cit., 29).
20. As far as 1:18 is concerned, it seems that the reading μονογενης Θεός is more probable than μονογενης υἱός : see B.M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 198, and B.A. Mastin, op. cit., 37,ff. For a different approach to the question of the way μονογενης should be understood see Th. C. de Kruijf, "The Glory of the Only Son (John 1:14)", 111,ff. This author sees the use of this word in the New Testament in the context of an Isaac-Christ typology since μονογενης was also used to describe Isaac. In the light of this he concludes that "the term μονογενης as used in the Fourth Gospel is more of a soteriological than of a christological nature. John uses the title of Isaac, which in certain circles had already been transferred to Israel, to indicate that in the sacrifice of Jesus' life God manifests his true love to those who believe that the crucified Jesus is the only Son of God", op. cit., 123.
21. Bernard, St John, I, cxxi, for example, is one of those who believes that ἐγὼ εἰμι in this instance is a translation of the divine name; see also his comment in II, 322 on 8:59. See also R. Brown's discussion of the use of ἐγὼ εἰμι throughout the whole of the gospel in his commentary, pp. 533,ff. Bultmann, on the other hand, rejects the suggestion that "ἐγὼ εἰμι renders אֲנִי אֱלֹהִים (or alternatively אֲנִי אֱלֹהִים) which can be used to refer to God because of verses like Deut. 32:39, Is. 41:4, 43:10, 46:4, 48:12". He also rejects the suggestion that ἐγὼ εἰμι "might be a rendering of אֲנִי אֱלֹהִים, which came into use as a divine name because of Ex. 3:14.... Jesus' statement would then mean "I am the 'I-am'". But is it possible to read this out of the simple ἐγὼ εἰμι? It would mean that ἐγὼ would have to be both subject and predicate". Bultmann maintains that "this view is not possible in the context, for then the stress would lie on the predicate, whereas in the context after πρὶν Ἀβρ. γενέσθαι the stress must be on the subject ἐγὼ, and there is no reason to expect a substantial predicate at all". See Bultmann's commentary, 327,f. See also n. 3, p. 225,f., where Bultmann distinguishes the various forms of the ἐγὼ εἰμι formula into the "presentation", the "qualificatory", the "identification", and the "recognition" formulae. For a rather different approach, see B. Lindars, Behind the Fourth Gospel, 46, who believes that "all the 'I am' sayings in John are best understood in terms of a Wisdom Christology, which also lies behind the Logos doctrine of the Prologue". See also his note 4 to Chapter 4, p. 82.

22. Together the verbs ἀποστέλλειν and πέμπειν appear over 40 times in the Fourth Gospel, an indication of how important this theme of "sending" is in the gospel.
23. In addition to the commentaries *ad loc.*, see also the following: Braun, Jean le Théologien, III, 121,ff.; Brown, John, 512,f.; R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, Vol. 2, 70,ff.; R. Bultmann & A. Weiser, "πιστεύω," (TDNT); Dodd, Interpretation, 179,ff.; R.T. Fortna, "Source and Redaction in the Fourth Gospel's Portrayal of Jesus' Signs", 160,ff.; W.F. Howard, Christianity According to St John, 151,ff.; D. Mollat, St Jean, 19,f.; J.H. Moulton & W.F. Howard, A Grammar of New Testament Greek; F. Mussner, The Historical Jesus in the Gospel of St John, 18,ff.; Painter, John, 71,ff.; Schnackenburg, St John, 558,ff.; H. Zimmermann, "Faith".
24. Regarding the relationship between "seeing" and "believing" see our comments on pp. 217,f. above.
25. Dodd (*op. cit.*, 289,f), for example, refers to chapters 2-12 as the "Book of Signs". For R. Brown (John, CXXXVIII) the "Book of Signs" covers 1:19 - 12:50. However the value and appropriateness of such a title for this section of the gospel has recently been questioned. J. Painter (*op. cit.*, 10), for example, notes that this title "overlooks 20:30 and the possibility that the resurrection of Jesus was the greatest of the signs. 20:30 seems to suggest post-resurrection signs".
26. For a comprehensive and tabulated list of what believing involves, see Painter, *op. cit.*, 78.
27. The verb used to "know" in this verse is γινώσκειν. Clearly, if we were to follow Abbott's translations, the verb εἶδέναι would have been more appropriate in this instance since it seems to me that it is not a question of "acquiring knowledge" but rather of "knowing all about" someone.
28. On this point see F.-M. Braun, *op. cit.*, 133,f.
29. See pp. 229,f.
30. For our comments on the textual evidence in support of each reading, as well as the way each is to be translated, see above, p. 3.
31. See our comments on the fourth evangelist's language and style in the context of our discussion of the language in which the gospel was written, pp. 21,ff.
32. In addition to the commentaries, *ad loc.* see also the following: Brown, John, 505,ff.; Dodd, Interpretation, 144,ff.; W. Grossouw, Revelation and Redemption, 35,ff.; W.F. Howard, Christianity According to St John, 174,ff.; Painter, John, *passim*; G. Von Rad, G. Bertram, R. Bultmann, "ἔστω...." (TDNT).
33. See above, p. 230.
34. See our discussion of the eschatological question above, pp. 183,ff.

35. However C.F.D. Moule, An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek, 80, f. appears to accept that even in 3:15 πιστεύων is being used absolutely; hence he rearranges the word-order thus: ἴνα ὁ πιστεύων ἑαυτὸν αἰώνιον ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχη).
36. See above, p. 228.
37. It should be noted that Barrett does not deny that the Fourth Gospel has a "destination". In a more recent work, The Gospel of John and Judaism, he states unequivocally that "John wrote not for pagans, not for Jews, but for Christians" (p. 17). Even in his commentary (St John, 300), when discussing 9:23, he notes that "it is probable that among the readers of John were Jewish Christians who had been put out of the synagogue...". See also his comments on the significance to be attached to πιστεύ[ε]τε in 20:31, ibid., 479. Hence the point at issue is whether or not John "wrote primarily to satisfy himself" (ibid., 115), and therefore, presumably, only secondarily in order to strengthen the faith of Christians.
38. See pp. 37, f.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. See our discussion of the possible significance of the gospel's "background" for determining what its destination and purpose were, pp. 13, ff.
2. See above, pp. 59.
3. See the discussion of this above, pp. 221, ff.
4. See above, pp. 210, ff.
5. On this see the comments of Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, 49.
6. It should be borne in mind that in addition to these non-Jewish elements there are other aspects of the Fourth Gospel which could quite easily have appealed to the Gentiles and thus prompted an editor to make these further additions for their benefit. We refer to those terms and concepts which, as we saw, have some similarity with others that could be found in material with which the Gentiles would have been familiar, e.g. the Hermetic and Gnostic literature and the writings of Philo. It must be noted, however, that while terms such as the "Logos" or the "Son of Man" might have had a familiar ring about them as far as the Gentiles were concerned, we are not suggesting that their understanding of these and other concepts was the same as that intended by the evangelist. This is a matter which we have already discussed above, pp. 156, f., where we also commented on some of the possible consequences of this situation. All we wish to suggest at this point is that despite the gospel's "Jewishness" and the fact that it was originally intended for a Jewish audience, some of the terminology used by the evangelist could conceivably have suggested to an editor that not only Jews but also Gentiles would benefit from reading it.

7. That an editor or editors did make some contribution to the form of the Fourth Gospel as we now possess it is, I think, beyond doubt. See above, pp. 7,f. But that he was responsible for these explanatory comments is, of course, no more than conjecture as there are no linguistic or textual grounds on the basis of which it might be possible to prove this contention. Yet when we view the gospel against the background of the way in which the evangelist has presented his material it seems to me to be a reasonable hypothesis in the absence of any more convincing explanation for their inclusion in the gospel.
8. See above, pp. 124,ff.
9. See our discussion of the "place of composition" in the introductory chapter, pp. 10,f., as well as our comments on the possible types of destinations that the Fourth Gospel could have had, pp. 20,f. Regarding the identity of the city of composition see the comments of Martyn in his History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel, 58, note 94. While Martyn appears to favour Alexandria, the more common view supports the claims of Ephesus.
10. See above, pp. 229,f.
11. It could be argued, however, that Joseph and to a lesser extent Nicodemus, in view of the role they played in procuring the body of Jesus after the crucifixion and in burying it, were publicly associating themselves with him and thus in the process became "true believers". See M. de Jonge, "Nicodemus and Jesus : Some Observations on Misunderstanding and Understanding in the Fourth Gospel", 342,f.
12. Is the fourth evangelist indicating in 12:42,f., that it was possible for some of the "authorities" so to organize matters that they themselves were never called upon to read the Benedictions?
13. This theme of 'decision' is one that receives considerable attention in the Fourth Gospel and has rightly been emphasized by Bultmann as is evidenced by the frequency with which the word Entscheidung appears in his writings.
14. See also Käsemann's views concerning the fourth evangelist's attitude to the Church, pp. 119,ff.
15. In spite of the evidence of Acts 11:26 to the effect that it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called "Christians" at what must have been an early date, it is significant that the Birkath ha-minim, in the earliest form of it known to us, speaks, not of "Christians" but of "Nazarenes". This would seem to indicate that among the Jews at least this was the more popular title by which the followers of Jesus were known. Whether the Jewish "believers" themselves used this latter title to describe themselves or preferred the title "Christians" we do not know with any degree of certainty.
16. See our treatment of this theme in chapter 2, pp. 68,ff. See also the comments of F.L. Cribbs in his article, "A Reassessment of the Date of Origin and the Destination of the Gospel of John", 47,f. After a brief review of the internal evidence in this regard Cribbs concludes that John "seems to have attempted to argue that Christianity represented a genuine extension of historic Judaism, and this would

seem to indicate that John was written at a time when this viewpoint could still be maintained, as well as at a time when this conception was beginning to be increasingly challenged by orthodox Judaism". As we have seen, Cribbs uses this evidence to argue in favour of a pre-A.D. 70 dating for the Fourth Gospel. While we would agree with him that John does appear "to argue that Christianity represented a genuine extension of historic Judaism" we cannot accept that this necessarily points to a pre-A.D. 70 dating. See above, pp. 207,ff.

17. Concerning Joseph and Nicodemus see, however, note 11 above.
18. See our discussion of this last-mentioned point above, pp. 46,f.
19. See the discussion of terminology above, pp. 37,ff.
20. See above, p. 197.
21. Concerning the evangelist's selection of material, see above, p. 215.
22. See above, pp. 99,ff.

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