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*FROM SERVANT TO KING:
INTERTEXTUAL PERSPECTIVES
ON THE PRESENTATION OF
JESUS' DEATH IN THE GOSPEL
OF JOHN.*

Dissertation for Master of Arts: Biblical Interpretation

Graeme Guthrie

Student Number 1805312

2023

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Abstract

That John's narrative account of Jesus' life, death and resurrection differs significantly from that of Matthew, Mark and Luke has long been recognised. However, a growing number of scholars have more recently argued that not only was John familiar with the Synoptic traditions, but that Mark's Gospel provided a framework for John's distinctive narrative and was 'transformed' to suit his own theological purposes. Key Johannine motifs include glory, exaltation and the kingship of Jesus, with the clustering of these themes centred on the climactic 'hour' of the crucifixion. Whilst the influence of Isaiah on John has been extensively studied, no commentator to date has examined the precise relationship between kingship and glory/exaltation in Isaiah, particularly in the prophecies of Second Isaiah, and how this underpins John's presentation of Jesus' death in a Johannine reworking of Mark. This work aims to demonstrate that John's presentation of the death of Jesus is to be read through the interpretative lens of Isaiah, where the declaration of YHWH as king is combined with the royal themes of exaltation and glorification. In this way, it will be argued, John transforms the passion of Jesus, as narrated by Mark, from suffering Servant to exalted King.

Introduction

The traditional viewpoint regarding the authorship of the Fourth Gospel maintained that the apostle John composed his gospel around 80-100 AD. This was the dominant view until the Enlightenment and the rise of historical criticism.¹ Various theories were brought to bear on the New Testament writings such as authorship and use of sources, which brought into question the hitherto unchallenged assumptions of the canonical gospels. A key area that was to be much debated in 20th century scholarship was John's relationship to the Synoptics, in particular Mark.²

The major modern day proponent for Johannine independence was P. Gardner-Smith in his 1938 monograph *St. John and the Synoptic Gospels*.³ In this slim volume he argued that, on the basis of similarities between John and the Synoptics being explained by shared oral tradition, there were no grounds for John's familiarity with the Synoptics as written works.⁴ Scholars supporting this view of Johannine independence included C.H. Dodd, Rudolf Bultmann and J. A. T. Robinson.⁵ Whilst discussion regarding the source material behind John's Gospel remains an area of debate, the notion that John wrote independently of Matthew, Mark and Luke has until recently been the prevailing view in biblical scholarship.⁶

Conversely, an increasing number of scholars argue that John was, to a greater or lesser degree, dependent on Mark. C. K. Barrett, in the introduction to his commentary on John, lists ten key events that occur in both Mark and John in exactly the same order; within these a further eleven examples of close verbal resemblances are noted.⁷ Barrett concedes that this

¹ S. E. Porter and R. C. Fay, 'Introduction to the Gospel of John in Modern Interpretation', S. E. Porter and R. C. Fay (eds.), *The Gospel of John in Modern Interpretation*, (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), pp. 17-19.

² Porter and Fay, 'Introduction', pp. 22-30; S. E. Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus: In Pursuit of the Johannine Voice* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), pp. 68-70; H. W. Attridge, 'John and Mark in the history of Research', in E. -M. Becker, H. K. Bond, C. H. Williams (eds.), *John's Transformation of Mark* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), pp. 13-21.

³ P. Gardner-Smith, *St John and the Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938).

⁴ C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 1978), p. 42.

⁵ Attridge, 'John and Mark', p. 13; Porter, *John, His Gospel*, p. 69.

⁶ Porter, *John, His Gospel*, pp. 67-70.

⁷ Barrett, *John*, pp. 42-45, emphasises that both lists are not exhaustive. A similar listing is found in Porter, *John, His Gospel*, pp. 70-71, though he lists similarities between John and the Synoptics, not Mark exclusively.

does not ‘prove’ that John used Mark directly, but it considerably weakens the theory of Johannine independence.⁸ Richard Bauckham argues that various clues throughout the gospel suggest that John’s audience (and the author) were familiar with Mark: the ‘implied reader’ would have to be aware of certain Markan details for John’s narrative to make sense e.g. that John the Baptist was imprisoned (Jn 3:24, Mk 1:14); the anointing of Jesus in Bethany (Jn 12:1; Mk 14:1, 3-9) and the mention of ‘the twelve’ (Jn 6:67-71; Mk 3:13-19).⁹ More recently, the edited volume *John’s Transformation of Mark*¹⁰ brings together a variety of essays exploring Johannine dependence on Mark: Jean Zumstein sees examples of ‘hyper-textuality’ in John, whereby John has ‘relectured’ Mark to suit his theological agenda;¹¹ Catrin Williams locates the phenomenon of the ‘rewriting’ of texts firmly within the framework of 2nd Temple Jewish scribal practice,¹² and Helen Bond notes the ways in which John has ‘transformed’ the Markan account of Jesus’ passion.¹³ Whilst the similarities between John and Mark have always suggested a connection, the differences have historically pointed towards independence; the more recent Johannine scholarship has contrarily postulated a ‘radical hermeneutical programme’ as the alternative reason, whereby Markan themes can be ‘transformed’ and even ‘reversed’ to suit John’s particular Christology and distinctive presentation of Jesus.¹⁴

For the basis of this work I hold that John was familiar with Mark, for the following reasons. *Firstly, both narratives begin with John the Baptist* (Jn 1:6; Mk 1:4). Notwithstanding the opening lines of John’s prologue (1:1-5), both gospels begin in the same place, with the introduction of John the Baptist announcing the imminent arrival of Jesus. If, as Richard

⁸ Barrett, *John*, p. 45.

⁹ R. Bauckham, ‘John for readers of Mark’ in R. Bauckham (ed.), *The Gospel for All Christians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 152-54, 163-65.

¹⁰ E. -M. Becker, H. K. Bond, C. H. Williams (eds.), *John’s Transformation of Mark* (London: T&T Clark, 2021).

¹¹ J. Zumstein, ‘The Johannine Relecture of Mark’, in E. -M. Becker, H. K. Bond, C. H. Williams (eds.), *John’s Transformation of Mark* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), pp. 23-29.

¹² C. H. Williams, ‘John’s “Rewriting” of Mark’, in E. -M. Becker, H. K. Bond, C. H. Williams (eds.), *John’s Transformation of Mark* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), pp. 51-65.

¹³ H. K. Bond, ‘The Triumph of the King: John’s Transformation of Mark’s Account of the Passion’, in E. -M. Becker, H. K. Bond, C. H. Williams (eds.), *John’s Transformation of Mark* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), pp. 251-67.

¹⁴ Attridge, ‘John and Mark’ p. 9; M. Jennings, ‘The Fourth Gospel’s Reversal of Mark in John 13:31-14:3’, *Biblica* 94.2 (2013), pp. 210–36. A detailed survey and evaluation of the various theories of Johannine dependence (including shared sources, oral history, second orality and interdependence) are beyond the scope of this work. See Attridge, ‘John and Mark’, pp. 9-22; Porter, *John, His Gospel*, pp. 63-88 and Porter and Fay, ‘Introduction’, pp. 15-43.

Burridge argues, all four gospels belong to the literary category of Graeco-Roman βίολ,¹⁵ it is significant that John follows Mark in beginning with the Baptist rather than the birth of Jesus (so Matthew and Luke) or Jesus himself. If John were composing his own βίολ of Jesus independently of Mark, it seems less likely he would choose the exact same starting point. *Secondly, the overall narrative structure of John follows Mark.* Beginning with John the Baptist, John's Gospel shares many of the narrative features of Mark, but crucially in the same order.¹⁶ By comparison, the same events in Matthew and Luke do not follow this chronology. A significant example would be the feeding of the 5,000 (Jn 6:1-15; Mk 6:32-44) followed immediately by the walking on the water (Jn 6:16-21; Mk 6:45-52) and the crossing of the sea (Jn 6:22-25; Mk 6:53-54).¹⁷ For these to follow the precise ordering in both Mark and John (against Matthew and Luke) strongly favours dependence on Mark. Further, both Mark and John devote similar portions of the overall gospel content to the passion narrative, again a remarkable feature if both accounts were composed independently.¹⁸ Other similar features include Peter's declaration of 'the Christ' in Mark 8:29, beginning the predictions of Jesus' death (8:31) and the journey towards Jerusalem; so too John 12:23 signals the arrival of 'the hour', concluding Jesus' public ministry and transitioning to the 'farewell discourses', culminating in the arrest and crucifixion. *Following from this, thirdly, both Mark and John's narrative have an emphasis on Jesus' death.* Beyond merely reporting the events of the passion, both gospels embed features in the narrative that point towards the cross from early on. The plot to kill Jesus emerges already in Mark 3:6, whilst John has Jesus speak of his own death during the Temple incident of 2:19-21. The Markan Jesus predicts the suffering of the 'Son of Man' three times (8:31-32; 9:30-32; 10:32-34); likewise John's Jesus speaks three times of his death as the 'lifting up' of the 'Son of Man' (3:14-15; 8:28; 12:30-34).¹⁹ Overall these features, in addition to the recent scholarly contributions mentioned above, argue strongly for John's dependence on Mark.

¹⁵ R. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 191-239.

¹⁶ As noted above by Barrett, *John*, pp. 42-45. See also Attridge, 'John and Mark', pp. 10-11.

¹⁷ By comparison Matthew has the feeding and the walking together (Mt 14:13-33) but the crossing later (8:18); the Lukan feeding of the 5,000 occurs in 9:10-17, the crossing later in 14:34-35 and the walking on water is omitted entirely.

¹⁸ M. Goodacre 'Parallel Traditions or Parallel Gospels? John's Gospel as a Re-Imagining of Mark', in E. -M. Becker, H. K. Bond, C. H. Williams (eds.), *John's Transformation of Mark* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), pp. 84-85.

¹⁹ This theme shall be explored in greater depth in Chapter One.

This work aims to focus on two areas where this is at present a dearth in the literature. The contributions in *John's Transformation of Mark* explored the various ways in which John has transformed Mark and argued for degrees of dependence. The final chapter by Helen Bond²⁰ compared the passion accounts of Mark and John, yet focused almost entirely on the trial scenes rather than the actual crucifixion and surrounding events. A close comparison of the ways in which John has transformed Mark's arrest, scourging, crucifixion, death and burial of Jesus remains outstanding. This work aims to examine, firstly, the ways in which John has transformed Marks' account of Jesus' death, with the dominant Johannine motif being that of *kingship*.

Secondly, the theological rationale motivating John's transformation was largely absent from *John's Transformation of Mark*. Whilst a perfect historical reconstruction of the original author's intent is not possible, it is clear that John places a high value on the role of the Jewish Scriptures being fulfilled in his distinctive presentation of Jesus. The Johannine Jesus himself makes clear that the Scriptures 'testify' about him (5:39-40), and at various places throughout the narrative the Scripture is 'fulfilled', with a particular focus around the events leading to the cross (13:18; 15:25; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37). Whilst John draws upon a variety of Old Testament texts throughout his gospel, several factors indicate that the book of Isaiah is of particular significance for his narrative and distinctive Christology. Isaiah is the only prophet mentioned by name (1:23; 12:38); these direct Isaianic citations form an *inclusio* framing Jesus' public ministry; and Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (12:12-41), which signals the beginning of 'the hour of glorification', is explicated by two citations from Isaiah (Isa 53:1; 6:10).²¹ John's use of the Isainic themes of glory and exaltation have been extensively studied. However, the drawing together of these themes with the Isaianic motif of YHWH as king as the theological rationale for John's presentation of Jesus' death has hitherto received little attention. Thus the second aim is to argue that it is John's reading of Isaiah that has provided the theological motivation and scriptural legitimisation of his reworking of Mark's passion account and presentation of the crucified Jesus as the exalted king.

²⁰ Bond, 'Triumph of the King', pp. 251-67.

²¹ These shall be explored in Chapter Three.

This dissertation shall be structured as follows: Chapter One will identify the distinctive Johannine themes (outside of the passion narrative proper) by which John conceptualises Jesus' death, including John the Baptist testifying that Jesus is the 'lamb of God'; the motif of 'seeing'; the cross as 'the hour of glorification' and the 'lifting up/exaltation' of the Son of Man. Chapter Two shall then contrast John's passion narrative with that of Mark, highlighting how the themes from Chapter One have been embedded in the narrative whilst the dominant motif throughout John's passion is the kingship of Jesus. Chapter Three shall outline the ways in which John utilises Scripture and argue that his particular interpretation of Isaiah is a key element in the Johannine transformation of the Markan account, drawing together the motifs of exaltation, glory and kingship. The final Chapter shall be a summary, concluding that John's transformation of Mark's passion account, from the Markan humiliated Jesus to the Johannine exalted-crucified-king, finds its scriptural basis in John's particular interpretation of Isaiah.

Chapter 1

Themes Anticipating the Death of Jesus throughout John's Gospel

A distinctive feature of John's gospel is that there are themes and motifs embedded throughout the text which anticipate the death of Jesus from the beginning of the narrative,¹ and at several instances prior to the passion narrative.² Whilst the actual events of Jesus' arrest and crucifixion are narrated in chapters 19 and 20, these uniquely Johannine motifs serve as pointers to John's interpretation of Jesus' death and its Christological significance. This chapter shall provide an overview of the major themes, outside of the passion narrative proper, by which John has transformed Mark and prepared the reader for his distinctive presentation of Jesus' death. The themes discussed in turn are as follows: the witness of John the Baptist and Jesus as the 'lamb of God'; the crucifixion as the 'hour of glorification'; and the 'lifting up/exaltation' of the Son of Man.

1. John the Baptist and 'Seeing' Jesus

John the Baptist is an appropriate character with whom to begin this chapter, as he is the first character (after the introductory verses of Mk 1:1-3 and Jn 1:1-5) to appear in both Mark and John, and the first spoken words of each gospel belong to him. Yet the Johannine Baptist differs significantly from his Markan counterpart. The author John prepares the reader for Jesus' death before Jesus has even spoken, with the Baptist's proclamation: 'Behold the lamb of God (ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) who takes away the sin of the world!' (Jn 1:29; cf. 1:36). Mark recounts the role of John 'preparing the way the way of the Lord' in fulfilment of Isaiah 40:3 (Mk 1:2-4) and the baptism of Jesus (Mk 1:9-11)³ but John's gospel alone has Jesus singled out as "the lamb of God". As to which lamb John is referring has been much debated by

¹ R. Edwards, *Discovering John: Content, Interpretation, Reception*. 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 2014), p. 92.

² J. Morgan-Wynne, *The Cross in the Johannine Writings* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2011), pp. 132-74.

³ As do Matthew and Luke.

commentators, with the list including the Messianic horned ram of Jewish apocalyptic,⁴ the Passover lamb,⁵ the lamb characterising the Servant of Isaiah 53:7 (ὡς πρόβατον...καὶ ὡς ἄμνός)⁶ and an allusion to the temple sin-offering.⁷ Whilst no single interpretation is without problems,⁸ it is clear that the function of the 'lamb of God' is to remove sin (ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, Jn 1:29). Given that 'lamb' is bound to evoke the image of sacrifice,⁹ it is specifically the death of Jesus as the lamb to which the Baptist testifies.¹⁰ Moreover, the sin that Jesus will take away is not that of Israel but of the entire world, a concept foreign to first century Jewish thought.¹¹ The 'making straight' of the 'way of the Lord' by these first words spoken by John the Baptist is followed immediately by reference to Jesus' as 'the lamb' and prepares the reader for his salvific death from the beginning of the gospel. It is noteworthy that John has 'transformed' the role of the Markan Baptist in order to shift the focus away from John and on to Jesus.¹² The 'baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins' of which Jesus undergoes by John (Mk 1:4, 9) is omitted, and instead John points towards the 'lamb of God' who will completely 'take away' the sins of the world.¹³ Further, the Isaiah 40:3 citation has been reworked, being found on the lips of John himself (against the anonymous editorial comment of Mark 1:2-3), and the two clauses of the Isaiah text being condensed into the singular Johannine 'make straight the way for Lord', resulting in a focused Christological expression. The 'way' is not 'prepared' before Jesus arrives; rather, it is 'the way' of Jesus himself that is

⁴ C.S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic: 2012), p. 452; A. J. Köstenberger, 'John', in G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (eds.), *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), pp. 428; D. J. Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2007), p. 312.

⁵ Barrett, *John*, p. 176; M. D. Hooker, *Not Ashamed of the Gospel: New Testament Interpretations of the Death of Christ* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1994), p. 97.

⁶ Köstenberger, 'John', p.428; J. G. R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (Dallas: Word Inc., 1987), p. 25; P. Stuhlmacher, 'Isaiah 53 in the Gospels and Acts', in B. Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher (eds.), *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), p. 160.

⁷ Keener, *John*, p. 452; F. J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1998), p. 59; L. Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), p. 128.

⁸ The 'Messiah' does not remove sin in 2nd Temple Jewish thought; neither does the Passover Lamb in Exodus. See further Morris, *John*, pp. 127-29; C. H. Williams, "'Seeing," Salvation, and the Use of Scripture in the Gospel of John: Intertextual Perspectives on the Johannine Understanding of Jesus's death', in M. Botner, J. H. Duff, S. Durr (eds.), *Atonement: Jewish and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020), pp. 135-37.

⁹ J. R. Michaels, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), pp. 108-9; Barrett, *John*, p. 176.

¹⁰ The theme of Jesus as lamb can be found in other NT texts e.g. 1Cor 5:7 and Rev 5:6.

¹¹ Köstenberger, 'John', p. 428.

¹² T. Engberg-Pederson, 'John the Baptist in Mark and John: An Exercise in Comparison', in E. -M. Becker, H. K. Bond, C. H. Williams (eds.), *John's Transformation of Mark* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), pp. 137-40.

¹³ Engberg-Pederson, 'John the Baptist', p. 139.

‘made straight’ (εὐθύνετε) by John’s witness. The referent of the passage is Jesus, equating him with ‘the Lord’ in Isaiah who brings salvation through the ‘way in the wilderness’.¹⁴

A further significant Johannine motif relates to the Baptist’s invitation to ‘see’ or ‘behold’ (ἴδε) the lamb.¹⁵ The notion of ‘seeing’ has already occurred in the prologue, where despite no one having seen God (1:18) John can write ‘we have seen his glory’ (ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, Jn 1:14). The Baptist is explicitly named as a ‘witness’ (μαρτυρία) to Jesus (1:7), marking him out as the one who calls others to ‘see’ who Jesus truly is, the lamb who takes away the sin of the world. John’s disciples, upon following Jesus, are enjoined by him to ‘come and see’ (ἔρχεσθε καὶ ὄψεσθε, Jn 1:39), inviting them to ‘see Jesus with the eyes of faith’.¹⁶ The motif subsequently occurs at key moments throughout the gospel’s narrative:¹⁷ the arrival of Jesus’ ‘hour’ signalling his impending death¹⁸ is set in the immediate context of the Greeks wishing ‘to see’ him (ἰδεῖν, 12:20); Jesus tells his disciples before he is arrested that if they have seen him they have seen the Father (14:9); immediately prior to the crucifixion Pilate twice demands that the Jews ‘behold the man’ (ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, 19:5) and their king (ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν, 19:14) echoing the ‘behold’ statements of the Baptist in 1:29 and 1:36; and when the crucified Jesus’ side is pierced John describes this as fulfilment of Zechariah 12:10: ‘they will look (ὄψονται) on the one whom they have pierced’ (Jn 19:37). As Jörg Frey notes, it is precisely the crucified Jesus to which many of the occasions of ‘seeing’ allude; thus the ‘seeing’ motif, and the related imperative to ‘behold’ Jesus, find fulfilment in his death. It is in the crucified Jesus that God will be truly ‘seen’.¹⁹

¹⁴ C. H. Williams, ‘The Testimony of Isaiah and Johannine Christology’, in C. M. McGinnis and P. K. Tull (eds.), *As Those who are Taught: The Interpretation of Isaiah from the LXX to the SBL* (Atlanta: SBL, 2006) pp. 108-10; C. Bennema, *Encountering Jesus: Character Studies in the Gospel of John*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), pp. 65-6.

¹⁵ ἴδε in John 1:29 is a neglected theme in most commentaries.

¹⁶ G. R. O’Day, ‘John’, in L. E. Keck (ed.), *The New Interpreter’s Bible: Volume IX* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995) p. 531.

¹⁷ The significance of Isaiah for the Johannine motif of ‘seeing’ will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

¹⁸ See discussion below.

¹⁹ J. Frey, *The Glory of the Crucified One: Christology and Theology in the Gospel of John*. (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2018), pp. 303-11. A key verse is Jn 14:7, where Jesus declares ‘from now on....you have seen him’. Frey understands ‘now’ as relating to the ‘hour’ of Jesus’ death.

2. The Hour of Glorification

‘Glory’ (δόξα) is a major theme throughout John, all the more striking when compared with the dearth of the motif in Mark.²⁰ Despite this, the Johannine understanding of ‘glory’ has until recently been largely neglected in biblical scholarship.²¹

Glory has a multifaceted function in John. From as early as the prologue, Jesus reveals the glory of God (Jn 1:14), echoing the Exodus account where Moses was withheld from seeing God face to face, but was permitted a glimpse from the rock whilst God’s glory (HT *kā-bôd*; LXX δόξα)²² passed by (Exod 33:17-23).²³ The hitherto unseen glory of God, which in Hebraic thought is the manifestation of his character, that is his ‘loving kindness and faithfulness’ (Exod 34:6) is made visible and ‘exegeted’ in Jesus of Nazareth (Jn 1:18).²⁴ Further, the miraculous ‘signs’ performed by Jesus likewise demonstrate his glory (2:11);²⁵ humans can glorify God by speaking the truth (9:24); the disciples glorify God by following Jesus (21:19); and the Son shares glory with the Father (17:5). Yet the distinctive feature of the Johannine glory motif is the way in which it relates to the death of Jesus, so that the glory of God is ultimately revealed ‘not, as we might suppose, in the resurrection, but in the shame of the cross’.²⁶ Whilst the occurrence of δόξα is not infrequent throughout other New Testament writings, the understanding of Jesus’ death (with the shame and humiliation inherent in crucifixion) as the

²⁰ Δόξα occurs 19 times in John, compared to 3 in Mark; δοξάζω and its variants occur 23 times in John, only once in Mark.

²¹ Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, p. 239; R. Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory: Major Themes in Johannine Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), p. 43.

²² Throughout this work the abbreviation HT will be used for ‘Hebrew Text’. LXX denotes the Septuagint.

²³ Michaels *John*, pp. 79-80; Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, pp. 46-50; B. Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 95.

²⁴ Bauckham *Gospel of Glory*, pp. 46-52; C. R. Koester, *The Word of Life: A Theology of John’s Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), p. 120.

²⁵ Koester, *Word of Life*, p. 121.

²⁶ Hooker, *Not Ashamed*, p. 96.

revelation of God's glory is uniquely Johannine.²⁷ At no point in Mark is Jesus' death described as glorification.²⁸

It is the combination of 'glory' terminology with the 'hour' (ῥα) throughout John which provides an interpretive lens for Jesus' death, or a 'reading guide' for the passion narrative.²⁹ As with δόξα, ῥα functions at more than one level for John.³⁰ It can be used as reference to a definite time (1:39; 4:6, 52-53; 19:14, 27) and the number of hours in a day (11:9). However, the majority of instances clearly refer to a discrete moment in Jesus' ministry, specifically his death on the cross.³¹

The first mention of Jesus' hour occurs at the wedding in Cana, where Jesus performs his first 'sign' by turning water into wine, after initially refusing to intervene as his hour had 'not yet come' (2:4). Performing the miracle, however, revealed his glory and his disciples believed in him (Jn 2:11). Thus Jesus' hour is at once connected with his glory, though not yet explicitly related to his death. Reading retrospectively, it is the miracle in Cana which signals the hour is approaching.³² Subsequent passages demonstrate that, despite growing hostility from the authorities intent on arresting Jesus, they are unable to do so as his hour is 'not yet': οὐπω

²⁷ It should be noted that 'glorification' in John can also encompass the resurrection e.g. Jn 2:18-22 where the resurrection is counted as a 'miraculous sign' (2:18) and the disciples remember what Jesus had said 'after Jesus was glorified' (7:16). This does not diminish the fact that Jesus' death on the cross is described as an act of 'glorification', which remains a uniquely Johannine theme. See further Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, pp. 53-60; L. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 376-77.

²⁸ The three occurrences of 'glory' in Mark (8:38; 10:37; 13:26) all refer to the future rule of Jesus/the Son of Man; the one occurrence of 'glorify' (2:12) describes the healing of the lame man and his response of praise to God.

²⁹ Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, p. 253.

³⁰ Morgan-Wynne, *The Cross*, pp. 56-63.

³¹ J. Frey, 'From the Expectation of the Imminent Kingdom to the Presence of Eternal Life: Eschatology in Mark and John', in E. Becker, H. K. Bond, and C. H. Williams (eds.), *John's Transformation of Mark* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), pp. 179-80. Frey understands the 'hour' as originating from the Markan Gethsemane tradition but being transformed by John. Conversely, Stefanos Mikhaliios argues cogently for John drawing upon the eschatological scenes of Daniel for his use of 'hour', with particular reference to Dan 12:1: 'And at that hour (τὴν ῥαν) Michael, the great angel who stands over the sons of your people, will pass by.....And on that day the whole people will be exalted (ὑψωθήσεται). See S. Mikhaliios, *The Danielic Eschatological Hour in the Johannine Literature* (London: T&T Clark, 2011), pp. 124-28. Whatever John's source material the 'hour' clearly plays are more significant feature in John as a referent to the cross than in Mark. Mark uses ῥα just twice to refer to Jesus' passion, both occurrences being located in the Gethsemane account (Mk 13:35, 41). Outside of the Markan passion narrative ῥα never refers to Jesus' death.

³² Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 36.

ἐληλύθει ἡ ὥρα αὐτοῦ (7:30; 8:20).³³ The hour is now more directly linked with Jesus' impending death, yet crucially God remains in control of the narrative: It is 'his' (Jesus') hour, and nobody can harm him until it has arrived.³⁴

A transitional point in the narrative is John 12:12-43, which brings Jesus' public ministry to a close and sets in motion the steps towards his arrest.³⁵ Jesus rides into Jerusalem, is hailed as king in fulfilment of Zechariah 9:9, and at last declares 'the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified' (12:23). He then speaks of a grain of wheat falling to the ground and dying, before praying that, rather than being saved from 'the hour', the Father would be glorified (12:27-28), echoing (though transforming) the suffering petitions of Jesus in the Markan Gethsemane tradition.³⁶ The third 'lifted up' (ὑψώω) statement follows³⁷ with the editorial comment that Jesus is now referring explicitly to his death (12:33). Thus the arrival of 'the hour' clearly points to the cross and the mutual glorification of the Son and the Father through Jesus' death.

The motif continues throughout the Farewell Discourses (Jn 13-17):

'Jesus knew that *his hour had come* to depart from this world and go to the Father' (13:1, italics added).

'Father, *the hour has come*. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you' (17:1, italics added).

As Richard Bauckham notes, John can speak of the cross as being 'the climax of the work that God has given Jesus to do....therefore also the climax of the revelation of God's glory in the flesh'.³⁸ If the revealed glory of God is the manifestation of his character (as alluded to in the

³³ Morgan-Wynne, *The Cross*, p. 56.

³⁴ Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, p. 96; Koester, *Word of Life*, p. 42.

³⁵ R. A. Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), p. 94.

³⁶ J. Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 487; Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, p. 249; idem, 'Imminent kingdom', p. 171. On John's transformation of the Markan Gethsemane account see Chapter 2.

³⁷ See section below on the 'exaltation/lifting up' statements.

³⁸ Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, p. 58.

prologue), then the cross will be the supreme display of his glory precisely because it discloses the depth of God's love.³⁹

3. The Lifting up/Exaltation of the Son of Man

The third way in which John prepares for the death of Jesus outside of the passion narrative is through the language of 'lifting up/exaltation'. The passages in question have been much studied and a brief summary for the purpose of this work will suffice.

Jesus predicts his death three times in Mark (8:31, 9:31-32, 10:33-34). In each passage the predictions are similar: the Son of Man will undergo suffering, be killed, and subsequently raised from the dead. John likewise has three corresponding Son of Man passion predictions (3:14; 8:28; 12:32-3), but where Mark explicitly has suffering and death followed by resurrection, John has collapsed the sequence of events into the one word ὑψώω, an example of a Johannine 'double entendre'.⁴⁰ ὑψώω is deliberately ambiguous and can be translated as 'lifted up' (a physical elevation from the ground) or 'exalted' (elevation of status, honour).⁴¹ It is the ambiguity of the Greek that allows John to coalesce the physical lifting up of Jesus (on the cross) with the exaltation and future glory of the resurrection.⁴² Thus, in a transformation of the Markan predictions, John combines Jesus' suffering and vindication into the one event of the cross. Whilst the temporal sequence of events clearly remains for John (as chapters 19-20 narrate), he sees the cross as exaltation instead of humiliation, or rather 'exaltation in humiliation'.⁴³

³⁹ Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, p. 61; Koester, *Word of Life*, p. 122.

⁴⁰ C. H. Williams, 'Another Look at "Lifting Up" in the Gospel of John', in J. G. McConville and L. K. Pieterse (eds.), *Conception, Reception and the Spirit: Essays in Honour of Andrew T. Lincoln* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2015), p. 58; M. C. De Boer, 'Johannine History and Johannine Theology: The Death of Jesus as the Exaltation and the Glorification of the Son of Man', in G. V. Belle (ed.), *The Death of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), p. 305; J. Dennis, 'The "Lifting Up of the Son of Man" and the Dethroning of the "Ruler of this World": Jesus' Death as the Defeat of the Devil in John 12:31-32', in G. V. Belle (ed.), *The Death of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), p. 678; Köstenberger, 'John', p. 436; Keener, *John*, p. 565.

⁴¹ Barrett, *John*, p. 214; F. W. Danker, W. Bauer, W. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp.1045-46. Of note it is possible a Semitic term lies behind this usage: the Aramaic אַזְדָּקֶפֶּה ('ezd^eqeph) can mean literally 'lift up' and specifically 'crucify'. See further Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 50; A. T. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to Saint John* (London: Continuum, 2005), p. 153. That John's usage is drawn predominantly from Isaiah shall be discussed in Chapter 3.

⁴² Hooker, *Not Ashamed*, p. 95.

⁴³ Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, p. 73. Italics added.

In John 3:13-14 Jesus tells Nicodemus that, just as the bronze serpent was lifted up by Moses in Numbers 21:9, so too must Son of Man be lifted up (οὕτως ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου). These verses contain an ‘intertextual fusion’ and demonstrate John’s creative use of Scripture.⁴⁴ The Johannine Jesus alludes to the Son of Man in Daniel 7:13-14, who comes on the clouds of heaven and receives ‘dominion and glory and kingship’, but in Jesus’ words his ‘exaltation’ will be like that of the serpent, which Moses ὑψωσεν to save Israel from the fiery snakes. As Catrin Williams notes, the verb ὑψόω is not found in the LXX Numbers text, suggesting the change in wording draws attention to the two events as being mutually illuminating (the lifting up of both the serpent and the Son of Man).⁴⁵ Both occasions are the result of human sin, and both ‘exaltations’ bring life to those who look upon them. At this point in the narrative John has not explicitly linked ὑψόω with the cross, but has brought together the ‘glory’ of the Son of Man with the ‘lifting up’ of the serpent and applied it to Jesus’ own ‘exaltation’ (in addition to continuing the Johannine motif of ‘seeing’: the serpent had to be ‘looked upon’ to effect salvation).

Secondly, in John 8:28, Jesus speaks to ‘the Jews’ and the context now makes clear he is alluding to his death (8:21-22, cf. 13:36). Again, the Son of Man will be ‘lifted up’ resulting in the public realisation that ‘I am (ἐγώ εἰμι)’. Whereas the exaltation in 3:14 leads to eternal life, in 8:28 the result is a revelation of who Jesus is.⁴⁶ This is one of the Johannine ἐγώ εἰμι statements without a predicate, and whilst John certainly may be drawing upon the divine Name of Exodus 3:14, a stronger case can be made that the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah are in view, where YHWH repeatedly declares “I am he” (Isaiah 41:4; 43:10, 25; 46:4; 51:12; cf. Deut 32:39).⁴⁷ The unique identity of God will thus be revealed when Jesus is ‘exalted’, that is, in his death on the cross.

⁴⁴ R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), p. 335.

⁴⁵ Williams, ‘Lifting Up’, p. 64; Michaels, p. 197.

⁴⁶ Keener, *John*, p. 745; R. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: ‘God Crucified’ and Other Studies on the New Testament’s Christology of Divine Identity* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), pp. 47-8.

⁴⁷ C. H. Williams, ‘“I Am” Sayings’, in J. B. Green, J. K. Brown and N. Perrin (eds.), *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd edition (IVP Academic: Downers Grove: 2013), pp. 181-82. Lincoln, *John*, p. 267. The significance of the ἐγώ εἰμι statements in John and the Isaianic background shall be discussed further in Chapter 3.

Thirdly, in 12:32-33 there is now no doubt the focus of the passage is Jesus' death: 'the hour' has come, signalling the time for the Son of Man to be glorified (12:23).⁴⁸ After the parable of the wheat grain dying, and the voice from heaven declaring the Father's name will be glorified (12:24, 28), Jesus says he will draw all people to himself when he is 'lifted up from the earth' (ὁψωθῶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς) with the editorial comment of 12:33 specifically referring to the mode of Jesus' death. This passage weaves together the Johannine motifs discussed above: the Greeks wish to 'see' Jesus (12:21); the 'hour of glorification' has come (12:22) and Jesus will be 'lifted up/exalted' (12:32), all of which indicate his impending death on the cross (12:33).

4. Summary of the Presentation of Jesus' Death in John's Gospel (Outside of the Passion Narrative)

This brief synopsis has examined the ways in which John has woven motifs throughout his gospel in preparation for the events of chapters 18 and 19. Jesus is introduced as the sin-removing 'lamb of God', the one who is 'seen' with the eyes of faith. The inevitability of the divinely appointed 'hour of glorification' and the threefold 'exaltation/lifting up' sayings (corresponding to the three 'passion predictions' of Mark) are uniquely Johannine themes which provide the lens through which the narrative of Jesus' arrest, trial and crucifixion must be read.

Having discussed the major themes that point the reader towards the cross, Chapter 2 shall consist of a closer examination of the arrest and death of Jesus, and thus the ways in which John has transformed the passion narrative of Mark.

⁴⁸ Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 215; Morgan-Wynne, *The Cross*, pp. 85-6; Morris, *John*, p. 599; Lindars, *John*, pp. 352-53.

Chapter 2

From 'My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?' to 'It is Finished!'

A Comparison of John and Mark's Passion Account

In the recent volume *John's Transformation of Mark*, Helen Bond compares the Johannine passion narrative with that of Mark, yet focuses predominantly on the trial scenes, with little mention of the crucifixion itself. John's reworking of the Markan Gethsemane, Jesus' journey to the cross, his death and burial, are noticeably absent.¹ This chapter attempts a comparison of the Markan and Johannine passion accounts, including these hitherto underexplored sections. As with the previous chapter, this shall predominantly be observational, noting *how* John has transformed Mark's account of Jesus' death. As to *why* he has done so (specifically the scriptural legitimisation of this reworking) shall be the focus of Chapter 3.

It should first be noted that there are many similarities between the two accounts and the same general outline is followed.² Both record Jesus as being betrayed by Judas and arrested by the Jews (Mk 14:43-50; Jn 18:3-11). Both have Jesus standing trial before the High Priest (Mk 14:55-65; Jn 18:12,13, 19-24) and subsequently Pilate (Mk 15:2-15; Jn 18:29-19:16). Peter's threefold disowning of Jesus is present (Mk 14:66-72; Jn 18:16-18,25-27),³ as is the mockery from the Roman guard (Mk 15:16-20; Jn 19:1-3), the crown of thorns and purple robe (Mk 15:17; Jn 19:2), the release of Barabbas (Mk 15:6-15; Jn 18:39-40), the dividing of Jesus' clothes (Mk 15:24; Jn 19:23-25), the sign 'King of the Jews' placed on the cross (Mk 15:26; Jn 19:19), the offering of wine (Mk 15:36; Jn 19:29), the presence of women at the cross (Mk 15:40-41; Jn 19:25), and the burial of Jesus' body by Joseph of Arimathea (Mk 15:42-47; Jn 19:38-4). However, even the shared features are not expressed identically, and John, whilst

¹ Bond, 'Triumph of the king', pp. 251-67.

² R. E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave, a Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, vol. 1 (London: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 80-81.

³ It is noteworthy that the account of Peter's denial in both Mark and John contain intercalation, unlike Matthew and Luke. See further Bond, 'Triumph of the King', p. 259.

following the Markan narrative chronologically, has significantly reworked Mark to serve his unique Christological presentation of the crucifixion.⁴

As noted, the themes of glorification and exaltation throughout John are utilised to describe the death of Jesus; whilst these words are now absent from the passion narrative, focusing on the way in which John has transformed Mark demonstrates the outworking of these motifs.⁵ Further, the crucifixion serves to highlight the theme of royalty *and culminates in the public manifestation of the kingship of Jesus*.

1. The Garden

An obvious omission in John is that there is no account of Jesus's prayer to the Father in the garden of Gethsemane prior to his arrest (Mk 14:32-42). John does set the scene of the arrest in an unnamed garden (Jn 18:1), but whereas Mark has Jesus petition the Father for an alternative to the cross, the Johannine Jesus has full knowledge of what is about to happen (18:4) but without the 'anguish of soul' of Mark 13:34.

However, a close reading of John 12 suggests that the Markan Gethsemane account has not been omitted, but rather transformed, an example of 'hypertextuality' in which Gethsemane is 'reinterpreted according to the Christology of the Fourth Gospel'.⁶ Several commentators note textual parallels between John 12:27-33 and Mark 14, suggesting John has reworked the Markan material earlier into his narrative.⁷ By shifting elements of the Markan passion account into an earlier part of the gospel, John is portraying all of Jesus' ministry as 'placed under the sign of the cross'.⁸

⁴ To quote Craig Keener: '...the particular traditions John reports and the manner in which he arranges and presents them provide a different portrait of Jesus' approach to his death than the Markan stream of tradition emphasizes'. Keener, *John*, p. 1084.

⁵ Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, p. 253.

⁶ Zumstein, 'Relecture of Mark', pp. 27-28.

⁷ 'The hour has come' (Jn 12:23, cf. Mk 14:41); 'My soul is troubled/sorrowful' (Jn 12:27; cf. Mk 14:34); 'Father save me from *this hour* (Jn 12:27)' and 'He prayed that if it were possible *this hour* might pass from him' (Mk 14:35). See R. E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 2 Volumes (New York: Doubleday, 1970), pp. 470-71; Moloney, *John*, pp. 359-60; Michaels, *John*, pp. 692-93.

⁸ Zumstein, 'Relecture of Mark', p.26. John has similarly moved the Markan Temple incident (Mk 11:15-19) to near the beginning of his gospel (Jn 2:13-25). Both accounts point towards Jesus' death (Mk 11:18; Jn 2:19),

In the context of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the arrival of 'the hour' (Jn 12:23) signaling his 'exaltation' and made explicit here as his impending death (12:32-33), Jesus declares:

'Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name' (12:27-28).

'My soul is troubled' (ἡ ψυχὴ μου τετάρακται) parallels Mark 14:34 (περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου).⁹ However, whereas in Mark Jesus prays that 'the hour might pass from him' (14:35), in John Jesus asks the (rhetorical) question of whether the Father should save him, followed by an emphatic 'no' (ἀλλὰ).¹⁰ Rather, he willingly embraces the 'hour' of the cross and asks not to be saved but that the Father be glorified (Jn 12:28).¹¹ Unlike Mark, the Johannine Jesus's prayer is answered (Jn 12:2-29), with the Father's voice affirming the coming glorification which will be made visible when Jesus is 'lifted up' on the cross (Jn 12:32-33).¹²

Returning to the arrest scene in John, Jesus rebukes Peter for striking the High Priest's servant and declares 'Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?' (Jn 18:11).

This is the only occurrence of 'cup' (ποτήριον) in John, so it is significant that the word (as a metaphor for Jesus' death) is spoken by the Markan Jesus in Gethsemane (14:36). John has retained this element of the Markan account despite his reworked narrative.¹³ In parallel with John 12:27, Jesus does not petition for 'the cup' to be removed, but once more asks (rhetorically) whether he should drink it. Thus Mark has two prayers in Gethsemane asking for the cup to be removed (Mk 14:36, 39); John has two rhetorical questions, emphasising Jesus' willingness to obey the Father's will.¹⁴ Additionally, John highlights Jesus' sovereign foreknowledge of the events taking place (Jn 18:4), such that the Johannine Jesus is shown to be orchestrating his own divinely appointed death.

thus John has again anticipated the cross from early on in Jesus' ministry. See further Hooker, *Not Ashamed*, pp. 98-99; Beasley-Murray, *John*, pp. 38-39.

⁹ Brown, *John*, pp. 470-71.

¹⁰ Michaels, *John*, p. 693.

¹¹ Brown, *John*, p. 470.

¹² Michaels, *John*, p. 693.

¹³ Michaels, *John*, p. 895. By comparison ποτήριον occurs in Mark six times, three of which are metaphors for Jesus, suffering/death (Mk 10:38, 39; 14:36).

¹⁴ Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, pp. 278-79.

The ‘cohort of soldiers’ (τὴν σπεῖραν, Jn 18:3) sent to arrest Jesus replaces the ‘crowd’ (ὄχλος) of Mark 14:43, and would have represented around 600 men.¹⁵ Despite this considerable ‘upgrade’ in the arresting party (not only in number but also in that they are Roman soldiers in John), a word from Jesus causes them to fall prostrate before him (Jn 18:6).¹⁶ Whilst Mark has Jesus identified by Judas the betrayer (αὐτός ἐστιν, Mk 14:44), the Johannine Jesus takes the initiative and identifies himself with the characteristic Johannine ‘I am’ (ἐγώ εἰμι, Jn 18:6).¹⁷ This is the seventh and final occurrence of the ‘absolute’ ἐγώ εἰμι statements in John (notwithstanding the repetition of verses 7 and 8, which serve to emphasise this occurrence),¹⁸ and whilst it can simply be a manner of self-designation¹⁹ most commentators agree, as noted in Chapter 1, it is a form of divine self-revelation drawing upon the Septuagintal translation of *Anî Hû* in Deuteronomy 32:39 and particularly the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah.²⁰ Whilst there is no act of resistance from Jesus in either Mark or John (conversely both describe the cutting off of the High Priest’s slave’s ear, by an unnamed disciple in Mark 14:47, by Peter in John 18:10), in John the utterance of 18:6 causes the cohort to fall prostrate, the traditional reaction to a theophany (e.g. Ezek 1:28; Dan 10:9).²¹ Whilst it is unlikely the contingent of Roman soldiers understand the significance of Jesus’ self-revelation, nevertheless John presents them as ultimately powerless before him and his spoken word.²²

One final point in John’s arrest scene regards the fate of the disciples. In Mark, they scatter and flee at the time of his arrest (Mk 14:50), an event predicted by Jesus as fulfilment of Zechariah 13:7 (Mk 14:27). In John, Jesus has similarly predicted they will be ‘scattered’ (Jn 16:32), but the prayer of John 17, whereby Jesus has protected his followers ‘by that name you gave me’ (17:12) is now ‘fulfilled’ (πληρωθῆ, 18:9). Of note, it is Scripture that is elsewhere

¹⁵ Michaels, *John*, p. 887; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 322.

¹⁶ Brown, *John*, p. 813.

¹⁷ Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, p. 252.

¹⁸ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, p. 40.

¹⁹ Lincoln, *John*, p. 444; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 322.

²⁰ The portrayal of Jesus orchestrating events, combined with the powerful effect of his spoken word, are entirely consistent with the picture of YHWH and his salvific purposes in these Isaianic texts. See further C. H. Williams, *I Am He: The Interpretation of Anî Hû in Jewish and Early Christian Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), pp. 287-98. See Chapter 3 for further discussion of the Isaianic ἐγώ εἰμι motif in John.

²¹ Lincoln, *John*, p. 444; A. T. Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* (Oregon: WIPF & Stock, 2000), p. 48; Lindars, *John*, p. 541.

²² M. M. Thompson, *John: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), p. 363.

‘fulfilled’ throughout John (12:38; 13:18; 15:25), thus Jesus’ words are portrayed as equally authoritative and equivalent to the words of God.²³

2. The Trial before Pilate

The subsequent events in John follow Mark closely. Both gospels describe Jesus standing trial before the Jewish Sanhedrin and subsequently Pilate; Peter’s denial; the release of Barabbas; and the flogging of Jesus. However, whilst the Johannine trial before the Jews is reduced to a brief exchange, the Roman trial is expanded to five times the length of its Markan counterpart and becomes the centerpiece of John’s passion narrative.²⁴ Pilate’s opening words to Jesus are identical in both gospels: ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ (σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, Jn 18:33=Mk 15:2).²⁵ In Mark the only words of Jesus to Pilate are the affirmative σὺ λέγεις (Mk 15:2); John develops the dialogue between them in a carefully constructed narrative involving Jesus, Pilate and ‘the Jews’. The dialogue explores questions of power and truth, but the dominant theme that emerges is clearly that of kingship.²⁶ Of note the word ‘king’ (βασιλεία) occurs four times in Mark’s trial compared with nine in John.²⁷ The emphasis on Jesus as king is made more apparent considering that John has transformed the ‘kingdom of God’, found so frequently throughout Mark, into the phrase ‘eternal life’.²⁸ That the development of the trial before Pilate should have such a cluster of explicit king/kingdom language, with relatively little outside of the Johannine passion narrative, emphasizes the point that *it is precisely as king that Jesus will suffer*. It is in his death that his true kingship will be revealed.²⁹

Regarding the soldiers’ mockery of Jesus, the scene follows Mark closely but with noticeable omissions. Both clothe Jesus in purple, the royal color of Hellenistic princes (ἱμάτιον

²³ Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 323; Thompson, *John*, p. 364; Lincoln, *John*, p. 445.

²⁴ Bond, ‘Triumph of the King’, p. 259.

²⁵ Lindars, *John*, p. 557.

²⁶ Moloney, *John*, p. 493; Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, p. 253; Köstenberger, ‘John’, p. 253; Bond, ‘Triumph of the King’, p. 259.

²⁷ If the crucifixion narrative itself is included the total is twelve in John (18:33, 37x2, 39; 19:3, 12, 14, 15x2, 19, 21x2) compared to six in Mark (15:2, 9, 12, 18, 26, 32); ‘kingdom’ (βασιλεία) also occurs three times in John’s trial (18:36) but does not occur in Mark.

²⁸ Frey, ‘From Expectation’, pp. 169-86.

²⁹ The majority of commentaries, whilst discussing Jesus’ kingship and significance of his kingdom in John 19, miss the significance of the clustering of these terms in the context of his suffering/death.

πορφυροῦν, Jn 19:2; πορφύραν Mk 15:17).³⁰ However, whilst Mark 15:20 has the soldiers remove the cloak and return Jesus' own clothes, John has the crown and robe stay on him before he is brought once more before the Jews and Pilate (with the implication that Jesus goes to the cross with the crown and robe intact). Further, John has placed the scourging of Jesus midway through the trial (Mark has Jesus scourged *after* Jesus has been condemned, Mk 15:16-20), such that the beaten Jesus is put on display before them. Whilst this is not historically incredible³¹ it remains unlikely, and rather serves the narrative as reaching a climax of the presentation of Jesus as the (ironic) king of the Jews³², dressed in royal purple and adorned with a crown of thorns.³³ The mocking and beating itself has been noticeably truncated in John: the beating with a reed and spitting are absent (Mk 15:19), yet the episode itself has been retained. Rather than the thoroughgoing dishonour found in Mark, John focuses the humiliation specifically on his claim to kingship as the soldiers pay mock homage to him.³⁴

The trial builds to a climactic point with Pilate's declaration to the Jews, 'Behold your King!' (Ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν, Jn 9:14) and the blasphemous response from the Jews, 'We have no king but Caesar!' (19:15), at which point Jesus is handed over to be crucified. This deeply ironic statement from the Jewish crowd is possibly an allusion the hymn sung at the end of the Greater Hallel in the Passover Haggadah:

'From everlasting to everlasting you are God;
Beside you we have no king, redeemer or saviour,
No liberator, deliverer, provider,
None who takes pity in every time of distress and trouble.
We have no king but you.'³⁵

Whilst the Haggadah is admittedly a later text, the theology is in keeping with earlier Jewish monotheistic belief. Israel had always unequivocally proclaimed YHWH as it's king (e.g. Judg

³⁰ Keener, *John*, p. 1122.

³¹ Thompson, *John*, p. 382.

³² Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, pp. 253-54.

³³ Lindars, *John*, pp. 553-54; Beasley-Murray, *John*, pp. 334-36; Lincoln, *John*, p. 459.

³⁴ Thompson, *John*, p. 383; Lincoln, *John*, p. 465; Barrett, *John*, p. 540; Moloney, *John*, p. 495.

³⁵ Lincoln, *John*, p. 471; Keener, *John*, p. 1132.

8:23; 1 Sam 8:7; Isa 26:13; 44:6), and only a representative raised up by God could be the true king of his people.³⁶ Thus 'we have no king but Caesar' from the lips of the Chief Priests represents the 'ultimate irony and betrayal'.³⁷

Further, ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν (Jn 19:14) provides a parallel to 'Behold the man!' (ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, 19:5).³⁸ Given the intratextual theme of 'seeing' previously discussed, the argument can be made that four acclamations frame Jesus' ministry forming an inclusio of 'seeing': two by John the Baptist, pointing towards the lamb of God (ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, Jn 1:29, 36) and two from Pilate, proclaiming Jesus' humanity and kingship.³⁹ Both sets of acclamations are presented in the context of Jesus' death, John's *pointing forwards* to the lamb, Pilate *pointing now* to the man/king on his way to the cross. Pilate's final question 'shall I crucify your king?' (Jn 19:15) thus makes explicit that the 'hour' has finally arrived, in which the rejected Jesus will be 'lifted up'. John's trial makes clear it is as the 'King of the Jews' that Jesus is crucified, and he will rule not from a throne, but from the cross: 'his violent and shameful death will reveal once and forever his eternal kingship'.⁴⁰

3. The Crucifixion

Again, the basic narrative follows Mark but with significant additions and omissions. John's transformation of Marks' crucifixion highlights the sovereignty of Jesus, his universal kingship and, importantly for John, the death of Jesus as the 'fulfillment' of Scripture.

Mark 15:21 has Simon of Cyrene forced to help Jesus carry his cross; John emphatically notes that Jesus carries it by himself (Jn 19:17), a comment that would be redundant unless making a point against Mark and the Synoptic tradition.⁴¹ Whilst unnecessary attempts have been

³⁶ Brown, *John*, pp. 896-97.

³⁷ M. Barker, *The King of the Jews: Temple Theology in John's Gospel* (London: SPCK, 2014), p. 543.

³⁸ Thompson, *John*, p. 390; Keener, *John*, p. 1123.

³⁹ ἴδε and ἰδοὺ can function interchangeably in John. See Williams, "'Seeing,'" p. 142. n. 34.

⁴⁰ Michaels, *John*, p. 944. See further Lindars, *John*, p. 572.

⁴¹ Keener, *John*, p. 1133. There is here the possibility of John drawing upon the Aqedah tradition (Gen 22:1-19), with Jesus carrying his own cross echoing Isaac carrying the wood for his own sacrifice. Whether or not John intends to echo this text does not diminish the portrayal of Jesus as orchestrating the narrative. See further Michaels, *John*, p. 948; Brown, *John*, pp. 916-17; Moloney, *John*, p. 506.

made at harmonization,⁴² John's theological purpose is clear: Jesus is self-sufficient and in control of his own death. Despite outward appearances nobody takes his life from him; Jesus himself offers it up freely (Jn 10:18).

All four gospels mention the sign 'King of the Jews' placed on the cross, though with slightly different wording.⁴³ Whilst John agrees with Mark in his second reference, 'The King of the Jews' (Jn 19:21= Mk 15:26), suggesting this was the earliest form of the tradition,⁴⁴ he has significantly developed the narrative at this point. That the sign is in the three major languages of the first-century Mediterranean world signifies the universality of Jesus' reign, and alludes to John 12:32-33 where Jesus will draw 'all people' to himself.⁴⁵ Pilate responds to the Jews' objection, 'What I have written, I have written (γέγραφα)' (Jn 19:22). The frequent occurrence of 'written' in John almost always refers to Scripture,⁴⁶ the sole exception being this verse and the editorial comment of 20:30-31, where the events of the gospel are 'written' (γέγραπται) to evoke faith in Jesus. Pilate is thus unwittingly carrying out God's will by fulfilling his purposes (cf. Jn 19:11).

The soldiers cast lots for Jesus' clothing and divide it among themselves (Mk15:24; Jn 19:23-25). Once more, John develops the Markan scene with an explanatory scriptural justification, quoting Psalm 22:18 LXX exactly.⁴⁷ Speculative theories abound as to the symbolism of the undivided garment (such as the unity of the church and the garments of the High Priest) but the focus is once more the fulfillment of Scripture.⁴⁸ That the garment is not divided legitimates the need to cast lots for it, and so John can narrate the event as the Scripture being 'fulfilled' (πληρωθῆναι).⁴⁹ Even the actions of the soldiers crucifying Jesus are pre-ordained and orchestrated by God.⁵⁰

⁴² Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 345.

⁴³ 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews' (Mt 27:37); 'The King of the Jews' (Mk 15:26); 'This is the King of the Jews' (Lk 23:38); 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews' (Jn 19:19).

⁴⁴ Brown, *John*, p. 901.

⁴⁵ Brown, *John*, p. 919; Thompson, *John*, p. 398; Lincoln, *John*, p. 474; Keener, *John*, p. 1137.

⁴⁶ Keener, *John*, p. 1138; Michaels, *John*, p. 950.

⁴⁷ Thompson *John*, p. 398.

⁴⁸ Michaels, *John*, p. 951-53; Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, pp. 955-58; Köstenberger, 'John', p. 501.

⁴⁹ Thompson, *John*, p. 398.

⁵⁰ Morris, *John*, p. 715.

Both Mark and John recount Jesus as drinking wine offered to him (Mk 15:36; Jn 19:29). The ‘sour wine’ of Mark likely alludes to Psalm 69:21 (though possibly drawing upon Psalm 22:15, given that Mk 15:34 cites this text); John again expands upon Mark by making explicit it is Jesus’ words, ‘I thirst’, which triggers the giving of wine and the ‘completion’ (τελειόω) of Scripture. Elsewhere in John the Scriptures are ‘fulfilled’ (πληρόω, see 19:24 noted above)⁵¹; now the final deliberate action of Jesus has brought his work and the entire prophetic pattern of Scripture to completion.⁵² The dying words of Jesus in John, ‘It is finished!’ (τετέλεσται, 19:30), signal a cry of triumph rather than the cry of dereliction in Mark 15:34. The ‘completion’ of Jesus’ work, echoing the ‘completion’ of the Scriptures in 19:28, draws together the word and work of God as ‘finished’; this is the moment of glory, his ‘coronation as king’.⁵³

Even in death, the Johannine Jesus remains sovereign. Mark 15:37 has Jesus ‘breathe his last’ (ἐξέπνευσεν); John has Jesus actively “hand over the/his spirit” (παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα, Jn 19:30). The verb παραδίδωμι is not infrequent⁵⁴ but fits with John’s presentation of Jesus ultimately embracing death of his own volition.⁵⁵

John omits the tearing of the Temple curtain and the centurions’ declaration of faith (Mark 15:38-39). Instead, he describes the piercing of Jesus’ side with the flow of blood and water (Jn 19:34). Attempts have been made to base this phenomenon on a physiological response to the heart being pierced and a subsequent release of fluid from the pericardial sack,⁵⁶ but once more, especially given the comment of 19:35 where this event is ‘seen’ (in the Johannine sense already noted in Chapter 1) so that ‘you also may believe’, John’s purpose is theological and Christological.⁵⁷ Jesus has already spoken of the life giving water/Spirit flowing from him (Jn 7:37-39), specifically when he has been glorified (Jn 7:39), thus the crucified/glorified Jesus is ‘seen’ as the one from whom flow the ‘waters of the Spirit of life’.⁵⁸ It is noteworthy

⁵¹ See also Jn 12:38; 13:18; 15:25; 17:12; 19:36.

⁵² Köstenberger, ‘John’, p. 502; Barrett, *John*, p. 553; Brown, *John*, p. 929; Michaels, *John*, p. 961.

⁵³ Thompson, *John*, p. 394; Lincoln, *John*, p. 478.

⁵⁴ Keener, *John*, p. 1148; Brown, *John*, p. 910.

⁵⁵ Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 353.

⁵⁶ Barrett, *John*, p. 556; Brown, *John*, pp. 946-47.

⁵⁷ Keener, *John*, p. 1153; Barker, *King of the Jews*, p. 560; Michaels, *John*, p. 969.

⁵⁸ Keener, *John*, p. 1153.

that other New Testament texts evoke these themes in a similar fashion: The book of Hebrews speaks of a salvific way being opened through the Temple curtain, 'that is his flesh' (Heb 10:20), thus the Markan rending of the curtain at the moment of Jesus' death and the Johannine piercing of his side can be read as illuminating the same event.⁵⁹ Similarly, Revelation 22:1 describes the eschatological river of the water of life flowing from 'the throne of God and of the lamb'. For John, the throne of Jesus is the cross, and the river of life the life-giving Spirit he will give (in accordance with Jn 7:39) after his glorification.

Once more, Scripture provides meaning for the event (Jn 19:36-37). It is debated as to exactly which Scripture John is quoting: the righteous sufferer of Psalm 34:19-20 or the prohibition against breaking the bones of the Passover lamb in Exodus 12:46 and Numbers 9:12.⁶⁰ Both would provide possible backdrops for John, as the Greek wording does not exactly follow any one text; conversely, Catrin Williams has argued it is precisely the 'catchword association' that suggests this is a deliberate Johannine composite citation, in which the theological elements of different texts mutually illuminate the subject. Jesus is at once the righteous sufferer and the divinely ordained Passover lamb whose bones will not be broken.⁶¹ The second Scripture is a quotation of Zechariah 12:10 (though it has been much debated as to the origin of John's textual source due to the quotation following neither the LXX or Hebrew Text (HT) exactly).⁶² Whether the Scripture legitimates a Christological interpretation (Zech 12:10 HT has God as the speaker, 'they will look on me') or a prediction of Thomas' meeting the risen Jesus,⁶³ the focus once more is Jesus' death as fulfillment of prophecy and in accordance with God's sovereign will.

4. The Burial

The final observation of John's transformation of Mark pertains to the burial of Jesus (Mk 15:42-47; Jn 19:38-42). The accounts are similar: both name Joseph of Arimathea, specifying

⁵⁹ Barker, *King of the Jews*, p. 559. It is noteworthy that Jesus also alludes to his body as the Temple in John 2:19.

⁶⁰ Keener, *John*, p. 1156; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 354; Morris, *John*, p. 727.

⁶¹ Williams, "'Seeing'", pp. 132-35. See further Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, p. 317.

⁶² Thompson, *John*, p. 405.

⁶³ Thompson, *John*, p.405.

that he was a follower of Jesus and that he asked Pilate for permission to remove the body. In both accounts Jesus is wrapped in a linen cloth and laid in a tomb. John, however, has expanded upon Mark's account with the addition of Nicodemus, whom has only encountered Jesus once (Jn 3:1-21), during an exchange concerning entering the 'kingdom of God' and anticipating Jesus' death with the first 'lifted up' saying (3:14). If there is pre-supposed knowledge of Markan tradition, it is noteworthy that in Mark Joseph is remembered as one 'waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God' (Mk 15:43). Thus John has two men connected by their anticipation of the 'kingdom of God' as the ones who bury Jesus. Finally, John's addition of the extravagant amount of spice (Jn 19:39) indicates a 'royal burial'. The amount would not have gone unnoticed, and whilst religious devotion is a possibility, Brown argues the obvious symbolism is that of royalty.⁶⁴ Josephus recorded five hundred servants being required to carry the spices for Herod the Great,⁶⁵ whilst a scriptural context is provided by Jeremiah 35:5 where the Lord promises King Zedekiah that 'as spices were burned for your fathers, the former kings before you, so shall spices be burned for you'. Thus Jesus is condemned, crucified, and buried as a king.⁶⁶

5. Summary of John's Transformation of Mark's Passion Narrative

John's reworking of Mark's passion narrative includes the transformation of the Gethsemane episode, with an emphasis on Jesus' foreknowledge of events and the power of his self-revealing ἐγώ εἰμι utterance; the theme of Jesus being in control and orchestrating the narrative as the 'fulfillment' of Scripture; the royal portrayal of Jesus before Pilate and the Jews; and his climactic reign as universal king when he is enthroned on the cross. The motifs of glorification, exaltation and 'seeing', hitherto anticipating the 'hour' and death of Jesus throughout the gospel narrative, are brought to bear on the passion narrative proper and underpin John's presentation of Jesus.

Given John's emphasis on 'fulfillment' in his presentation of Jesus' death, Chapter 3 shall outline John's use of Scripture throughout his gospel, with a focus on the Book of Isaiah as the

⁶⁴ Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, p. 1260.

⁶⁵ Brown, *John*, p. 960.

⁶⁶ Thompson, *John*, p. 406; Lincoln, *John*, p. 485; Moloney, *John*, p. 510.

hermeneutical lens through which he has interpreted Jesus' death and transformed Mark's passion account.

Chapter 3

'My Eyes Have Seen the King'

The Influence of the Book of Isaiah on John's Transformation of Mark

Having explored several themes that interpret Jesus' death (Chapter 1) and the Johannine passion narrative compared to Mark (Chapter 2), the present chapter will consider how John's transformation of Mark is dependent upon his distinctive reading of the Jewish Scriptures. I shall begin with an overview of John's use of Scripture and the significance of the Book of Isaiah for shaping his presentation of Jesus. A closer examination of John 12:12-43 follows, which draws together the themes discussed in Chapter 1 with John's creative interpretation of Isaiah 53:1 and 6:10. This passage provides an important hermeneutical lens through which to interpret Jesus' death. Finally, I shall consider some additional Isaianic motifs upon which John has drawn in his transformation of Mark's passion account: the sovereignty of YHWH, the 'Trial' motif, the 'I am' motif and the theme of 'Seeing'.

1. *John's Use of Scripture*

In continuity with Mark, John roots the mission and identity of Jesus in 'Scripture' and the milieu of 1st century Judaism.¹ From the very first verse of the prologue (Jn 1:1), the phrase ἐν ἀρχῇ echoes the opening words of the Septuagintal version of Genesis (1:1), not only locating Jesus' existence in eternity and paving the way for a Johannine 'high Christology', but also anchoring Jesus to the beginning of the Old Testament writings.² Throughout his gospel John draws upon scriptural themes such as creation, the Law and Jewish festivals as well as key figures from Israel's history including Moses, Abraham and David.³ The Johannine Jesus himself attests to the significance of Scripture as legitimising his mission and identity.⁴

¹ Köstenberger, 'John' p. 415; Beasley-Murray, *John* p. lviii; Brown, *John*, p. 132.

² Köstenberger, 'John', p.421; Lindars, *John*, p. 82; Barrett, p.151.

³ Lindars, *John*, p. 36.

⁴ E.g. 'You search the scriptures...it is they that testify on my behalf' (Jn 5:39); 'If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you

However, John's use of Scripture, to quote C. K. Barrett, is 'far from simple'.⁵ Whilst there are only 14 direct Old Testament citations in John (contrasted with Mark's 7 citations from the Pentateuch alone, and a further 20 from the Prophets and Psalms),⁶ John's handling of Scripture involves extensive use of allusions, echoes, typology and motifs which encompass the entire breadth of the Old Testament.⁷ Further, recent scholarship examining John's use of composite citations, dependent on exegetical techniques that are analogous to rabbinic methods such as *gezerah shavah*, have further enabled his gospel to be situated within the context of Second Temple scriptural exegesis.⁸ Whilst John's default source seems to have been the LXX, he is certainly familiar with the Hebrew text of some scriptural books and, when required, subjects the Hebrew to textual modification (cf. the quotation of Isa. 6:10 in Jn 12:40) to align 'Scripture' with his own theological, and especially Christological, agenda.⁹

Two distinctively Johannine characteristics are relevant, moreover, when considering how Scripture has informed John's transformation of Mark's passion account:

Firstly, not only the content of the citations themselves but their form and position in the narrative is telling. John introduces the first 7 quotations with a variety of citation formulas, such as 'it is written' (2:17; 6:31; 6:45) and 'as Scripture said' (7:38; 7:42). However, from John 12:38 onwards there is clear shift, with the remaining 7 quotations no longer described as 'written', but rather 'fulfilled' (πληρώω).¹⁰ This coincides with the transition from Jesus' public ministry to the arrival of 'the hour' and the ensuing events leading to the cross. John is therefore narrating Jesus' rejection, suffering and death precisely as 'fulfilment' of Scripture, thus part of God's pre-ordained plan and with 'Jesus' full knowledge and participation'.¹¹

believe what I say?' (Jn 5:46,47); 'If those to whom the word of God came were called "gods"-and the scripture cannot be annulled' (Jn 10:35).

⁵ Barrett, *John*, p. 27.

⁶ C. A. Evans, 'The Beginning of the Good News and the Fulfilment of Scripture in the Gospel of Mark', in S. E. Porter (ed.) *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) pp. 84-5.

⁷ Brown, *John*, pp. 133-34; Morris, pp. 55-6; Köstenberger, 'John', p. 420.

⁸ C. H. Williams, 'John, Judaism and "Searching the Scriptures"', in R. A. Culpepper and P. N. Anderson (eds.), *John and Judaism: A Contested Relationship in Context* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), pp. 77-81.

⁹ Köstenberger, 'John', p. 418.

¹⁰ Jn 12:38; 13:18; 15:25; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36. See further S. Moyise, *The Old Testament in the New: An Introduction* (London: Continuum, 2001), p. 64; Brown, *John*, p. 137; Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, p. 286.

¹¹ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, p. 286.

Secondly, John's handling of Scripture invites (or necessitates) the practice of 'reading backwards'.¹² At various points in Jesus' ministry the Scripture(s) being alluded to are 'remembered' by the disciples and only properly understood from the post-resurrection point of view. Two examples are as follows:

In John 2:13-25 Jesus overturns the tables of the money changers and drives out the animals from the Temple. John adds the editorial comment in verse 17 that his disciples 'remembered' that it was written, 'zeal for your house will consume me', a citation of Psalm 69:9 (68:10 LXX).¹³ When challenged by the Jews to explain his actions, Jesus replies that he will raise 'this temple' in three days after it has been destroyed, referring to his body:

'After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken' (Jn 12:22, italics added).

Similarly, in John 12:12-19, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey in fulfilment of Zechariah 9:9-10.¹⁴ This passage is immediately followed by the arrival of 'the hour' (12:23) and, as discussed, Jesus' approaching death. An introductory scriptural formulation is used before the citation, καθώς ἔστιν γεγραμμένον (12:14), and once more the explanatory comment indicates that the text is only understood retrospectively:

'His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him' (12:16, italics added).

Both texts are situated at points in the narrative which point forwards to the cross, yet John makes explicit that the Scriptures quoted are only understood when they are 'remembered' in light of the crucified and risen Jesus, or in Craig Keener's words, the 'retroactive testimony

¹² Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, p. 312.

¹³ The LXX has the aorist κατέφαγέν, whilst John uses the future καταφάγεταί, most likely fitting with Jesus prophetically relating the text to his future death. Otherwise John here follows the LXX exactly. See further Köstenberger, 'John', p. 433; O'Day, 'John', pp. 543-44.

¹⁴ John 12:12-19 is discussed further below. The entry into Jerusalem incident is recorded in Mk 11:1-11 but does not include the citation from Zechariah.

of the resurrection'.¹⁵ It is after Jesus' 'glorification' that John intends the Scriptures to be fully realised.

In summary, John's use of Scripture in his presentation of Jesus is very different from that of Mark and the other Synoptic Gospels. Whilst utilizing far fewer explicit Old Testament citations than Mark, John nevertheless engages in a creative and sophisticated manner of interpretation that is rooted in Israel's Scriptures and located within 2nd Temple Jewish exegetical methods. He explicitly states, from 12:38 onwards, that it is due to the arrival of 'the hour' and path towards the cross that Scripture is not merely written but 'fulfilled', thus portraying the rejection, suffering and death of Jesus as scriptural fulfilment. Furthermore, the entirety of John's Christological interpretation is presented as only being perceived retrospectively, that is, from the viewpoint of the post-Easter community of faith that remembers/reads the texts with the crucified and risen Jesus as their hermeneutical lens.

2. John's Use of Isaiah

That Isaiah plays a major role in John's theology and presentation of Jesus has long been recognized. To quote Günter Reim:

'No book of the Old Testament has shaped the theology of John more than Deutero-Isaiah, and none of the authors of New Testament writings as influenced by Deutero-Isaiah as much as John'.¹⁶

Of the 14 citations in John, 4 come from Isaiah,¹⁷ and he is the only prophet explicitly mentioned by name.¹⁸ Jesus' public ministry is, strikingly, framed by these quotations, with John the Baptist proclaiming the coming salvation of God through the words of Isaiah 40:3,

¹⁵ Keener, *John*, p. 530.

¹⁶ G. Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 183. Quoted in D. J. Brendsel, 'Isaiah Saw His Glory': *The Use of Isaiah 52-53 in John 12* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), p. 5. See further Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 378-81.

¹⁷ Jn 1:23 (Isa 40:3); Jn 6:45 (Isa 54:13); Jn 12:38 (Isa 53:1); Jn 12:40 (Isa 6:10).

¹⁸ C. H. Williams, 'Isaiah in John's Gospel', in S. Moyise and M. J. J. Menken (eds.), *Isaiah in the New Testament* (T & T Clark: London, 2005), pp. 101-102; eadem, 'The Testimony of Isaiah and Johannine Christology', in C. M. McGinnis and P. K. Tull (eds.), *As Those who are Taught: The Interpretation of Isaiah from the LXX to the SBL* (Atlanta: SBL, 2006), p. 107.

and the double Isaianic quotation in John 12:38-41 marking the beginning of ‘the hour’ and the events leading towards the cross. That John is drawing upon the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah to introduce Jesus’ ministry is further strengthened by the Baptist’s comment in 1:29 and 1:36: ‘the lamb (ἀμνός) of God....who takes away (αἵρων) the sin of the world’, alluding to the Servant figure of Isaiah 53, who is ‘like a sheep’ (ὡς ἀμνός, 53:7) and ‘bears’ sin (φέρει, 53:4, cf. Isa 53:11.) The connection between the Baptist’s words and Isaiah is further suggested by the textual variant in John 1:33-34, where Jesus is described as ‘the chosen one of God’ (ὁ ἐκλεκτός τοῦ θεοῦ) after the Spirit has descended on him. These verses thus echo Isaiah 42:1, where Israel is called ‘my chosen one’ (ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου) upon whom God puts his Spirit (ἔδωκα τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπ’ αὐτόν, Isa 42:1 LXX).¹⁹

As noted, John narrates Jesus’ rejection and death as ‘fulfilment’ of Scripture; indeed, the strategic placements of the Isaiah citations suggest they contribute significantly to the shaping of the Johannine presentation of Jesus’ death.

John’s Gospel contains numerous textual and thematic connections with the prophecies of Isaiah, and a full study of those connections is beyond the scope of this work.²⁰ What can be demonstrated is that the themes discussed so far - and which undergird how John has transformed Mark’s passion account - are themselves significantly shaped, and indeed legitimised, by John’s distinctive use of Isaiah. In particular, outside of the Passion narrative, John points forward, from the outset, to the death of Jesus by alluding to the ‘lamb of God’ (1:29, 36) and also by explicating the cross as the occasion for the ‘glorification’ and ‘lifting up/exaltation’ of Jesus. The passion narrative itself portrays Jesus as being sovereign over events (14:29; 16:4), declaring the divine ἐγώ εἰμι during his arrest (18:5-8), standing before Pilate and ultimately being crucified as the universally proclaimed king (18:33, 36-37; 19:3-4, 14-16, 19). *Each of these motifs can be traced to distinctive elements attested in the prophecies of Isaiah.* A close examination of John 12:12-43 will demonstrate how John draws together

¹⁹ Other manuscripts read ‘Son of God’ in Jn 1:34. See Williams, ‘Isaiah in John’s Gospel’, p. 105; Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, pp. 157-58.

²⁰ A concise overview of the many connections can be found in J. Hamilton, ‘The Influence of Isaiah on the Gospel of John’, *Perichoresis* vol. 5.2 (2007), pp. 139-62. See further Brendsel, *Isaiah Saw His Glory*, pp. 4-7; Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 378-79.

these themes from an intertextual reading of Isaiah, and sees them as being fulfilled in the crucified Jesus.

3. *John 12:12-43 The Conclusion to Jesus' Ministry*

John 12:12-43 is a particularly significant episode within the Fourth Gospel's narrative: it closes the 'book of signs',²¹ it establishes the end of Jesus' public ministry, it acts as a rhetorical 'break' to prepare the reader for the passion narrative,²² and it contains a cluster of sayings specifically relating to Jesus' death (12:23-24, 32-33). These various features provide the reader with a frame through which to interpret the passion.²³ John has hinted at Jesus' death several times in earlier verses, emphasising the approaching Passover festival (11:55; 12:1; 12:12; 12:20) and Jesus' awareness of his own death (12:7) as the context of 12:12-43. Jesus rides into Jerusalem mounted on a donkey, with the crowds proclaiming him as king in the words of Psalm 118:25-56, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9.²⁴ Some Greeks among the crowd ask to see Jesus (θέλομεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἰδεῖν, Jn 12:21), signalling the arrival of 'the hour' of Jesus' glorification (12:23) and exaltation, which is then made explicit as his death by crucifixion (12:32-33). This will be the means by which Jesus draws 'all people to myself'. Despite the public display of miraculous signs, many do not believe in Jesus (12:37). Yet this rejection is itself presented by John as part of God's sovereign plan, and it is said 'to fulfil' the words of Isaiah (ἵνα ὁ λόγος Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου πληρωθῇ, 12:38), citing Isaiah 53:1 and 6:10.

John 12:12-43 is thus a key passage for understanding John's scriptural legitimation for how he will present Jesus' death.²⁵ A closer reading will demonstrate, moreover, how John draws upon Deutero-Isaiah, and fuses together the themes of the servant of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 with the enthroned king YHWH of Isaiah 6. Both images are manifest (or 'seen') in the crucified

²¹ R. E. Brown and F. J. Moloney, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), pp. 300-303.

²² Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 71.

²³ O'Day, 'John', p. 713.

²⁴ As discussed above, with retrospective interpretation after Jesus has been crucified and resurrected (Jn 12:16).

²⁵ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, pp. 48-9; O'Day, 'John', p. 713.

Jesus, with the cross thus functioning as ‘the ultimate theophany’.²⁶ John 12:12-43 can be divided into three units, which shall be discussed as follows: Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem (12:12-19); the ‘Greeks’ wishing to see Jesus (12:20-36); and the double citation from Isaiah (12:37-43).²⁷

3.1. John 12:12-19

The first unit has a close equivalent in Mark 11:1-11 but, once more, it has undergone considerable Johannine transformation. As with the passion account, John highlights the motif of kingship at numerous points. Both the Markan and Johannine accounts match each other exactly in their citation of Psalm 118: ‘Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord’ (Jn 12:13=Mk 11:9). Yet John adds the words ‘the king of Israel’ to the scriptural citation (found in neither the Hebrew or LXX),²⁸ and, by doing so, echoes the words proclaimed by Nathanael at the beginning of John’s account, ‘you are the king of Israel’ (1:49). The crowds, according to Mark, spread their cloaks and branches on the road; only in John are they specifically described as *palm branches* (βαῖα τῶν φοινίκων), suggesting a royal acclamation of praise for Jesus as king.²⁹ In a similar fashion to carrying his own cross (19:17), Jesus finds the donkey with no mention of help from others (12:14).³⁰ From the beginning of the passage it is clear that *Jesus enters Jerusalem as king*. The whole section of 12:12-43 is thus introduced as the coming of the king to Jerusalem, a dominant theme throughout the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah.³¹

²⁶ Keener, *John*, p. 885.

²⁷ Beasley-Murray, *John*, pp. 206-7. Many commentaries see 12:44-50 as part of the same unit as 12:37-43. For the purpose of this work I consider the third ‘unit’ to be 12:37-43 due to the explicit focus on the Isaianic citations.

²⁸ Köstenberger, ‘John’, p. 471. Conversely Mark has the ‘the coming of the Kingdom’ (11:10). Commentators offer various solutions to the addition in John, from an editorial gloss to suit John’s theology (so Köstenberger) or a citation of Zephaniah 3:15. See further Barrett, *John*, pp. 418-19; Lindars, *John*, p. 424.

²⁹ 1 Maccabees 13:51 describes the Jews entering the citadel ‘with praise and palm branches’ following Simon’s defeat of the Syrians. Cf. Rev 7:9: ‘After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude...standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”’ Keener, *John*, p. 868; Moloney, *John*, p. 358; B. J. Malina and R. L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), p. 209. See further Barker, *King of the Jews*, p. 45.

³⁰ Against Mk 11:1-6, where the disciples assist Jesus by bringing the donkey to him.

³¹ A. T. Abernethy, *The Book of Isaiah and God’s Kingdom: A Thematic-Theological Approach* (London: Intervarsity Press, 2016), pp. 56-8. See also R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 49-53. See further discussion below.

John 12:12-19 continues with the ‘remembered’ quotation from Zechariah 9:9 (Jn 12:15) which is not found in Mark³² and follows neither the Hebrew nor the LXX exactly.³³ The most noteworthy difference in the text is John’s addition of the words ‘do not fear’ (μὴ φοβοῦ) in place of Zechariah’s ‘rejoice greatly’ (Χαῖτε σφόδρα).³⁴ Whilst this could be a composite citation drawing upon Zephaniah 3:16 (Θάρσει, Σιων),³⁵ the command ‘do not fear’ is found in various passages throughout the Old Testament, but occurs with particular frequency in Isaiah.³⁶ Significantly, many of these Isaianic passages describe the post-exilic return of YHWH to Zion as ruler and saviour:

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, **do not fear** (μὴ φοβεῖσθε)!”
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.” (Isa 35:3-4 LXX).

O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, **do not fear** (μὴ φοβεῖσθε);
say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”
See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him (Isa 40:9-10 LXX).

³² Nor Luke. It is found only in Mt 21:5.

³³ Köstenberger, ‘John’, pp. 472-73; Barrett, *John*, pp. 418-19.

³⁴ Other differences include the omission of ‘to you’, suggesting that Jesus comes not merely to Jerusalem but to the world, and John’s ‘sitting’ (καθήμενος) rather than Zechariah’s ‘mounting’ (ἐπιβεβηκώς), thereby emphasizing Jesus’ royal dignity. All these point to the ‘universal reign’ of the king. See further Köstenberger, ‘John’, p. 473.

³⁵ Lindars, *John*, p. 424; O’Day, ‘John’, p. 707.

³⁶ E.g. 7:4; 8:12; 10:24; 13:2; 35:4; 37:6; 40:9; 41:10, 13; 44:2; 51:7; 54:4; 63:17.

Do not fear (μὴ φοβοῦ), for you will not be ashamed....

For a brief moment I abandoned you,

but with great compassion I will gather you (Isa 54:4-7 LXX).

Given the context of Jesus entering Jerusalem and proclaimed as king, the return of YHWH to Zion in these Isaianic passages strongly suggest John has drawn upon them for his 'do not fear' citation in 12:15.

3.2. John 12:20-36

The second unit displays further Isainic inter-textual links and motifs. Some Greek pilgrims request 'to see' (ἰδεῖν) Jesus (12:21), which triggers the arrival of the 'hour' for the Son of Man to be glorified (δοξασθῆ, 12:23) and the drawing of 'all people' to Jesus when he is lifted up (ὑψωθῶ) on the cross (12:32). Whilst possible the Greeks (Ἕλληνές) here are Diaspora Jews,³⁷ scholarly consensus is that they are non-Jews and represent the Gentile world.³⁸ *Crucially, it is Jesus' coming to Jerusalem as king and the revelation of his glory to 'the nations', represented by 'the Greeks', that can be traced to the prophecies of Isaiah.* As Andrew Abernethy has demonstrated, the motif of the universal revelation of YHWH as king is a key theme throughout Deutero-Isaiah, and is situated in the context of the post-exilic return of YHWH to Zion.³⁹ Earlier Isaianic texts have already anticipated the 'seeing' of YHWH and his glory, such as Isaiah 35, where the coming 'glory of the Lord' will be 'seen' (ὄψεται τὴν δόξαν κυρίου καὶ τὸ ὕψος τοῦ θεοῦ, Isa 35:2 LXX).⁴⁰ Further, several passages throughout Isaiah use 'glory' as a feature of kingship, whether describing foreign kings (Isa 8:17; 14:18) or God as king (6:3; 24:23), such that 'the anticipation of God's glory being revealed would call to mind God's return as king'.⁴¹

³⁷ Barker, *King of the Jews*, p. 347.

³⁸ O'Day, 'John', p. 710; Barrett, *John*, p. 421; Lindars, *John*, p. 427; Michaels, *John*, pp. 685-86.

³⁹ Abernethy, *Isaiah and God's Kingdom*, pp. 57-63.

⁴⁰ As already noted, this text is significant in that it precedes the μὴ φοβεῖσθε (35:4) which John is possibly alluding to in Jn 12:15.

⁴¹ Abernethy, *Isaiah and God's Kingdom*, p. 58. Cf. Ps 21:5; 24:7-10.

As noted in Chapter 1, Isaiah 40:3 is a significant text for John, but it belongs to the wider context of Isaiah 40-55 in which ‘the coming of God as king is the anchor’.⁴² As Abernethy notes, there are numerous thematic and semantic intra-textual links between Isaiah 40:1-11 and 52:7-10 which give coherence to the whole of chapters 40-55 around the prospect of YHWH’s reign as king:⁴³

How beautiful upon **the mountains**

are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” (Isa 52:7)

Get you up to a **high mountain,**

O Zion, **herald of good tidings;**
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, **herald of good tidings,**
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!” (Isa 40:9)

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,

together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight **they see**
the return of the LORD to Zion.

Break forth together into singing,

you ruins of Jerusalem;
for **the LORD has comforted his people,**
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD has bared **his holy arm**

⁴² Abernethy, *Isaiah and God’s Kingdom*, p. 54.

⁴³ Abernethy, *Isaiah and God’s Kingdom*, pp. 63-65.

before the eyes of **all the nations**;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God. (Isa 52:8-10)

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God (Isa 40:1).

See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and **his arm** rules for him (Isa 40:10)

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken (Isa 40:5).⁴⁴

Whilst a detailed commentary of each passage is beyond the scope of this work, it is evident that both Isaiah 40:1-11 and 52:7-10 share features of good news and comfort; this good news is focused on the coming of YHWH to rule Zion as king; and a concern that all nations see this revelation.⁴⁵ These motifs thus frame the intervening chapters and point forwards to the role of the Servant in 52:13-53:12 as coordinating with God's redemptive purposes.⁴⁶ Significantly for this work, John 12:20-36 draws upon each of these themes. After entering Jerusalem and being hailed as king, the 'Greeks' wish to 'see' Jesus, alluding to the 'all people' (Isa 40:5) and 'all nations' (Isa 52:10) who 'see' the glory of the Lord and his salvation.

⁴⁴ A point missed by most commentators is that if Jn 12:20-36 has drawn upon Isa 40:5 then there is a strong case for the heavenly voice of Jn 12:28-30 alluding to the 'voice of the LORD' in Isa 40:5. In both instances God's voice confirms what has been said and will take place, specifically God's glory will be revealed/seen.

⁴⁵ Abernethy, *Isaiah and God's Kingdom*, p. 63.

⁴⁶ Abernethy, *Isaiah and God's Kingdom*, p. 62.

3.3. John 12:37-43

The third unit contains two explicit Isaianic citations, providing a scriptural legitimisation for unbelief in Jesus and, with John 12:44-50, concludes Jesus' public ministry.⁴⁷ I shall consider each citation in turn before discussing how John has deliberately juxtaposed these verses.

The first citation (Jn 12:38) from Isaiah 53:1 follows the LXX exactly,⁴⁸ and is drawn from the literary unit referred to as the fourth Servant Song (Isa. 52:13-53:12).⁴⁹ This was an influential text for many New Testament writers, not least Mark.⁵⁰ The opening verse of LXX Isaiah 52:13 reads:

Behold, my Servant shall understand,
And shall be exalted (ὕψωθήσεται) and shall be glorified (δοξασθήσεται) greatly.

As discussed in Chapter 2, John has already utilised the dual themes of 'exaltation/lifted up' and 'glorification' to point towards Jesus' death. That John 12:38 is thus evoking the wider context of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 in his citation of 53:1 is suggested by these very themes being found in the preceding verses which anticipate the cross.⁵¹

The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified (δοξασθῆ) (Jn 12:23).

And I, when I am lifted up (ὕψωθῶ) from the earth, will draw all people to myself (Jn 12:33).

⁴⁷ Lincoln, *John*, p. 356; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 207.

⁴⁸ Köstenberger, 'John', p. 477; O' Day, 'John', p. 716. The LXX itself follows the HT closely, but with the addition of κύριε in 53:1. See further E. R. Ekblad Jr., *Isaiah's Servant Poems According to the Septuagint: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), p. 194.

⁴⁹ Ekblad, *Servant Poems*, p. 168.

⁵⁰ Other New Testament texts include Rom 10:16; 15:21; Mt 8:17; Lk 22:37; Acts 8:32-33; Heb 9:28; 1Pet 2:22-25. See Bauckham, *God of Israel*, pp. 33-4; G. Lanier, *Old Made New: A Guide to the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2022), pp.96-7; D.L. Bock and M. Glaser (eds.), *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53: Encountering the Suffering Servant in Jewish and Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012); R. E. Watts, 'Mark', in G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (eds.), *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), pp. 111-14.

⁵¹ J. Lett, 'The Divine Identity of Jesus as the Reason for Israel's Unbelief in John 12:36-43', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 135.1 (2016), pp. 163-66.

As Richard Bauckham cogently argues, John appears to have taken the introductory line of Isaiah 52:13, which announces in advance the exaltation of the Servant in 53:12, and interprets it as the whole sequence of humiliation, suffering, death and vindication found in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. The result is that the Servant is exalted and glorified precisely in his suffering and humiliation, and thus provides the scriptural legitimization of the cross as the occasion of Jesus' own exaltation/glorification.⁵² *It is this depiction of the Isaianic Servant, as interpreted by John, that provides the theological motivation for his presentation of Jesus' death on the cross as 'exaltation' and 'glorification'.*⁵³

The second Isaianic citation (Jn 12:40) is taken from Isaiah 6:10. The original setting of Isaiah 6 is the prophet's vision of the enthroned LORD and his subsequent commissioning to prophesy to Israel and Judah. Despite this command, however, God has already announced that they will neither see nor understand his message (Isa 6:9-10). John's citation of Isaiah 6:10 does not perfectly match the LXX or HT, and various theories have been offered as to his possible source.⁵⁴ Both the LXX and HT have a chiastic structure moving from heart, to ears, to eyes and back again, though the LXX places the responsibility of obduracy on the people, against the HT whereby God is the implied causation of their hardness/blindness.⁵⁵ By contrast, John 12:40 omits 'hearing' altogether, retains the HT notion of God as the cause and uses a parallel structuring for 'eyes' and 'hearts' (not present in the HT).⁵⁶ The effect is to emphasise the closely related themes of seeing and understanding/believing,⁵⁷ and John has thus applied this text as further rationale for the Jews' lack of faith: despite Jesus' signs, their eyes are blinded and their hearts hardened, as Isaiah had already prophesied.

That John has brought into close relationship two seemingly disparate texts demonstrates both his creative use of Scripture and, again, the theological motivation for his presentation

⁵² Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, pp. 46-48; idem, *Gospel of Glory*, pp. 53-55.

⁵³ Williams, "'Seeing'", pp. 145-46; Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, pp. 247-48; Köstenberger, 'John', p. 436.

⁵⁴ Including quoting the LXX from memory; quoting the HT but with influence of LXX; utilising a Targumic source or influence from other Isaianic texts. See further Köstenberger, 'John', p.480; Lanier, *Old Made New*, p. 71; Williams, 'Testimony of Isaiah', p. 114.

⁵⁵ Williams, 'Testimony of Isaiah', pp. 113-114; Köstenberger, 'John', p. 481

⁵⁶ Köstenberger, 'John', p. 481.

⁵⁷ The Isaianic influence of these themes are discussed further below.

of Jesus' death. It has been noted that thematic and lexical connections between Isaiah 6:1 and 52:13, as well as Isaiah 57:15, are already evident in the HT.⁵⁸

See, my servant shall prosper;

he shall be **exalted** (yā·rûm) and **lifted up** (niśśā')

and shall be **very high** (gābah) (52:13)

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, **high** (rām) and **lofty** (niśśā') and the hem of his robe filled the temple (6:1)

For thus says the **high** (rām) and **lofty** (niśśā') one

who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:

I dwell in the **high** (mā·rôm) and holy place,

and also with those who are **contrite** (dāk·kā) and humble in spirit,

to revive the spirit of the humble,

and to revive the heart of the **contrite** (57:15).

The intertextual links between these Isaianic verses are clear, with the combination of the Hebrew roots *rum* (to be high/exalted) and *nassa* (to lift up) occurring together, which is a rare feature in the Old Testament.⁵⁹ Both Isaiah 6:1 and 57:15 describe God as 'high' and 'lifted up' (though 6:1 refers specifically to God's throne as exalted), whilst Isaiah 52:13 has the servant similarly 'lifted up'. Operating under the principle of catchword association, these verses can be read as mutually illuminating. In other words, the exaltation of the Servant is none other than his exaltation to the throne of God.⁶⁰ Further thematic links strengthen this mutual interpretation. The repetition of 'holy' in Isaiah 57:15 echoes the reference to holiness in Isaiah's call-vision (6:3), while the description of God in Isaiah 57:15 as dwelling with the

⁵⁸ Bauckham, *God of Israel*, pp. 35-36; J. Dekker, 'The High and Lofty One Dwelling in the Heights and with his Servants: Intertextual Connections of Theological Significance Between Isaiah 6, 53 and 57', *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 41. 3 (2017), pp. 475-91.

⁵⁹ Occurring only four times in the Book of Isaiah (6:1; 33:10; 52:13; 57:15) and nowhere else in the OT. See further J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) p. 378.; Bauckham, *God of Israel*, p.36.

⁶⁰ Dekker, 'High and Lofty', pp. 482-76; Bauckham, *God of Israel*, p. 36.

contrite/crushed (*dakka*) evokes the earlier reference to the servant who is ‘crushed’ (53:5, 10).⁶¹

The intertextual links which invite mutual interpretation of these three Isaianic verses, though present in the Hebrew, are further strengthened in the LXX, particularly the linking together of Isaiah 6:1 and 52:13. The LXX translator renders the three Hebrew terms in 52:13 ‘exalted’ (γᾱ·rûm), ‘lifted up’ (niśšā’), and ‘very high’ (gābah) as a two-verb Greek formula, as already noted: ὑψωθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται.⁶² Both verbs are frequently found in the LXX, with ὑψώ used to translate 8 different Hebrew verbs, and δοξάζω to render 6 verbs.⁶³ However, the combination of both verbs is rare and, crucially, *is a combination that refers to the Servant in Isaiah 52:13 but elsewhere is used in reference to the Lord*.⁶⁴

But the Lord Sabaoth shall be exalted (ὑψωθήσεται) in judgment,
and the Holy God shall be glorified (δοξασθήσεται) in righteousness (Isa 5:16 LXX).

‘Now I will arise,’ says the Lord, ‘now I will be glorified (δοξασθήσομαι); now I will be exalted (ὑψωθήσομαι)’ (Isa 33:10 LXX).

As Ekblad notes, the semantic links between these verses in the LXX brings the Servant and the Lord into mutual identification, a feature which is further strengthened by Isaiah 49:3 where the Lord speaks in the first person regarding his Servant: ‘in you *I will be glorified* (δοξασθήσομαι),’ whereas in 52:13 the Lord says ‘*my servant...will be glorified* (δοξασθήσεται). The glorification of the Servant and of the Lord coincide, such that the role of the Servant and God’s own activity become ‘almost interchangeable’.⁶⁵

Returning to Isaiah 6, the train of the Lord’s robe which fills the temple in the HT (Isa 6:1) is replaced in the LXX (and the *Targum of Isaiah*) by ‘his glory’ (τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ), once more

⁶¹ Bauckham, *God of Israel*, pp. 35-37; Dekker, pp. 477-82.

⁶² Ekblad, *Servant Songs*, pp. 179-82; M. Hengel and D. P. Bailey, ‘The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period’, in B. Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher (eds.), *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), pp. 121-22.

⁶³ Ekblad, *Servant Songs*, p. 182.

⁶⁴ Ekblad, *Servant Songs*, pp. 181-83; Hengel, ‘Effective History’, pp. 121-22.

⁶⁵ Hengel, ‘Effective History’, p. 122.

strengthening the ‘lifted up’ (ὑψηλοῦ, Isa 6:1) and ‘glory’ combination linking 6:1 and 52:13.⁶⁶ *This suggests that not only does the ‘exaltation’ and ‘glorification’ of the Servant in Isaiah 52:13 lie behind John’s use of the terms, but also the ‘exalted’ throne and ‘glory’ of YHWH in Isaiah 6:1.* Further, the words ‘who has believed in our report (τῇ ἀκοῇ) of Isaiah 53:1 matches the ἀκοῇ of 6:9, the very passage quoted in John 12:39-40.⁶⁷ Finally, there is a strong ‘visual’ element linking both texts.⁶⁸ The opening line of the fourth Servant Song, ‘Behold’ (Ἴδοὺ), is followed by references to ‘seeing’ the servant (Isa 52:15, 53:2). In Isaiah 6:1 the prophet ‘saw’ (εἶδον) the Lord, followed by his lament that ‘my eyes have seen the king, the Lord Almighty’ (τὸν βασιλέα κύριον σαβαωθ εἶδον τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς μου, 6:5) and the concluding command of 6:9: καὶ βλέποντες βλέψετε καὶ οὐ μὴ ἴδητε (..and looking you will look, but you will not perceive).

John concludes the double citation with the comment that ‘Isaiah said these things (ταῦτα) because he saw Jesus’ glory (τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ) and spoke about him’ (Isa 12:41). In the context of Isaiah 6 the allusion is to the glory seen by Isaiah in his throne vision (though the text can imply John is referring to both Isaianic citations in Jn 12:41).⁶⁹ What is largely agreed is that the referent of ‘him’ in John 12:41 is Jesus,⁷⁰ thus the glory seen by Isaiah is equated with Jesus’ own glory. It is debated as to whether John intends to mean the glory of the pre-existent Son (e.g. Jn 17:5) or the ‘glorification’ of Jesus in his death. Given the context of John 12:12-43 as a whole, the multiple allusions to Jesus’ death and the juxtaposition of Isaiah 52:13 with 6:10 such that the exaltation of the Servant is seen as his exaltation to the throne of God, I concur with Jörg Frey that the glory seen by Isaiah is none other than the ‘δόξα of the crucified one’;⁷¹ the throne of YHWH in Isaiah 6 is ‘seen’ in Jesus ‘exalted’ on the cross.

In summary, John 12:37-43 utilises two citations from the Book of Isaiah to explain hostility to Jesus as fulfillment of Scripture. The citations themselves demonstrate John’s exegetical

⁶⁶ Barker, *King of the Jews*, p. 504; Williams ‘Testimony of Isaiah’, pp. 115-16.

⁶⁷ Ekblad, *Servant Songs*, pp. 195-96.

⁶⁸ C. H. Williams, ‘Johannine Christology and Prophetic Traditions: The Case of Isaiah’, in B.E. Reynolds, and G. Boccaccini (eds.), *Reading the Gospel of John’s Christology as Jewish Messianism* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp. 100-101. On the Isaianic motif of ‘seeing’ see discussion below.

⁶⁹ Keener, *John*, p. 885; Morris, *John*, p. 537.

⁷⁰ Michaels, p. 711; Lindars, *John*, p. 439; Lincoln, *John*, p. 358; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 217; Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, p. 245.

⁷¹ Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, p. 247.

practice in line with Second Temple Jewish methods, bringing together disparate texts by means of catchword association and thematic links. The various associations, already present in the HT, are more apparent in the LXX. The texts thus become mutually illuminative. The Servant of Isaiah 52:13-53:12, exalted and glorified in his humiliation, is at the same time the exalted, enthroned king YHWH of Isaiah 6. The entire sequence is then applied to Jesus, specifically 'his glory' which was glimpsed by Isaiah, interpreted by John as Jesus' death on the cross.

3.4. *Summary of John 12:12-43*

John 12:12-43 clearly represents a pivotal moment in the narrative and serves as a key chapter for understanding the Johannine presentation of Jesus' death. Jesus enters Jerusalem and is proclaimed as king, echoing the return of YHWH as king to Zion in Deutero-Isaiah. The 'Greeks', representing 'the nations' wishing to 'see' Jesus, evoke the Isaianic eschatological promise that 'all people will see the glory of the LORD' (Isa 40:5). This signals the arrival of 'the hour', when Jesus will be both glorified and lifted up/exalted, both motifs alluding to Isaianic texts such as the Servant of Isaiah 52:13-53:12. That John intends Jesus' 'exaltation' to be understood as crucifixion is made explicit (Jn 12:33). The section concludes with a double quotation from Isaiah, bringing into close proximity the role of the Servant and the enthroned YHWH as king. I propose that here, more than anywhere else in the Fourth Gospel, is the scriptural basis for John's transformation of Mark's passion account. The cross as the occasion of glorification and exaltation, and the portrayal of Jesus as enthroned king in the midst of his suffering, is legitimized by John's Scriptural bringing together of the Isaianic Servant and the enthroned king YHWH.

Having discussed John's use of Scripture and the importance of Isaiah as seen in John 12:12-43, I now briefly consider the Isaianic background of four motifs already discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, which have influenced John's presentation of Jesus' death: Sovereignty, the Trial, 'I am' and 'Seeing'. Each motif can be understood as part of the larger theme of YHWH as king in Deutero-Isaiah. Whilst the Johannine motifs of exaltation and glorification have already

been noted by several scholars as originating from Isaiah,⁷² the Isaianic theme of YHWH's kingship has largely been missed.

4.1. The Sovereignty Motif

At several instances in the passion narrative the Johannine Jesus, unlike his Markan counterpart, is the orchestrator of his own death, not least because he has foreknowledge of the events leading to the cross. This is entirely consistent with the portrayal of YHWH as sovereign king throughout Deutero-Isaiah, where he is portrayed as the 'commander of destinies.....[which is] *a significant feature of a divine king in the Ancient Near East*'.⁷³ In the prophecies of Isaiah this is highlighted through the emphasis on God's word as sovereign and that it will achieve its purposes, particularly in passages that frame chapters 40-55:

The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the **word of our God endures for ever** (Isa 40:8).

As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it.....
so is **my word** that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it (Isa 55:10-11).⁷⁴

Further related verses are prominent in the Isaianic 'trial speeches'⁷⁵ including YHWH's declaration that he announces events before they come into being (42:9; 48:3-5). Further, Israel can bear witness that YHWH's will is unalterable; nothing can prevent his sovereign plan

⁷² Bauckham, *God of Israel*, pp. 46-49; Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 374-80; Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, pp. 247-49; Williams, "'Seeing'", pp. 143-49.

⁷³ Abernethy, *Isaiah and God's Kingdom*, p. 78 (italics added).

⁷⁴ Isaiah 55:11 LXX reads '...it shall not return until whatever I have willed is fulfilled (συντελεσθῇ)'. This is the same root word used when Jesus is crucified, 'in order to fulfil (τελειωθῇ) scripture' (Jn 19:28), and when he dies, 'It is finished (τετέλεσται)!' (Jn 19:30).

⁷⁵ Discussed further below.

(43:12-13; 41:21-29; 42:9). The fourth Servant Song also makes clear that the suffering and humiliation of the Servant are precisely because the Lord has willed it (53:6, 53:10).

In contrast to YHWH's sovereign will, the foreign gods are like nothing compared to him and their ways are futile (43:13-13); YHWH alone is Israel's creator and king:

I am the LORD, your Holy One,
the Creator of Israel, your King (Isa 43:15).

Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god (Isa 44:6).

Thus a key feature of YHWH's kingship in Deutero-Isaiah is his sovereign control over history, his foreknowledge of events and the futility of the 'gods' opposing him. These themes share significant connections with John's presentation of Jesus' death. At various points Jesus is portrayed as announcing beforehand what is about to happen to him (Jn 14:29; 16:4; 18:4) and his ensuring that the disciples go free is shown to fulfill his own spoken words (18:9). John makes clear that Jesus lays down his life of his own volition (10:18) and requires no assistance to carry his cross (19:17). Jesus' opponents are shown ultimately to have no power over him, whether the 'ruler of this world' who will be cast out (12:31; 14:30), the Roman soldiers who fall prostrate before him (18:6), or Pilate himself whose power to crucify Jesus is given him 'from above' (19:11). As discussed above and already noted in Chapter 2, the whole sequence of events culminating in Jesus' death is seen as Scripture being 'fulfilled' (πληρώω), thus in accordance with God's sovereign will. So too the moment of Jesus' death itself: his thirst is to 'fulfill' (τελειωθῇ) Scripture (19:28), whilst his final cry τετέλεσται (19:30) signals the completion of both the Scripture and God's work.⁷⁶ The sovereignty motif of YHWH as divine

⁷⁶ O'Day, 'John', p. 832. A point missed by most commentators is the possible allusion to Isa 55:11. The LXX reads '...[my word]...shall not return until whatever I have willed is fulfilled (συντελεσθῇ)'. This is the same root word used when Jesus is crucified, 'in order to fulfil (τελειωθῇ) scripture' (Jn 19:28), and when he dies, 'It is finished (τετέλεσται)!' (Jn 19:30).

king throughout Deutero-Isaiah is thus embedded in the Johannine portrayal of Jesus' suffering and death.

4.2. *The Trial Motif*

One of the key features of John's transformation of Mark's passion is that he offers an extended trial narrative. Andrew Lincoln, in his influential work *Truth on Trial*, argues that not only are Isaianic motifs present throughout John, but the very literary structure of the Fourth Gospel has been heavily influenced by the Isaianic trial or 'lawsuit' motif. The prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah as a whole can largely be divided into YHWH's 'trial speeches' against Israel (42:18-25; 43:22-28; 50:1-3) and those against the 'nations' (41:1-5; 41:21-29; 43:8-13; 44:6-8; 45:18-25).⁷⁷ In addition to multiple Isaianic legal terms found throughout the gospel such as 'judgement' (κρίσις)⁷⁸ and 'bear witness' (μαρτυρέω)⁷⁹, the thrust of the lawsuit in Isaiah 40-55 is YHWH's proclamation of his unique identity as king and God over and against the gods of the nations (Isa 44:6-8). In particular, in the final trial speech against the pagan ruler Cyrus, YHWH declares that he does not hide his words; he is the LORD who speaks what is right and true:

I have not spoken in secret (οὐκ ἐν κρυφῇ λελάληκα)

nor in a dark place of the earth;

I did not say to the offspring of Jacob,

"Seek a vain thing."

I am, I am the Lord

speaking righteousness

and declaring **truth** (ἀλήθειαν) (Isa 45:19 LXX).

John 18:19-24, likewise in the context of a trial (Jesus before the High Priest), can be seen to echo Isaiah 45:19:⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Lincoln, *Truth on Trial*, pp. 38-39.

⁷⁸ κρίσις occurs 12 times in Isaiah 40-55 (with a further 23 times in chapters 1-39 and 10 times in chapters 56-66). It occurs 11 times in John and is entirely absent in Mark.

⁷⁹ Variations of μάρτυς (witness) occur 7 times in Isaiah, 6 of which are in chapters 40-55. The related verb μαρτυρέω (bear witness) occurs 33 times in John, and is again absent in Mark.

⁸⁰ This connection is missed by the majority of commentators. See Köstenberger, 'John', p. 500.

I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. **I have said nothing in secret** (ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐλάλησα οὐδέν).

Similarly, Jesus' Roman trial can be shown to bear Isaianic influence. As discussed Chapter 2, the trial before Pilate strongly emphasises the kingship of Jesus. It is, however, also closely associated with the motif of 'truth' (ἀλήθεια):

Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to **testify** (μαρτυρήσω) to the **truth** (ἀληθεία). Everyone who belongs to the **truth** (ἀληθείας) listens to my voice.' Pilate asked him, 'What is **truth** (ἀλήθεια)?' (Jn 18:37-38).

It is YHWH who declares the 'truth' before Cyrus in Isaiah 45:19; this role is fulfilled by Jesus before Pilate in John 18:37. A further semantic link is found between John 18:37-38 and Isaiah 43:9, part of the larger trial speech of 43:8-13. The connection between this verse and John 18:37 is strengthened by the associated Johannine 'testify' (μαρτυρήσω), echoing the Isaianic 'witnesses' (μάρτυρας) and occurrence of 'truth':

All the nations have gathered together,
and rulers will be gathered from among them.
Who will declare these things?
Or who will declare to you
the things that were from the beginning?
Let them bring their **witnesses** (μάρτυρας) ,
and let them be justified and speak **truths** (ἀληθῆ) (Isa 43:9 LXX).

At the climax of the Johannine trial scene, before Pilate's declaration 'Behold you king!' (Jn 19:14), he is described as sitting down on the 'judge's seat' (καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ βήματος, Jn 19:13). The verse is known to be problematic in that ἐκάθισεν can be intransitive ('Pilate sat')

or transitive ('he caused Jesus to sit').⁸¹ The majority of commentators favour the former, largely on historical grounds (Pilate would be unlikely to do this as part of a trial).⁸² Yet, when interpreted in light of possible connections with the Isaianic lawsuit motif, it makes excellent sense theologically to have Jesus portrayed (once more, with Johannine irony) as seated as both divine king and divine judge.⁸³ The Johannine trial, with its extended narrative and emphasis on Jesus' kingship, can once more be shown to draw upon the trial motif of Isaiah, where YHWH 'testifies' against the nations and Israel that he alone is king.

4.3. The 'I Am' Motif

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Johannine 'I am' statements feature prominently throughout the gospel, both with and without a predicate.⁸⁴ Whilst the divine name attested in Exodus 3:14 (Hebrew *hā-yā*; Greek Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν) has possibly contributed to the Johannine understanding and formulation of these sayings,⁸⁵ there is general agreement that their primary scriptural background are the ἐγώ εἰμι utterances found in Deutero-Isaiah (translating the Hebrew *anî hû*, 'I am he').⁸⁶ In passages that are strongly monotheistic in emphasis it is YHWH that declares to the nations that he is both creator and redeemer and that there are no other gods beside him.⁸⁷ Andrew Abernethy regards this rhetorical device as a distinctive feature of kingship, the proclamation that YHWH alone is ruler over all things.⁸⁸

⁸¹ Barrett, *John*, p. 544; Michaels, *John*, pp. 940-41.

⁸² Keener, *John*, p. 1129; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 342; Thompson, *John*, p. 388; Lindars, *John*, p. 570.

⁸³ Lincoln, *John*, p. 469. The argument is further strengthened when considering that the motif of YHWH seated on the throne is often associated with the theme of judgement in the Jewish Scriptures: Ps 9:4,7; 122:5, Prov 20:1; 1Kings 7:7; Isa 9:7; 16:5. As Marc Brettler notes '[unlike ANE sources] in Israelite sources the throne is particularly associated with the king's role as judge'. See further M. Z. Brettler, *God is King: Understanding an Israelite Metaphor* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), p. 82. See also Abernethy, *Isaiah and God's Kingdom*, p. 15. It is noteworthy that extra-biblical traditions remember Jesus as seated whilst mocked as judge and king, e.g. *Gospel of Peter* (5:7): 'And they dressed him in purple and seated him upon the judgement seat, saying, 'Judge justly, King of Israel'' and Justin's *Apology* (I:35): 'They seated him upon the judgement seat and said, 'Judge us'' See further O'Day, 'John', p. 822.

⁸⁴ With predicates: 6:35; 8:12; 10:7; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1. 'Absolute' sayings: 4:26; 6:20; 8:24; 8:28; 8:58; 13:19; 18:5. See Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, pp. 194-96.

⁸⁵ Koester, *Word of Life*, pp. 103-4.

⁸⁶ C. H. Williams, "'I Am' Sayings', in J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, and N. Perrin (eds.), *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd edition (IVP Academic: Downers Grove: 2013), pp. 181-82; Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, pp. 194-95; Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 370-73;

⁸⁷ E.g. Isa 41:4; 43:10; 45:18. Cf. Deut. 32:39.

⁸⁸ Abernethy, *Isaiah and God's Kingdom*, pp. 85-102.

Thus says the Lord,
 who made heaven—
 this is the God who displayed the earth and made it;
 he himself marked its limits;
 he did not make it to be empty
 but to be inhabited:
 I am (ἐγώ εἰμι), and there is no other (Isa 45:18 LXX).⁸⁹

For the purpose of this work there are three noteworthy features regarding the Isainic ἐγώ εἰμι motif in John. Firstly, a feature neglected by many commentators but highly suggestive of John's use of Isaiah is the bringing together of the ὑψώω motif and ἐγώ εἰμι in John 8:28:

When you have lifted up (ὑψώσητε) the Son of Man, then you will realise that I am (ἐγώ εἰμι).

As Richard Bauckham notes, this verse is significant in that it is both the middle one of the three ὑψώω sayings and the centrepiece of the seven absolute 'I am' sayings.⁹⁰ As already noted, the 'double-entendre' ὑψώω is used by John to speak of the cross as the occasion of simultaneous 'lifting up' and 'exaltation', alluding to the exaltation of the Servant in Isaiah 52:13 and the throne of God in 6:1. John 8:28, however, juxtaposes the 'exaltation' with the divine self declaration ἐγώ εἰμι, bringing both sayings into theological relationship.⁹¹ Thus *when* Jesus is lifted up on the cross, *then* the unique divine identity of YHWH will be revealed. It is thus in Jesus' death that the character and glory of God will be fully disclosed.

Secondly, the seventh (and final, hence climactic) ἐγώ εἰμι statement from Jesus' lips occurs in John's passion narrative, when he is arrested (Jn 18:5-8). The divine revelation, and the power demonstrated over the prostrate soldiers, occurs, again, in the context of Jesus' suffering.⁹² Significantly, there are parallels between the context of the Isaianic ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements and the arrest scene of John 18:1-11, such that Jesus' words at the time of

⁸⁹ It is noteworthy that this verse is immediately followed by 45:19 (I have not spoken in secret..), the text discussed above as influencing the Johannine trial motif.

⁹⁰ Bauckham, *God of Israel*, pp. 47-48.

⁹¹ Bauckham, *God of Israel* p. 48.

⁹² Williams, *I Am He*, pp. 293-9; Koester, *Word of Life*, pp. 103-4.

his arrest may be seen as the culmination of the Johannine absolute ἐγώ εἰμι sayings.⁹³ As noted, the context for the pronouncements in Deutero-Isaiah is the assertion that God is in control of world history, and the pagan idols are futile to oppose him. The arrest scene, as noted in Chapter 2, similarly portrays Jesus as in control and with foreknowledge of events (Jn 18:4). John's narrative highlights the confrontation between Jesus and the disciples against Judas and the arresting party, evoking the Deutero-Isaianic image of the trial between God and the nations.⁹⁴ Jesus' utterance 18:5, and the resulting collapse of the arresting party, signifies the power of the divine self-declaration, manifest in Jesus even as he submits to arrest.

Thirdly, there is a possible additional 'I am' pronouncement that is significant for the purpose of this work. In John 18:37, when Jesus is interrogated by Pilate, he replies with the words 'you say that I am king'. The Greek reads as follows:

σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς εἰμι. ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

However, Jane Heath observes that, on the basis of textual criticism, the period placed after εἰμι (which was never a part of the original text) could justifiably be placed after ἐγὼ, to read:

σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς *εἰμι ἐγὼ*. εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον (italics added).⁹⁵

The clause has essentially the same meaning, but with the obvious difference that εἰμι ἐγὼ now echoes the earlier Johannine ἐγὼ εἰμι statements. The change in word order, whilst less common in John, is not unique.⁹⁶ If John is in fact here alluding to the ἐγὼ εἰμι motif, it is significant that this would be the final such saying in the gospel and that it is so closely related to Jesus' identity as king, which has been the dominant theme throughout the trial scene. Conversely, it should be noted that none of the other occurrences of εἰμι ἐγὼ in John relate

⁹³ Williams, *I Am He*, pp. 293-98.

⁹⁴ Williams, *I Am He*, p. 294.

⁹⁵ J. Heath, "'You Say that I am a King' (John 18:37)", *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 34.3 (2012), pp. 232-39.

⁹⁶ E.g. Jn 3:28; 7:34, 36; 12:26.

specifically to Jesus' identity. Heath also fails to address the question as to why John would change the word order of so significant a phrase at this point in the gospel.⁹⁷ On balance, whilst a creative interpretation, the argument is not persuasive as to include John 18:37 as an example of the ἐγώ εἰμι motif.

The Johannine 'I am' statements, as declarations of Jesus' unique identity, likewise can be shown to be drawn from the ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements of God in LXX Isaiah. That the final Johannine ἐγώ εἰμι occurs in the context of Jesus' arrest again suggests that John has deliberately situated this motif as culminating in the context of Jesus' passion.

4.4. *The Seeing/Beholding Motif*

The final Isaianic motif to be considered is that of 'seeing'. This has already been noted in Chapters 1 and 2 as a theme upon which John has drawn in his presentation of Jesus' death. The motif is found throughout Isaiah and, significantly, draws together many of the themes considered in this chapter. The chiastic opening lines of the fourth Servant Song link the ἰδοὺ of Isaiah 52:13 with the associated future 'seeing' (ὄψονται) of the Servant by the nations in 52:15.⁹⁸ As Ekblad notes, further passages in the LXX speak of the nations' future 'seeing' of the Servant:

Kings shall see (ὄψονται) him, and rulers shall stand up
and do obeisance to him for the Lord's sake,
because the Holy One of Israel is faithful,
and I have chosen you (Isa 49:7 LXX).

And the Lord shall reveal his holy arm
before all the nations,

⁹⁷ A comparison of the earliest textual witnesses is somewhat disappointing in that there are no periods or breaks to indicate either way how the sentence should be read, though Codex Alexandrinus repeats ἐγώ, thus forcing the reading of εἰμι ἐγώ. The stronger argument pertains to the syntax of the verses, whereby Jesus' βασιλεὺς εἰμι ἐγώ balances out Pilate's question βασιλεὺς εἶ σύ? See further Heath, 'You Say', pp. 236-38.

⁹⁸ Ekblad, *Servant Songs*, pp. 177-78.

and all the ends of the earth shall see (ὄψονται)
the salvation that comes from God (Isa 52:10 LXX).

As discussed in this Chapter, 52:13-53:15 has numerous connections with Isaiah 6, not least the themes of vision/seeing:

I saw (εἶδον) the Lord (Isa 6:1 LXX)

I have seen (εἶδον) the King, the Lord Sabaoth, with my eyes (Isa 6:5 LXX)

You will listen by listening, but you will not understand,
and looking you will look (βλέποντες βλέψετε), but you will not perceive (ἴδητε) (Isa 6:9 LXX).

Further, the Isaianic revelation of YHWH ruling the nations as universal king is portrayed as 'seeing' his glory. A feature of YHWH's kingly rule as his glory being made manifest is already established in Isaiah 1-39:

Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory (Isa 6:3)

Then the moon will be abashed,
and the sun ashamed;
for the LORD of hosts will reign
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
and before his elders he will manifest his glory (Isa 24:23).

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God (Isa 35:2).

This theme of the kingly glory of YHWH being 'seen' continues, and indeed is strengthened, in the opening verses of the Septuagintal version of Deutero-Isaiah. Isaiah 40:5 declares that

the Lord's glory will be 'seen' (ὀφθήσεται) by 'all people', and the coming of YHWH to Zion signals the thrice repeated command to 'behold' him:

See, your God (ἰδοὺ ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν)
See (ἰδοὺ) the Lord comes with strength,
and his arm with authority;
see (ἰδοὺ), his reward is with him,
and his work before him (Isa 40:9-10 LXX).

The Isaianic motif of 'seeing' can be demonstrated throughout the Fourth Gospel at key points in the narrative. Crucially, the theme of 'beholding' YHWH/the Servant and 'seeing' the glory of God as king are brought together specifically in John's presentation of Jesus' death. John wishes his readers to 'behold' the king and 'see' his glory in the crucified Jesus.

The opening lines of John 1:14 'we have seen his glory' (ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ) introduce both Johannine themes of 'seeing' and 'glory'. The Baptist 'sees' the Spirit descend on Jesus,⁹⁹ validating his own testimony (1:34; cf. 1:32-33) and framed by the double 'Behold (ἰδοὺ) the lamb of God!' (1:29; 35). That John specifically names Isaiah (Jn 1:23) in the citation from Isaiah 40:3 strongly suggest the ἰδοὺ of John 1:29 and 1:35 echo the ἰδοὺ of Isaiah 40:9-10.¹⁰⁰ The lamb of God to whom John points from the beginning of the gospel thus already alludes to the Isaianic vision of the coming of YHWH as king.

The first command of Jesus to his followers is to 'come and see' (ὄψεσθε, 1:39), and the first explicit declaration of Jesus as king (1:49) is as a result of him seeing Nathanael under the fig tree (1:48-49). Jesus responds that they will 'see' greater things (μείζω τούτων ὄψη, 1:50). Further, the entire narrative of chapter 9 involves the healing of a blind man, who comes to believe in Jesus after his eyes are opened and he 'sees' Jesus:

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' He answered, 'And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.' Jesus

⁹⁹ As noted, echoing Isa 42:1.

¹⁰⁰ Williams, "'Seeing'", p. 142.

said to him, 'You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' He said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshiped him. Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind' (Jn 9:35-39).

A relationship is thus established between 'seeing' and believing in Jesus, with the Pharisees, who investigate the healing but refuse to believe, declared by Jesus to be 'blind' (9:40-41). This is further explicated in John 12:12-43, a passage dominated by sayings related to Jesus' death. Crucially, John 12:39 makes clear the Jews do not believe because, as prophesied by Isaiah, 'he has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts' (12:40 citing Isa 6:10),¹⁰¹ echoing Jesus' words in John 9:39.¹⁰² Seeing and believing are brought into mutual relationship, and further emphasised by Jesus' words in 12:44-45:

Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me. The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me.

Thus to believe in Jesus is to believe in God; to see Jesus is to see God.¹⁰³ The multiple themes expounded throughout 12:12-43 (the glory of the king; the exaltation of the Servant; the throne of God) are precisely what the Jews cannot see when they look at Jesus because they are 'blind' and do not believe. It follows that, in light of John 12:44-45, they cannot 'see' the God who sent Jesus.

The passion narrative continues to emphasise the 'seeing' motif, with Pilate's double 'Behold!' imperative directed towards the Jews: 'Behold (ἰδοὺ) the man!' (19:5) and 'Behold (ἴδε) your king!' (19:14). As the direct citations from Isaiah form an *inclusio* in John (Jn 1:23; 12:38-40), so too do the ἰδοὺ statements: John the Baptist, introducing Jesus' ministry and playing the role of the faithful witness (1:7-8) exhorts his listeners to 'behold' the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, resulting in his disciples following Jesus (1:29; 35). By stark contrast Pilate represents a type of anti-witness, exhorting the Jews to 'behold' the man

¹⁰¹ As discussed above, John's citation of Isa 6:10 follows neither the HT nor the LXX exactly, and his unique wording emphasises the importance of 'seeing'.

¹⁰² Michaels, *John*, pp. 572-73.

¹⁰³ A similar phrase occurs in Jn 6:40 (This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life) linking seeing and believing, yet Jn 12:44-45 is the first occasion whereby to see Jesus is to see God. Cf. Jn 14:9: Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.

and king, followed by Jesus' ultimate rejection by his own people (19:15-16; cf. 1:10-11). When Jesus finally dies, the explanatory narrative comment elaborates the seeing motif further: the disciple who 'saw' Jesus gives testimony (ὁ ἑωρακὼς μεμαρτύρηκεν, 19:35) so that others may believe. Jesus' death scene concludes with the quotation from Zechariah 12:10: 'they will look on (ὄψονται) the one whom they have pierced' (Jn 19:37). As Jörg Frey notes, John places salvific significance on 'seeing' the glory made manifest in the cross:

'It is Gods's δοξα, which, according to the Johannine presentation, has become 'visible' in Christ...The crucified one is- as the glorified one- *meant to be seen*'.¹⁰⁴

Finally, the motif of truly 'seeing' the crucified Jesus continues into the resurrection narratives. When the risen Jesus appears to the disciples, John notes that it is after seeing his hands and his side that they rejoiced (20:20). It is not that they merely encounter Jesus alive again: what they 'see' are the marks of the cross. This detail is explicated in Jesus' interaction with Thomas, who states that 'unless I see the mark of the nails...I will not believe' (20:25). Jesus appears to Thomas and invites him to touch him and 'see my hands' (ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου, 20:27), resulting in Thomas' climactic confession 'My Lord and my God!' (20:28).¹⁰⁵ Once more, it is not just seeing Jesus alive but seeing the wounds that bear witness to the cross which result in Thomas' faith. The Isaianic 'seeing' motif thus reaches a crescendo in John's passion account: Both the exalted Servant of Isaiah 52:13-53:15 and the glory of the coming king YHWH to Zion will be 'seen' by the nations; John depicts this in his presentation of Jesus' death. To 'see' the crucified Jesus is to 'see' the glory of YHWH the king.

¹⁰⁴ Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, p. 258. Italics added.

¹⁰⁵ A point missed by most commentators is the parallelism displayed between the Jews and Thomas' 'beholding' Jesus: Pilate displays the wounded Jesus in royal regalia to the Jews (ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν, 19:14) but they do not 'see' and thus reject him; Jesus shows the wounds of the cross to Thomas, (ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου, 20:27); Thomas 'sees' and believes.

5. Conclusion: The Influence of Isaiah on John's Transformation of Mark

This chapter has considered the ways in which John's interpretation of the Jewish Scriptures has influenced his transformation of Mark and informed his own distinctive presentation of Jesus' death. Whilst John clearly draws upon a range of texts throughout his gospel, the Book of Isaiah has been shown to be of particular significance. The Johannine themes used to describe Jesus' death in Chapter One (seeing; exaltation/lifting up; glorification) can be demonstrated as having their origin in the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah. The motif of kingship, which pervades John's passion account, can likewise be shown as having its scriptural basis in the proclamation of YHWH as the coming universal king throughout Isaiah 40-55. Specifically, in John 12:12-43, a passage focused on Jesus' impending death, John weaves together the Isaianic themes of kingship, glorification and exaltation. Under the principle of catchword association, the Servant of Isaiah 52:13-53:15 and the enthroned king YHWH of Isaiah 6 are brought into mutual relationship with the coalescing of both figures being projected onto the image of Jesus crucified.

Additional connections can be demonstrated between John and Isaiah: the motifs of sovereignty, the trial, the 'I am' pronouncements and 'seeing'. The Isaianic 'seeing' motif, whereby the glory of king YHWH and the exalted Servant are 'seen' by the nations, is brought to bear on the crucified Jesus. Whilst some cannot believe because they have been blinded, those who believe can 'see' the glory of the king in the one pierced on the cross. When Isaiah saw 'his glory' (Jn 12:41), he saw the 'glory of the crucified one',¹⁰⁶ the glory of YHWH the king made manifest in Jesus' death.

¹⁰⁶ Frey, *Glory of the Crucified One*, p. 258.

Conclusion

This work began by arguing that John's Gospel was not written independently of Mark but demonstrates signs of familiarity with the Gospel of Mark. It thus follows that John has transformed Mark's account to suit his own theological agenda. I have attempted to articulate some of the ways in which John has transformed the presentation of Jesus' death, as well as his reasons for doing so. In summary, John has portrayed the crucified Jesus as the exalted-enthroned king, and his primary scriptural basis for doing so is the bringing together of key Isaianic themes (kingship, glorification, exaltation, the Servant).

Whilst Mark alludes to Jesus' death at various points, John has significantly developed and re-worked the following Markan motifs: the Markan predictions of Jesus' death have become the corresponding 'exaltation/lifted up' passages; the cross as the focus of suffering has become the Johannine 'hour' of glorification. From the outset, the Johannine Jesus is described as the 'lamb of God' who will take away the sin of the world and his followers are to 'behold' him. Each of these motifs can be traced to the prophecies of Isaiah.

The Johannine passion narrative itself, where the language of exaltation and glory is noticeably absent, nevertheless portrays a Jesus who embodies these themes *on the way* to the cross. The agony of the Markan Jesus in Gethsemane becomes the sovereign Johannine Jesus who is in control of events, who willingly lays down his life, who utters the divine self-designation ἐγώ εἰμι, and who stands before Pilate as king of the Jews, albeit in deeply ironic fashion. The kingship motif, already hinted at in Mark, dominates the Johannine passion account. Jesus completes and 'fulfils' the Scriptures and the work of God on the cross, where he is displayed, 'seen' and buried as the universal king.

What legitimises John's transformation of Mark is his interpretation of Isaiah, in particular his handling of the LXX text, and the bringing together of the Servant of Isaiah (52:13-53:12) with the enthroned king YHWH (Isa. 6), as particularly demonstrated in John 12:20-43. Here the themes of exaltation, glorification and kingship are strikingly juxtaposed with Jesus' suffering and death, and these coalesce into a web of scriptural images which enable John to see the

cross as 'glorification in humiliation' and the revelation of the suffering 'Servant' as simultaneously the exalted and enthroned king YHWH. John's prologue makes clear that no one has ever seen God; John's transformation of Mark makes clear that, for those with eyes to 'see', the crucified Jesus is the ultimate display of God's glory, the embodiment of YHWH as king.

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