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**THE THEOLOGICAL ROLE OF *shmei/a*  
IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

**WON-HA HWANG**

**THE THEOLOGICAL ROLE OF *shmei/a*  
IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

by

**WON-HA HWANG (B.A., M.DIV.)**

Dissertation

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**Supervisor: Prof. Dr. J. G. van der Watt**

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**Won-Ha Hwang**

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## SUMMARY

**Title: The theological role of *shmei/a* in the Gospel of John**

**Researcher: Won-Ha Hwang**

**Supervisor: Prof. dr. J. G. van der Watt**

**Degree: Master of Theology**

The author of the Gospel of John recorded the seven miracle accounts in his book and named them distinctively as *shmei/on* ('sign'), while in the Synoptics the miracles are usually called *du, nami j* ('mighty deed'). This particular term signifies that the miracles of Jesus in this Gospel are significant occasions which carry associative theological messages. Thus Johannine research has always had a great deal of interest in this specific field. The important interpretative point to note is that the individual sign does not exist on its own but reciprocates the influence to the associated discourses on the revelatory mentions of Jesus and/or operates together with other signs in the specific features of its macro context. Thus the delivery of the message is maximised.

As a result of the comprehensive analysis of the whole signs, it is clear that the author of this Gospel elaborately arranges seven signs, and thus draws his theological messages most efficiently. The main concern of *shmei/a* in this Gospel is to expose the Christological portraits of Jesus and some related theological themes. The divine identities of Jesus that are exposed by the signs are, for example, 'the eschatological bridegroom,' 'the provider of eternal life,' 'the bringer of the eschatological salvation,' and 'the Messiah/Christ/King.' Some related theological themes that are conveyed through the signs are, for example, 'the replacement of the Jewish tradition,' 'the significance of a faith in Jesus,' 'glorification of Jesus,' 'unbelief,' and 'the discipleship.'

It is thus clear that the Johannine signs are written so that people may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing people may have Life in His name (cf. 20:31).

## OPSOMMING

**Titel: Die teologiese funksie van *shmei/a* in die Evangelie volgens Johannes**

**Navorsers: Won-Ha Hwang**

**Studie-leier: Prof. dr. J. G. van der Watt**

**Graad: Meestersgraad in Teologie (M.Th.)**

Die outeur van die Evangelie van Johannes het die beskrywings van die sewe wonderwerke in sy boek vermeld en hulle veral opvallend en onderskeidend as *shmei/on* ('teken') beskryf, terwyl die wonderwerke in die Sinoptiese Evangelies gewoonlik *du, nami j* ('magtige daad') genoem word. Hierdie besondere term beklemtoon dat die wonderwerke van Jesus in hierdie Evangelie besondere gebeure was waarin vereenselwigende teologiese boodskappe ingeslote teenwoordig was. Die Johanese navorsing het dus voortdurend 'n groot belang gehad in hierdie bepaalde veld. Die belangrike vertolkende kenmerk waarvan kennis geneem behoort te word is dat individuele teken nie opsigself afsonderlik bestaan nie, maar dat dit inderdaad die stel die invloed hiervan vergoedend gelyk met die vereenselwigende redevoerings in terme van die openbarende vermeldings van Jesus en/of funksioneer tesame met die ander tekens binne die bepaalde verwyssing van die makro verwysingsraamwerk (konteks). Die bestuurde aflewering van hierdie boodskap word dus hiermee tot die uiterste beklemtoon.

Op grond van die alles-insluitende ontleding van al die tekens, word dit kenmerkend duidelik dat die outeur van hierdie Evangelie breedvoerig volgens 'n bepaalde orde-rangskikking sewe tekens gebruik, terwyl hy sodoende sy teologiese gevolgtrekkings baie doeltreffend daarstel. Die hoof kenmerk van die *σημεία* in hierdie Evangelie word bewys deur die openbarende blootstelling van die Christologies-beeldende sketse van Jesus, tesame met bepaalde verwante teologiese temas. Die Goddelik-identiteits kenmerke van Jesus wat deur middel van tekens blootgestel word is onder andere soos 'die eskatologiese bruidegom', 'die Voorsiener van die Ewige Lewe', die 'Bewerkende Voorsiener van die Ewige Lewe', 'die Bewerker van die Eskatologiese Verlossing' en die 'Messias/Christus/Koning'. Sommige bepaalde teologiese temas wat deur middel van die tekens oorgedra word is onder andere 'ie vervanging van die Joodse tradisie' 'ie betekenis van 'n geloof in Jesus', 'verheerliking van Jesus', 'ongeloof' en 'die dissipelskap'.

Dit word daarom bevestigend onderskryf dat die Johanese tekens op sò wyse beskryf was dat mense sou kon kom tot die geloofsoortuiging dat Jesus inderdaad die Messias, die Seun van God is en dat hulle op grond van hierdie geloof die Lewe mag verkry in Sy naam (cf.20:31).

**KEY WORDS**

The Gospel of John

shmei/on ('sign') or shmei/a ('signs')

The synchronic way of biblical interpretation

The theological themes

A Christological picture of Jesus

Eternal life

Eschatological salvation

Faith

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## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Problem and purpose

The Gospel of John<sup>1</sup> contains the miraculous deeds of Jesus.<sup>2</sup> While in the Synoptics the miracles are usually called *du, nami j* ('mighty deed'), in the Gospel of John they are mostly referred to as *shmei/on* ('sign').<sup>3</sup> This peculiar term signifies that the miracles of Jesus in this Gospel are not merely magnificent events, but significant occasions into which associative messages are packed (cf. Thompson 1992:379).<sup>4</sup> Thus Johannine research has always shown a great deal of interest in these extraordinary activities (that is, 'signs') of Jesus (Van Tilborg 1996:117).

Previously, investigation in this field was done largely according to the diachronic method of biblical interpretation. This method focuses on examining the historical development of the text rather than on grasping the theological message of the final form of the text. Such an approach proved problematic from the perspective of the

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<sup>1</sup> The following terms will be used to indicate the Gospel of John in this dissertation: 'the Gospel of John,' 'the Gospel according to John,' 'John's Gospel,' 'the Gospel' and 'this Gospel.'

<sup>2</sup> Some of the miracle accounts are found in the Synoptics (e.g., 'the feeding of the multitude,' in 6:1-15) while some of the miracle accounts in the Synoptics are not found in this Gospel (e.g., 'the changing of water into wine at Cana,' in 2:1-11) (see Blackburn 1992:549-560). However, even though there are common miracle accounts found in both the Gospel of John and the Synoptics, there are obvious differences between both, in number and circumstances and way of the narration. For a good discussion in this regard, see Brown (1966:525-532).

<sup>3</sup> There are 17 occurrences of the term *shmei/on* in the Gospel of John: 2:11, 18, 23; 3:2; 4:48, 54; 6:2, 14, 26, 30; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18; 37 and 20:30. Besides, some scholars think that the miraculous fishing story in chapter 21 also belongs to the same material (see Smalley 1978:86-88). Kostenberger (1988:57; also see Dennison 1976:190-202) accurately relates these occurrences to the specific occasions as follows: John 2:11 refers to Jesus' changing of water into wine; 2:18 to the temple cleansing; 2:23 and 3:2 makes general reference to 'the signs' that Jesus performed; in 4:48, Jesus chastises people for their insistence on 'signs and wonders' in order to believe; 4:54 refers to Jesus' healing of the nobleman's son; 6:2 talks about signs Jesus is performing upon the sick; 6:14 relates to Jesus' feeding of the multitudes; 6:30 records the Jews' request for yet another sign; 7:31 asks, in the context of the discussion over Jesus' healing of a lame man (cf. 5:1-15), whether Christ will make more signs than Jesus; 9:16 makes reference to Jesus' opening the eyes of a blind man; 10:41 says that John the Baptist did not make any signs; 11:47 and 12:18 refer to Jesus' raising of Lazarus; 12:37 concludes that even though Jesus did all these signs, the Jews still did not believe in him; and 20:30 notes that Jesus performed many other signs, but that the evangelist selected certain signs to lead his readers to faith in Jesus.

<sup>4</sup> For a full consideration on the historical survey of the term 'sign,' see Davids (1997:1093-1095); Williams (1989); Rengsorf (1975:200-261).

final message of this Gospel (see Nicol 1972:1; Fortna 1970, 1988).<sup>5</sup> Thus it is necessary to employ a different exegetical method, that is, the synchronic approach that concerns only the final form of the text. This contributes to an investigation of the theological message of the signs (see Du Rand 1997:5-15; Powell 1995:255).<sup>6</sup> In spite of this effort, however, the theological role of the signs has not yet been given the full attention it deserves because up to now only the meaning of the individual sign has been presented and not all the signs as a group which bears in mind the macro context of the Gospel. This is caused by overlooking the fact that the individual sign does not exist on its own but influences the associated discourses on the revelatory mentions of Jesus and/or operates together with the other signs in the specific features of its macro context. This indicates the coherence or unity of signs in this Gospel (cf. Smalley 1994:86-92).

The purpose of this dissertation is therefore to search for the theological role and meaning of all the signs as a unit. The analysis will consider how the individual signs are related to the surrounding revelatory discourses and how they reciprocate with each other. Thus, as a result of an appropriate analysis of the text, the theological role of the signs will be indicated accurately via a demonstration of the strong unity or coherence of the signs.

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<sup>5</sup> So-called 'sign source' (*Semeia Quelle*, hence the conventional siglum: SQ) theory is a representative instance of this way of study. Bultmann sets forth a comprehensive literary theory of this regard. He gave the classical statement to the SQ hypothesis, in 1941, in the very first edition of his commentary (1971). He has interpreted the Gospel of John through the method of form criticism and thus naturally separates the Gospel from the various sources. They are 'sign source,' 'passion narrative,' and 'discourses' (see Smith 1987:39-61). Following him, many scholars such as Wilkens (1958), Smalley (1965), Fortna (1970; 1988), Schnackenburg (1965-1984), and Brown (1966, 1970) wholly or partially accepted the SQ hypothesis of Bultmann and have steadily developed this theory (see Fortna 1992:18-22; 1970; Johns & Miller 1994:519-520). In South African academic circles, particularly, Nicol (see 1972) was the representative scholar of this study. He attempted to find the author's theological interpretation of the Gospel by the separation of source and redaction, disagreeing with all the previous methods of exegesis, through the method of literary criticism, form criticism, and redaction criticism. As stated by Fortna (1992:20), however, despite wide acceptance the hypothesis has never been universally accepted. A number of dissenters have rejected this hypothesis on plausible evidence and thus nowadays it turns out that further investigation of this theory makes little progress.

<sup>6</sup> Amongst others, particularly in Johannine circles, are Culpepper (1983; 1998) who initiates the genuine work in this regard, following him, Duke (1985), O'Day (1986), Staley (1988), Stibbe (1992), and Moloney (1996). They have attempted to analyse the final text so that the meaning of the text would be drawn rather than spending the time for debate on the historical background (*i.e.*, the authorship, the situation of the community, redaction, etc.)



## 1.2. Methodological considerations

### 1.2.1. General principle

One must use the proper strategies to understand the biblical text accurately, as the following statement by Egger (1996:8) attests: “To do justice to the varied aspects of New Testament texts, a varied set of methodological instruments is used in scholarly dealing with the New Testament.” According to this requirement, new biblical methodological skills are constantly developing. At the beginning of the 20th century started, particularly, the scene of the interpretation of biblical methods changed dramatically (see Lategan 1984:3; Snyman 1991:86). It was influenced by other secular disciplines, while the interdisciplinary phase became common in various scholarly fields. Amongst others, the literal-linguistic theory has contributed most to the change of approach.<sup>7</sup> In the previous period, historical-critical methods concerning the historical development of the text were methods central to biblical interpretation. They focused on the origin and the development of the text. However, the literal-linguistic discipline only concentrates on the final form of the text. According to Lategan (see 1984:3-4; also see Longman III 1987:41), while interests of biblical interpretation shift its focus from the author to the reader, a recent trend is the concern with the investigation of the communicative devices that were used by authors to enlighten the reader (see Botha 1991a:277-293).<sup>8</sup> However, in biblical interpretation, three elements of this (that is, the author, the text, and the reader) should be fully considered synthetically (cf. Egger 1996:8-13; see Tate 1991).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> In this regard, Longman III (1987:7) says as follow: “Biblical scholars have turned to literary study for help (Polzin, Detweiler, Crossan, Via, etc.), and an increasing number of literary scholars have turned to the Bible as an object of study (Alter, Kermode, Ryken, Frye). Such interests have led to the rise of the literary approach in biblical studies, most commonly referred to as literary criticism.” This trend could be attested mainly by a lively discussion at the meeting of *the Society of Biblical Literature*, as well as in seminars of *the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas* (Combrink 1986:9).

<sup>8</sup> Jonker (1996:399; see also Botha 1991b:71-87; Van Tilborg 1989:19-31) says the relationship between the biblical exegesis and the communication theory is as follows: “Biblical exegesis should thus be done within the framework of communication theory. This interest in communication can also be related to the influence of and interaction with textual linguistics and textual theory.” In succession (1996:405), “the communication model should not only provide an explanation of how exegetical methodologies can exist side by side, but should also explain how this system becomes operative, that is, how methodologies interact.”

<sup>9</sup> Deist and Burden (1980:54) mentions the relations among the author, the text and the receiver as follows: “It is clear that one needs to have knowledge of the speaker if one wants to understand his

### 1.2.2. The aim of the analysis

This dissertation aims to represent the theological role of the Johannine signs. Therefore the texts will be read with a focus on the exposure of the theological messages that they contain. This means that a synchronical approach to the texts should be employed primarily and the diachronic approach can be used to supplement it.

#### **Excursus: Synchronic analysis vs. Diachronic analysis**

There are two interpretative dimensions of the text (cf. above). One is to grasp the meaning of the text as it is presented and another is to search the historical development of the text. According to de Saussure, the first is called as 'synchronic approach' and the second is called as 'diachronic approach'. According to him (de Saussure 1915:98-138), synchronic linguistics will be concerned with logical and psychological connections between coexisting items constituting a system, as perceived by the same collective consciousness, and diachronic linguistics will be concerned with connections between sequences of items not perceived by the same collective consciousness, which replace one another without themselves constituting a system. Therefore the purpose of synchronic method is the grasp of the meaning of the final form of the text while the purpose of diachronic method is the reconstruction of the historical track down which the texts reached their perfect forms according to the passage of time.<sup>10</sup>

However, up to now there are sharp conflicts about the methodological initiative, in fact, most probably between the German speaking scholars as leaders that hold fast to the historical-critical view and the English speaking scholars as leaders, that a new

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message. It is also clear, however, that one cannot look at the speaker in isolation. The speaker must be looked at as a complete human being in all of his contexts. The speaker must, moreover, be looked at in relation to his audience and in terms of the rhetoric of the text. .... speaker and audience and text form a single whole. No one of them can be conceived of without the other two. And the exegete must be fully aware of this trinity in his efforts to understand any text."

<sup>10</sup> When these two methods are applied in the biblical interpretation, the first one is adopted by, amongst others, textual linguistics, structuralism, semantics, narrative criticism, pragmatic analysis, text genre analysis and the second one is adopted as literary criticism, form criticism, source criticism, tradition criticism and redaction criticism (see Egger 1996:67; 153).

method must be used in the interpretation of the Bible. Thus it has seemed impossible to harmonize with each other.<sup>11</sup> Many scholars such as Egger (1996:67; also Motyer 1997:27-44) properly insist that these two methods go with each other in a way, in that the synchronic readings contribute to a methodological expansion of the diachronic readings. According to him, this investigates the text as it comes into being, through the literal-linguistic method, and then examines the text for the historical point of view (see Jonker 1993: 100-115; 1996: 397-411; 1998:1-15).<sup>12</sup>

As a conclusion of this argument, regarding the chronological order between synchronic analysis and diachronic analysis, the statement of Thiselton (1992:80-81) makes it clear that of the two, synchronic linguistics has priority both in importance and in sequence of application, stating, “it is proper to trace the historical evolution of a term and its changing semantic value, .... , firstly, that synchronic description is the pre-requisite of diachronic study at every separate stage.”

### 1.2.3. The analytical process

According to the general principle of the methodology and considering the aim of the analysis, the following analytical process is employed (cf. Jonker 1993:111-112). Even though every text is analysed according to this framework, exceptions may sometimes occur.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> As an attempt to solve these opposite standpoints ‘*To each its own meaning: an introduction to Biblical criticisms and their applications*’ edited by Haynes, S R and McKenzie, S L will be helpful.

<sup>12</sup> Counet (2000:19) also states their compatibility, admitting the incompatibility of both, as follows: “I think it is wrong to create a dichotomy between historical-critical research as a so-called speculative or subjective method, especially if this leads to a hierarchy of diachronic research at the expense of synchronic research. My presupposition is that diachronic conclusions are ultimately based on a subjective interpretation of the text (textual peculiarities, such as doublers, contradictions, incompatibilities, fractures, etc. - thing which can indeed be determined ‘objectively’ - are not necessarily ‘absolute’ reasons to search for the sources and *Vorlagen*; they can be intended or meaningful).”

<sup>13</sup> These steps follow the exegetical procedure of Van der Watt, in principle (cf. his transcript of lectures *Exegesis: An approach* in 2001). He develops the stage of analysis as follows: 1) choose text, 2) textual criticism, 3) grammatical and syntactical analysis, 4) structural analysis, 5) detail analysis (grammatical-semantic analysis, literary analysis, socio-cultural and historical analysis, comparison between different books of the New Testament), and 6) macro structure. However, since taking the purpose of this dissertation and the genre of the underlying text, there will be slight differences in this process. In this regard, Van der Watt also asserts the flexibility of exegesis stages with the statement that, maintaining the fundamental exegetical principles, the individual methods will not be unfolded by turns in every case.

### 1.2.3.1. Macro Context

The study of the macro context is very important in forming an accurate understanding of the text (Stibbe 1993:11). This consideration prevents the exegete from going astray and makes an understanding of the narrative vital. At this stage, following the statement of Van der Watt (2001:10-11), two basic questions must be answered when the particular passage is interpreted: 1) what difference would it make to the book if this passage was not part of it? and 2) what difference would it make to this passage if it was not part of this book? These two questions will lead the investigator to seeing the underlying text from a broad prospective and allowing an overall picture of the text.<sup>14</sup>

In this dissertation, consideration will be focused on the signs which are arranged in chapters 1-12. Thus the following broad demarcation of chapters is suggested (cf. Brown 1966:cxxxviii-cxliv; Stibbe 1993:120). The precise explanation of this separation will be dealt with in each analysis of the texts.

Chapter 1	The introduction
Chapters 2-4	The Cana to Cana itinerary
Chapters 5-10	The Jerusalem to Jerusalem itinerary
Chapters 11-12	The conclusion

### 1.2.3.2. Structural analysis

When certain words combine to construct a meaningful sentence, they should be governed by specific grammatical and syntactical rules. This means that individual literal elements cannot produce sense themselves without appropriate rules, thus all correct sentences have a correct grammatical structure. This structured quantity might

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<sup>14</sup> Regarding the macro structure of this Gospel, up to now various divisions of the Gospel have been proposed (see Mlakuzhyil 1987). Although scholars commonly agree with the broad division of the Gospel, no general agreement has emerged concerning the details of the arrangement, which may be caused by displacement from the original form (Deeks 1968:108; cf. Loader 1984:188-216).

be composed of just one word or phrase, or may stretch into volumes. Understanding text means the perception of the grammatical-syntactical role of words. This governs the sentence. Furthermore, the interrelationships of the individual sentences become the text and make more sense (Louw 1979:1). That is, combined sentences produce the meaning. The text thus builds up creating the gist.

‘Discourse analysis’ that has been particularly developed in South Africa is the proper methodology for understanding this complexity of the text (cf. Snyman 1991:83).<sup>15</sup> This method examines the manner of the composed text and tries to find the gist of the text, as the result of the language-interoperation within the pericope. However, this method is not an attempt at a complete exegesis of the text but is useful in examining the basic development of the train of thought in the discourse (see Louw 1979:1-4). As Louw (1992:18; cf. Stibbe 1993:11) mentioned, it is rather a demonstration, a displaying or showing, first of all to oneself, how the text is being read, then giving account to others of how the text is read and used to eventually come to an understanding of the text.

#### **Excursus: The four steps of discourse analysis**

The followings are the four steps of discourse analysis.

1) Division of the text into cola<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> In regarding discourse analysis that has developed particularly in South Africa, Du Toit (1974:56) hits the mark by saying that “discourse analysis is a particular specialization of structural analysis, applied to a primary studying of the course of an argument at paragraph or pericope level, and then, more specifically, the course of the argument as presented by the writer as an ordered whole, and as a result of his selection and arrangement of words, phrases and sentences within the pericope or paragraph context.”

<sup>16</sup> Jordaan (1986:407) points out that subjectivity could have intervened in the process of dividing the colon. So he advises that ‘immediate constituent analysis’ is helpful, and especially that ‘the analysis of thought structure’ can be used for maintaining the objectivity in discourse analysis. According to Van Rensburg (1997:2), ‘the analysis of thought structure’ is an exegetical method of finding relations between the components of the text on both micro and macro level. For all that, it is still a very useful method as Du Toit (1974:57) describes that “discourse analysis does, if used correctly, provide a with a systematic and controllable method by means of which we can free ourselves to a large extent of *apriori*’s and where our observation and description of real and verifiable phenomena in the surface structure of a given stretch of language lead us to an understanding of its contents.”

Dividing the sentence into cola is a first step. A colon is the smallest syntactic unit, which consists of a nominal element (subject) and a verbal element (predicate). To put it precisely, as Du Toit (1977:1) defines, a colon is 'an independent, grammatical construction, consisting of a noun-phrase and a verb-phrase (together with possible embedded elements), which, in itself, is not embedded in some higher-level configuration.' Thus colon is defined as a nominal element (subjective) and a verbal element (predicative), each having the possibility of being extended. A colon may also be broken down into smaller elements if it is deemed necessary for the discussion of the relationships within the colon (see Tolmie 1993:403-405).<sup>17</sup>

## 2) Identifying the structure markers<sup>18</sup>

Two kinds of structure markers can be considered in this step. The logical marker is the first. It is the horizontal aspect in skimming the cola to grasp the partial themes among the overall. Second, the vertical marker will be reflected, which is the vertical (or continuous) aspect, that scrutinizes the cola to examine the stream of thought. The structure markers mark the specific words and phrases to determine the structure. Prominent persons, things, verbs, abstract nouns, specific events, etc. should be marked. Through this step, groups of cola can be formed, which will be known as a 'cluster.'

## 3) Semantic relationships between the cola

The third step is the consideration of the semantic relationships between the cola. To express semantic relationships between the cola, lines will be drawn on the left-hand side of the text to indicate how each colon or segment of a colon is related semantically to the other. The detailed discussion of this drawing will be argued in detail. A proper name will be consigned to each cluster according to the result of the discussion above (see Louw 1979:30; Du Toit 1974:58). This name reflects the kernel of the colon, which is a short phrase or sentence pregnant with meaning.

## 4) Formulation of the main focus of the text

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<sup>17</sup> In this dissertation, the demarcation of cola will largely be dependent upon the work of Botha (2003).

<sup>18</sup> This step does not appear physically in this dissertation but will be discussed in detail in the discussions on each cluster.

The final step is to find the manner of logical argumentation or the pivot focus of the author. This work will be done through summarising the main theme of the clusters and relating their relationships. Thus the reader will be aware that the author of the Gospel has arranged each narrative or discourse with consummate artistry (cf. Stibbe 1993:11).

### **1.2.3.3. The literary setting**

The narrator gives a spatial, temporal, and occasional setting to the narrative. These contextual factors may contribute to making a decision on the interpretative direction of the narrative. Thus this circumstantial statement should be considered before the deeper analysis of the narrative plots (see De Villiers 1984:66).

#### **1) The spatial setting**

If a certain regional name is referred to in the narrative, exegetes must pay attention to its geographical information (see Van Aarde 1991:118). In particular, some places of the biblical era may have figurative meanings which are especially prominent in the Gospel of John, like 'Nazareth' (cf. John 1:46).

#### **2) The temporal setting**

It must be recognised that the time in the narrative is a diverse type of time. Powell (1990:72; cf. Stibbe 1993:15; Culpepper 1983:53) distinguishes the time into two types: 'chronological' and 'typological.' He classes the chronological references as either locative or durative. According to him, locative references specify the particular point in time at which a given event takes place while durative references indicate a chronological temporal setting. Typological references, however, represent the symbolic meaning through the figure of time, which is employed particularly in the Gospel of John (*i.e.*, 'the third day' in 2:1).

#### **3) The occasional setting**

The narrator develops his plot centering on the occasions in the narrative. In the Gospel of John, the various Jewish feasts (for instance, Passover) particularly affect the story, and are extremely prominent in chapters 5-10 (see CHAPTER III). Therefore the occasional aspect, which may not appear in the specific pericopes (for instance, the healing story in 4:46-54), should be considered during the analysis.

#### **1.2.3.4. Textual criticism**

The original Greek New Testament document has not been preserved and the existing copies are different from each other for various reasons (see Metzger 1964:131-137; cf. Tuckett 1987:23). Therefore it is necessary to establish the original text through consulting the existing manuscripts and supplementary materials on appropriate practice before attempting to interpret the biblical text (Holmes 1989:53).<sup>19</sup> This work is called ‘textual criticism’ (cf. Metzger 1992:207-246; Aland 1987:275-276).<sup>20</sup>

#### **1.2.3.5. The detailed analysis of the aspects highlighted by the narratological perspective**

From a macro contextual investigation, structural analysis and the study of the literary setting, certain issues to be investigated in detail are exposed as having grasped the special attention of the narrator. Thus the text will be analysed more deeply by the method of narrative criticism that is developed within the literal field (see Powell 1990).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> The sources of textual criticism are Greek manuscripts, lectionaries, ancient translations, patristic citations, etc. For a detail discussion on this regard, see Rius-Camps (2002:84-94); Byun (1996:10-19); Elliott (1990:51, 56); Petzer (1986:18-32); Fee (1968:23-44); Metzger (1964:131-137); and Kenyon (1933:37).

<sup>20</sup> To define this science more clearly, the definition of Greenlee (1995:1) is useful. “Textual criticism is the study of copies of any written work of which the autograph (the original is unknown, with the purpose of ascertaining the original text.”

<sup>21</sup> Powell (1995:239) insists that this criticism is practiced with primary reference to the four Gospels, and the Book of Acts in New Testament studies. In the Johannine studies, as mentioned in ‘the problem statement,’ Boer and Stibbe evaluated that Allen Culpepper set the new agenda through his



The grammatical-semantic<sup>22</sup> study of important words or concepts will be done at this analytical stage where necessary (cf. Van der Watt 2001:4; Bock 1989:100-101; Louw & Nida 1988:xv-xviii). The fundamental principle of the word study that is presented to general scholars is “the meaning of a word depends not on what it is in itself, but on its relation to other words and to other sentences which form its context” (Thiselton 1992:79). Thus the investigation of the meaning of a word will be carefully considered in its context.

Then, the author of this Gospel seems to take some narratives from his stock of traditions and this overall principle is also applied to some sign texts so there might be some parallels in the Johannine narratives to the Synoptics (*i.e.*, 6:1-21 and Mk 6:30-54 par). However, it is correct to infer that the Johannine author certainly organises the stories according to his own theological standpoint. Thus the investigator will examine the redactive emphasis of the author when parallels are found between this Gospel and the Synoptics.

Finally, the socio-historical and cultural setting will be considered thoroughly, because the Bible was written based on historical facts. This means that the Bible is a real occurrence, not a fictitious anecdote. In this regard, Van der Watt (2001:8) states as follows: “meaning and cultural ecology are directly related. Words express ideas that have their existence and relevance within a cultural ecological system. Serious misunderstanding occurs when words are interpreted without considering the cultural ecology, or when words are simply taken from their original cultural context and placed into a new cultural context.”<sup>23</sup>

#### **1.2.3.6. The point of view**

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monumental book ‘Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel,’ subtitled ‘a study in literary design,’ published in 1983 (de Boer 1992:35; Stibbe 1992:9-11).

<sup>22</sup> Van Dijk (1985:103) defines the general sense of ‘semantics’ as a component theory within a larger semiotic theory about meaningful, symbolic behaviour. So ‘semantics’ is the investigation of the words or concepts represented through the interrelations or interoperations between each element.

<sup>23</sup> The weakest point of modern literary exegetical methods is ignorance of the historical settings of the text (cf. Jonker 2000:1-15; Craffert 1996:45-55).

The narrator forms the narrative from his own perspective. As a matter of fact, the real reader of the narrative observes the narrator's stance. The narrator's perspective is the 'manner of presentation' in which a narrator presents or structures his narrative. Uspensky has contributed further significant conceptual refinements to the discussion of the point of view, which enables the reader to define the point of view of the narrator in the Gospel of John more accurately (see Culpepper 1983:20-34).

There are two components to this perspective (cf. Uspensky 1973:6): the narrator's technical perspective (angle of vision) and the narrator's ideological perspective. The former is the narrator's temporal, spatial, and psychological situation, and the latter is his evaluation of the narrated world. The narrator's ideological perspective is the purpose of the narrative, and is presented through his technical perspective. Therefore the hermeneutical purpose of the narrative discourse is to grasp the narrator's message: ideology or theology (cf. Du Rand 1986:154; Van Aarde 1991:103).

The narrator of the Gospel of John has the following technical perspectives.<sup>24</sup> Firstly, in the temporal point of view, the narrator has a retrospective perspective.<sup>25</sup> Secondly, the narrator has an omnipresent perspective from the spatial point of view, so the narrator knows everything and can describe the overall situation. The narrator keeps an eye on Jesus' actions and thought. Finally, from the psychological point of view, the narrator has an omniscient perspective, so he presents inside information that cannot simply be observed by the addressee.<sup>26</sup>

#### **1.2.3.7. The synthesis: theological interpretation**

As previously mentioned, there are two components to the narrator's perspective, the technical perspective and the ideological perspective. The narrator's main intention is

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<sup>24</sup> These perspectives are not maintained uniformly.

<sup>25</sup> The narrator of the Gospel describes the stories after events happened and somewhat later, whether it is a long or a short period of time. The four gospels were written after Jesus' Resurrection, thus the following situations of post-Easter are important to note: Advent of the Holy Spirit, persecution, mission, faith of the early church, etc.

<sup>26</sup> The narrator shows the reader the characters' inner thoughts, feelings and emotions and sends a message in an external or internal manner.

the ideological perspective, which is based on his technical perspectives.<sup>27</sup> The simplicity of a gospel as a narrative is manifested in the narrator's ideological/theological perspective that corresponds to the perspective of the author, and in particular in its simultaneous agreement with the perspective of the protagonist. As a result, all events, characters and so forth in the Gospels are constantly being presented from one particular perspective – that is, from that of one character, namely Jesus (Van Aarde 1991:120; cf. Culpepper 1983:32). Therefore the reader must always struggle to grasp this consolidated point of view. In this regard, the Johannine narrator eventually states the whole theological purpose of the Gospel in 20:31: 'But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.' Therefore an understanding of every episode should always be illuminated by this overall ideological (or theological) perspective.

### **1.3. The central theoretical argument**

While in the Synoptics the miracles are usually called *du, nami j* ('mighty deed'), in the Gospel of John they are usually called *shmei/on* ('sign'). This peculiar term signifies that the miracles of Jesus in this Gospel are significant occasions which contain associative theological messages. The individual sign does not exist on its own but reciprocates its influence to the associated discourses on the revelatory mentions of Jesus and/or operates together with the other signs in the specific features of its macro context. Thus the delivery of the message is maximised. The central theoretical argument or the hypothesis of this work is that the Johannine signs expose the Christological portraits of Jesus and some theological elements. The author of this Gospel elaborately arranges seven signs, and thus draws his theological messages most efficiently.

### **1.4. Chapter division**

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<sup>27</sup> Uspensky (see 1973:8) employs the concepts of structuralism relating to the technical perspective of surface structure and the ideological perspective of depth structure.

The following outline of the contents shows the scope of this study:

#### CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the introductory matters of this dissertation, including problem and purpose, methodological considerations, and the central theoretical argument.

#### CHAPTER II. THE INAUGURAL SIGNS

This chapter studies the initial two signs that indicate the public inauguration of Jesus. They are ‘the changing of water into wine at Cana’ (2:1-11), and ‘the healing of the royal official’s son’ (4:46-54).

#### CHAPTER III. THE INTENSIFIED SIGNS

This chapter studies the ensuing four signs that function to draw the various intensified identities of Jesus. They are ‘the healing at the pool of Bethesda’ (5:1-18); ‘the feeding of the multitude’ (6:1-15); ‘the walking on the sea’ (6:16-21); ‘the healing of the blind man from birth’ (9:1-41).

#### CHAPTER IV. THE CLIMACTIC SIGN

This chapter studies the last sign that is a climax of all that has preceded it and ultimately indicates Jesus’ glorification: ‘the raising of Lazarus’ (11:1-44).

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSION

This chapter synthesises the results of the analysis of every sign and concludes this investigation by the verification of the theological role of *shmei/a* in the Gospel of John.

## CHAPTER II. THE INAUGURAL SIGNS

### 2.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to conduct research into the theological messages of the initial two signs in chapters 2-4, ‘the changing of water into wine at Cana’ (2:1-11) and ‘the healing of the royal official’s son’ (4:46-54). The primary reason for dealing with these two signs together is that chapters 2-4 are bound together, when considering the overall structure of the Gospel. In these chapters, the narrator records the first cyclical movement of Jesus that starts at Cana and finishes at Cana.<sup>28</sup> More precisely, on this circular journey, Jesus performs the changing miracle at the wedding (2:1-11), undertakes the subsequent circular expedition (2:12-4:45), and then performs the healing miracle for the royal official’s son (4:46-54). Hence the expedition narrative is well composed in the arrangement of the two miracles at the beginning and at the end. Besides, therein the reader finds the strong *inclusio* between the changing miracle in 2:1-11 and the healing miracle in 4:46-54 (cf. Painter 1989b:28). Although much evidence for this *inclusio* has been suggested (see 2.3.1.2. ‘The parallelism between the first sign and the second sign’), the most obvious proof is the close numeric association of both the miracles because the narrator mentions the changing miracle as *avrch.n tw/n shmei,wn* in 2:11 and the healing miracle as *deu,teron shmei/on* in 4:54, thereby ignoring the reference in 2:23 to the signs made by Jesus in Jerusalem (cf. Beasley-Murray 1987:33). This furthermore supports the fact that both signs seem to have a strong interrelationship, in that the narratives have even taken place at the same place, *viz.*, ‘at Cana’ (2:1, 11; 4:46). After all, chapters 2-4 form a well-rounded unit and the analysis of these two signs at once is proper. Therefore initially the two signs will be analysed in due order, bearing in

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<sup>28</sup> The second cyclic journey of Jesus is found in chapters 5-10, as will be investigated later on. Interestingly, the itinerary of Jesus parallels the spread of the church in the first part of Acts in an intriguing way (cf. Acts 1:8; Culpepper 1998:129).

Jerusalem: Acts 5:16, 28 & John 2:13-3:21

Judea: Acts 8:1 & John 3:22-30

Samaria: Acts 8:4-25 & John 4:1-42

Ends of the earth (Gentiles): Acts 8-10 & John 4:46-54

mind the theological purpose of the narrator's artistry in making a reciprocal relationship between both signs, according to the methodological framework. The theological messages of these signs will thus be drawn accurately.

## **2.2. The changing of water into wine (2:1-11)**

### **2.2.1. The macro context**

#### **2.2.1.1. Chapter 1 as a Johannine Christological introduction**

Though the underlying sign is placed at the beginning of chapter 2, it is primarily necessary to identify the main focus of chapter 1 because 'the prologue' in 1:1-18 provides the key to an understanding of this Gospel, and makes clear how the author wishes his readers to approach his presentation of Jesus' work and person (Lightfoot 1956:78). The ensuing part of this chapter (1:19-51) is closely linked to chapter 2 by the numeric mention 'on the third day' in 2:1 (see 'The literary setting; Painter 1989b:21-22). Therefore it is proper that the first stage of the analysis should be to find the pivotal theological focus of chapter 1.

The first chapter of the Gospel is generally divided into the following three sub-units (see Morris 1971:65; cf. Brown 1966:cxxxviii-cxl; Koester 1989:329)<sup>29</sup>: 'the prologue of the Gospel' (1:1-18); 'the testimony of John the Baptist to Jesus' (1:19-34); and 'the calling of the first disciples' (1:35-51). The main focus of these three individual parts is indicated in the following way:

Firstly, the prologue of the Gospel (1:1-18) introduces the historical Jesus who brings the divine grace. According to Van der Watt (see 1995:311-332), the narrator, with the help of structural techniques, tells the twofold stories in the prologue. The one is about the historical Jesus (vv. 1-13) and the other is about the divine grace (vv. 14-18) (cf. Hooker 1970:357). These two stories, however, are combined with each other structurally so that the interpreter explores the semantic depths of the prologue more

effectively. In other words (Van der Watt 1995:331), “the two different sections are first interpreted individually, each according to its own principles of composition, and are then related to each other in order to illustrate the semantic interaction (for instance, between history and grace).” By this method of composition (cf. Culpepper 1980:1-31; Staley 1988:50-57), the narrator attempts to deliver the full dimensions of the presence of the Son in the cosmos, in the terms of Van der Watt, ‘the historical Jesus introducing divine grace.’

Secondly, the narrator mentions the identity of Jesus through the testimony of John the Baptist to Jesus (1:19-34). The narrator introduces the theme of bold witness to Jesus, the theme of humbleness as a servant, a rich Passover symbolism, and so on. Ultimately, however, as Stibbe (1993:36) believes, a great Christological confession is presented from the mouth of the Baptist who is the first human witness to Jesus (Smith 1995:104-105): ‘the Lamb of God’ (v. 29; see Bruce 1983:52), ‘the one who existed before John’ (v. 30), ‘the one to be revealed to Israel’ (v. 31), ‘the recipient of God’s Spirit’ (v. 32), ‘the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit’ (v. 33), ‘the Son of God’ (v. 34). The climactic Christological indication of the narrator is found in the confession of the Baptist in verse 34, οὐκ οἶδ’ οὐδὲν ἄλλο, which is described as the most important Christological title in this Gospel (cf. 1:34, 49; 5:25; 10:36; 11:4, 27; 19:7; 20:31; see Smith 1995:127-131). Therefore the testimony of the Baptist has an important role in initiating the person of Jesus for the reader, which will be repeated throughout the whole Gospel (see Morris 1971:130).

Thirdly, the calling of the first disciples (1:35-51) prompts Jesus to prepare for the start of His ministry, which means not that Jesus must work with His disciples but that the disciples must be trained to succeed His ministry. The reader, however, begins to realise the various aspects of Jesus’ identity in this part because there are various names to indicate Him in the words of the disciples. These include ‘the Lamb of God’ (v. 36), ‘the Rabbi’ (v. 38), ‘the Messiah’ (v. 41), ‘the one about whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote’ (v. 45), and ‘the King of Israel’ (v. 49). These names actually have a tendency towards the traditional Jewish Messianic concept of a

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<sup>29</sup> For a fuller argumentation of the macro structure of the Gospel of John, see Mlakuzhyil (1987).



physical hero. The paradigmatic reader might, however, gain the universal divine nature of Jesus through the narrator's accurate point of view (cf. John 6:14-15; see Dodd 1953:228).

Therefore the author majestically introduces Jesus in chapter 1 (cf. Culpepper 1983:90). The Christological titles will be developed through the entire Gospel in full so that the reader understands the Gospel as a record of the Christological revelation (see Witherington III 1995:76). Thus the underlying episode is required to find the identity of Jesus.

#### **2.2.1.2. The pivotal theme of chapters 2-4**

The underlying sign is placed at the very first part of chapter 2, but, as stated above, chapter 2 is bound together with chapters 3-4 macro-structurally. Thus the finding of the pivotal theme of these three chapters is essential to a proper understanding of this particular text. In these three chapters, the strong thematic coherence is found, which also functions as further evidence to support the demarcation of these chapters from the others.

To put it more precisely, the narrator mentions the following ministries of Jesus that are subtly linked together in theme: the changing of the water into wine (2:1-11), which indicates the changing of the old order into the new; the cleansing of the temple (2:12-25); the introduction of the new life (3:1-36); the mention of the new worship (4:1-45); and the healing of the Gentile's dying son (4:46-54), which indicates the new range of Jesus' ministry. As Dodd (1953:297) clearly states, the works of Jesus in these three chapters must be treated as forming a single complex act or episode. That is, as the statement of Blomberg (2001:106) asserts, chapters 2-4 stress the newness of what Jesus is bringing: a new joy, a new temple, a new birth and a universal offer of salvation. In these chapters, after all, the narrator depicts Jesus as the protagonist who

breaks the traditional order and brings about the innovative order.<sup>30</sup> Therein the narrator elaborately places the underlying sign at the very beginning so that it plays a role in the initiation of the public ministry.

## 2.2.2. Structure

The following is a discourse analysis of the pericope.

### 2.2.2.1. Division of the text into cola

#### Cluster A Introduction: The presence of the disciples in Cana

1 Kai. th/| h`me,ra| th/| tri,th| ga,moj evge,neto e  
vn Kara. th/j Galilai,aj(

2 kai. h=n h` mh,thr tou/ VIhsou/ evkei/\

3 <sup>2</sup>evklh,qh de. kai. o` VIhsou/j kai. oi` maqhtai. auv  
tou/ eivj to.n ga,mon

#### Cluster B The shortage of wine

<sup>30</sup> In addition, through the ensuing provoking teaching and the miraculous deeds of Jesus, which are not yet realised at this time, the various faith-responses in the different places of Palestine are engendered. Stibbe (1993:42-43) enumerates these various responses in the following way:

- 2:1-11 The wine miracle at Cana. (First sign)  
*faith-response*: The disciples believe in Jesus, because of the sign at Cana.
- 2:12-22 The cleansing of the Temple  
*faith-response*: The Jews demand a sign and misunderstand Jesus.
- 2:23-25 Many people see signs from Jesus in Jerusalem  
*faith-response*: Many believe in Jesus due to the signs they have observed.  
Jesus does not entrust Himself to them, because he knows their true motives.
- 3:1-21 The conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus  
*faith-response*: Nicodemus knows Jesus is 'from God' because of the signs He performed,  
but he also misunderstands Jesus.
- 3:22-36 The testimony of John the Baptist towards Jesus  
*faith-response*: John reveals true faith in Jesus, as well as a true understanding.
- 4:1-42 Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman  
*faith-response*: The woman believes in Jesus and consequently leads her whole village to  
faith.
- 4:43-54 The healing miracle at Cana. (Second sign)  
*faith-response*: The official and his whole household believe in the basis of the sign.

4 <sup>3</sup>kai. u`sterh, santoj oi;nou le,gei h`mh,thr tou/ V  
Ihsou/ pro.j auvto,n(

4.1 Oi=non ouv k e;cousin

5 <sup>4</sup>kai. le,gei auvth/| o` VIhsou/j(

5.1 Ti, evmoi. kai. soi,(

5.2 gu,nai.

5.3 ou;pw h[kei h` w[ra mou.

6 <sup>5</sup>le,gei h`mh,thr auvtou/ toi/j diako,noij(

6.1 {O ti a'n le,gh| u`mi/n poi h,sate

### Cluster C The changing of water into wine

7 <sup>6</sup>h=san de. evkei/ li,qinai u`dri,ai e]x kata. to.n kaqaris  
mo.n tw/n VIoudai,wn kei,menai(

cwrou/sai avna. metrhta.j du,o h' trei/j

8 <sup>7</sup>le,gei auvtoi/j o` VIhsou/j(

8.1 Gemi,sate ta.j u`dri,aj u[datoj

9 kai. evge,misan auvta.j e[wj a;nw

10 <sup>8</sup>kai. le,gei auvtoi/j(

10.1 VAntlh,sate nu/n

10.2 kai. fe,rete tw/| avrcitrikli,nw|\

11 oi` de. h;negkan

### Cluster D The supply of wine

12 <sup>9</sup>w`j de. evgeu,sato o` avrcitri,klinoj to. u[dwr o  
i=non gegenhme,non

13 kai. ouv k h;|dei po,qen evsti,n(

14 oi` de. dia,konoi h;|deisan oi` hvntlhko,tej to. u  
[dwr(

15 fwnei/ to.n numfi,on o` avrcitri,klinoj

—16 <sup>10</sup>kai. le,gei auvtw/| (  
 16.1 Pa/j a;nqrwpoj prw/ton to.n kalo.n oi=non ti,q  
 hsin  
 16.2 kai. o[tan mequsqw/sin to.n evla,ssw\  
 16.3 su. teth,rhkaj to.n kalo.n oi=non e[wj a;r*t*i

### Cluster E The faith of the disciples in Cana

†7 <sup>11</sup>Tau,thn evpoi,hsen avrch.n tw/n shmei,wn o` VIhsou/j  
 evn Kana. th/j Galilai,aj  
 |  
 | 18 kai. evfane,rwsen th.n do,xan auvtou/ (  
 | 19 kai. evpi,steusan eivj auvto.n oi` maqhtai. Auvto

#### 2.2.2.2. The discussion of the clusters

The pericope is divided into 19 cola, which are grouped into 5 clusters, in the following way:

Cola 1-3 / 4-6 / 7-11 / 12-16 / 17-19

**Cluster A (cola 1-3):** In the first colon, the time, the place and the occasion are mentioned, while cola 2 and 3 contain the main characters. This is the typical pattern of the introduction of the miracle narratives in this Gospel, which will be investigated later when each text is analysed. Yet colon 1 is closely related to colon 2, apart from colon 3. This is evident from the different semantic domains. Two verbs, that is, *evge,neto* in colon 1 and *h=n* in colon 2 belong to the same semantic domain: ‘Be, become, exist, happen’ (Louw & Nida 1988:149-166), while the verb *evklh,qh* in colon 3 belongs to another semantic domain: ‘Communication’ (Louw & Nida 1988:388-445). The semantic relations between cola 1-2 and 3 are generic-specific, thus colon 3 is more strongly emphasised. Besides, in here, the attendance of Jesus’ disciples (colon 3) is emphasised more due to the expression in Greek as **de. kai.**

o`VIhsou/j **kai**. oi`maqhtai. auvtou. Therefore the pivotal point of the cluster may be formulated as ‘the presence of the disciples in Cana.’

**Cluster B (cola 4-6):** The main reason for the demarcation of these two cola as a separate unit is to be found in the fact that a shift in focus occurs in colon 4. Whereas the first three cola focus on the attendance of the main characters, from colon 4 the focus shifts to the conversation between Jesus and his mother and the conversation between Jesus’ mother and the servants. In each of the three cola (4, 5 and 6), the main verb *le,gei* is referred to in sequence, in order to compose the reciprocal dialogues as well as to play a role in the separation of these three cola from the preceding three cola. As far as content is concerned, colon 4 contains the personal request of the mother of Jesus relating to the lack of wine, colon 5 is the rebuff of Jesus in response to her request and colon 6 is the order of Jesus’ mother to the servants. The common theme of colon 4 and colon 5 is thus ‘the shortage of wine,’ which composes the incomplete dialogue between Jesus and his mother. Then this is transformed into the dialogue between Jesus’ mother and the servants in colon 6, which forms the basis for the servants to prepare the miracle. Therefore colon 5 is equivalent to colon 6 and these previous two cola are linked to colon 6 by means of a qualifying setting-relationship. Therefore the pivotal focus of the cluster is ‘the shortage of wine.’

**Cluster C (cola 7-11):** Colon 7 introduces a new cluster by reason of the obvious change of scene from the preceding cola. This colon provides a suitable environment for the miracle to take place and cola 8-11 present the sequential order and compliance. These four cola create the *inclusio* (ring composition): cola 8 and 10 respectively refer to Jesus (see sequential *le,gei*) and cola 9 and 11 respectively form the following compliance of the servants (see *evge,misan* and *h;negkan*). Therefore colon 7 provides a qualifying characteristic setting on behalf of the following four cola, accompanying each of the ensuing two small units (8-9 and 10-11) that bear a logical cause-effect relationship. After all, the miracle has taken place as a result of the subsequent orders of Jesus, together with the accompanying compliances of the servants. The main point of the cluster is thus the performance of

the miracle, that is, ‘the changing of water into wine.’

**Cluster D (cola 12-16):** The conjunction *de .* in colon 12 demarcates/indicates a new section from the preceding one. This is the first reason for considering a break between cola 11 and 12. The second reason for the separation is that the characters have changed, from Jesus and the servants to the steward and the bridegroom. The reason for isolating colon 12 from what follows from cola 6-11 is therefore clear. The steward’s taste of the wine is presented with indicative aorist verb in colon 12 (*evgeu, sato*), together with the ensuing two results presented with the indicative pluperfect verb in cola 13 and 14: third person singular on behalf of the steward (*h; |dei*) and third person plural on behalf of the servants (*h; |deisan*). These ensuing two acts are presented with the indicative present verbs in cola 15 (*fwnei/*) and 16 (*le, gei*). Besides, it could thematically be stated that after the steward tasted the wine, he called the bridegroom and spoke to him in order to satisfy his curiosity about the wine. Cola 13 and 14 are thus equivalent to each other and fulfil a function with reference to the reason for colon 15. They are dependent on colon 12, which means that colon 12 contains the logical meaning-purpose relationship with these ensuing three cola (13-15). Finally, colon 16 is linked to the preceding four cola by means of a logical cause-effect relation. It is evident from the conjunction *kai .* in the beginning of colon 16, which functions as the link between these two parts (cola 12-15 and colon 16). After all, in this cluster, the narrator skilfully portrays the main characters (Jesus and his mother) leaving the picture, and in such a way grants the new characters (that is, the steward and the bridegroom) an entrance to the stage. The main emphasis with reference to these new characters relates to ‘the supply of wine.’

**Cluster E (cola 17-19):** The opening term *tau, thn*, which indicates the first miraculous incident (*avrch.n tw/n shmei, wn*), leads to the conclusion of the narrative. The spatial term *evn Kana. th/j Galilai, aj* appears again and makes a chiasmic form with reference to the introduction. Three indicative aorist verbs *evpoi, hsen, evfane, rwsen, evpi, steusan* are most impressive in this cluster. Two preceding singular verbs in cola 15 (*evpoi, hsen*) and 16 (*evfane, rwsen*) present the act of Jesus and these are linked by means of a

cause-effect relation, while the following plural verb in colon 17 (*evpi, steusan*) presents the response of the disciples. This last colon is linked to the preceding two cola by means of a reason-result semantic relationship. The pivotal focus is thus ‘the faith of the disciples in Cana.’

### 2.2.2.3. The summary of the clusters

According to structural analysis, the relations between the clusters can be expressed diagrammatically in the following way:

1 <sup>1</sup>	cola 1-3	The presence of the disciples in Cana
2 <sup>1</sup>	cola 4-6	The shortage of wine
3	cola 7-11	The changing of water into wine
2 <sup>2</sup>	cola 12-16	The supply of wine
1 <sup>2</sup>	cola 17-19	The faith of the disciples in Cana

The pericope has a chiastic structure (cf. Stibbe 1993:44). Cola 1-3 and 17-19 are related each other chiastically, forming the introduction and the conclusion respectively, because there are strong verbal parallels in the words *evn Kana . th/ j Galilai, aj* and *oi` maqhtai . auvtou/*. Two dialogues in cola 4-6 and cola 12-16 concentrate on common subjects, which are the shortage of wine (the problem), as well as the supply of wine (the solution) respectively. Thus cola 7-11 is detected as the centrepiece of the pericope, which contains the actual miracle (sign). This indicates that the narrator above all else emphasises the miracle itself.

### 2.2.3. The literary setting

The narrator furnishes the temporal (‘on the third day’), the occasional (‘a wedding’), and the spatial setting (‘at Cana in Galilee’) at the outset of the narrative.

#### 2.2.3.1. The temporal setting

The narrator begins the episode with the temporal mention of ‘on the third day’ (th/| h`me,ra| th/| tri,th). In fact, the actual running days of the episode must be the sixth or the seventh day because the first day is mentioned in 1:19-28, the second day in 1:29-34, the third day in 1:35-42, the fourth day in 1:43-50 and the fifth day (or including the sixth day) at the interval of chapter 1 and 2.<sup>31</sup> The narrator, however, does not start the count of the day from the actual first day in 1:19-28, even though this may seem to be natural. Rather, he makes a start with the calling of Nathanael in 1:43-50 and with what, in 1:50ff, Jesus offers in prospect as great things. Therefore this may imply a certain theological intention on the part the narrator.

Regarding the numeric mention of ‘on the third day,’ most commentators (Culpepper 1998:130; Ridderbos 1992:99; Stibbe 1993:46; Beasley-Murray 1987:36; Schnackenburg 1968:325; Suggit 1987:147-148; Kysar 1986:44; cf. Bruce 1983:68; see Lindars 1972:128) think that this narrator’s attempt is an effort to deliver the symbolic allusion of the Resurrection. This is the reason that, as stated by Dodd (1953:299-300; see Lightfoot 1956:105), ‘the third day’ is in Christian tradition from earliest times the day when Christ manifests His glory in resurrection from the dead (cf. Hos 6:2; Mt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:64; Lk 9:22; 18:32; 24:7, 46; Acts 10:40; 1 Co 15:4). To elaborate, this inference is supported by the strong Easter term of ‘manifestation of the glory of Jesus’ at the conclusion of the episode in 2:11 (see Caird 1968:265-277). Therefore the temporal mention makes the reader associate this narrative with the Easter event.

#### **2.2.3.2. The occasional setting**

The occasional setting of the narrative is ‘the wedding’ (ga,moj). According to Stauffer (1964:648-657), in the world of Israel and Judah as well as in the ancient world, ga,moj acquires its greatest religious significance where it is used in connection with the union or close connection between God and the people of Israel

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<sup>31</sup> Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael in 1:43-50 while he is going to Galilee, and probably one of the two days is required in 2:1 for the journey to Galilee (Haenchen 1984:172; Carson 1991:167; cf. Bruce 1983:68).



(or God and man). Although the Old Testament only refers to marriage as simply being a symbol of the covenant between God and the people, as this is to be kept in all fidelity and renewed with all passion (Hos 2:19; Isa 54:4ff; 62:4ff; Ezk 16:7 ff), at certain stages within the Synoptics (Mt 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Lk 12:35-40), a wedding feast is directly used as a parabolic description of the kingdom of God (Barrett 1978:189). In John 3:29 (cf. Rev 19:7-9; Mk 2:19; see Stauffer 1964:654), John the Baptist uses the symbol of ‘the bridegroom and the bride’ with an eschatological reference (see Jeremias 1967:1099-1106). When the narrator uses the term  $\gamma\alpha, \mu\omicron\upsilon\upsilon$ , therefore, the reader can without any difficulty relate this occasion to the eschatological banquet between God and his people (cf. Isa 25:6; see Van der Watt 2000:392-393; Pryor 1992:17; Olsson 1974:26; Dodd 1953:297; Lindars 1972:125). Thus it is possible to suppose that the underlying narrative has strong eschatological factors.

### 2.2.3.3. The spatial setting

The narrator does not provide a specific physical location for the reader, such as a house or the Temple, as the case is in many other Johannine narratives. The only location given is the broad geographical setting of ‘at Cana in Galilee’ ( $\epsilon\upsilon\nu \text{ Kana. th/j Galilai, aj}$ ) (cf. Collins 1995:102; Bruce 1983:68). According to Ridderbos (1992:104), with regard to geographical information in the New Testament, “like Nazareth, Cana is an insignificant place in Galilee, one from which, in Nathanael’s opinion, nothing good can be expected.” However, like the temporal mark, this spatial indication in the Gospel of John gives the reader a significant association rather than a mere geographical significance.<sup>32</sup> In this regard, Olsson (1974:27-29) correctly observes that the narrator of the Gospel always specifies that ‘Cana is in Galilee’ and this indicates in some sense an opposite of ‘Jerusalem in Judea’. In other words, Galilee fulfils the function of a symbolic site of ‘the acceptance and the discipleship,’ in comparison with Judea where the hostility against Jesus originated (cf. Newman & Nida 1980:56; see Geysers 1986:13-20). The reader

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<sup>32</sup> In the whole of the New Testament, the place ‘Cana’ is mentioned only in the Gospel of John (2:1, 11; 4. 46; 21:2).

may therefore anticipate the positive result of the narrative through the spatial setting.

**To summarize:** The setting of the narrative not only provides the factual contextual information of a on historical happening, but also offers the following rich symbolic allusions: the Resurrection (through the temporal mention); the eschatological banquet between God and His people (through the occasional mention); and the acceptance and the discipleship (through the spatial mention).

#### **2.2.4. The aspects highlighted by the narratological perspective**

From the macro-contextual investigation, the structural analysis and the study of the literary setting, certain issues that grasped the special attention of the narrator are exposed, in the following way:

- 1) The sequential dialogues between the characters change the scenes and thus divide the clusters in the following way (cf. Schnackenburg 1968:334)<sup>33</sup>:
  - A. The motive dialogue between Jesus and his mother (cluster B): *the cause*
  - B. Two interlude dialogues between the mother of Jesus and the servants, and between Jesus and the servants (cluster C): *the miracle*
  - C. The didactic dialogue between the steward and the bridegroom (cluster D): *the result*
- 2) The narrator attempts to emphasise the miracle itself (cluster C) more than anything else because this pericope has a chiasmic structure focusing on the miracle portion. Therefore the detailed particulars of the progression of the miracle must be granted proper focus. This may contain meaningful overtones.
- 3) The story starts and ends with the common remark on the situation of the

disciples: their attendance at a wedding (in the introduction) and their putting their faith in Jesus (in the conclusion). This aspect is connected to the affirmative emphasis of the narrator, which is also rendered by the symbolic friendly place of ‘Cana,’ so that the reader may anticipate the strong implication of ‘the discipleship.’

The analysis will thus proceed under the following headings: 1) the function of the motive dialogue, 2) the overtone of the miraculous procedure, 3) the significance of the didactic dialogue<sup>34</sup>, and 4) the narrator’s comment on the disciples.

#### 2.2.4.1. The function of the motive dialogue

After the description of the setting and the presence of the main characters in the narrative opening of vv 1-2<sup>35</sup>, the narrator delineates the first dialogue between Jesus and his mother (vv. 3-4). When the wine runs short<sup>36</sup>, the mother of Jesus tells Him about this embarrassing problem (v. 3). Many commentators, especially Catholics such as Moloney (1993:81), insist that she does not ask for a miracle but that she instead merely reports this desperate situation (see Brown 1966:98; Collins 1990:166). However, from the inference of the immediate contextual situation, it seems safe to

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<sup>33</sup> The action unfolds as the result of various direct speeches: a) Jesus’ mother speaks to Jesus (v. 3), b) Jesus answers His mother (v. 4), c) Jesus’ mother speaks to the servants (v. 5), d) Jesus speaks twice to the servants (vv. 7-8), and e) the steward speaks to the bridegroom.

<sup>34</sup> Here, only the motive dialogue between Jesus and his mother and the didactic dialogue between the steward and the bridegroom will be investigated. Two interlude dialogues between Jesus’ mother and the servants (v. 5) and Jesus and the servants (vv. 7-8) are directly linked with the performance of the miracle before and after, so it does not have the same theological importance in the narrative but just functions as a tool of the miraculous performance.

<sup>35</sup> According to Lieu (1998:63), the mention *kai. h=n h` mh, thr tou/ Vhhsou/ evkei* is John’s regular way of introducing a focal character (+*hn de. a;nqrwpoj* [3:1 Nicodemus]; +*hn tij* [4:46; 5:5; 11:1; 12:20 (pl.)]).

<sup>36</sup> The manuscripts of  $\alpha^*$ ,  $\text{it}^{\text{a,b,f2j,r}}$ ,  $\text{sy}^{\text{hmg}}$  are paraphrased by reading *oi=non ouvk ei=con, o]]]ti sunetele, sqh o[ oi=nos tou/ ga,mou\ ei=ta*. Two Old Latin witnesses ( $\text{it}^{\text{e,l}}$ ) describes this verse in the following way: *et factum est multam turbam vocitorum vinum consummari*. Brown (1966:98) refers to the fact that La Grange, Braun, Bultmann, and Boismard prefers the longer reading of the original hand of Sinaiticus, together with that of the Old Latin. However, he himself prefers the shorter reading, because both Bodmer papyri support the shorter reading. Alexandrian manuscripts (i.e.,  $\text{P}^{66}$ ,  $\text{P}^{75}$ ,  $\alpha^{\text{a}}$ ), the majority of the uncial and minuscule manuscripts, together with some versional witnesses also concretely support the shorter reading. Thus the textual evidence clearly

assume that she expected from Jesus some miraculous action (see Scott 1992:177-184). First of all, as observed by Olsson (1974:35), this statement of Jesus' mother is in the form of a prayer as a request to Jesus to intervene in some way. Besides, by considering the declaration of Jesus' mother to the servants as 'do whatever He tells you' (v. 5), it is natural to think that she is convinced that Jesus would perform some kind of action, even though Jesus replies with a mysterious answer (v. 4; cf. Schnackenburg 1968:331; Painter 1989b:23). Therefore, something is undoubtedly requested by Mary from Jesus as He refuses to become involved.

According to Williams (1997:679-692; cf. Collins 1995:100-109), this request scene must be understood in the first-century Mediterranean social context. In the first-century Mediterranean world, certain occasions such as birthdays, weddings, and funerals are public events rather than private family celebrations. Furthermore the running out of wine on a public occasion such as wedding feast represents a loss of the host's honour, reputation and prestige in the community. Thus the problem of the shortage of wine indicates to all that the groom has very limited material and social resources. For this reason, this crisis can be understood not only as a material problem, but it may indeed also in an inclusive way refer to some mental damage (see Malina 1993:28-62).

In the first-century Mediterranean world, however, if the host is faced with such a disturbance, his colleagues or patron can supply the deficiency and maintain honour and reputation of the threatened host. In the narrative, when the wine resources run out, it is only Jesus' mother who is aware of the urgency of this situation (v. 3).<sup>37</sup> Bearing in mind this social context, Jesus' mother aims to seize the opportunity by extending the reciprocal relation with the host through her son's replenishment. Besides, she simultaneously seeks to broaden the favour from Jesus, which would establish Him as the patron of a local family. This may enhance His honour as well as that of His physical family (cf. Destro & Pesce 1995:268-272).

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supports the shorter reading and the longer reading seems to be an elucidation because the reading of **a\*** is a gloss, even though this is an early one.

<sup>37</sup> Although the narrator does not give any information on the relations between Jesus' mother and the host of the banquet, she might have had close relations with the host.

Jesus, however, firstly refuses to grant His mother the favour, addressing her as *gu, nai* (v. 4). There are no precedents for a son addressing his mother as ‘woman’ in either Jewish or Greek sources. This address has therefore been discussed with special interest, especially amongst Catholic scholars, as it creates difficulties in their Mariology (cf. Haenchen 1984:173).<sup>38</sup> The address ‘woman’ is neither proved to be a mark of honour, nor it is definitely a disrespectful form (Schnackenburg 1968:328; Nortje 1986:23:25; Strachen 1941:122). The word *gu, nai* indicates simply ‘an adult female person of marriageable age,’ and thus Jesus generally addresses most females as *gu, nai* in the Gospels (see Mt 15:28; Lk 13:10; John 4:21; 8:11, 19:25; 20:13; Louw & Nida 1988:9.34; Kysar 1986:45). Thus, as believed by Williams (1997:688), this characteristic address might imply Jesus’ denying Mary’s material claims on Him, distancing Himself from her by placing her on par with the other women He so addresses. That is, this negative response should be understood from the point of the status that Jesus has in public (cf. Gibson 1990:37-66; Collins 1995:104; Witherington III 1995:79).

Besides, this indication shows the intention of the narrator who tries to associate this story with that of the crucifixion (19:25-27). This inference is evident from the fact that the same address of Jesus to his mother as *gu, nai* is only found again in the crucifixion scene, thereby ignoring of the reference in 6:42 because though this verse also obviously mentions Jesus’ mother it is just the voice of the crowds (see Kitzberger 1998:24-25).<sup>39</sup> This is the very reason for the narrator having mentioned

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<sup>38</sup> In the Gospel of John, Jesus’ mother is mentioned only three times, *viz.*, in this episode, in 6:42 and in 19:25-27. In these instances, she is constantly addressed as ‘woman.’ The reason for this anonymity differs according to various scholars. Some representative suggestions in this regard are as follows: Barrett (1978:190) infers that it is certain that John has in mind a historical character and that he intends no veiled allusion to Israel, from which the Messiah sprang. Lindars (1972:128; see also Kitzberger 1995:564-586), on the other hand, thinks that the reason for the mentioning of this unnamed is to distinguish her from Mary of Bethany (Mary Magdalene). Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:66; cf. Williams 1997:685), however, plausibly suggest that in the Mediterranean world the names of respectable women were never mentioned in public. That is, ‘mother of Jesus’ is the customary honorific title, which is the respectful way of referring to a woman who has born a son; the birth of a son accordingly defines the woman as a complete, adult person.

<sup>39</sup> Some commentators (Brown 1966:107-109; Stibbe 1993:44) suggest that Jesus’ mother is probably intended as an allusion to Gen 3:15 (also 3:20), in which case she is to be seen as the new Eve in the

‘h` w[ra mou’ in the subsequent utterance of Jesus, which is a statement in this Gospel commonly referring to the death and glorification of Jesus (see 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1).<sup>40</sup> He speaks of His hour as not yet come, and then, finally, of its arrival. It refers to that decisive time in the crucifixion and resurrection when He is glorified by the Father (Kysar 1986:45).

Nevertheless, after the refusal, Jesus immediately performs the miracle. This contrasting action might have caused some confusion to the paradigmatic reader without an accurate understanding of the metaphorical dimension of the Gospel. That is, clarity in this regard would not have been possible unless the reader has in mind the metaphorical family imagery of the Gospel. According to Van der Watt (see 2000:161), the metaphorical family imagery is obvious throughout the entire Gospel, and is simply supported by family language (*e.g.* father, son, brothers, house, birth, and life) and family imagery (*e.g.* love, teach, learn, protect, honour, and ask). Van der Watt suggests the distinction of the two dimensions of the family in the Gospel: ‘the earthly family’ and ‘the heavenly family.’ Although the narrator presents Jesus as a member of a physical family (cf. 1:45; 2:1, 12; 6:42; 7:3-10), which is not surprising because He became flesh (1:14), He ultimately, through the entire Gospel, emphasises the heavenly family.

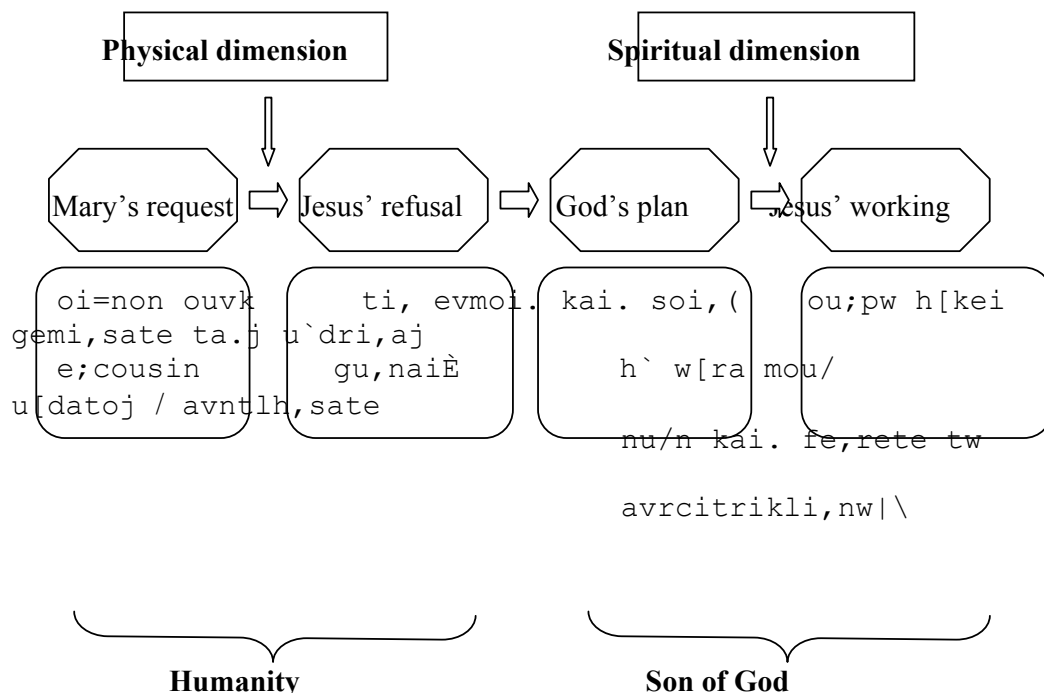
Regarding of Jesus’ works, not only in chapter 2 but also in chapter 7, Van der Watt (2000:261) states, “Jesus does not immediately listen to nor do what his earthly family suggest. In 2:4, Jesus remarks: *ti, evmoi. kai. soi, (gu,naiÈ ou;pw h[kei h` w[ra mou* and in 7:8: *u`mei/j avna,bhte eivj th.n e`orth,n\ evgw. ouv k avnabai,nw eivj th.n e`orth.n tau,thn( o[ti o` evmo.j kai ro.j ou;pw pep lh,rwtai.* The will of His heavenly Father, but not that of His earthly family, dominates the actions of Jesus.

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new creation of Jesus’ ministry (see Suggit 1987:149). This suggestion, however, does not have obvious evidence in consideration with the context (see Culpepper 1983:133-134).

<sup>40</sup> There is much dispute concerning the connotative meaning of the word ‘hour’ mentioned by Jesus in the Gospel of John. Scholars are divided on whether ‘my hour’ refers to the moment of the first public display of Jesus’ power or to the moment of His passion. Although this mention indicates His first sign primitively, the narrator wants the reader to keep further ranges of symbolism in mind Jesus’ hour

The priority of adherence to the heavenly family is stressed.” The following diagram illustrates this metaphoric dimension.



Therefore the motivational dialogue between Jesus and his mother functions as the proclamation of the public status that Jesus bore (see Witherington III 1995: 78-79; Lightfoot 1956:101).<sup>41</sup>

#### 2.2.4.2. The overtone of the miraculous procedure

As mentioned above in the structural analysis, the narrative has a strong chiasmic structure. It is exposed that the process of Jesus' miracle in vv. 6-8 (cluster C) is the centrepiece of the pericope. This means that the narrator wants the reader to concentrate on the process of the miracle. In view of the paradigmatic reader, *inter alia*, according to the perception of the contemporary reader, the account of the miraculous process seems to be very simple. To the original Johannine reader,

refers His returning to His Father (Lindars 1972:129). For a more complete argumentation of this, see Schnackenburg 1968:328-331, Giblin 1980:197-211.

<sup>41</sup> See Van der Watt (2000) for a full discussion of family imagery in the Gospel of John.

however, this could have been very different due to the fact that the depiction of the narrator contains the full symbolic implication, which would be considered more precisely.

The narrator mentions the qualificational setting for the miracle in verse 6 in *h=san de. evkei/ li, qinai u`dri, ai e]x kata. to.n kaqarismo.n tw/n VIoudai, wn kei, menai( cwrou/sai avna. metrhta.j du, o h' t rei/j*<sup>42</sup> (cf. Mk 7:3–4). This mention not only provides the reader with factual information, but also furnishes a complete symbolic association (cf. Kysar 1986:46; Bruce 1983:70-71). The following is the precise discussion in this regard:

First of all, the reader immediately discovers that a huge amount of water will be changed into wine because the reference to the quantity as ‘six stone jars’<sup>43</sup> of water’<sup>44</sup> indeed indicates a very extensive scale. It is natural to infer that the guests at the festival had already become drunk because the festival may have continued for some days (see v. 10) with the effect that they would currently not have been in need of such a huge quantity of wine. This excessive quantity of the wine accordingly must be acknowledged as the hopeful imaginings of the abundance provided by the messianic age (e.g., Jer 33:6; Isa 60:5; Kysar 1986:46-47). In this regard, Beasley-Murray

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<sup>42</sup> The textual problem must be mentioned regarding *h=san de. evkei/ li, qinai u`dri, ai e]x kata. to.n kaqarismo.n tw/n VIoudai, wn kei, menai* (v. 6). This verse depicts the conditions of the miracle that is to come. The substance of the sentence is the same, even though there are some differences between the manuscripts. The manuscripts offer the following possibilities:

- 1) The printed edition (UBS<sup>4</sup>) is supported by P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> a<sup>c</sup> B L X W 0141 33 213 1071 eth.
- 2) Omission of *kei, menai* is supported by a<sup>\*</sup> 13 346 147 it<sup>a,e</sup> arm,
- 3) Placement of *kei, menai* after *e]x* is supported by A G D Q L P it<sup>c,q</sup> vg sy<sup>p,h,pal</sup> al.
- 4) Placement of *kei, menai* before *e]x* is supported by 69 124 it<sup>l</sup>.
- 5) Placement of *kei, menai* before *li, qinai*, and omit *e]x* is supported by it<sup>f2</sup> it<sup>b</sup>.

Although the major witnesses support the printed edition, the word *kei, menai* can raise a question. This seems to be awkward because *h=san* places at the beginning of the sentence. Thus the committee of UBS<sup>4</sup> opted for this word depending on transcriptional evidence, which says that awkward reading is more preferable. In this regard, according to Schnackenburg (1968:332), there is archaeological evidence for the existence of such vessels, which were mostly embedded in the ground. However, it is certain that Jesus did not create the vessels.

<sup>43</sup> This ‘stone jars’ reminds the reader of Exodus 7:19, where Moses changes to blood the water in the Egyptian’s stone jars (Brown 1966:100).



(1987:35) also accurately states, “their large size is natural, but the sequel suggests that the great quantity they contained reflected the fullness of Christ’s grace, in contrast to the limitations of the old covenant (John 1:16–17).”

Secondly, the numeral-mention ‘six’ implies a strong Jewish atmosphere. According to Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:69), in first century Mediterranean society, most village families would have had no more than one stone water jar (which held about twenty gallons), hence the presence of six stone jars may indicate that others have been borrowed from neighbours for the occasion. Therefore the intentional coincidence of the ‘six’ can be understood in the artistry of the narrator in expressing a certain theological purpose. As Morris (1971:182) and other commentators (see Collins 1995:104-105) believe, the Jews regard ‘seven’ as the perfect number and ‘six’ accordingly is short of perfection, lacking, incomplete. Hence the ‘six jars’ in this verse are held to point to Judaism as incompleteness.

Thirdly, with reference to the ‘water,’ Van der Watt (2000:228) supposes that John uses the imagery of water and relates the term to fulfil an important function in the Gospel.<sup>45</sup> This substance, in general, symbolically functions as the image of the purification or renewal in this Gospel (see Kotze 1985:55-56). What then is the water that is replaced by this wine of God? The narrator gives a hint when he mentions that the water jars were there ‘kata. to.n kaqarismo.n tw/n VIoudai, wn.’ As suggested by Dodd (1953:299), these stand for the entire system of Jewish ceremonial observance – and by implication for religion upon that level, wherever it is found, as distinguished from religion upon the level of ‘truth’ (cf. 4:23-24). Therefore, the narrator shows that, from now on, the purification is no longer necessary through the Jewish ceremony but only results from the action of Jesus (13:10) or his word (15:3) or his blood, that is, his death on the cross (1 Jn 1:7) (Suggit 1987:151; Brown

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<sup>44</sup> *metrhta.j* is a liquid measure of about 9 or 10 gallons (UBS dictionary) and one measure is 39.39 litres (cf. 1 gallon = 3.785 litres).

<sup>45</sup> Culpepper (1998:131) enumerates the use of ‘water’ in the various contexts as follows (also see Goppelt 1972:324-328): John’s baptising (1:26-28), ritual cleansing (2:6-7), new birth (3:5), living water (4:10-15), healing water (5:2-7), and Jesus’ walking on water (6:16-21). On the literary level, but, Van der Watt (2000:229) considers that the references to water in 1:31, 33; 2:1-11; 3:5; 5:1-18;

1966:104).

Jesus now implicitly performs a miracle without any public presentation according to which they are associated with such divine power (Olsson 1974:58). He merely orders the servants to fill the jars with water and they fill them to the brim. Then the servants bring the wine to the steward to taste it. Thus the narrator's intention in describing the miraculous process seems to be to present the above-mentioned symbolic import. That is, John's mind is fixed, not on the heightening of the physical miracle, but on encouraging the belief that the spiritual resources of Christ provided in the Christian Gospel are inexhaustible. Here the actual miracle is secondary, while the symbolism is prominent (Strachen 1941:123).

#### 2.2.4.3. The significance of the didactic dialogue

After the miracle, the narrator leaves Jesus out of the story and introduces the steward and bridegroom into the narrative (v. 9). Thus the scene now changes and has an utterly new atmosphere (see Busse 1995:29-32). The narrator does not give any information about the bridegroom and the bride in the narrative, while they are actually the protagonists in the feast. He just mentions the dialogue between the steward and the bridegroom on the new wine (v. 10; see Witherington III 1995:78):  
Pa/j a;nqrwpoj prw/ton to.n kalo.n oi=non ti,qhsin kai. o[tan mequsqw/sin to.n evla,ssw\ su. teth,rhkaj to.n kalo.n oi=non e[wj a;rti<sup>46</sup>.

The statement of the steward, however, obviously has a significant function in drawing the identity of Jesus into the narrative. According to Beasley-Murray (1987:35), "the statement to the bridegroom is neither a proverb nor a rule; it may be

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6:16-21; 9:7; 13:5; 19:34 might be symbolic, so they do not present themselves directly as metaphors on the textual level, but, in chapter 4 and 7, the reference to water can be considered as metaphorical.

<sup>46</sup> The Byzantine manuscripts (a<sup>c</sup> A X G D Q L P and etc.) added to,te after mequsqw/sin. However, P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> a\* B L 083 0141 57 248 573 579 1010 1279 I<sup>185</sup> it<sup>a,e,f12,l,q</sup> sy<sup>pal</sup> sa bo eth didn't add to,te and thus support the printed edition. The Byzantine MSS seems to try to make a smoother reading by adding to,te...

an ironical or humorous or simply shrewd comment on human conduct. For the Evangelist it serves as a testimony to the perfection of the sign performed by Jesus.” Furthermore, the reader who has the potential knowledge of the messianic connotation of bridegroom (see Mk 2:19f. par; Mt 29:1-13; cf. Rev 21:2, 9; 22:17) and the apocalyptic symbolism of wine (see Hoskyns 1947:192)<sup>47</sup> and the symbolic representation of Jesus as bridegroom that is made explicit in John 3:29 (see Brown 1966:159-160)<sup>48</sup>, realises that the bridegroom in this verse has the role of the evocative character who is bathed in Christological light (Duke 1985:94; Van der Watt 2000:392-393). That is, it would seem to be an inevitable conclusion that the reference to the bridegroom is to Jesus (Suggit 1987:153).

Besides, while Newman & Nida (see 1980:61) properly translate the *to.n kalo.n oi=non* into ‘the best wine’ nevertheless most major versions translate it as ‘the good wine,’ therein the association of the bridegroom with the wine is even more noteworthy. Thus, Newman & Nida suppose that there is a contrast not merely between good wine and poor wine, but between the best wine and ordinary wine. This ultimately indicates that the contrast is not just on the literal level of physical material but is also a symbolic disparity between the new way of Jesus and the old way of Judaism. The plentiful nature of Jesus as the eschatological Bridegroom is thus clearly exposed through the reference of the steward (see Smith 1995:109; Staley 1988:85; Witherington III 1995:79-80).

#### **2.2.4.4. The narrator’s comment on the disciples**

In structure, the disciples are strongly emphasised in both the opening and at the end of the narrative by the chiasmic structural artistry of the narrator. First of all, in the opening (v. 2), the narrator describes how Jesus’ disciples are invited to participate in

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<sup>47</sup> Regarding the wine, according to Culpepper (1998:131), it (wine) is a powerful symbol that occurs in the Bible in reference to physical and spiritual joy (Ecc 9:7; Ge 27:28), future hope (Zec 10:6-7; Isa 25:5; Joel 2:19) and abundance (Joel 2:24; 3:18; Am 9:13). Therefore when the narrator mentions the wine in the story, the reader associates this substance naturally into the eschatological dimension (see ‘The literary setting’).

<sup>48</sup> It is not exactly clear who the speaker is in John 3:31-36, as it could be the Baptist, Jesus or the narrator (Tolmie 1998:64-65).

a wedding party. Yet it still remains to identify exactly who these disciples are (see Moloney 2000:49-52). This is due to the fact that ‘the calling of the disciples’ in 1:35-51 is no longer described. In regard to their identity, some commentators (see Carson 1991:169) think that this term indicates only the five already mentioned disciples (Andrew, Simon, Philip, Nathanael, and an unnamed disciple), while others (see Bernard 1928a:73) think that this might refer to all the followers of Jesus, while others (see Barrett 1978:190) still think that the reader here might refer to ‘the twelve’ in 6:67, with the resulting conclusion that it is most probably this complete group to which the narrator referred. Bearing in mind the macro context, although this is a trivial matter for the exegesis, it is plausible to conclude that this might refer to the five disciples who have already mentioned (see Newman & Nida 1980:56).

The reference to the disciples is once again found at the end of the narrative (v. 11). Therein the narrator ends the episode with a reference to the directive instalment of the faith of the disciples in Jesus. The following is the semantic relationships of three sub-cola in this closing verse.

—Tau, thn evpoi, hsen avrch.n tw/n shmei, wn o` VIhsou/j e  
 vn Kana. th/j Galilai, aj  
 —kai. evfane, rwsen th.n do, xan auvtou/ (  
 —kai. evpi, steusan eivj auvtou.n oi` maqhtai. Auvtou

As argued in the structural analysis of this verse (see ‘Structural analysis’), three indicative aorist verbs *evpoi, hsen*, *evfane, rwsen*, *evpi, steusan* in each colon are most remarkable in the statement of the narrator. Two preceding singular verbs *evpoi, hsen* and *evfane, rwsen* present the acts of Jesus, which are linked by means of cause-effect relations to each other. The following plural verb *evpi, steusan* in the last colon presents the response of the disciples. This is semantically a result of the preceding action of Jesus. That is, Jesus reasons the putting of the disciples’ faith into Him and this aspect is further emphasised in the sentence.

As Tolmie (1998:59-61) supposes, in the ideological perspective, the narrator of the Gospel is basically concerned with two aspects, namely the identity of Jesus and humankind's reaction to Jesus, since the Gospel is aimed at guiding the reader deeper into faith in Jesus, thereby sharing the eternal life. Thus this structural artistry of the narrator is also aimed at guiding the reader deeper into discipleship. In this regard, the statement of Ridderbos (1992:113) is significant: "believing means here that the more and more they learned to understand the person with whom they had to do; it was the faith, therefore, that did not stop at astonishment over His power (cf. 2:23 ff) or at the expectation with which they had approached Him."

#### **2.2.5. The point of view**

The narrator organises the story chronologically, that is, the story is stated according to the sequence in which the actions occurred, which included: 1) the lack of wine caused the mother of Jesus to ask Him to create more wine; 2) Jesus performed the miracle according to the request of His mother; 3) the steward was surprised by the good taste of this new wine; and 4) the disciples believed in Jesus as a result of His miraculous deeds. However, he omits stating the time during which the guests drank all the wine and shortened the period that was taken to create the wine in the water jars. This means that the interest of the narrator lies in the narrative plot and not as such in the description of the wedding banquet itself.

The narrator has a strong retrospective point of view in the temporal perspective. It is evident from the post-Easter terms in the narrative, for instance, 'on the third day,' 'wedding,' 'wine,' and 'glory.' Therefore the story must be read in the viewpoint of Resurrection (see 'The literary setting').

The narrator adopts an omnipresent point of view in the spatial perspective. This is evident from the entire pericope. He is in every dialogue, *viz.*, the dialogue between Jesus and his mother, mother and the servants, Jesus and the servants, and finally the steward and the bridegroom. These dialogues contribute to the establishment of the narrative plot. Furthermore, each dialogue draws the respective Christological dogma,

for instance, the dialogue between Jesus and mother exposes the public status of Jesus, the dialogue between mother and the servants exposes the supernatural power of Jesus, the dialogue between Jesus and the servants exposes the anti-Judaist tradition, and the dialogue between the steward and the bridegroom exposes the identity of Jesus as the eschatological bridegroom.

The narrator adopts an omniscient point of view in the psychological perspective. Even though he does not introduce the complete inner thoughts of the main characters, he grants a full and outstanding account on the actions and words of the characters, in order for the reader to be able to gain all the necessary information and to properly understand the theological message. This is especially prominent in the tacit response of Jesus' disciples towards the miracle, which shows the significant purpose of the narrative (v. 11; cf. Culpepper 1983:23).

## **2.2.6. The synthesis**

### **2.2.6.1. The primary concern of the narrative**

This is the first sign in the Gospel of John, which is obviously mentioned by the narrator in the last verse of the pericope (*avrch.n tw/n shmei, wn*, v. 11). This narrator's mention of a 'sign' to the event indicates that the narrative should be regarded as having had some special meaning (see Witherington III 1995:79-80).<sup>49</sup> That is, the story is not to be taken at face value but rather its true meaning lies deeper (Dodd 1953:297). In other words, as Brown (1966:103-104) states, the narrator does not put emphasis primarily on the replacing of the water for Jewish purification, nor on the action of changing water to wine, nor even on the resultant wine, nor on Mary or her interaction, nor on why she pursued her request, nor on the reaction of the steward or of the groom. Rather, the narrator is concerned with something that points to a reality with even greater significance (Louw & Nida 1988:443). That is, the primary concern in narrating the story is to portray the Christological picture of Jesus.

Regarding the mention of ‘first,’ according to some commentators (Olsson 1974:67; Newman & Nida 1980:62) this numerical mention means not only ‘initial’ but also ‘primary,’ or ‘basic.’ The author of the Gospel often uses words in more than one sense. Therefore this figure must be regarded as having a connotative meaning and accordingly should not be thought of as merely an indication of an actual figure. This is supported by the noteworthy contrast between the temporal indicator of  $\text{ou}; \text{pw}$  (v. 4) and  $\text{nu}/\text{n}$  (v. 8), in which both are stated by Jesus Himself that give the reader a certain illumination on ‘now is the time to start something.’ Besides, the statement of the steward that  $\text{su teth, rhkaj to.n kalo.n oi=non e[wj a;rti}$  also supports the fact that the narrator gives a strong significance to the start of Jesus’ ministry with the underlying miracle (cf. Schnackenburg 1968:323). That is, this says something about the appearance of Jesus in the economy of salvation (Smith 1995:109). Thus the underlying sign functions as an introduction that provides an interpretation to all of them (Labahn 1999:187; Blomberg 2001:87).

#### **2.2.6.2. The identity of Jesus**

The narrator arranges the miracle tradition anew in his story. He (the narrator) unfolds his theological intention of exposing the identity of Jesus with coherence in the following three gradual phases (vv. 3-5; 6-8; 9-10).

##### **1) Jesus’ public status (vv. 3-5)**

The narrator, at the opening of the narrative (vv. 3-5), pronounces Jesus’ public status through the incompatible actions of Jesus, that is, the refusal of His mother’s request on the supply of the wine, followed by the immediate performance of the miracle. Jesus here declares His freedom from any kind of human manipulation. He will not be controlled by His mother’s or any human’s desire. In the metaphoric family dimension of this Gospel, Jesus does not act according to the request of His physical family but takes action according to the programme of His heavenly Father (cf.

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<sup>49</sup> For a full argumentation of the use of ‘sign,’ see Rengsorf 1975:200-269.

Lightfoot 1956:101).<sup>50</sup>

This may cause the reader to reflect on the pre-mentioned identity of Jesus as ‘the Son of God’ through the mouth of John the Baptist in John 1:34. Jesus proves his obedience to God, and therefore his true sonship, by accomplishing the work that the Father gives him to do (Smalley 1978:216). This theological motif of Jesus to ‘the Son of God’ will be developed in the whole Gospel (see 1:49; 5:25; 10:36; 11:4, 27; 19:7; 20:31), but here only the gloomy initial picture of this is found (see Smith 1995:127-131).

### **2) The remarkable abundance of the new order (vv. 6-8)**

Through the miraculous process (vv. 6-8), the narrator shows the lack of Judaism and the plentifulness of new order. The narrator intentionally designs this aspect by focusing his artistry on the structural emphasis of the miraculous process. Even though there is no need to provide ‘plenty of the best wine’ at the banquet because the feast is almost finished and the guests are already drunk, Jesus does provide it in order to announce His excessive joy and abundance of His order (see Kysar 1986:46). Thus the reader realises the intentional supply of Jesus in this regard. This inference is heightened by the macro context of the narrative. That is, the narrator places the underlying story in the beginning part of Jesus’ first circular journey in chapters 2-4 where Jesus breaks the old order and the new order commences, so that the reader is aware of the pre-suppositional rationale of Jesus’ ministry that will be developed in the whole Gospel.

### **3) Jesus as the eschatological bridegroom (vv. 9-10)**

The obvious theological message the narrative contains is concretised by using the statement of the steward to Jesus (v. 10). The narrator implicitly applies the imagery of bridegroom to Jesus. Jesus, as the eschatological bridegroom, supplies an

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<sup>50</sup> It is sometimes a pattern in Johannine stories of Jesus’ encounter with human need first to rebuke the one asking for help, only to go on to fulfil the request (cf. 4:48ff and 11:3ff; Kysar 1986:45).



abundance of the best wine at the banquet so that He satisfies the people while the physical bridegroom disappoints the people through the shortage of wine. This contrast presents the obvious distinction between the old order (Jewish order) and the new order (Christological order). The narrator actually attempts to show that Jesus can save the world from sin and death, whereas Judaism has failed in this regard. This is why he draws the strong Easter nuance at the outset and at the end of the narrative. At the outset of the narrative (v. 1), through the temporal mention ('on the third day'), the narrator furnishes not only the factual contextual information of the historical event at hand, but also the figurative allusion to Easter. This postulation is also reflected in the end of the narrative where the narrator mentions that Jesus reveals the 'glory' (v. 11a).

### **2.2.6.3. Theological and hermeneutical conclusion**

Jesus performs this significant miracle with the intention of revealing His  $\delta\omicron, \chi\alpha$  (see Caird 1968:265-277; Cook 1984:291-297; Bratcher 1991:401-408).<sup>51</sup> The reference of the narrator to Jesus having manifested His  $\delta\omicron, \chi\alpha$  recalls the reader to the narrator's previous declaration, which is that of 'the glory as of a father's only son' in chapter 1 (1:14; Peterson 1993:33; cf. Collins 1995:105-107). Thus the Christological theme that is introduced in chapter 1 is developed in this story. In this regard, Brown (1966:101) correctly explains this  $\delta\omicron, \chi\alpha$  as meaning that the true glory of Jesus is only to be revealed in His hour. Since 7:39 clearly states that during the ministry Jesus had not yet been glorified, the reader is to think of verse 11 either as referring to a partial manifestation of glory, or as being part of the encapsulation of the training of the disciples, where their whole career, including their sight of the glory of the resurrected Jesus, was foreshadowed (see Von Rad 1974:241-242; Strachan

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<sup>51</sup> Peterson (1993:33) correctly states that "within the story, the irony is that while the disciples and the other actors 'saw' what Jesus did, his disciples 'saw' what he did as a 'sign' manifesting his 'glory' and 'believed in him,' whereas it is implied that the others did not 'see' the sign or the glory and hence did not 'believe.'" Subsequently he (1993:34) differentiates the faith of the disciples in this verse from Nathanael's belief that Jesus was the 'Son of God' and 'King of Israel,' and also from both the Baptist's and the disciples' earlier identification of Jesus as 'the Lamb of God' and as 'the Messiah/Christ.'

1941:103-106).<sup>52</sup>

The disciples respond to the exposure of Jesus' identity by putting their faith in Him (v. 11b; cf. Witherington III 1995:79). Jesus' wonders are persuasive evidence of His divine authority and therefore evoke faith. That is, only on the condition of faith do they reveal Christ's glory (Kysar 1986:47). This affirmative reaction, that is, the acceptance and the discipleship, is the narrator's anticipation at the beginning of the narrative (v. 1). The narrator not only mentions the presence of the disciples but also employs the friendly spatial mention ('at Cana') at the opening so that he alludes to the symbolic implication of the acceptance and the discipleship. In this regard, Brown (1966:102) properly states that "what shines through is Jesus' glory and the only reaction that is emphasised is the belief of the disciples." Although Carson (1991:166) labelled this story as 'semi-public' because only the servants and the disciples gained any knowledge of the source of the wine (that is, knowledge of the disclosure of Jesus), the underlying story has a full role in the pronouncement of the initiation of Jesus' public ministry for the paradigmatic reader.

God now spreads the messianic banquet and Jesus presents Himself as the bridegroom. From now on, as Beasley-Murray (1987:37) states, "the reality and the gift remain through every succeeding generation, till the last hour strikes and the ultimate gift of life through Christ is his gift to all who do not reject the revelation in him (5:21-29)."

### **2.3. The healing of the royal official's son (4:46-54)**

#### **2.3.1. The macro context**

##### **2.3.1.1. 4:43-45 as a transitional passage of the sign**

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<sup>52</sup> Barrett (1978:193) also thinks that although "the hour had not come for manifesting his glory, yet, as indeed in all the signs, a partial and preliminary manifestation was granted that the disciples might believe." On the other hand, Moloney (1993:88) states about this verse connecting with the Sinai scene that "the solemnity of the language indicates to the reader that the revelation of the glory of YHWH manifested 'on the third day' at Sinai has been surpassed in the manifestation of the glory of Jesus 'on the third day' at Cana (2:1)."

Even though the underlying narrative starts from verse 46, it is necessary to investigate some preceding verses (vv. 43-45) due to the fact that this is the transitional passage similar to 2:23-25, introducing the following story (Ridderbos 1992:173; Beasley-Murray 1987:70; Kysar 1986:72; Bruce 1983:116). This transitional passage, as will be investigated, functions as a very important precaution to prevent the serious failure of the people. Thus it is essential to concentrate on this passage.

In verse 43, the narrator describes Jesus' journey to Galilee after He has stayed in Samaria for two days. The departure for Galilee forms the resumption of verse 3. In verses 1-3, Jesus leaves Judea because of the attention with which the Pharisees are suspiciously regarding His work there (v. 1), and is moving into Galilee (v. 3). The teaching at Sychar is only an episode of His journey (vv. 4-42), and the narrative is now resumed (Bernard 1928a:163). The narrator then, in verse 44, refers the reason for this expedition to Galilee: *auvto.j ga.r VIhsou/j evmartu,rhsen o[ti profh,thj evn th/| ivdi,a| patri,di timh.n ouvke;cei*. This mention is difficult to understand because it seems to be contradicted in the following verse (v. 45). In this verse (v. 44), Jesus compares His situation to that of a prophet who receives no honour in his own country; while in the following verse (v. 45), His native Galilean community grants Him an enthusiastic welcome (Brown 1966:187). There is therefore an obvious contradiction between these two verses, with the identification of the country to which Jesus belonged (*evn th/| ivdi,a| patri,di*).

As Bernard (1928a:163-164) and other commentators point out, a similar saying is placed in the mouth of Jesus in the Synoptic narratives, in Mk 6:4, Mt 13:57, Lk 4:24, but in these passages the 'home town' of Jesus clearly indicates Nazareth, where He is teaching and where His friends and kinfolk are amazed that 'the carpenter, the Son of Mary,' should exhibit such wisdom as His words reveal. In this Gospel, however, the circumstances are wholly different from those at Nazareth. Jesus left Judea, where the Pharisees were beginning to watch Him with suspicion and was moving through

Samaria into Galilee. Therefore an alternative explanation should be presented.

Although scholars have sought a way to solve this problem, there are still great varieties of interpretative opinions (cf. Culpepper 1998:145). According to Carson (1991:235-238), about ten different solutions to properly identify this place have been proposed. Amongst others, many commentators, including Carson, prefer to interpret this place as Galilee - indeed, not merely as Galilee, but as Galilee as it represents Jewish soil as opposed to Samaritan soil. This is, however, improbable because the following verse (v. 45) clearly mentions the cordial welcome of Galilee. A better solution of this problem would therefore be to regard this verse (v. 44) as an addition, in other words, an editorial comment by the redactor (see Witherington III 1995:126). The redactor might have inserted this verse somewhat later, with the intention of criticizing a faith based on signs and wonders. The failure of a miracle-oriented faith is criticized on the occasion of the ensuing healing miracle (v. 48) and the remark of the narrator in 2:23-25 (see Kysar 1986:72-73).

In this regard, the following statement by Brown (1966:188) is significant: “We have seen that in their estimation of enthusiasm based on miracles, 4:44-45 and 2:23-25 have much in common. These two passages also have a similar function in the outline of the Gospel. After the description in 2:23-25 of those in Jerusalem who believed in Jesus because of His signs, one of these ‘believers,’ Nicodemus, came to Jesus with his inadequate understanding of Jesus’ powers. Jesus had to explain to Nicodemus that He was really one who had come from above to give eternal life. So also, after the description in 4:44-45 of the Galileans who welcomed Jesus because of His works, a royal official from Galilee comes to Jesus with an inadequate understanding of Jesus’ power. Jesus, as the Giver of Life, will lead the man to a deeper understanding of His function as the giver of life.”

#### **2.3.1.2. The parallelism between ‘the first sign’ and ‘the second sign’**

The most prominent contextual feature of the underlying episode is the frequent structural and literal parallelisms between the previous sign (‘the first sign’ in 2:1-11)

and this current sign ('the second sign' in 4:46-54).

They are:

- 1) As is indicated in Brown's statement (1966:194), there is an obviously similar pattern in the two episodes: Jesus has just arrived back at Galilee; someone comes with a request (Mary; the royal official); Jesus indirectly seems to refuse the request; the person having posed the question persists; Jesus grants the request; which leads another group of people (the disciples; the household) to believe in Him (cf. Schnackenburg 1968:464; Moloney 1993:190; Stibbe 1993:71).
- 2) The same spatial reference ('Cana') to the first sign is particularly emphasised in the setting of this narrative (4:46): 'he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine.' Therein the narrator does not merely indicate the space but he also adds the fact that Jesus' first miracle happened at the same place, thus it is natural to suppose that there is a certain relationship between the episodes (cf. Painter 1989b:28; Witherington III 1995:127).
- 3) The climactic continuity of both is found in the numeral statement of 'the second sign' at the end of the narrative (v. 53), in contrasting to 'the first sign' at the end of the previous episode (2:11).<sup>53</sup>
- 4) Finally, as Mlakuzhyil (1987:170-195) suggests, the following similar method of conclusion is prominent:

2:11a    Tau, thn **evpoi, hsen** th.n avrch.n tw/n **shmei, wn** o`  
VIhsou/j

4:54a    Tou/to de. pa, lin deu, teron **shmei/on evpoi, hsen** o`  
VIhsou/j

2:11b evn Kana. **th/j Galilai,aj**

4:54b evlqw.n ... eivj **th.n Galilai,an**

2:11c **kai. evpi,steusan** eivj auvto.n oi` maqhtai. auvtou

4:53d **kai. evpi,steusen** auvto.j kai. h` oivki,a auvtou/  
o[1h

In the diachronic aspect of the pericope, as Moloney (1993:189; also see Beasley-Murray 1987:71) states, the author might well have been using traditional miracle stories in both the Cana accounts, even though they have been radically rewritten to suit the purpose of the present narrative.<sup>54</sup> In the synchronic aspect of the pericope, however, the author attempts to form the conclusion of the first itinerary of Jesus with this episode. This means that the author, who started the replacement of the Jewish substantiality by Jesus, now lowers a curtain with the healing of the Gentile's dying son (the identity of the royal official as a Gentile will be examined later). In other words, the ministry of Jesus is started in the Jewish realm and influences His close relationships (His disciples and possibly His mother), and is finished in the Gentile realm and influences peoples distant from Him (the royal official and his household).

### 2.3.2. Structure

The following is a discourse analysis of the pericope.

#### 2.3.2.1. Division of the text into cola

##### Cluster A The visit of Jesus to Galilee

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<sup>53</sup> The term 'sign' is mentioned in chapters 2-4 six times (2:11, 18, 23; 3:2; 4:48, 54).

<sup>54</sup> Brown (1966:195), while he doesn't accept a source theory in the Bultmannian sense, suggests that this parallel is the editing of the corpus of Johannine material, which has been split up, to form the beginning and the end of the second part (see Brown 1966:cxl; Stibbe 1993:71).

1 <sup>46</sup> Hlqen ou=n pa,lin eivj th.n Kana. th/j Galilai,a  
 j( o[pou evpoi,hsen  
 to. u[dwr oi=non

**Cluster B The request of the royal official**

2 kai. h=n tij basiliko.j ou- o` ui`o.j hvsqe,nei evn  
 Kafarnaou,m  
 3 <sup>47</sup> ou-toj avkou,saj o[ti VIhsou/j h[kei evk th/j VIo  
 udai,a j  
 eivj th.n Galilai,an avph/lqen pro.j auvto.n  
 4 kai. hvrw,ta i[na katabh/| kai. iva,shtai auvtou/  
 to.n ui`o,n(  
 5 h;mellen ga.r avpoqnh,|skein

**Cluster C The healing of the royal official's son**

6 <sup>48</sup> ei=pen ou=n o` VIhsou/j pro.j auvto,n(  
 6.1 VEa.n mh. shmei/a kai. te,rata i;dhte( ouv mh.  
 pisteu,shte  
 7 <sup>49</sup> le,gei pro.j auvto.n o` basiliko,j(  
 7.1 Ku,rie(  
 7.2 kata,bhqi pri.n avpoqanei/n to. paidi,on mou  
 8 <sup>50</sup> le,gei auvtw/| o` VIhsou/j(  
 8.1 Poreu,ou(  
 8.2 o` ui`o,j sou zh/|

**Cluster D The faith of the royal official and his household**

9 evpi,steusen o` a;nqrwpoj tw/| lo,gw| o]n ei=pen a

uvtw/| o` VIhsou/j

10 kai. evporeu,eto  
 11 <sup>51</sup>h;dh de. aurtou/ katabai,nontoj oi` dou/loi aurtou/ u`ph,nthsan aurtw/|  
 le,gontej o[ti  
 11.1 o` pai/j aurtou/ zh/|  
 12 <sup>52</sup>evpu,qeto ou=n th.n w[ran parV aurtw/n evn h-| k  
 omyo,teron e;scen\  
 13 ei=pan ou=n aurtw/| o[ti  
 13.1 VEcqe.j w[ran e`bdo,mhn avfh/ken aurtou.n o` p  
 ureto,j  
 14 <sup>53</sup>e;gnw ou=n o` path.r o[ti evn evkei,nh| th/| w[r  
 a| evn h-| ei=pen aurtw/|  
 o` VIhsou/j(  
 14.1 ~0 ui`o,j sou zh/|(  
 15 kai. evpi,steusen aurtou.j kai. h` oivki,a aurtou/  
 o[lh

### Cluster E The reference to the second sign

16 <sup>54</sup>Tou/to de. pa,lin deu,teron shmei/on evpoi,hsen  
 o` VIhsou/j evlqw.n  
 evk th/j VIoudai,aj eivj th.n Galilai,an

#### 2.3.2.2. The discussion of the clusters

The pericope is divided into 16 cola, which are grouped into 5 clusters, in the following way:

Cola 1 / 2-5 / 6-8 / 9-15 / 16

**Cluster A (colon 1):** The conjunction ou=n in colon 1 demarcates a new section



from the preceding one. This colon simply concerns the movement of Jesus to Galilee. The title of the cluster is thus ‘the visit of Jesus to Galilee.’

**Cluster B (cola 2-5):** The reason for the demarcation of these six cola from the first colon is the appearance of the main character (the royal official). The subsequent three indicative verbs, *viz.*  $h=n$ ,  $avph/lqen$ , and  $hvrw,ta$  also fulfil some function on behalf of the separation between these cola and the preceding colon. Colon 2 introduces the royal official (see the verbal element for the existence  $h=n$ ), colon 3 depicts the temporal and spatial setting for the character (see the participle  $avkou, saj$ ), colon 4 provides the royal official’s request to Jesus (in here, the verb  $hvrw,ta$  presents the specific desire of the royal official) and colon 5 functions as the reason for the request (see conjunction for the reason  $ga.r$ ). The semantic inter-relationship can therefore be stated in the following way: colon 2 governs the ensuing cola because it presents the character, colon 3 has a subordinate qualificational relationship (setting-time) to colon 4 and colon 4 is the result of colon 5, thus they have a logical reason (colon 5)-result (colon 4) relationship. The pivotal focus of the cluster is therefore ‘the request of the royal official.’

**Cluster C (cola 6-8):** The most important reason for the demarcation of these three cola as a separate unit is to be found in the fact that a shift in focus occurs in colon 6. Whereas the preceding cola are subjected by the request of the official, from now on the focus shifts to the rebuff of Jesus (colon 6), the petition of the official (colon 7), and to the response of Jesus (colon 8). In each of these three cola, the main verb  $le, gw$  ( $ei=pen$  in colon 6 and  $le, gei$  in cola 7-8) is referred to in sequence, in order to compose the reciprocal dialogue around ‘the miracle.’ With reference to the semantic relationship, each dialogue has a co-ordinate dyadic contrastive relationship. The theme of the cluster may accordingly be formulated as ‘the healing of the royal official’s son.’

**Cluster D (cola 9-15):** The different tense of the verb  $evpi, steusen$  (indicative aorist), in contrast to the two preceding indicative present verbs ( $le, gei$ ), introduces the new section. Besides this, the dialogue between Jesus and the official

becomes a dialogue between the official and his servants. This supports the demarcation. The cluster can be distinguished internally into the three parts: cola 10-12; 13-15; 16. This demarcation is based on the following arguments: The first part (cola 10-12) is demarcated as a separated unit, because cola 10-12 have three third person singular verbs (*evpi, steusen, evporeu, eto, and u`ph, nthsan*), further, cola 13-15 have different explicit structural markers, *viz., ou=n and w[ra*, and colon 15 creates an *inclusio* with colon 9, because both present the faith of the royal official (see *evpi, steusen*). Cola 9 and 10 are in the first place primarily linked by means of a different consequential relationship, which is an unfolding structure. Their primary concern is the trust of the official in Jesus' word and the ensuing journey towards his son. Cola 9-10 are linked to colon 11 by means of a qualificational setting (time) relationship. Thus these sequential actions make a preliminary condition for the following second part. Secondly, colon 12 is the question of the official, colon 13 is the answer of the servants, and colon 14 is the result of the preceding two cola (12 and 13). They are all unfolded with the same significant words, that is, *ou=n and w[ra*, which implies that the primary concern of this unit is the 'time.' The semantic relationship of cola 12 and 13 is cause-effect, and the two preceding cola, together with colon 14, are linked by means of a reason-result relationship. Finally, colon 15 is the result of the healing and the repetition of colon 9, which is not merely the presentation of the same faith of the official but indicates his advanced faith that is caused by the miracle. This colon is linked to the preceding cola (9-14) by means of a result-result relationship. The theme of this cluster is thus identified as 'the faith of the royal official and his household.'

**Cluster E (colon 16):** The co-ordinating conjunction *de .* separates this unit from the preceding unit. This colon concerns the movement of Jesus to Galilee. The reference to the second sign is prominent (see colon 1). The title of the cluster thus seems to be 'the reference to the second sign.'

### 2.3.2.3. The summary of the clusters

According to the structural analysis, the relations between the clusters can be

expressed diagrammatically in the following way:

1	colon 1	The visit of Jesus to Galilee
2	cola 2-5	The request of the royal official
3	cola 6-8	The healing of the royal official's son
4	cola 9-15	The faith of the royal official and his household
5	colon 16	The reference to the second sign

The different elements are loosely linked to each other in this pericope. Colon 1 functions as the introduction to the narrative. Two dialogues in cola 2-5 and cola 9-15 antithetically concentrate on the situations of the common character (*viz.*, the royal official) prior to and after the miracle, with reference to his request and to his (and his household's) faith. Cola 6-8 contains the miracle and colon 16 indicates this narrative as the second sign. Therefore there is no definite structural form (or emphasis) in this narrative.

### **2.3.3. The literary setting**

The narrator furnishes only the spatial setting ('Cana') at the outset of the narrative.

#### **2.3.3.1. The spatial setting**

The narrator furnishes the spatial setting of the episode as 'Cana' (τῆ.ν Κανα.), which symbolically indicates the place of acceptance in the Gospel of John (see '2.2.3. The literary setting'; cf. Strange 1992:827). The narrator intentionally adds the fact that the first sign of Jesus occurred in this very place so that the reader who knows the result of the previous sign (2:1-11) can expect the affirmative mood of the episode as well as the clear relationship between this episode and the previous one. Carson (1991:238) accurately describes this relationship in the following way: "the One who transformed water into wine, eclipsing the old rites of purification and announcing the dawning joy of the Messianic banquet, is the one who continues His Messianic work, whether He is rightly trusted or not, by bringing healing and snatching life back from

the brink of death (cf. Isa 35:5-6; 53:4a [cf. Mt 8:16-17]; 61:1).” Thus, through not only the structural patterns but also the spatial mention of the narrator, the reader has in mind the certain close relationships of this sign to the previous sign.

#### **2.3.4. The aspects highlighted by the narratological perspective**

From the macro-contextual investigation, the structural analysis and the study of the literary setting, certain issues that grasped the special attention of the narrator are exposed, in the following way:

- 1) In relation to the first sign (2:1-11), while Jesus uses water as a medium in producing the wine in the previous story, in the underlying narrative, Jesus uses only ‘the word’ to heal the dying son (Kowalski 1987:95). Besides, the miracle takes place at a distance when the official believes this word of Jesus (see the verbal repetition, *evpi*, *steusen*, in colon 9 and in colon 16). The thematic relationship between ‘the word’ and ‘the faith’ should therefore be investigated in detail.
- 2) The story concerns the ‘life.’ The ‘life’ motif is the main theme in the whole Gospel and is as such especially emphasised in chapters 2-4 (see below). Bearing in mind that the underlying narrative is operated at the conclusion of these chapters in macro structural point, this thematic coherence maybe functions to climb at this narrative.
- 3) Another point to be considered is the identity of the royal official. This character occupies the greatest part of the narrative (cola 2-15) and is prominent throughout. Besides, as will be examined later, the narrative stream regarding characterisation has suddenly been turned from the Jews to the Gentile (*i.e.* Samaritan) in chapter 4. Thus the identity of this pivotal character, in relation to his nationality, must be taken note of.

The analysis will thus proceed under the following headings: 1) the word and the faith,

2) the ‘life’ motif, and 3) the identity of the royal official.

#### 2.3.4.1. The word and the faith

When Jesus arrives at Cana in Galilee, the royal official goes from Capernaum to plead<sup>55</sup> with Jesus to come down and heal his dying son<sup>56</sup>, because he has heard that Jesus performs miracles<sup>57</sup> and such power holds out hope for his son (vv. 46-47; Carson 1991:238). Jesus, however, answers him with the paradoxical mention that *ea.n mh. shmei/a kai. te,rata i;dhte( ouv mh. pisteu,shte*<sup>58</sup> (v. 48). The answer of Jesus is neither ‘yes’ nor ‘no’ (Bernard 1928a:168; cf. Labahn 1999:178-203). This mention just comes first in the sentence to criticize the general Jewish view of the miracle (cf. 2:23; 4:45; see Painter 1989b:27).<sup>59</sup> Ultimately, however, the mention functions to awaken the reader who has a Jewish idea of the miracle, that is, that the visible miracle will lead them to the right faith (see ‘The macro context’).<sup>60</sup> That is, the narrator emphasises that a faith based on the miracles is inadequate (2:23; Barrett 1978:207). This perspective (faith without sight) reappears at the end of the Gospel (see 20:29, 31; Lindars 1972:203; Staley 1988:86). Thus, as believed by Moloney (1993:185) of this mention, “a right and fruitful relationship with Jesus is not built on the wonders he performs; it is built on belief in the word of Jesus.”

The official again urges Jesus to come down to Capernaum, with such deep anxiety

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<sup>55</sup> The imperfect verb *hvrw, ta* indicates the persistence of the request (Ridderbos 1992:175).

<sup>56</sup> According to Bernard (1928a:167), the phrase *h;mellen avpoqnh, |skein* is used at 11:51; 12:33; 18:32 of the impending death of Jesus; but, in the present passage, there is no suggestion in *h;mellen* of the inevitability or predestined certainty of the boy’s death; it expresses futurity only, ‘was going to die.’

<sup>57</sup> Although the narrator doesn’t say so explicitly of this miracle, presumably the ‘signs’ that impressed the people at Jerusalem were works of healing (Bernard 1928a:167).

<sup>58</sup> According to Newman & Nida (1980:137), ‘signs’ and ‘wonders’ are joined by ‘and’, which is used as the equivalent of a noun modified by an adjective. That is, ‘wonders’ is taken here as a way of modifying and intensifying the noun ‘signs’, therefore this phrase can be understood as the ‘wonderful miracles’ or ‘remarkable signs.’

<sup>59</sup> However, Johns & Miller (1994:530-531) paraphrase this verse differently, insisting that signs play a positive role for faith, as follows: ‘You must understand that unless you see signs and wonders, you will certainly not believe so I will give you signs and wonders, so that you may believe.’

for the welfare of his son that no other consideration weighs with him. This is evident from his mention that *ku,rie( kata,bhqi pri.n avpoqanei/n to. paidi, on mou* (v. 49). He neither defends himself, nor argues and is not interested in Christology or fulfilled prophecy or even in signs and wonders (cf. Lightfoot 1956:128-129). He simply pleads with Jesus to do something before the child dies. He may think that the Master's presence is necessary if Jesus were to perform a cure (Morris 1971:290). Jesus' reply in verse 50 *poreu,ou( o` ui`o,j sou zh/*<sup>61</sup>, however, is unexpected. Jesus gives the man no sign but only the words. This imposes a stiff test for the man. The royal official immediately believes the word of Jesus without any corroboration of words and sets off for his home. Thus, as in the statement of Schnackenburg (1968:467; also see Culpepper 1983:137), the official seems to have attained a degree of faith higher than that of the Galileans, who believe only what they 'see' (v. 48).<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> According to Newman & Nida (1980:137; cf. Carson 1991:238; Morris 1971:290), although Jesus addresses the man directly, he uses the plural form of 'you'. It is important to note that the plural form of the verb be indicated in translation to show that Jesus' words apply to others, not just to the official.

<sup>61</sup> The UBS<sup>4</sup> adopts *pai/j auvtou*, but some variations of these words appear in variant readings. This textual problem is intricate; hence it should be treated carefully. The following is the list presented by the apparatus criticus of UBS<sup>4</sup>.

*pai/j auvtou/* P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> a B C W<sup>supp</sup> / 1016 arm  
*ui`o.j auvtou/* it<sup>auy,c,d,f,ff2,l,r1</sup> vg Augustine<sup>vid</sup>  
*pai/j sou* D Q Y 0233 f<sup>1</sup> 28 157 180 205 565 597 700 1006 1010 1243 1292 1342 1424 1505  
*Byz*  
 [E F G H] *lect sy<sup>h</sup> geo Heracleon<sup>acc, to origin</sup> Origen Chrysostom*  
*ui`o.j sou* P<sup>66c</sup> D L N 0141 33 579 892 1071 1241 / 68 / 211 / 387 / 547 / 672 (it<sup>a,b,e,q</sup>)  
*syr<sup>c,p,hmg,pal</sup>e*  
*eth slav Cyril<sup>lem</sup>*  
*pai/j sou o` ui`o.j auvtou/* f<sup>3</sup>

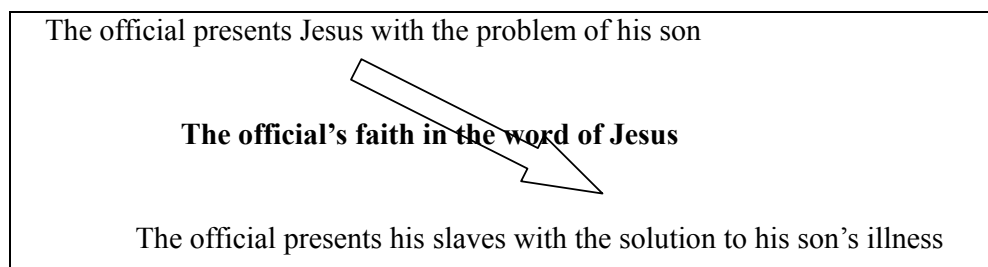
The external evidence supports *pai/j auvtou/* as a rule. *pai/j* occurs only in the Gospel of John, but *ui`o.j* appears frequently in the Gospel. According to Kilpatrick (1990:354), it is the term used elsewhere in this story but *pai/j* is employed in the parallel stories of Matthew and Luke (Mt 8:6, 8, 13, Lk 8:7). He states that *pai/j* in the Gospel of John is a harmonization with Matthew and Luke. In addition, Metzger (1994:178) correctly insists that *ui`o.j* is due to scribal assimilation of the usage of the context. For *sou* and *auvtou*, Metzger states, "the reading *sou* arose when *o[ti]* was taken by some copyists to be *o[ti recitativum]*, introducing the actual words of the servants" (cf. Bernard 1928a:169).

<sup>62</sup> In this regard, Beasley-Murray (1987:73) states, "along with the emphasis on the word of Jesus, the narrative reveals a corresponding progression in the officer's faith (vv 48, 50, 53). These two features, the authoritative word of the Lord and the faith of the officer, provide the form by which the final eschatological truth is made known and apprehended."

In the above consideration, that is, on faith without seeing the miracle, the suggestion of Van Aarde is noteworthy. According to him (1991:124), there are two complete narrative-lines in the story:

- 1) The official comes to Jesus after hearing that he is in the vicinity, as his child is ill (*beginning*). This is followed by the discussion between them (*middle*). The man believes the word that Jesus speaks to him and goes home (*end*).
- 2) He meets his slaves (*beginning*). This is followed by the discussion with the slaves (*middle*). Both he and his household believe (*end*).

The link (or bridge) of the two narrative-lines is that ‘the man believes the word that Jesus speak to him and went home.’ The medium to realise the miracle is the faith on the word, thus the narrator delivers for the reader his message that faith in the word is the key to solving the problem. This is diagrammatically presented in the following way:



Then, in the ensuing verses (vv. 51-53), through the scene of asking the slaves on the hour, the narrator describes the coincidence of the hour of the word and the hour of the healing (cf. Strachan 1941:163-165). More precise analysis of these verses is needed to understand this assumption. While the official is still on his way down to Capernaum<sup>63</sup>, he meets his servants<sup>64</sup> who have good news of the restoration of his

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<sup>63</sup> According to Carson (1991:239), the word *katabai, nontoj* is accurate because one inevitably travels ‘down’ to any point on the lakefront of Galilee for the reason that the level of the lake is almost 700 feet below sea level and the surrounding land is much higher. Also see Morris (1971:290) for the mention *katabh/* in verse 47, which is also a minor remark of accuracy.

son (v. 51).<sup>65</sup> When the official asks them about the time of the beginning of restoration, the servants tell him that ‘yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him’<sup>66</sup> (v. 52; see Morris 1971:291-292). This temporal mention serves to strengthen the faith of the official and his household because that was the time at which Jesus had performed the miracle (v. 53; Carson 1991:239).<sup>67</sup>

Therefore, through the artistry of the dialogue between the official and his servants in these verses, the narrator attempts to inform the paradigmatic reader as well as the official that the healing is due to Jesus Himself (cf. Gundry 2002:21). After all, the narrator delivers the important theological issue that correct faith is based on the word not on the visible observance of the miracle. This assumption was already founded at the provocative mention of Jesus in verse 48, *eva.n mh. shmei/a kai. te, rata i; dh te ( ouv mh. pisteu, shte*, and previously in the transitional passage (vv. 43-45).

#### 2.3.4.2. The ‘life’ motif

In this narrative Jesus restores to life the dying son of the official. Thus the theme of ‘life’ is stressed among others. The Gospel of John stresses life as the eschatological gift and goal overall (see Smith 1995:149-150). Thus accordingly the narrator of the Gospel emphasises this theme in the partial chapters (chapters 1-4) by considering the broader context of these chapters, which is obvious from the observation of Culpepper. According to him (see 1998:144-147), chapters 1-4 make a subtle advance on the theme that Jesus is the One who gives life. This position is declared in 1:1-18 with the mention of ‘in him was life’ (1:4), unfolds in the various discourses and narratives in chapters 2-4, and competes in the underlying pericope with the mention of ‘your son

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<sup>64</sup> As Ridderbos (1992:176) states, the servants who come out to meet their lord are unbiased witnesses, because they know ‘nothing.’

<sup>65</sup> According to Brown (1966:191), a twenty miles’ journey, which was the shortest road between Capernaum and Cana, was not accomplished in one day, so it is the next day when the servants meet the official who had already begun the descent.

<sup>66</sup> The timing of the sudden healing in verse 52 *evcqe. j w[ran e`bdo, mh n* is probably reckoned from sunrise – *i.e.* about one o’clock in the afternoon (Carson 1991:239).



will live' (4:50). The following table shows this development accurately (cf. Mlakuzhyil 1987:199):

A (2:1-11)	The first sign at Cana in Galilee
B (2:12-25)	The replacement of the temple
C (3:1-21)	The discourse on eternal life
C'(3:22-36)	The discourse on eternal life
B'(4:1-45)	The replacement of the worship
A'(4:46-54)	The second sign at Cana in Galilee

In the above table, chapters 2-4 create a chiasmic structure centering around 'the discourse on eternal life': The two signs are each symmetrically arranged at the beginning and at the end, both the replacements of the old tradition also have a symmetrical position, and thus both discourses on eternal life are detected as the centrepiece of all the chapters (3:1-21& 3:22-36). Brown (1966:197) rightly states in this regard that in the discourse with Nicodemus Jesus said that God gave the only Son that everyone who believes in Him might have eternal life (3:16, 36); in the dialogue with the Samaritan woman Jesus speaks of the water that gives life; and in the present scene Jesus performs a sign that gives life. Therefore the present miracle story functions in a sense as the visual effectiveness of this theme.

Returning to the underlying narrative, the theme of life is stressed by the literary arrangement of the narrator. The narrator uses *zh/|* (the indicative present form of *za, w*) three times in verses 50, 51 and 53, so that the reader experiences the vital impression on the 'life' (cf. Dodd 1953:318; Brown 1966:197). Stibbe (1993:71) accurately remarks of this literary arrangement that this threefold use of the *za, w* reminds the reader of the allusions to Jesus as the Giver of Life (cf. 3:16, 36; 4:14). In this regard, it is very important to note that the 'life' in this Gospel is not the physical life, but always indicates 'the eternal life' (Coetzee 1988:43). That is, *za, w* is not a

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<sup>67</sup> According to Koester (1989:337), the use of *evpi, steusen* with dative in v. 50 and the absolute use in v. 53 may indicate a growth in the official's faith (Brown 1966:512-513; Schnackenburg 1968:561-562; Barrett 1978:245), but it is a faith based on the word and confirmed by the sign.

biological term, but a religious term. Thus although the narrator mentions the restoration of the physical life of the official's son in the story, his ultimate focus is on the eternal life (see Bultmann 1964:870-872).

According to Van der Watt (1989:217), 'eternal life' (zwh. aivw, nioj) is the basic soteriological concept in the Gospel of John (cf. the 56 usages of the concept and related terms in this Gospel). This term is emphatically described as the soteriological result in John 5:25 and 5:29. Van der Watt (see 1985:77-78) develops this concept with the corresponding divine reality (cf. 1:18; 14:6ff). According to him, "the divine reality, being present in Christ, becomes available to every one who believes in Jesus' sacred mission and in what he has to reveal (cf. 3:15, 16; 5:24; 6:26ff). John 20:31 described this as the purpose of this gospel. Sharing this divine reality as a new way of existence is called having 'eternal life.' This sharing of divine reality only exists in the living and intimate relationship that exists between man and the Father and the Son (14:19-20). Having life actually enables a person to exist actively and consciously within and according to the parameters of this divine reality."

Therefore the narrator uses the underlying narrative as corroborative evidence of the theme of 'life.' That is, through the narrative, the narrator attempts to show the reader that the theme of eternal life is substantiated by this visual miracle. Jesus is now proved as the One who has the power to give eternal life to the people who believe in Him.

#### **2.3.4.3. The identity of the royal official**

In this episode, only two major characters are depicted, disregarding the servants of the basiliko.j and his dying son: Jesus and basiliko.j. Although Schnackenburg (1968:466) says that the author does not seem to take any interest in the identity of basiliko.j, his identity is an important point to be considered to clarify the nature of the ministry of Jesus.

Most commentators are unanimous in taking him to be in the service of Herod

Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, who was never officially a king but is given the title in Mark 6:14 (see Carson 1991:238; Mead 1985:69; Brown 1966:190; Schnackenburg 1968:466). Most contemporary versions also translate this word into a servant of a king (see Newman & Nida 1980:136; Schmidt 1964:591). However, Codex Bezae and the Latin tradition (*regulus*) take him to be a petty king. In this regard, Haenchen (1984:234) insists that the reading *basilikos* probably originated from a back translation of the Latin word *regulus*, which was then rendered as *basilikos*. The present problem, however, is not whether he is a king or a servant, but whether he is Jewish or a Gentile. Regarding this national identity, there was no end to the controversy between the two factions.

Moloney (1993:182) suggests the possible meaning of *basilikos* using the quotation from U. Wagner's recent monograph. According to Wagner, the word *basilikos* has four possible meanings: 1) of a royal blood, 2) servants to a royal household, 3) soldiers of either the Herodian kings or of the emperor, and 4) a royal scribe. The word itself therefore denotes various possibilities. So it is necessary to employ the literary context and the socio-political evidence of the first-century Mediterranean Palestinian area (see Bruce 1983:117).

Firstly, in conjunction with the story of the Samaritan woman in the preceding chapter, it is natural to define him as a Gentile (see Blomberg 2001:106). Secondly, by using the first century Palestinian political contextual proof, as Mead (see 1985:69-72) believes, it is easy to postulate that the man is a Gentile officer, perhaps in the service of Herod Antipas, but quite probably, in the service of Rome. Thirdly, as many scholars suggest, this story is another variant of the story of the healing of the centurion's slave (Mt 8:5-13; Lk 7:1-10; recounted in the Q source).<sup>68</sup> This is evident from the remarkable similarities between these two episodes, that is, the simple form of a story is elaborated in an unusual manner. Beasley-Murray (1987:71) correctly explains this aspect as follows: "The father's statement of his boy's illness and appeal

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<sup>68</sup> Some commentators think that this story has many parallels with the story of the healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter (Mt 15:21-28; Mk 7:24-30). For more full information of this debate, see Morris 1971:288-289; Schnackenburg 1968:471-475; Brown 1966:192-194.

for healing is in both accounts followed by an unexpected rebuff, followed by a renewal of the father's request; instead of going off to the child Jesus makes a declaration of healing (John 4:50, 'Go, your son lives'; in Mt 8:13, 'Go, as you believed, let it happen for you'); the father believes and returns to his house in Lk 7:10, as in John 4:51 ff., and confirmation of the miracle is given by those in the home." Thus this official is similar to Matthew's and Luke's centurion.<sup>69</sup>

It is therefore certain that this man is a Gentile and perhaps the secondment of a Roman official in Palestine (cf. Witherington III 1995:128). This brings the reader to the conclusion that the realm of Jesus' ministry is universal (see Koester 1990:665-680). That is, the mission of the Lord expands: in chapter 2 the glory of the Lord is shown to his disciples, and in chapter 3 new life is offered to the Jews, in 4:1-42, to the Samaritans; in this last episode, with great brevity and a dramatic sign of power, it is brought to the Gentiles (Mead 1985:71). Therefore, as believed by Labahn (1999:194), through the healing the Gentile's son, Jesus is testified as *o` swth.r tou/ ko, smou*, as confessed by the Samaritan woman (4:42). In this regard, one of the Johannine kernel messages in 5:24-25 is noteworthy: 'Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life. Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.'

### 2.3.5. The point of view

As mentioned above, the narrator attempts to match this story with the previous one

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<sup>69</sup> Some scholars, however, such as Morris (1971:288; cf. Carson 1991:233-234) suggest that the only things in common are some interesting verbal parallels, and the healing at a distance. According to Morris, there (in Synoptic) it is a centurion (probably a heathen), here (in the Gospel of John) an officer of Herod (probably a Jew); there a slave, here a son; there Jesus speaks His word of power in Capernaum, here in Cana; there the centurion's faith evokes Jesus' praise, here the father's faith is weak; there the centurion asks Jesus not to come to his home, here the father begs Him to come; there the illness is paralysis, here a fever; there the elders plead for the man, here he pleads in person; and this story takes place just after Jesus' return from Judea, that is evidently much later. According to Blomberg (2001:106; see Mead 1985), however, "John calls the sick boy both 'son' and 'servant' (vv. 46b, 49, obscured by the NIV's 'child' in the latter text), thus inadvertently harmonising his account

(2:1-11) through structural and literary parallelism. The narrator's situation of the underlying story is also similar with the previous story. As in the previous story, the narrator has a good hold on the whole episode. He adds his own comments especially on the setting (v. 46) that +Hlqen ou=n pa,lin eivj th.n Kana. th/j Galilai,aj( o[pou evpoi,hsen to. u[dwr oi=non, so that he seems to unfold the story with the same perspective.

The narrator organises the story chronologically, that is, the story is stated according to the actions as they occur: 1) setting of the story; 2) the request of the official; 3) the rebuff of Jesus; 4) the performance of the miracle; 5) the conclusion of the story, *viz.*, the official and his household putting their faith in Jesus. However, the narrator omits the official's time of arrival and departure from Capernaum and Cana. Nevertheless it takes quite a long time a distance of about 20 miles, yet the story is focused on 'Cana,' which is emphasised in the setting of the narrative.

The narrator adopts a strong retrospective point of view in the temporal perspective. The narrator's previous warning in verses 44-45 and the rebuff of Jesus in verse 48 are on inadequacy of a miracle-oriented faith. This kind of faith perhaps has remained as a problem of post-Easter in the Johannine community.

The narrator adopts an omnipresent point of view in the spatial perspective. This is particularly obvious because this narrative views the miracle at a distance. The narrator gives a variety of spatial references and his participation in every place: Jesus moved from Samaria to Galilee and then to Cana in Galilee, while the official moved from Capernaum to Cana and returned from Capernaum to Cana. The narrator's main focus, however, is Cana; therein the narrator does not mention Capernaum at all, although this seems to have been the official's place of residence. This seems to be the reason for the deliberate link of the underlying story to the first sign.

The narrator takes an omniscient point of view in the psychological perspective. He

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with the references to a servant in the Q passage." Besides the differences suggested by Moloney, it is an unessential problem, caused by a different emphasis of the author.

makes a detailed report of the ardent wish of the royal official: 1) he has a son who lies ill; 2) he hears of the arrival of Jesus; 3) he asks Jesus to heal his son; 4) he believes in the word of Jesus; 5) he realises the coincidence of the hour of Jesus' word and his son's recovery; and 6) he (and his whole household) believes in Jesus. Hence the report of the psychological situation of the royal official is indeed remarkable, as he is indeed a central person of concern within this particular context (see Culpepper 1983:24-25). This is done because the narrator wishes to show that he expects the implied reader to associate himself with the character of the official (cf. Van Aarde 1991:122).

### **2.3.6. The synthesis**

#### **2.3.6.1. The completion of the first circular journey of Jesus**

This is the second sign in the Gospel of John, which is explicitly mentioned by the narrator in the last verse of the pericope (*deu, teron shmei/on*, v. 54). The underlying story is placed at the end of the narrative material that belongs to Jesus' first itinerary, that is, so-called 'from Cana to Cana.' During this journey, the narrator depicts Jesus as a Hero whom the forces of darkness will try to overcome and to understand (Stibbe 1994a:13). More precisely, Jesus breaks the Jewish symbolic substances and introduces the new order through His ensuing provoking teachings and the accompanying miraculous deeds. Thus the reader becomes aware of the full identity of Jesus in this unit, as it has been given briefly in the first chapter of the Gospel (see '2.2.1.1. Chapter 1 as a Johannine Christological introduction'). After all, through the narrator's arrangement, the underlying narrative can function as the completion of this significant journey.

#### **2.3.6.2. The threefold theological significance**

The underlying narrative has threefold theological significance in relation to Jesus' identity (cf. Brown 1966:197; Lightfoot 1956:129). It firstly emphasises the faith in the word of Jesus, and secondly, stresses Jesus' power to give life, and finally,

demonstrates the universal range of Jesus' ministry.

### **1) The faith in the word of Jesus**

Firstly, the miracle takes place when the royal official trusted in the word of Jesus alone without any visual observance. The royal official simply takes Jesus at His word and started on his way (Witherington III 1995:128). This point is subsequently enhanced by the artistry of the dialogue between the official and his servants in the latter half (vv. 51-54), wherein the narrator, through the scene of addressing the slaves on the hour, describes the coincidence of that hour of the word and hour of healing to make the reader aware that the healing is due to Jesus Himself through the official's faith in the word. Besides this assumption is already emphasised by the provocative mention of Jesus in verse 48 that *eva.n mh. shmei/a kai. te,rata i;dhte( ouv mh. pisteu, shte* and at the transitional verses (vv. 43-45) that criticise faith based on signs and wonders. For this reason, the reader clearly realises that adequate faith is based on the words of Jesus but not on the miracles (cf. v. 48; see Culpepper 1998:146; Staley 1988:86).<sup>70</sup>

### **2) Jesus' power to give life**

Secondly, the underlying story concerns 'life,' not merely physical life but 'eternal life.' Eternal life is the key concept in the Gospel of John and is as such emphasised through the entire Gospel. Having life actually enables a person to exist actively and consciously within and according to the parameters of the divine reality (Van der Watt 1985:77-78). This concept can furthermore be related to the metaphorical image of the family. Therein one can be a part of the heavenly family by the possession of 'eternal life' (Van der Watt 2000:206). In this regard, Jesus is 'the resurrection and life' (11:25), which means that Jesus makes resurrection possible by raising a person

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<sup>70</sup> Interestingly, Kysar (1986:74) observes that the story has taken the reader through three different kinds of faith: first, faith based solely upon signs (v. 48); second, belief in Jesus' word (v. 50); and, third, absolute faith in a Christian sense (v. 51). Kysar supposes it possible that the author means for the reader to understand this progression of faith as a paradigm of the emergence of genuine belief and perhaps even the necessary steps toward mature Christian conviction.

from death to life (Van der Watt 2000:213).

### **3) The universal range of Jesus' ministry**

Then, thirdly, the identity of the royal official is drawn as that of a Gentile. The word *basilikos* itself denotes various possibilities, thus the external evidence is needed. In this dissertation, the literary context and the socio-political situation of first century Mediterranean Palestine are employed for this investigation. As a result of these methodological tools, this man is identified as a Gentile and perhaps a secondment of the Roman official for Palestine. This consequently leads to the universal realm of the ministry of Jesus (see Koester 1990:665-680). Therefore, like the disciples of Jesus (2:11) and the Samaritans (4:42), the Gentile member of the royal official and the members of the Gentile's household also believe in Jesus (4:54) and they all serve as paradigms for the implied readers (Labahn 1999:194-195).

#### **2.3.6.3. Theological and hermeneutical conclusion**

The narrator places this episode at the end of the first cyclic journey of Jesus in chapters 2-4. Accordingly, the reader reaches the conclusion of the expedition with this story. The ministry of Jesus starts in the Jewish realm and influences His close relationships (his disciples and possibly his mother), and finishes in the Gentile realm and influences peoples distant from Him (the royal official and his household). Therefore every person is invited and if they believe the words of Jesus, they will have eternal life (cf. 1:12).

#### **2.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has studied the theological message of the initial two signs in chapters 2-4. These three chapters, which contain the first cyclical journey of Jesus, are a well-rounded unit that is compressed with 'the break of the old order and the commencement of the new order.' In these chapters, the narrator depicts Jesus, through the description of Jesus' provoking teachings and deeds including the



miracles, as a hero who destroys the old order to introduce a new order, which is achieved by the changing of the water into wine and the introduction of new substances such as a new temple, new life, new worship and a new faith.

This innovative atmosphere is started elaborately and ends with the two signs. The narrator does not merely place these miracles without any consideration but with artistry he has fitted these in such a way as to support his theological purpose. They are ‘the changing of water into wine at the wedding’ (2:1-11) and ‘the healing of the royal official’s son’ (4:46-54). The main concern of both signs is to draw the true identity of Jesus. That is, they indicate a strong Christological picture of Jesus. To put it precisely, in the first sign (‘the changing of water into wine’), the narrator depicts Jesus as the eschatological bridegroom. Here, Jesus, as the eschatological bridegroom, satisfies all the people through the supplication of the best wine while the physical bridegroom disappoints the guests at the wedding festival due to the shortage of wine. Therefore, through this sign, the reader becomes aware of the lack of Judaism and plenty of Christianity. In the second sign (‘the healing of the royal official’s son’), through the healing of the Gentile’s dying son by Jesus, the narrator depicts Jesus as the universal sacrifice that will bring the true salvation, but that will not be limited to the Jews. Therein, Jesus grants eternal life to everyone who believes in Him, and grants everybody the opportunity to become part of God’s family (see Culpepper 1998:147).

After all, it is clearly evident that the first sign fulfils the function of the commencement of Jesus’ inauguration on behalf of His public status, and the second sign fulfils the function of stating the universal boundary with reference to His inauguration. Thus, it is possible to identify the underlying two signs as ‘the inaugural signs.’ God now spreads the eschatological banquet and everyone is invited to receive this favour from Him (cf. 3:16).

## CHAPTER III. THE INTENSIFIED SIGNS

### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to investigate the theological messages of the four signs in chapters 5-10, which are ‘the healing at the pool of Bethesda’ (5:1-18); ‘the feeding of the multitude’ (6:1-15); ‘the walking on the sea’ (6:16-21); and ‘the healing of the blind man from birth’ (9:1-41). The primary reason for dealing with these four signs in a group is that chapters 5-10 are bound in the same way as chapters 2-4 if one can consider the overall structure of the Gospel. In structure, according to Mlakuzhyil (see 1987:175-181), since the first unit of the Gospel (chapters 2-4) ends with the last verse of chapter 4 (v. 54), the second unit must begin with the first verse of chapter 5. This is evident from both the literary-chronological device *meta . tau/ta*<sup>71</sup> as well as the mention of Jesus’ movement to a new place (Jerusalem)<sup>72</sup> on the occasion of a

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<sup>71</sup> This term (*meta . tau/ta*) is a Johannine mark of transitions (Lozada 2000:68). This functions to establish major breaks in the Gospel, which in turn demarcate a beginning episode. Booth (1996:46) considers this term in more detail functioning as the transition of four occurrences at the scene-level and five occurrences at the episode-level in the Gospel, in the following way:

- 1) Four occurrences at the scene-level: 2:12 (shift from Cana to Capernaum), 5:14 (change in characters and move to the temple), 19:28 (transition from crucifixion to death), 19:38 (transition from death to burial).
- 2) Five occurrences at the episode-level: 3:22 (from Jerusalem to the countryside), 5:1 (from Galilee to Jerusalem), 6:1 (across the sea of Galilee), 7:1 (from Galilee to Jerusalem), 21:1 (in Galilee).

Besides, Culpepper (see 1993:196) properly suggests, in this regard, that 5:1 mark a transition to a new section of the Gospel, using three markers that appear at significant junctures elsewhere in this Gospel: the phrase *meta . tau/ta*, a reference to a Jewish festival, and a change of location. On the other hand, Kysar (1986:75) supposes that this *meta . tau/ta* is the author’s loose tying of this with the previous narrative (cf. 3:22).

<sup>72</sup> Chapters 5-10 contain the second circular journey of Jesus while the previous three chapters (chapters 2-4) mention the first cyclical movement of Jesus. Interestingly, the geographical order of the second itinerary is the exact reverse of the first journey in the previous chapters. In the previous chapters, Jesus undertakes a circular journey from Cana through Jerusalem and back to Cana. In the underlying chapters, conversely, the journey takes place from Jerusalem through Galilee and back to Jerusalem. The author therefore seems to compose these chapters contrastively to the previous chapters. The second circular itinerary in relation to the four signs can thus schematically be presented in the following manner (cf. Stibbe 1993:73):

*Jerusalem*: the healing at the pool of Bethesda (5:1-18)  
*Galilee*: the feeding of the multitude (6:1-15)  
*Galilee*: the walking on the sea (6:16-21)

feast of the Jews (see below).<sup>73</sup> The end-limit of this unit is the last verse of chapter 10 (v. 42). The following arguments may be advanced in its support: 1) there are a number of inclusions and/or parallels between 5:1-47 and 10:22-42 (see Mlakuzhyil 1987:176); 2) 10:40-42 looks like a double conclusion to 5-10, as well as to the public ministry of Jesus in chapters 1-10 (see Brown 1966:414); and 3) concluding verses of chapter 10 (vv. 40-42) may be thought of as forming a kind of inclusion with the testimonial introduction in which John the Baptist bears witness to Jesus (1:19-34; cf. also 1:6-8, 15, 35-36; see Carson 1991:403).<sup>74</sup> Therefore it is possible to conclude that the new unit is started at 5:1 and ends at 10:42. This indicates that chapters 5-10 proved themselves to be a well-rounded unit and thus the analysis of these four signs together is proper.

Besides, each miracle story in these chapters is consistently followed by dialogue texts and sporadically also by revelatory monologues (cf. Culpepper 1983:73).<sup>75</sup> Hence the reader realises a more complete identity of Jesus through these signs. That is, the revelation of the person of Jesus seemed in the previous unit to have been quite limited, but in this unit, the report of the self-revelation of Jesus in chapters 2-4 continues with an ever increasing and deepening wealth of topics and motifs (Ridderbos 1992:181). Therefore, like the previous chapter, four signs will be

*Jerusalem*: the healing of the blind man from birth (9:1-41)

<sup>73</sup> For four other reasons for regarding chapter 5 as the beginning of a new phase in the development of the Gospel, see Mlakuzhyil (1987:170-171).

<sup>74</sup> This is supported by the fact that 10:40 is almost a verbatim repetition of 1:28, as follows:

1:28 tau/ta evn Bħqani, a| evge, neto **pe, ran tou/ VIorda, nou** (  
o[pou h=n o` **VIwa, nnhj bapti, zwn**

10:40 Kai. avph/lqen pa, lin **pe, ran tou/ VIorda, nou** eivj to.n to, pon  
o[pou h=n **VIwa, nnhj to. prw/ton bapti, zwn** kai. e;meinen evkei/

<sup>75</sup> The miracle accounts in chapters 5-10 can be related to the dialogues and discourses, as follows (cf. Morris 1971:23; Carson 1991:274; Culpepper 1998:151-152):

**Miracle accounts**

**The dialogues and discourses**

The healing at the pool (5:1-18)	Discourse on Jesus' authority and the witnesses (5:19-47)
The feeding of the multitude (6:1-15)	Discourse on the bread from heaven (6:22-59)
The walking on the sea (6:16-21)	No dialogue or discourse (a single entity of the above)
The healing of the blind man (9:1-8)	A series of dialogues in six ensuing scenes (9:9-41)

analysed in due order, bearing in mind this broader context, according to the methodological framework. The theological messages of these signs will thus be drawn accurately.

### **3.2. The healing at the pool of Bethesda (5:1-18)**

#### **3.2.1. The macro context<sup>76</sup>**

##### **3.2.1.1. Two fresh thematic developments**

There are two distinctive thematic features in chapters 5-10. These features dominate an understanding of the entire episodes, including signs. This is particularly freshly developed from the underlying sign (Culpepper 1983:91). Thus it is proper to discuss this thematic intensification at this juncture.

The first feature is the distinguished references to the Jewish feasts, which include the followings: the Sabbath (5:9); the Passover (6:4); the Tabernacles (7:2) and the Dedication (10:22). According to Moloney (1998:165), “as both ‘the Jews’ and the Johannine Christians grappled with the loss of the Temple and the celebrations of the presence of God centred upon that sacred place, the author tells the story of Jesus’ presence at feasts of ‘the Jews’ to articulate the Johannine understanding of how God is present to God’s people.” In other words, as Culpepper (1998:148) observes, “at each festival Jesus does or says things that show that He is the fulfilment of what is celebrated during the particular festival. Therefore the analysis of each text must be done according to the reciprocal relations between the significance of the feast and the fulfilment of Jesus.” Thus the narrative plots are unfolded with the particular reference to the Jewish feasts and this seems the way in which the narrator presents

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<sup>76</sup> Even though, as is the claim of many commentators who followed Bultmann’s thesis (see Bultmann 1971:209-210), it is true that the order of chapter 5 and 6 is originally inverted or that chapter 6 is a later addition to the book, the reader just reads the skilful masterpiece of the author, hence the investigator also concerns only the final form of the text. See Ridderbos (1992:181-184) and Carson (1991:240) for a good discussion in this regard.

the personality of Jesus.<sup>77</sup>

The second notable feature is a different attitude of the Jews toward Jesus.<sup>78</sup> In the preceding chapters, although the attitudes of the Jews are partially negative (cf. 2:23-25; see Von Wahlde 1982:33-60), the Jews generally indicate an enthusiastic faith-response to Jesus. In the subsequent chapters, however, their hostility against Jesus intensifies sharply. Thus, in this chapter, the Jews become important for the first time, and the basis of the conflict is explained. The issue is the locus of revelation – Jesus or the Law (Culpepper 1983:91; see Schnackenburg 1980:90-91). They now plot to kill Jesus and make every attempt to seize or to stone him, as he performs miracles and by way of discourses exposes to them necessary and special information. Furthermore the dramatic power of the rest of the Gospel is built around this conflict (see Culpepper 1983:91-94; 1993:196; Lightfoot 1956:138). This, however, does not necessarily indicate that there are no responses of faith in these chapters, but it is merely stated to note that such responses are unusual (Thomas 1995:4; see Ridderbos 1992:181).

Therefore, the underlying episode should be read from a somewhat different perspective (or anticipation) from the preceding episodes. That is, the narrative would be unfolded on the basis of the typology of the Jewish feasts in hostile circumstances.<sup>79</sup>

### 3.2.2. Structure

The following is a discourse analysis of the pericope.

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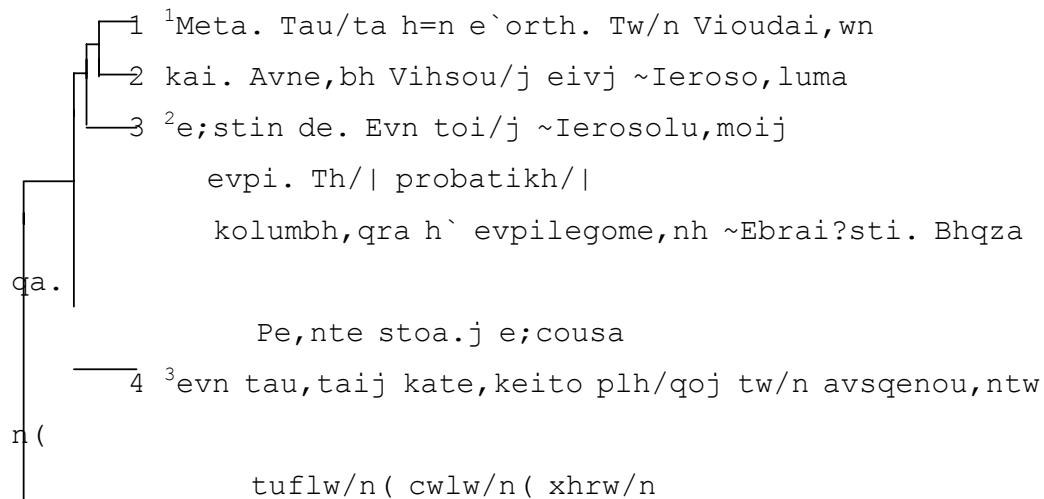
<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, the author of the Gospel uses the Jewish festivals as temporal markers to develop the narrative line chronologically from a macro-linguistic perspective (Booth 1996:47).

<sup>78</sup> In this Gospel, as observed by Van der Watt (2002:3), ‘Jews’ should not be identified with modern Jews, neither with all genealogical Jews in ancient times. This is a socio-religious category of people who can be identified as ‘disciples of Moses,’ that is, the people who follow the law not Jesus.

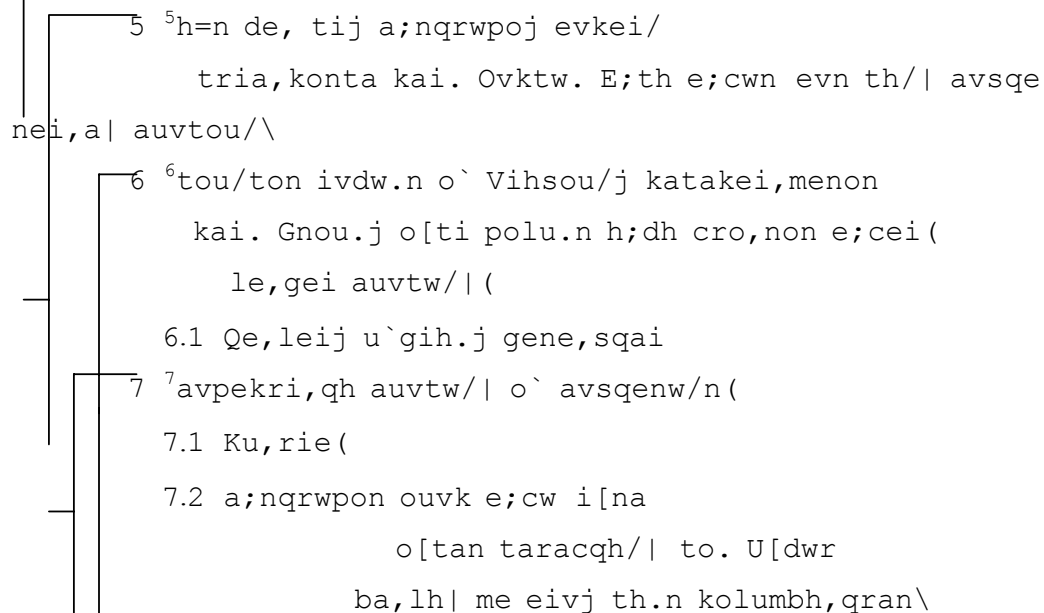
<sup>79</sup> A different way of referring to the miracle also seems to have been prominent. A miracle of Jesus is usually referred to in the previous chapters (usually in Galilee) as a *shmei/on*, where in this case *e;rgon* is mainly used to refer to a miracle of Jesus (usually in Jerusalem). In fact, both words have the same meaning, while the author seems to have presented these to the readers so that they would realize a slight dissimilarity in the miraculous ministry between the previous unit and this underlying

3.2.2.1. Division of the text into cola

**Cluster A Jesus and the many invalids at the pool**



**Cluster B Jesus heals the crippled man at the pool**



unit (see Johns & Miller 1994:525-526). For a more complete discussion in this regard, see Bertram (1964:635-655).

7.3 evn w-| de. E;rcomai evgw, ( a;lloj pro. Evmou/  
katabai,nei

—8 <sup>8</sup>le,gei auvtw/| o` Vihsou/j(

8.1 :Egeire

8.2 a=ron to.n kra,batto,n sou

8.3 kai. Peripa,tei

—9 <sup>9</sup>kai. Euvqe,wj evge,neto u`gih.j o` a;nqrwpoj

—10 kai. H=ren to.n kra,batton auvtou/

—11 kai. Periepa,tei

**Cluster C The Jews' interrogation of the man**

(  
sou  
—12 +Hn de. sa,bbaton evn evkei,nh| th/| h`me,ra|  
—13 <sup>10</sup>e;legon ou=n oi` VIoudai/oi tw/| teqerapeume,nw|  
13.1 Sa,bbato,n evstin(  
13.2 kai. ouvke;xesti,n soi a=rai to.n kra,batto,n  
—14 <sup>11</sup>o` de. avpekri,qh auvtou/j(  
14.1 ~O poih,saj me u`gih/ evkei/no,j moi ei=pen(  
14.1.1 +Aron to.n kra,batto,n sou  
14.1.2 kai. peripa,tei  
—15 <sup>12</sup>hvrw,thsan auvtou,n(  
15.1 Ti,j evstin o` a;nqrwpoj o` eivpw,n soi(  
15.1.1 +Aron  
15.1.2 kai. peripa,tei  
—16 <sup>13</sup>o` de. ivaqei.j ouvke h;|dei ti,j evstin(  
—17 o` ga.r VIhsou/j evxe,neusen o;clou o;ntoj evn tw  
/| to,pw|

**Cluster D The admonition of Jesus and the betrayal of the man**

tw/| i`erw/|  
 18 <sup>14</sup>meta. tau/ta eu`ri,skei auvto.n o` VIhsou/j evn  
 19 kai. ei=pen auvtw/|(  
 19.1 :Ide  
 19.2 u`gih.j ge,gonaj(  
 19.3 mhke,ti a`ma,rtane(i[na mh. cei/ro,n soi, ti g  
 e,nhtai  
 20 <sup>15</sup>avph/lqen o` a;nqrwpoj  
 21 kai. avnh,ggeilen toi/j VIoudai,oi j o[ti VIhsou/j  
 evstin o` poi h,saj  
 auvto.n u`gih/

**Cluster E The Jewish plot to kill Jesus**

Ihsou/n(  
 22 <sup>16</sup>kai. dia. tou/to evdi,wkon oi` VIoudai/oi to.n V  
 o[ti tau/ta evpoi,ei evn sabba,tw|  
 23 <sup>17</sup>o` de. vihsou/j avekri,nato auvt oi/j(  
 23.1 ~O path,r mou e[wj a;rti evrga,zetai  
 23.2 kavgw. evrga,zomai  
 24 <sup>18</sup>dia. tou/to ou=n ma/llon evzh,toun auvto.n oi` V  
 Ioudai/oi avpoktei/nai(  
 o[ti ouv mo,non e;l uen to. sa,bbaton(  
 avlla. kai. pate,ra i;dion e;legen to.n geo.  
 n  
 i;son e`auto.n poiw/n tw/| qew/|

**3.2.2.2. The discussion of the clusters**

The pericope is divided into 24 cola, which are grouped into 5 clusters in the following way:



Cola 1-4 / 5-11 / 12-17 / 18-21 / 22-24

**Cluster A (cola 1-4):** The Johannine characteristic phrase *meta . tau/ta* leads the new section, which plays the role of demarcation in the Gospel of John (see Lozada 2000:68; Booth 1996:46; Culpepper 1993:196). The reason for the separation of the second colon from the first colon is the use of coordinative conjunction *kai .* In these two cola, the narrator mentions that the motivation for the moving up of Jesus is to have the unnamed Jewish feast sustained. Colon 3 is separated from the preceding colon not only because of the conjunction *de .* but also the mention of the specific place (*Bhqzaqa*<sup>80</sup>) in this colon, therein the narrator has been developing the place of the narrative. Colon 4 is the sketch of the space: there are many invalids. This is also the development of the setting. Therefore, as stated by Culpepper (1993:201), the narrator carries the reader into the narrative by moving from the general to the specific at the setting: Jerusalem; a pool; and a multitude of invalids. Hence the interrelationships between cola 1-4 are evident: colon 1 is linked to colon 2 by means of a logical reason-result relationship; colon 3 is the specific mention of generic mention, colon 2; colon 4 is linked to the previous three cola (1-3) by means of a subordinate character-setting relationship. The main focus of the cluster is thus formulated as such: ‘Jesus and the many invalids at the pool.’

**Cluster B (cola 5-11):** The most prominent reason for the demarcation of cola 5-11 from the preceding cola is the change of scene. This means that cola 5-11 contain the dialogue between Jesus and a crippled man, while the preceding cola present the setting of the narrative. Besides, the coordinating conjunction *de ,* also functions as the second reason for the demarcation. This demarcation is therefore accurate. Structurally, the cluster can be grouped according to the following three parts: colon 5; cola 6-8; and cola 9-11. The following three pieces of evidence support this assumption. 1) Colon 5 is the presentation of the protagonist (the crippled man),

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<sup>80</sup> The investigator has not decided on the exact term for the name of this pool, *Bhqzaqa .*, *Bhqesda ,* and so on. So the various terms will be used alternatively in this dissertation (see the textual debate regarding this term).

therein the narrator uses the verbal element  $\eta=\nu$  and  $\epsilon\nu\kappa\epsilon\iota$ . 2) The ensuing three cola (cola 6-8) pertain to the dialogue between Jesus and the crippled man, therein the same semantic domain of the structural markers governs this part (cola 6-8):  $\lambda\epsilon, \gamma\epsilon\iota$  in colon 6,  $\alpha\nu\epsilon\kappa\rho\iota, \varrho\eta$  in colon 7, and  $\lambda\epsilon, \gamma\epsilon\iota$  in colon 8. According to Louw & Nida (1988:397-401; 409-410), these Greek terms belong to the semantic domain of ‘Communication’ (sub-domain: speak, talk; question, answer). 3) The last three cola (cola 9-11) are the result of the miracle, which is presented in cola 9-11 by three subsequent conjunctive  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  . at the beginning of the respective cola. Thus the above grouping is accurate. The semantic relationships of the cola can be expressed in the following way: Colon 5 is a setting of the cluster and thus it governs the whole cluster; cola 6-8 have internally different non-consequential relations and function as the reason for cola 9-11; and cola 9-11 are internally linked by means of consequential relations. Therefore the pivotal point of the cluster may be formulated as ‘Jesus heals the crippled man at the pool.’

**Cluster C (cola 12-17):** The first reason for the demarcation of cola 12-17 from the preceding cola is the change of scene. That is, cola 12-17 contain the dialogue between the Jews and the crippled man, while the preceding cola present the dialogue between Jesus and the man. The second reason is the significant reference of the narrative that  $\tau\eta\nu\delta\epsilon. \sigma\alpha, \beta\beta\alpha\tau\omicron\nu\epsilon\nu\epsilon\nu\kappa\epsilon\iota, \eta\eta\tau\eta/\eta\eta\mu\epsilon, \rho\alpha$  in colon 12, which presents the narrative occasion (see ‘Literary setting’). Thus the demarcation is proper. The semantic relationships of the cola are as follows: conjunction  $\omicron\upsilon=\nu$  in colon 13 indicates that this colon is the result of the preceding colon (colon 12), and thus they have a reason-result relationship; cola 12-13 are linked to colon 14 by means of a cause-effect relationship; colon 15 is a cause of the ensuing cola; and cola 16 and 17 are linked to each other by means of a result-reason relationship because colon 17 contains the conjunction  $\gamma\alpha\rho$  . Thus the main point of this cluster is ‘the Jews’ interrogation of the man.’

**Cluster D (cola 18-21):** The demarcation of these cola from the preceding cola is primarily reasoned by the Johannine demarcating phrase  $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha. \tau\alpha\upsilon/\tau\alpha$  in colon 18 (see ‘Cluster A’). Colon 18 is a different consequential to colon 19, but ultimately

they have a qualificational setting relationship (time and place). Colon 20 is also linked to colon 21 by means of a different consequential relationship, so they form an unfolding structure. While the preceding two cola (cola 18-19) describe the movement of Jesus, the following two cola (cola 20-21) describe the movement of the crippled man. Their semantic relationship is accordingly a coordinating additive, being different and non-consequential. After all, the pivotal point of the cluster is ‘the admonition of Jesus and the betrayal of the man.’

**Cluster E (cola 22-24):** The phrase *kai. dia. tou/to* supports the correct reason for the current demarcation. Furthermore, the phrase creates the *inclusio* between this colon (22) and the last colon (24) by the repetition of this phrase in colon 24. Therein the repetition of *o[ti ..... evn sabba, tw|* and *o[ti ..... to. sa,bbaton* also supports this assumption. Therefore it is clear that the main emphasis of the author is the act of Jesus on the Sabbath and the consequent plotting to kill Him. The semantic relations of the cola are as follows: colon 22 is non-consequential to colon 23, and cola 23-24 are a reason of colon 25. Thus the main focus of the cluster is ‘the Jewish plot to kill Jesus.’

### 3.2.2.3. The summary of the clusters

According to the structural analysis, the relations between the clusters can be expressed diagrammatically in the following way:

1 <sup>1</sup>	cola 1-4	Jesus and the many invalids at the pool
1 <sup>2</sup>	cola 5-11	Jesus heals the crippled man at the pool
2 <sup>1</sup>	cola 12-17	The Jews’ interrogation of the man
2 <sup>2</sup>	cola 18-21	The admonition of Jesus and the betrayal of the man
2 <sup>3</sup>	cola 22-24	The Jews plot to kill Jesus

The pericope falls largely into two groups (see Blomberg 2001:108; Witherington III 1995:134; Witkamp 1985:19-31): clusters A-B (cola 1-11, vv. 1-9a) and clusters C-E (cola 12-24, vv. 9b-18). The mention *+Hn de. sa,bbaton evn evkei,nh|*

th/| h`me,ra| (colon 12) is the reference point of the bipartite (cf. Ridderbos 1992:184; Staley 1991:72). The first section features an actual healing narrative where the narrator takes the reader's attention from the many invalids (the general) at the pool to focus on a crippled man (the particular). The second section features a conflict narrative where the narrator describes the hostile attitude of the Jews toward Jesus because of Jesus' Sabbath breach and profanity. In this way the narrative develops gradually in each section from the general to the specific. That is, in clusters A-B, the mention about the many invalids concentrates and focuses on the crippled man, while, in clusters C-E, the Jewish intrigue to kill Jesus is developed. After all, the narrator presents evidence that the miracle of Jesus causes the plot of the Jews to kill Him (cf. Moloney 1998:167).

### 3.2.3. The literary setting

The narrator furnishes the occasional ('a festival of Jews'; 'a Sabbath') and the spatial setting ('Jerusalem'; 'a pool of Bethesda') at the outset of the narrative.

#### 3.2.3.1. The occasional setting

The narrator starts the narrative with the reference to 'a festival of Jews' (h=n e`orth. tw/n VIoudai,wn<sup>81</sup>). Even though the identity of the festival is not indicated, which would mean that the narrator might not have been interested in this feast (see Carson 1991:240-241; Kysar 1986:75; Bruce 1983:121), he nevertheless has an apparent interest in Jewish feasts in the entire Gospel. That is, in this Gospel, most of the episodes in chapters 5-11 will relate to Jesus fulfilling the true intention of

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<sup>81</sup> P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> A B D T Q W<sup>supp</sup> f<sup>1</sup> 28 syr<sup>c,p</sup> read the anarthrous e`orth, but a C L D Y place an article before e`orth. Some manuscripts (a C L D) would have identified the indeterminate feast by inserting an article. They also inserted avzmwn before VIoudai,wn and h` skhnophgi, a after VIoudai,wn with the same purpose (Metzger 1994:178). Schnackenburg (1980:93) describes that the word e`orth is often used alone to mean the Feast of Tabernacles in the Old Testament and in Judaism (see 1 Ki 8:2; 2 Ch 7:8; Ne 8:14, 18; Ezk 45:25), but as the feast is named in full in 7:2, this cannot be the case here. Therefore the reading without an article doesn't seem to indicate a specific feast at this juncture. The gospel of John does not concern itself with the chronological order of statements. Therefore the identification of the feast has no weight; rather the external evidence should be given much more weight. This means that UBS<sup>4</sup>, viz. omission of an article, is preferable.

one of the annual festivals of Israel (Blomberg 2001:108; Moloney 1998:165; Booth 1996:47; cf. Barrett 1978:209), but this occasional mention is an exception and seems to show the motive of Jesus' movement to Jerusalem (cf. Bowman 1975:111-132). The narrator elaborately shows another occasion, which is a Sabbath (*sa,bbaton*). As observed by Ridderbos (1992:184), what is at stake in what follows is rather the issue of the Sabbath in this narrative (v. 9a). That is, the theme of a Sabbath, instead of the unnamed feast, dominates the account of the miracle and its aftermath, *viz.*, the conflict between Jesus and the Jews (Moloney 1996:3; Schnackenburg 1980:92-93).<sup>82</sup> The reader may therefore anticipate that the narrator perhaps presents Jesus as the One who replaces the Sabbath with his own person (cf. Stibbe 1993:74; see Witherington III 1995:134-137).

### 3.2.3.2. The spatial setting

The subsequent statement of the setting is a spatial indication that 'Jesus went up to Jerusalem' (*avne,bh VIhsou/j eivj ~Ieroso,luma*). Blomberg (2001:108) states correctly that in this movement that "the author passes over whatever other ministry Jesus performed in Galilee after the healing of 4:46-54 and describes him going up to Jerusalem for an unnamed feast." Subsequently he says, "the description is accurate, because pilgrims ended their journey by ascending Mount Zion, irrespective of the direction from which they came." Apart from this socio-religious rationale, however, the change of location alters the reader's anticipation of the result of the episode. It is for this reason that Jerusalem is realised as the figurative place of hostility in this Gospel while Galilee is known as the figurative place of acceptance (see '2.2.3.3. The spatial setting'; Witherington III 1995:133). At this point the attention of the reader is therefore diverged from the circumstance of acceptance to the circumstance of hostility.

There is another spatial setting of the narrative, the pool of Bethesda (v. 2). The reader expects to find Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem, but the narrator unexpectedly

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<sup>82</sup> Staley (1991:60) also correctly states that the narrator's belated reference to the Sabbath not only forces the reader to re-evaluate the significance of the miracle – or rather the command of Jesus – but

describes a pool that is located near the Sheep Gate, which has five porticoes and a number of a mobs who wanted to be healed of their illnesses (Moloney 1998:171). According to Thomas (1995:6-7), the reader's expectancy level at this point in the narrative is rather high. This is the reason that the mention of water serves to remind the reader that the appearance of water thus far in this Gospel has been in rather remarkable contexts, which include the significance and origin of John's baptism (1:25-28, 33; 3:23), Jesus' turning water into wine (2:1-11), the fact that one must be born of water and spirit in order to see the Kingdom of God (3:5), the fact that Jesus (3:23) and/or His disciples (4:2) baptized others in water, as well as the discussion of Jesus with the Samaritan woman regarding the living water (4:9-15).<sup>83</sup> Therefore it is possible to anticipate that certain significant events might occur at this juncture.

**To summarize:** the narrative setting anticipates the fact that the identity of Jesus might be related to the Sabbath and the expectation that a certain significant event that is important in substance in this Gospel might occur at the pool in hostile circumstances.

#### **3.2.4. The aspects highlighted by the narratological perspective**

From the macro contextual investigation, the structural analysis and the study of the literary setting, certain issues to be investigated in detail are exposed for having grasped the special attention of the narrator in the following way:

- 1) The narrator develops the narrative in a manner that the miraculous action of Jesus (verses 1-9a) causes the Jews' plot to kill Him (verses 9b-18).<sup>84</sup> The reader who knows the extraordinary knowledge of Jesus thus expects that Jesus deliberately causes this complicated situation through the performance

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also forces the reader to re-evaluate the characters involved in the story.

<sup>83</sup> Thomas (1995:7) also mentions the significant use of water in the Gospel after chapter 5, as follows: Jesus makes a proclamation regarding rivers of living water (7:37-39); a blind man recovers his sight by washing in water (9:7); Jesus washes the disciples' feet (13:1-20), at the crucifixion blood and water come forth from a wound in Jesus' side (19:34); and a miraculous catch of fish took place in the water (21:1-14)

<sup>84</sup> Two contrasting dialogues in cola 6-7 and cola 12-17, which present the miracle and the conflict, are impressive in this regard.

of the miracle for a specific purpose. Therefore the analysis should be unfolded, giving consideration to the intention of Jesus who causes this complicated situation.

- 2) Unlike the previous two signs, the result of the miracle seems to be negative (Culpepper 1998:80; cf. Brown 1966:209). The crippled man does not have faith in Jesus after the healing, and the Jews rather condemn Jesus. This negative result of the miracle is already obscurely anticipated by the macro contextual investigation of chapters 5-10 and the temporal setting ('Jerusalem') of the episode. Through the entire narrative, conversely, the reader gets to know the identity of Jesus more precisely through Jesus' self-revelational monologues throughout the conflict narrative. This is exposed in relation to the Sabbath theme. That is, in the underlying story, the violation of the Sabbath that is the criterion of the bipartite of the narrative functions not only to offer the immediate cause of the conflict between Jesus and the Jews but also plays a role to draw the identity of Jesus in association with this feast. Therefore Jesus' identity in relation to the Sabbath motif should be discussed precisely.

The analysis will thus proceed under the following headings: 1) the narrative function of the miracle account (vv. 1-9a), and 2) the narrative function of the conflict account (vv. 9b-18).

#### **3.2.4.1. The narrative function of the miracle account (vv. 1-9a)**

##### **3.2.4.1.1. Setting for the miracle (vv. 1-3)**

The narrative opens with an introductory account of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews (v. 1). This is followed by a more focused introduction of the narrator's lead to the scene of the pool of Bethesda<sup>85</sup> around which many invalids lie

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<sup>85</sup> There are a lot of debates concerning the original form of verse 2 (see Kysar 1986:75-76). The following is the textual criticism to establish more preferable form of this verse:

(vv. 2-3; cf. Moloney 1998:166)<sup>86</sup>. As supposed by Blomberg (2001: 109), the categories of people lying around pool such as *tuflw/n( cwlw/n( xhrw/n*<sup>87</sup> precisely match categories of the sick that Jesus regularly encounters and heals in the Synoptics. Isaiah 35:6 may well provide the background to this, which includes

1) Regarding the phrase *evpi. th/| probatikh/| kolumbh, qra*. The manuscript evidence is very complicated in this verse. *evpi. th/| probatikh* is attested by the influential manuscripts (B C D N W), but the sentence has two possible meanings, according to whether *kolumbh, qra* is taken as nominative, qualified by *h` evpilegome, nh*, or dative, qualified by *th/| probatikh/*. The former is translated as: 'In Jerusalem, by the Sheep [.....], there is a pool with the Hebrew name, etc.' The latter, however, is translated as: 'In Jerusalem, by the Sheep pool, there is a [.....] with the Hebrew name, etc.' (Brown 1966:206). The committee of the UBS<sup>4</sup> was inclined to take *kolumbh, qra* as nominative in view of the reference to *h` pu, lh h` probatikh*, in Ne 3:1 and 12:39 (Metzger 1971:208). For reference Bauer and Bultmann also opted for the former (Haenchen 1984:244), but Brown (1966:206) opted for the latter, supplying the general noun 'place.' It more seems more reasonable to opt for the former.

2) Regarding the name *Bhqzaqa*. There is confusion about the place name. *Bhqzaqa* was chosen by the majority of the UBS<sup>4</sup> committee, but other names also have strong attestation. The list of UBS<sup>4</sup> presents as follows:

*Bhqzaqa*. a (L C it<sup>e</sup> Bhzaqa,) 33 it<sup>1</sup> (it<sup>b, n2\*</sup> vg<sup>mss</sup> Bet(h)zet(h)a) Eusebius Cyril  
*Belzeqa*, D it<sup>d, r1</sup> (it<sup>a</sup> Belzatha)  
*Bhqsaia?da*, (P<sup>66c</sup> Bhdsai?da, P<sup>66\*</sup> Bhdsai?da, n) P<sup>75</sup> B T W<sup>supp</sup> Y it<sup>aur, c, f2c, l</sup> vg syr<sup>h</sup> e  
 sa pbo  
*Bhqesda*, A C D Q 078 0141 0233 f<sup>1</sup> f<sup>3</sup> Byz [E F G H] lect

*Bhqsaia?da*, has strongest attestation, but is suspect as an assimilation to the town of 'Bethsaida' on the Sea of Galilee (Metzger 1994:178). Brown (1966:206) adds evidence from the copper scrolls found at Qumran (3Q15xi 12-13; #57) and published by Milik in *Discoveries in the Judean Desert*, III (1962), p. 271. According to Brown, Milik suggested that Bezatha is a rendition of the Aramaic emphatic plural of the name ('Bet 'Esdata'). However, Brown couldn't reach a conclusion, despite all of this archaeological evidence. The committee of UBS<sup>4</sup> also failed to reach an accord on this regard (Metzger 1994:178-179). Therefore it is still very difficult to decide the exact place name, however it fortunately doesn't influence the meaning of the text.

<sup>86</sup> Alexandrian text and major versions (P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> a B C\* D T W<sup>supp</sup> 0141 it<sup>d, f, l, q</sup> vg sa bo Amphilochius etc.) omit the verse 4. Verse 4 was first presented in the Byzantine text as a gloss, which is a *ggeloj ga.r kata. kairo.n kate, bainen evn th/| kolumbh, qra| ( kai. evta, rassen to. u[dwr\ o` ou=n prw/toj evmba.j meta. th.n tarach.n tou/ u[datoj ( u`gih.j evgi, neto ( w-| dh, pote kateiceto nosh, mati*. Haenchen (1980:245) insists that even though this verse is found in the later readings, they might not be entirely foreign to the original narrative of the curative pool. However, as stated by Metzger (1994:179), verse 4 as a gloss is a secondary character, which is clear from (1) its absence from the earlier and best witnesses as mentioned above, (2) the presence of asterisks or obeli to mark the words as spurious in more than twenty Greek witnesses (including S 047 1079 2174), (3) the presence of non-Johannine words or expressions (*kata. kairo.n*, etc.; see Bernard 1928a:229), and (4) the rather wide diversity of variant forms in which the verse was transmitted. Therefore the omission of verse 4 is preferable.

<sup>87</sup> Many major witnesses (P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> a A B C L T 0141 157 it<sup>q</sup> sa pbo bo<sup>pt</sup> ach<sup>2</sup>) have only *xhrw/n*, but Western (and Syrian) contain amplification of the *evkdecome, nwn th.n tou/ u[datoj*



among the signs of the Messianic age the promise that ‘then will the lame leap like a deer.’ The reason so many sick people come here is a periodic disturbance of the waters thought to be due to an angel and this provides the therapeutic significance for the people (see Ridderbos 1992:185). This superstition may be derived from the intermittent bubbling up of a natural spring (Morris 1971:302). Then, the narrator focuses on a certain man among all the sick (v. 5). Therefore the presence of many invalids at the pool functions as the setting for the appearance of the crippled man (see ‘Structure’).

### 3.2.4.1.2. The crippled man and Jesus (5-9a)

Detailed information about this remarkable man is not given, but the reader realises that he has been ill for thirty-eight years and he has been lying there a long time (vv. 5-6; Mt 9:6 par). Some commentators think that this mention of numbers should be understood symbolically, e.g., the thirty eight years of wandering in Deut 2:14 (Dodd 1953:319). However, there is no interlocking symbolism between the two events (see Schnackenburg 1980:95; Carson 1991:242). The statement of this period is not only a statement of the historical duration of the man’s desperate situation but also a literary device to underline the hopelessness of the case (cf. Brown 1966:207; Ridderbos 1992:185). In this regard, Haenchen (1984:245; also Kysar 1986:76) mentions that this lengthy duration of the illness is a way of emphasising the magnitude of the healing that follows (cf. Lk 13:11; Acts 4:22, John 9:1).

In verse 6, the narrator reports the three subsequent actions of Jesus. This statement of Jesus’ actions can be divided into the following three sub-parts.

6a	tou/ton	i v d w . n	o`	V I h s o u / j	k a t a k e i , m e n o n		
6b	k a i .	g n o u . j	o [ t i	p o l u . n	h ; d h	c r o , n o n	e ; c e i (
6c	l e , g e i	a u v t w /   (	Q e ,	l e i j	u ` g i h . j	g e n e , s q a i	

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ki, nhsin after xhrw/n. Thus it is easy to conclude that the original text has just xhrw/n according to the external evidence.

The precise explanation of each colon is as follows: Firstly, Jesus sees (*ivdw.n*) a crippled man lying at the pool of Bethesda (v. 6a). The narrator does not offer the reason Jesus chooses this man from the many sick people.<sup>88</sup> In the Gospel of John, however, it is clear that Jesus' particular observation of a particular person indicates the introduction of a certain miraculous action (cf. 9:1; see Ridderbos 1992:185).<sup>89</sup> Secondly, Jesus knows (*gnou.j*) the long duration of the man's desperate situation (v. 6b). The narrator no doubt thinks of Jesus' supernatural knowledge, which is a Johannine theme, without interference from any observation (cf. 1:47 f; 2:25; Barrett 1978:211; Brown 1966:207). Thirdly, Jesus asks (*le,gei*) the man to be made well (v. 6c). The semantic relationships between these three sub-units are as follows: *ivdw.n* (saw) in verse 6a and *gnou.j* (knew) in verse 6b are participles depending on the main verb *le,gei* in verse 6c. Accordingly, the main focus of the whole sentence should be on verse 6c (see Newman & Nida 1980:146).

Jesus Himself positively approaches the invalid person to heal him. That is, as stated by Ridderbos (1992:185), "the words with which Jesus addresses him (*qe,leij u`gih.j gene,sqai*) are not just a way of starting a conversation but an indirect offer, based on the power and authority at Jesus' disposal, to which He called the sick man's attention as a new possibility."<sup>90</sup> Thus, this question is best taken as one of the elliptical offers He is constantly making in this Gospel (e.g. 4:10; 6:32, 33; Carson 1991:243). After all, as Culpepper (1993:203) assures us, the reader gains a distinct impression of Jesus' sovereign manner and his concern for the physical and spiritual needs of the man from what He says and does in this statement.

Yet this man does not know who Jesus is and thus sees no other possibility than the therapeutic power of the water for his healing (Ridderbos 1992:185; cf. Witherington

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<sup>88</sup> According to Barrett (1978: 212), "there are parallels and some contrasts between this narrative and that of the paralytic in Mark 2:1-12; perhaps here also a contrast is intended. In Mark the paralytic, let down through the roof, is set before Jesus, whose choice is therefore to some extent restricted, as it is not in John."

<sup>89</sup> According to Brown (1966:207), the Synoptic also uses the description of Jesus' seeing someone (and explicitly or implicitly taking pity on him) as a means of introducing a miracle (cf. Lk 7:13; 13:12).

<sup>90</sup> This positive attitude of Jesus is distinctive from the previous two miracles (in 2:1-11; in 4:46-54), in which the people come to Jesus with an earnest request.

III 1995:137). He just says that *ku,rie ( a;nqrwpon ouvk e;cw i[na o[tan taracqh/| to. u[dwr ba,|h| me eivj th.n kolumbh,qran\ evn w-| de. e;rcomai evgw, ( a;lloj pro. evmou/ katabai,nei (v. 7)*. This answer is just the lamentation of his misfortune, or at least a request to let him into the pool when the water is stirred up (see Robinson 1985:57-59). For this reason, Stibbe (1993:74) believes that this crippled man is one of two people in John's narrative who are on the margins of society (the other is in chapter 9).<sup>91</sup> On the other hand, Lightfoot (1956:149) significantly states that "possibly the 'first come, first served,' as described in this verse, and the important man's lack of help at the critical moment, should be contrasted with the Lord's universal and permanent invitation, as described in 6:35, 37."

Jesus subsequently cures the crippled man through his authoritative command that *:Egeire a=ron to.n kra,batto,n sou kai. peripa,tei (v. 8*; see Beasley-Murray 1987:73-74). Ridderbos (1992:186) claims that, for the paralytic to carry his pallet<sup>92</sup> home manifests the reversal in his fortunes, which ultimately reflects the manifestation of Jesus' glory (cf. Staley 1991:60-61). Then the narrator stresses the completeness of the cure in repetitive manner in verse 9. Firstly it is presented in the use of *euvqe,wj*<sup>93</sup>, in which the narrator emphasises the immediacy of the cure. Then, secondly, the narrator obviously confirms that the desperate situation of the man is completely solved (*evge,neto u`gih.j*)<sup>94</sup>. Thirdly, the effectiveness of the cure is publicly demonstrated again by the man's instantaneous action that *a;nqrwpoj kai. h=ren to.n kra,batton auktou/ kai. periepa,tei* (Kysar 1986:76). Just as the 38 years prove the

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<sup>91</sup> On the other hand, as observed by Carson (1991:243), this invalid is the painful opposite of everything that characterises the wonderful character in chapter 9. See Lightfoot (1956:138) for a more full argumentation of the comparison of the characterisation of the crippled man (in chapter 5) and the blind man (in chapter 9).

<sup>92</sup> The Greek word for mat (*kra,batoj*) here is a colloquial term for the pallet or mattress that the poor had for bedding. It is used elsewhere in the New Testament only in Mark 2:4, 9, 11, 12; 6:55; Acts 5:15; 9:33. It always refers to the bed of a sick person (Newman & Nida 1980:147).

<sup>93</sup> This word is common in Matthew and the very similar *euvqu,j* is frequent in Mark, but both are rare in John (three times each), and the rarity puts all the greater emphasis on the present passage (Morris 1971:303; cf. Brown 1966:208).

<sup>94</sup> According to Moloney (1996:5), the word *evge,neto u`gih.j* is found in John only in 5:11, 14, 15 and 7:23, which looks back to the miracle in John 5.

gravity of the disease, so the carrying of the bed and the walking prove the completeness of the cure (Barrett 1978:212). Finally, in verse 11, the word of Jesus is followed by the exact repetition of those words in the description of the man's response that +Aron to.n kra,batto,n sou kai. peripa,tei. Through these literary artifices, the narrator verifies for the reader that the miracle happened immediately by Jesus' extraordinary power, not by the natural movement of the water.

### **3.2.4.1.3. The narrative function of the miracle account**

What, then, is the pivotal focus of this miracle account? In these verses of the narrative (in vv. 5-9a), the reader finds neither amazing scenery nor ethical discourse. There is no wonderful demonstration that despite thirty-eight years of suffering the lame man is totally healed. Main attention is given rather to the depiction of the contrastive characterisation of the crippled man and Jesus. That is, the crippled man is depicted as a hopeless case while Jesus is described as the One who has concern is for an exceedingly weak person. In other words, Jesus heals the person who is utterly on the margins of society (see Stibbe 1993:74-75). On the narrative level, after all, the character of the crippled man plays a role in stimulating the intention of Jesus and in exposing Jesus' identity.

### **3.2.4.2. The narrative function of the conflict account (vv. 9b-18)**

#### **3.2.4.2.1. The gradual development of the intrigue to kill Jesus**

As argued in the structural analysis, the underlying narrative is divided into the healing narrative (vv. 1-9a) and the conflict narrative (vv. 9b-18). The narrator's comment +Hn de. sa,bbaton evn evkei,nh| th/| h`me,ra| (v. 9b) functions as a reference point of this bipartite (see Witherington III 1995:134-137).<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> According to Blomberg (2001:108; see Moloney 1998:172), commentators have often divided the account of the miracle in two (vv. 2-9a, 9b-15), thinking that the latter half was an add-on in that nothing about the Sabbath appears in the first half. But John as narrator elsewhere reserves information about time and place for the end of a pericope (most notably in 6:59); each half of the story is less

That is, once the man is made well, he carries his pallet and walks in obedience to the command of Jesus. This causes the crippled man to be accused by the Jews because he has breached the Sabbath regulations. Thus the reader anticipates that difficulties could arise from the events reported (see Moloney 1996:6). The hostility of Jews toward Jesus develops gradually in each section from the general to the specific (see ‘Structure’). That is, in verses 9b-13, the Jews try to determine the healer; in verses 14-15, the admonition of Jesus and the betrayal of the man; and in verses 16-18, the Jewish plot to kill Jesus.

#### **3.2.4.2.2. Characterisation**

This gradual development is unfolded and centers on the three characters, that is, Jesus, the crippled man and the Jews. Their specific characterisation makes the plot and thus delivers the message the narrator wants to convey.

##### **1) Jesus**

The reader who knows the supernatural knowledge of Jesus may suppose that Jesus already anticipates the serious result of his deed. That is, Jesus himself performs the miracle intentionally on the Sabbath to cause the ensuing conflict.<sup>96</sup> This inference is accurate due to the ultimate fact that the reader gains the full identity of Jesus reflected on the Sabbath while serious conflict occurs between the Jews and Jesus.<sup>97</sup> This perspective is also already anticipated in the macro contextual investigation of chapters 5-10, wherein the investigator has argued that the identity of Jesus is exposed

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meaningful without the other, and healings on the Sabbath are frequently attested to in the synoptic tradition (Mk 1:21-29 pars; 3:1-6 pars; Lk 13:10-17; 14:1-6). The text should be allowed to stand as John presents it. For a more complete discussion of this, see Witkamp (1985:19-31).

<sup>96</sup> In this regard, Carson (1991:244) accurately states, “the Synoptics record a number of incidents in which Jesus’ activity on the Sabbath becomes the focus of controversy (Mk 2:23-3:6; Lk 13:10-17; 14:1-6; cf. Mk 12:1-14). All the Gospels report that disputes between Jesus and the Jewish authorities over the Sabbath were so sharp that they figure prominently in the rising desire to kill Jesus.”

<sup>97</sup> The first reason for the Jewish persecution of Jesus is that Jesus violates the Sabbath regulation in verse 16. In this statement, by the way, the narrator mentions the plural form *tau/ta* and the imperfect tense of the verb *εἰποι, ει* together, which indicates a repeated action. Thus Newman & Nida (1980:150) accurately understand this statement as an illustration of the things that Jesus is in the habit of doing on the Sabbath day.

in relation to the Jewish feasts.<sup>98</sup> Therefore, the conflict caused by the miracle must not be seen in a negative light but rather from the viewpoint of the narrator's intentional composition in delivering the theological message as related to the miraculous event.

When Jesus 'afterward' (meta. tau/ta)<sup>99</sup> finds again the cured man in the temple as He finds the blind man whom He cured on a later occasion (v. 14a; cf. 9:35; 1:43), He warns the man that :Ide u`gih.j ge,gonaj( mhke,ti a`ma,rtane(i[na mh. cei/ro,n soi, ti ge,nhtai (v. 14b)<sup>100</sup>. Although there is no evidence, it is conjectured that the man has gone to the temple to offer thanks for his recovery (Mk 1:44; Lk 17:14; see Bernard 1928a:234). :Ide u`gih.j ge,gonaj employs the perfect form of the verb, indicating that the cure is permanent (Morris 1971:307). mhke,ti a`ma,rtane neither indicates nor implies that the man's illness is the consequence of sin; probably it would be true to say here (as at 9:3; 11:4) that it occurred so that God might be glorified in his work (Barrett 1978:213; cf. Morris 1971:307; Lightfoot 1956:141; Lindars 1928a:217).<sup>101</sup> That is, this mention ultimately might be intended for the exposure of the nature (or purpose) of Jesus' ministry: Jesus carries out the work of God in deliverance from sin and death for eternal life.

This assumption is supported by the ensuing brief declaration of Jesus that 'my Father

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<sup>98</sup> The conflict between Jesus and the Jews is one of the prominent motifs in this Gospel (see Blomberg 2001:111; Mealand 1993:261). Culpepper (1993:205) claims, "Jesus has encountered little opposition or conflict through the first four chapters of the Gospel. At most this conflict is foreshadowed in the interrogation of John the Baptist by those sent from the Jews and by Jesus' exchange with the Jews in the temple. With John 5:1-18, however, the conflict between Jesus and the Jews is established, and this conflict will build throughout the rest of the Gospel."

<sup>99</sup> This is an indefinite term, so it does not mean immediately 'afterward,' but leaves the time uncertain (Morris 1971:307). In other words, as observed by Moloney (1998:169), this expression separates the encounter between Jesus and the man from what happens in the surrounding narrative.

<sup>100</sup> According to Newman & Nida (1980:150), the verb 'see' (:ide), which can also be translated into 'listen,' is merely an English idiomatic way of expressing the Greek idiom that is used for the purpose of drawing attention to something. So a more satisfactory equivalent for 'see' is 'pay attention' or 'hear what I am telling you.'

<sup>101</sup> Brown (1966:208) also properly states in this regard that in Synoptics the healing miracles of Jesus are part of his attack on the sinful realm of Satan, therein the narrative of the paralytic lowered through the roof, the power to forgive sins is the major point of the narrative. In this Gospel, however, Jesus denies that the sickness is to be regarded as punishment for sin when the man born blind is presented to him (see 9:3).

is still working, and I also am working' (v. 17; see Dodd 1953:320-323).<sup>102</sup> As argued by Yee (1989:40), "the rabbinic belief is that God continues his creative and sustaining work even on the Sabbath. This rabbinic belief can be traced back to the Old Testament itself where the Sabbath is linked both to Creation (Gen 2:2-3; Ex 20:8-11) and Redemption (Dt 5:15). The Creator-Redeemer God carries on his creative/liberating work throughout the course of the salvation history (cf. Bertram 1964:640). In view of this theology of the Sabbath, Jesus justifies the legality of his Sabbath healing by stating that he is doing the same redemptive work as his Father" (see Westermann 1998:72; Moloney 1998:170; Lightfoot 1956:140-141).<sup>103</sup> Thus this theological mention of Jesus indicates Jesus' homogeneousness with God, and accordingly the Jews are seeking all the more to kill Jesus (v. 18).<sup>104</sup>

The antagonism to Jesus becomes hotter now than before. However, paradoxically, the reader grasps the fuller identity of Jesus through this conflict. Therefore the function of the characterisation of Jesus is served as the positive exposure of his own divine identity as the One who is equal to God (see Schnackenburg 1980:97-98; cf. Stibbe 1993:75-76).

## **2) The crippled man**

The most noticeable characteristic of the crippled man is his passive and timid attitude (see Orchard 1998:70). He does not ask Jesus to heal him, does not say he wants to be well, and blames his continued infirmity on others (v. 8; Culpepper 1998:150). When the Jews rebuke the man who had been cured for the infringement of the Sabbath practice, he spares no pains to defend himself by just answering them that 'the man who made me well said to me, take up your mat and walk' (v. 11; cf. Moloney 1998:168-169). When interrogated about who this was, the man reveals that he does not know even though Jesus is his great benefactor (v. 13; cf. Witherington III

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<sup>102</sup> Culpepper (1993:205) considers that the final pronouncement of Jesus in v. 17 provides a lens through which to view the entire narrative and a point of the transition for the discourse in 5:19-47.

<sup>103</sup> For surveys of the biblical and rabbinic understanding of Sabbath see Hasel (1992:849-856).

<sup>104</sup> In verse 18, through the word *avpoktei/nai*, the reader sees the first active hostility against Jesus reported in this Gospel; in 4:1 it is only implied (Brown 1966:213).

1995:138).<sup>105</sup> The man meets Jesus again in the temple and is told by Jesus that *mhke, ti a`ma, rtane* (v. 14). This warning indicates the potential that the man will be easily affected by sin (cf. John 9:3; Lk 13:1-5; see Haenchen 1984:247; Brown 1966:208).<sup>106</sup> The man goes to the Jews and tells them that it is Jesus who has made him well, after encountering Jesus in the temple (v. 15; see Culpepper 1993:204-205). As a result of this indiscreet report, the Jews start persecuting Jesus because He is doing such things on the Sabbath. Besides, the most serious problem of the cured man is that he does not respond with faith to Jesus at the end, unlike the characters portrayed in the journeys of faith in the Cana-to-Cana section (see Moloney 1996:7; Kysar 1986:78).<sup>107</sup> Thus the reader discovers that this crippled man has a spiritual disease (or disease of vindication), as well as a physically incurable illness (cf. Culpepper 1983:138).

At the narratological level, this particular portrayal contributes to making Jesus draw His divine identity in a completely negative way.

### 3) The Jews

The Jews (*oi` VIoudai/oi*) enter the story, accusing the man of unlawful Sabbath work by carrying his mat (v. 10; Ex 20:8-11; Jer 17:19-27; Moloney 1998:168). Thus the reader discovers that this narrative is not an end to the miracle but that it is to take

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<sup>105</sup> The reason for Jesus' sudden departure is clearly stated as follows: *o; clou o; ntoj evn tw/| to, pw|* (v. 13). That is, the miracle has attracted a large crowd, whose presence, it is implied, is intimidating to Jesus (Orchard 1998:69).

<sup>106</sup> Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:112) interpret the act of the healed man in the social scientific perspective of the first century in the Mediterranean world. According to them, the sin of the man (cf. v. 14) means a breach of interpersonal relations with the group and thus the accusation of the man indicates the strong will of attachment to the dominant social group. For a complete discussion in this regard, see Pilch (2000).

<sup>107</sup> While some commentators suggest this act as a positive witness for Jesus, some scholars such as Culpepper (1993:204-205) construe the final act of the crippled man, telling the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him, in a negative way, because "1) the man's earlier responses have established the trait of seeking to pass responsibility from himself to others; 2) Jesus' warning in v. 14 underlines that he is a sinner; 3) we have seen formal contrasts between this passage and the first two signs, where individuals come to believe in Jesus; and 4) this pericope functions to establish the opposition to Jesus and explain some of the reasons for it." On the other hand, with relation of 9:11, Carson (1991:246) states as follows: "It will not do to suppose he is innocently giving credit where credit is due, like the healed man in 9:11. In the latter case, credit is given when it is still a question of establishing the reality



a distinct turn to another aspect (cf. Thomas 1995:12). The term οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι/οἱ is mainly the designation throughout the Gospel of the leading opponents of Jesus, *i.e.* the strict Pharisees, as distinct from the simple folk whether in town or country (Bernard 1928:232; Newman & Nida 1980:148).<sup>108</sup> Their portrayal is identical in this story.

The Jews start to blame the crippled man, stating that *sa,bbato,n evstin( kai .ouv k e;xesti,n soi a=rai to.n kra,batto,n sou* (v. 10). In this statement the reference to the ‘lawful’ (*e;xesti,n*) is not the Mosaic Law as such but rather the rabbinic interpretation of the Mosaic Law. That is, the complaint of the Jews about the Sabbath regulation is justified by the Mishnah law (Barrett 1978:212). Mishnah, *Shabbath* 7:2 lists thirty-nine classes of work forbidden on a Sabbath, the last being ‘taking out aught from one domain into another’ (Morris 1971:306). Therefore the public carrying of the mat by the crippled man on the Sabbath naturally comes to the attention of the Jews and thus they accuse him of breaking the law. As indicated in the statement of Beasley-Murray (1987:74), although it is extraordinary that the healed paralytic has no idea of the identity of his benefactor, it is equally extraordinary that the Jewish leaders have no regard for the healing of a man who has been crippled for almost a lifetime; their sole concern is for the breaking of a Sabbath rule as defined in their tradition. They do not exhibit surprise at the miracle, but instead rebuke him for his violation of the Sabbath. They are concerned only with the observance of the Sabbath law (Haenchen 1984:246).

The man defends himself by blaming his breach of the Sabbath regulation on the healer (v. 11). Thus the Jews naturally enquire as to His identity (v. 12), because anyone going around telling people to contravene one of the thirty-nine prohibited categories of work is far more dangerous than the odd individual who does so (Carson 1991:245). As soon as they learn from the man that the Healer is Jesus from Nazareth (v. 15), they begin to persecute Jesus (v. 16). In regarding to the Jewish persecution in

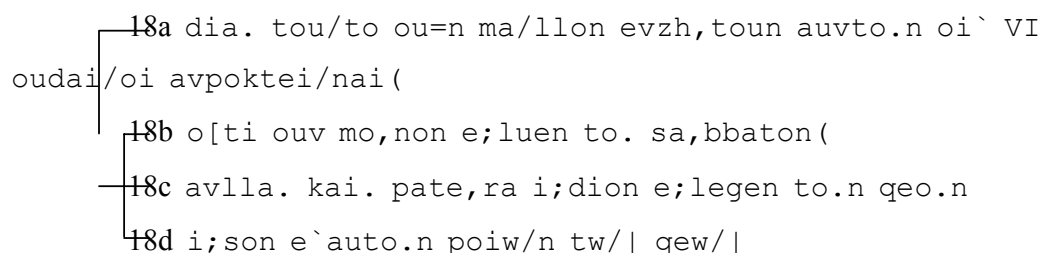
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and credibility of the miracle; in the present, the motive can hardly be a desire to assign appropriately to Jesus, for the hostile opposition has already manifested itself (vv. 11-13).”

<sup>108</sup> See Culpepper (1983:125-132) for a more complete argument on the character to the Jews in this Gospel.

verse 16, Moloney (1998:170) correctly states that “the imperfect form of the verb *evdi,wkon* indicates that Jesus’ actions on the Sabbath led to a constant persecution/prosecution of Jesus. From this point on there is a trial in process, and the protagonists are ‘the Jews’ who acts as accusers and Jesus who defends himself by revealing the truth.”<sup>109</sup> The statement for Jesus’ self-defence *o` path,r mou e[wj a;r ti evrga,zetai kavgw. evrga,zomai* (v. 17) causes the Jews to try harder to kill Jesus because He is not only breaking the Sabbath, but is also calling God His own Father, thereby making Himself equal to God (v. 18; see Harvey 1976:67-81).

Verse 18 can be semantically structured as follows:



Considering the semantic relationships of the cola, it can be identified that colon 18a governs colon 18b, colon 18c and colon 18d, and that these three subsequent cola can be linked by means of equivalent relationships. This structural diagram of verse 18 shows that, according to the interpretation of the Jews of Jesus’ words and actions, Jesus offends on three scores (Moloney 1998:170):

- 1) He has broken the Sabbath by telling the man to carry his pallet and by healing him (v. 18b).
- 2) He has called God his own Father by claiming that the one who works on the Sabbath is his Father (v. 18c).
- 3) He has made himself equal to God by claiming that just as God is able to work on the Sabbath, so is he (v. 18d).

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<sup>109</sup> For a good discussion on the trial of Jesus in this Gospel, see Rensberger (1984:395-411).

However, ironically, the Jews have expressed a true understanding of Jesus (Moloney 1998:170). That is, these scores allow the reader to recognise the true identity of Jesus: 1) He is the Lord of the Sabbath (v. 18b); 2) He is the only Son of God (v. 18c); and 3) He is equal to God (v. 18d).

The character of the Jews is presented in the narrative as the paradoxical tool for the drawing of Jesus' identity in the structure of controversy.

#### **3.2.4.2.3. The narrative function of the conflict account**

The narrator conveys his theological message through the three main characters in the conflict account. They present the following functions respectively: 1) Jesus exposes his identity through positive speeches and actions; 2) the crippled man contributes to Jesus drawing His divine identity in a completely negative way; and 3) the Jews play the function of a paradoxical tool drawing the identity of Jesus in the controversy structure.<sup>110</sup>

#### **3.2.5. The point of view**

The narrator's retrospective point of view is determinatively presented in the temporal perspective. This is evident from the theme of the Sabbath regulation in drawing the identity of Jesus as God Himself in the context of conflict, which may be one of the main issues in the post-resurrection.

The narrator adopts an omnipresent point of view in the spatial perspective. He knows not only the geographical place such as the pool of Bethesda (v. 2; cf. Culpepper 1983:27), but also participates in every dialogue between Jesus and the crippled man (vv. 5-9a; 14), the crippled man and the Jews (vv. 10-13; 15), and Jesus and the Jews

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<sup>110</sup> Culpepper (1993:206) regards these three characters as being in the following ways: Jesus is bound to the will of the Father, the man at the pool is bound to his infirmity (and perhaps also to the power of sin), and the Jews are bound to the law. The action that takes place, therefore, is the result of the bondage or primary allegiance of each of these characters.

(16-18). This omnipresent spatial perspective is necessary to deliver the implicative message of the episode because this episode unfolds by centring on the characterisation of Jesus, the crippled man and the Jews.

The narrator adopts an omniscient point of view in the psychological perspective. This is evident from the main characters: Jesus, the crippled man and Jews (see Culpepper 1983:22-26). The narrator knows the desperate situation of the crippled man and the attempts of the Jews to kill Jesus. With regard to Jesus, although the narrator does not apparently mention the inner thoughts of Jesus, he clearly reports it (Jesus' inner situation) through the mention of Jesus' direct speech (v. 17) and the hostile response of the Jews (v. 18). Although the narrator ends the narrative with a comment on the attempt of the Jews to kill Jesus, beyond that, the reader can grasp the true identity of Jesus.

### **3.2.6. The synthesis**

#### **3.2.6.1. The hermeneutical presuppositions**

Even though there is neither a numbered nor a specifically labelled sign for this miracle episode, this story can clearly be regarded as a sign, *viz.*, the third sign in the Gospel of John (see 'Chapter 1. Introduction'). The narrator places the underlying sign at the beginning of Jesus' second circular journey in chapters 5-10, which takes place from Jerusalem through Galilee and back to Jerusalem, in which the report of the self-revelation of Jesus in chapters 2-4 continues with an ever increasing and deepening wealth of topics and motives (Ridderbos 1992:181). Therefore the reader may expect a fuller exposure of Jesus' identity in these chapters and accordingly the underlying sign can be seen as an opening of this development.

There are some specific features that can be seen as hermeneutical keys to the whole episode, including signs to understand this well-rounded unit, which is particularly developed from the underlying sign and the underlying sign is an initiation of the development of these features. Among others, there are two distinctive thematic

features in chapters 5-10. They are the references to the Jewish feasts through which the author wants to draw the identity of Jesus in relation to the fulfilling of the Jewish feasts (see Culpepper 1998:148; Moloney 1998:165), and a different attitude of the Jews toward Jesus, so that the narrative plot can be exposed centring on the conflict context between Jesus and the Jews (see Culpepper 1983:91; Von Wahlde 1982:33-60; Schnackenburg 1980:90-91; Lightfoot 1956:138). Therefore the underlying episode should be read on the basis of the typology of the Jewish feasts ('the Sabbath' at this juncture) in hostile circumstances.

There is another important point to be kept in mind for a proper analysis of the underlying narrative. This is the structural artistry of the narrator. The narrator gradually develops the narrative in each section from the general to the specific (see Blomberg 2001:108; Witkamp 1985:19-31). That is, in verses 1-9a, the narrator concentrates on the many invalids, moving to the crippled man and Jesus immediately performs the miracle without any request to the problematical person. Subsequently, in verses 9b-18, the Jews interrogate the man about the healer and this develops the intrigue to kill Jesus. Thus the narrator arranges that 'the miracle of Jesus' causes 'the plot of the Jews to kill Him' (cf. Moloney 1998:167).

### **3.2.6.2. The identity of Jesus**

The narrator arranges the miracle tradition anew for narrating his story. He (the narrator) unfolds his theological intention to expose the two aspects of Jesus' identity in the miracle narrative (vv. 1-9a) and in the conflict narrative (vv. 9b-18) respectively. These aspects are 'Jesus is the life-giver' and 'Jesus is equal to God.' Bearing in mind the above hermeneutical presuppositions, the consideration of Jesus' identity can be discussed focusing on these two aspects.

#### **1) Jesus is the life-giver**

In the miracle narrative (vv. 1-9a), the narrator exposes the identity of Jesus as the life-giver (cf. Beasley-Murray 1987:73). Jesus enables the man, who has a spiritual

disease (or disease of vindication) as well as a physically incurable illness, to stand up and begin to live (v. 9). In this part of the narrative, the narrator organises that the character of the crippled man plays a role in stimulating the intention of Jesus while the character of Jesus functions by plunging into an exposure of His own identity. Jesus draws His life-giving power through the miracle and this aspect of His identity is presented precisely in the ensuing discourse of Jesus (vv. 19-47). The discourse can be divided with two parts (vv. 19-30 and vv. 31-47), in the first part of which the discourse explains ‘the life-giving power of Jesus’ and the second demonstrates ‘the witnesses to Jesus.’ In the first part of the discourse, Jesus positively heightens His affectionate personality.

Jesus claims His authority as the Son who should be with God in a gradual progressive method in this discourse. Initially, Jesus opens the discourse with the significant mention that *ouv du, natai o` ui`o.j poiei/n avfV e`autou/ ouvde.n eva.n mh, ti ble,ph| to.n pate,ra poiou/nta\ a] ga.r a'n evkei/noj poih/| ( tau/ta kai. o` ui`o.j o`moi,wj poiei//* (v. 19). Subsequently, Jesus utters the key statement of his ensuing discourse after the miracle *w[sper ga.r o` path.r evgei,rei tou.j nekrou.j kai. zw|opoiei/( ou[twj kai. o` ui`o.j ou]j qe,lei zw|opoiei/* (v. 21). Finally, in verse 30, to which much of verse 19 returns, Jesus concludes the discourse by reiterating the principle with which it began: *Ouv du, namai evgw. poiei/n avpV evmautou/ ouvde,n\ kaqw.j avkou,w kri,nw( kai. h` kri,sij h` evmh. dikai,a evsti,n(o[ti ouv zhtw/ to. qe,lhma to. evmo.n avlla. to. qe,lhma tou/ pe,myanto,j me.* The statement (v. 19) and restatement (v. 30) of the theme of Jesus’ total dependence on the Father further indicates the unity of vv. 19-30. That is, what is said in the third person in v. 19 is restated in the first person in v. 30, so Jesus applies ‘the Son’ to Himself (Moloney 1998:177).

v. 19: *ouv du, natai o` ui`o.j poiei/n avfV e`autou/ ouvde.n*

v. 30: *ouv du, namai **evgw.** poiei/n avpV evmautou/ ouvde,n*

This gradual progression of the discourse implies that Jesus is with God and God gives the life-giving power to Jesus so that, like God, Jesus can give life to whomsoever He pleases (see Culpepper 1998:152).

## **2) Jesus is equal to God**

In the conflict narrative (vv. 9b-18), the narrator exposes that Jesus is equal to God. Jesus intentionally causes the conflict between Him and the Jews by the performance of the healing ministry on the Sabbath and by stating that he is doing the same redemptive work as His Father (see Kysar 1986:79). Interestingly, the narrator unfolds the story by the centring on the three main characters in this part of the account. They are Jesus, the crippled man and the Jews. Jesus exposes His divine identity through positive speeches and actions; the crippled man contributes to making Jesus draw His divine identity in a completely negative way; and the Jews play the role of paradoxical tool in drawing the identity of Jesus in the controversy structure. Therefore, the narrator makes Jesus the positive deliverer of His identity and the other two characters vehicles to make the identity of Jesus more effective (cf. Witherington III 1995:139; Carson 1991:249-250). Through the conflict story, the narrator states that Jesus is equal to God who carries on his creative/liberating work throughout the course of salvation history. This aspect of Jesus' identity is heightened in the second part of the ensuing discourse of Jesus (vv. 31-47), in which Jesus positively emphasises His divine authority.

The main focus of the second part of Jesus' discourse is His defence against the Jews (see Talbert 1992:124-130). That is, Jesus continually faces the trial by the Jews, and thus He needs to defend His heavenly authority. He employs several authoritative witnesses. By law, testimony had to be confirmed by two witnesses (Dt 19:15), but Jesus has five authoritative witnesses at this juncture (Culpepper 1998:152-153). The witnesses are presented to the Jews as follows (cf. Moloney 1998:186-189):

vv. 33-35	John the Baptist
v. 36	The works of Jesus
vv. 37-38	The word of the unseen Father
v. 39	The Scripture
vv. 45-47	Moses

The witnesses support the divine authority of Jesus with consistency: John the Baptist testifies to the truth - Jesus (v. 33), the works of Jesus testify that the Father has sent Jesus (v. 36), the Father Himself testifies for Jesus (v. 37), the Scriptures testify Jesus (v. 39), and Moses wrote about Jesus (v. 46). Thus Jesus is proven as the Son of the Father and accordingly Jesus is not guilty of blasphemy. In contrast, the inability of the Jews to accept these witnesses leads to an ironic change in the direction of the trial: the accusers become the accused (vv. 45-47; Moloney 1998:189).

### **3.2.6.3. Theological and hermeneutical conclusion**

The more important thing to note here is that these two aspects of Jesus' identity should not be separated from each other but should be seen as complementary. That is, Jesus' life-giving power on the Sabbath flows from His dependence upon His Father who is still working and this ultimately implies that Jesus is equal to God, which is testified by the authoritative witnesses. Thus the one who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, but whoever hears the word of Jesus and believes God sent Jesus will receive eternal life (vv. 23-24; see Moloney 1998:189).

## **3.3. The feeding of the multitude (6:1-15)**

### **3.3.1. The macro context**

#### **3.3.1.1. The Johannine redactive emphasis**

It is clear that the author of this Gospel seems to take the underlying narrative from his stock of traditions (Witkamp 1990:43; Kysar 1986:89). This inference is



supported by the comparison with the Synoptics on the sequence of the stories in 6:1-21 (cf. Mk 6:30-54 par).<sup>111</sup> According to Witkamp (1990:43-45), there are obvious correspondences between the Gospels (John 6:1-15 and Mk 6:40-44 par), which are as follows: big crowd, 200 denarii, five loaves and two fishes, people sit down, much/green grass, 5000 men, Jesus takes the loaves, gives thanks (John *kevucariste,w* Mk *evuloge,w*), distributes them, everyone has enough, twelve baskets. According to Witkamp, however, there are several prominent differences between both accounts as well. They can be presented as follows: Passover is mentioned; multiplication comes instantly; Jesus takes the initiative; 200 denarii are *not* enough; *barely* loaves; Philip and Andrew are mentioned; the verb (*kata*) *kla,w* is omitted; Jesus orders his disciples to collect the pieces left over the sequel vv. 14-15. The reason for both these correspondences and differences is that the author of this Gospel is independent of the Synoptics and dependent on a parallel tradition or source (see Ridderbos 1992:209; Carson 1991:267). This indicates that the Johannine author takes the story from the stock of tradition and composes it with the artistry of his own theological viewpoint, including such features as the educational feature and Passover motif (cf. Painter 1989a:421-450).

### 3.3.1.2. Some specific features of chapter 6

There is another noteworthy overall structural feature to deal with in this story. Some specific features of the underlying chapter are not found in the preceding chapters. Many contemporary commentators (see Bultmann 1971:209-210; Ridderbos 1992:181-184; Lee 1994:129; Carson 1991:267; Schnackenburg 1980: 5-9; Bernard 1928a: xvii-xix) have argued that the sequential order of chapters 5 and 6 has been somewhat displaced: chapter 5 should be set between chapters 6 and 7. This inference depends on a geographical sequence that suggests that originally chapter 4 (which concludes that Jesus is at Galilee) is followed by chapter 6 (which begins with Jesus on the shore of the sea of Galilee) and is followed by chapter 5 (in which Jesus goes up to Jerusalem), and chapter 7. This suggestion, however, focuses too strongly on geography (Moloney 1998:193). In fact, no arrangement can solve all the

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<sup>111</sup> See Brown (1966:236-244) for a full treatment in this regard.

geographical and chronological problems in this Gospel, and to rearrange on the basis of geography and chronology is to give undue emphasis to something that does not seem to have been of major importance to the author (Brown 1966:236; also see Barrett 1978:227).<sup>112</sup> Rather, this projected rearrangement is attractive in some ways but not compelling, which is, for instance, the development of the Mosaic theme (see Witherington III 1995:148-150).

There is an overt penetration of the Mosaic motif into this story (Stibbe 1993:81). This motif is developed from this chapter and ends in chapter 8. It is evident from a cursory glance at the overall themes of these chapters: in chapter 6, Jesus supplies the spiritual Bread of Life just as the manna is given by God to Moses in the desert. In chapter 7, Jesus announces the new stream of living water just as the water from rock in the wilderness. In chapter 8, Jesus proclaims his identity as the Light of the World just as the pillar of light is given by God to guide the Israelites in the desert. Thus clearly Moses is the *sensus plenior* of the Jesus story, just as Jesus is the *sensus plenior* of the Moses story. This means that the narratives, including the underlying narrative, in chapters 6-8 must be read according to the perspective of a hidden Mosaic theme.

There are some more specific features underlying the chapter, which are not found in the preceding chapters, and which it might be helpful to know. These can be briefly presented as follows (cf. Lee 1994:126-127): 1) The first of the 'I am' sayings, which are used in a predicative way in the Gospel within the context of metaphor, appear.<sup>113</sup> 2) The revelation of Jesus' identity and mission progresses throughout the narrative in a more complex way than in the previous narratives. 3) The final responses of the main characters are more varied than in the previous symbolic narratives: acceptance and rejection are both presented in a new and critical way. 4) The last impressive feature is that the author organises the narrative with the direct voice of Jesus instead of his indirect narrative explanation (see Ridderbos 1992:208). Therefore, the reader may meet the more precise and full identity of Jesus with the vivid discourses of

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<sup>112</sup> There is no manuscript evidence for the reversal of order.

<sup>113</sup> See Ball (1996) for a good discussion on 'I am' sayings in the Gospel of John.

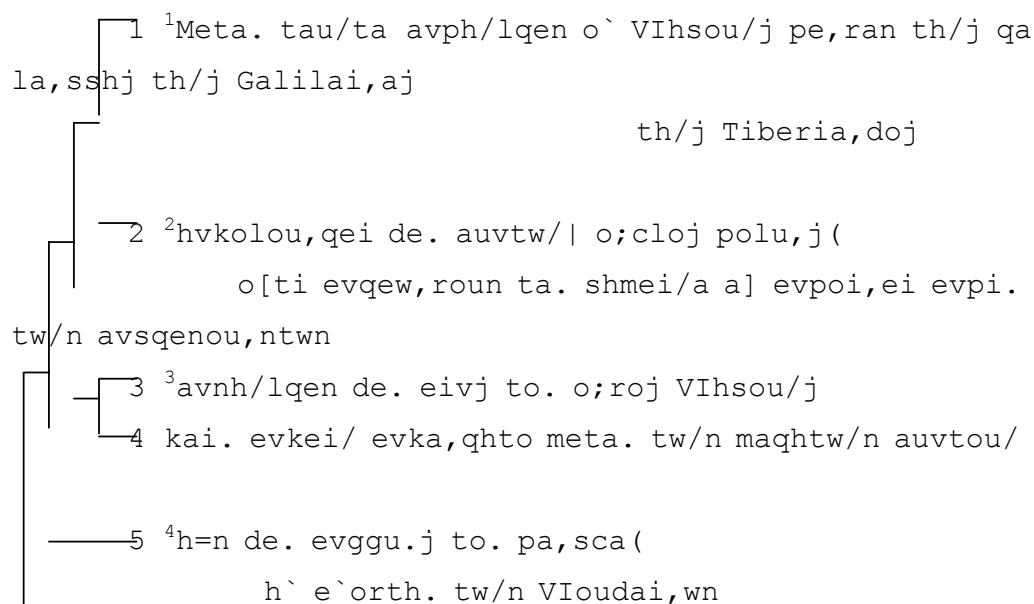
Jesus.

### 3.3.2. Structure

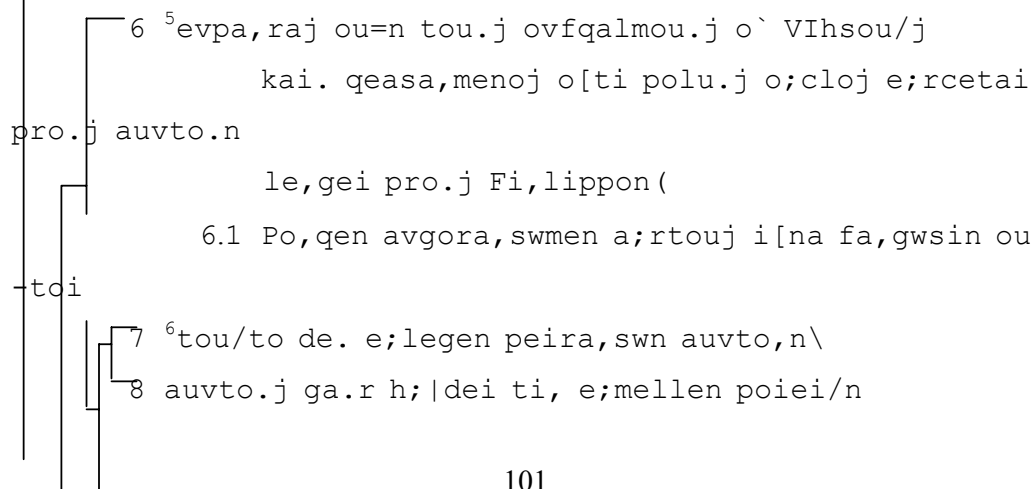
The following is a discourse analysis of the pericope.

#### 3.3.2.1. Division of the text into cola

##### Cluster A Jesus encounters the crowds



##### Cluster B The lack of food



9 <sup>7</sup>avpekri,qh auvtw/| o` Fi,lippo(j(  
 uvtoi/j  
 9.1 Diakosi,wn dhnari,wn a;rtoi ouvkv avrkou/sin a  
 i[na e[kastoj bracu, ti la,bh|

10 <sup>8</sup>le,gei auvtw/| ei-j evk tw/n maqhtw/n auvtou/(  
 VAndre,aj o` avdelfo.j Si,mwnoj Pe,trou(

10.1 <sup>9</sup>:Estin paida,rion w-de  
 du,o ovya,ria\  
 ojj e;cei pe,nte a;rtouj kriqi,nouj kai.  
 10.2 avlla. tau/ta ti, evstin eivj tosou,touj

**Cluster C The feeding of the multitude**

11 <sup>10</sup>ei=pen o` VIhsou/j(  
 11.1 Poih,sate tou.j avnqrw,pouj avnapesei/n  
 12 h=n de. co,rtoj polu.j evn tw/| to,pw|  
 13 avne,pesan ou=n oi` a;ndrej to.n avriqmo.n w`j pe  
 ntakisci,lioi  
 14 <sup>11</sup>e;laben ou=n tou.j a;rtouj o` VIhsou/j  
 15 kai. euvcaristh,saj die,dwken toi/j avnakeime,noi  
 j  
 16 o`moi,wj kai. evk tw/n ovvari,wn o[son h;qelon

**Cluster D The leftover food**

17 <sup>12</sup>w`j de. evneplh,sqhsan( le,gei toi/j maqhtai/j a  
 uvttou/(  
 17.1 Sunaga,gete ta. perisseu,santa kla,smata(  
 i[na mh, ti avpo,lhtai  
 18 <sup>13</sup>sunh,gagon ou=n

19 kai. evge, misan dw, deka kofi, nouj klasma, tw n  
 evk tw/n pe, nte a; rtw n tw/n kriqi, nwn  
 a] evperi, sseusan toi/j bebrwko, sin

### Cluster E Jesus escapes the crowds

20 <sup>14</sup>Oi` ou=n a;nqrwpoi ivdo, ntej o] evpoi, hsen shmei  
 /on e; legon o[ti  
 ———— 20.1 Ou-to, j evstin avlhqw/j o` profh, thj  
 o` evrco, menoj eivj to.n ko, smon

21 <sup>15</sup>VIhsou/j ou=n gnou.j o[ti me, llousin e; rcesqai k  
 ai. a`rpa, sein avto.n  
 i[na poih, swsin basile, a(  
 avnecw, rhsen pa, lin eivj to. o;roj avto.j m  
 o, noj

### 3.3.2.2. The discussion of the clusters

The pericope is divided into 21 cola, which are grouped into 5 clusters, in the following way:

Cola 1-5 / 6-10 / 11-16 / 17-19 / 20-21

**Cluster A (cola 1-5):** The Johannine transitional expression meta. tau/ta introduces a new unit (cf. 2:12; 3:22; 5:1; 5:14; 6:1; 7:1; 19:28, 38; 21:1). This introduces a new place (colon 1, th/j qala, sshj th/j Galilai, aj th/j Tiberia, doj), a new set of characters (colon 2, o; cloj polu, j; colon 4, tw/n maqhtw/n avtou/), and a change of time (colon 5, to. pa, sca). The reason of this gathering is also given: o[ti evqew, roun ta. shmei/a a] evpoi, ei

evpi. tw/n avsqenou,ntwn (colon 2; cf. 2:23-25; Moloney 1998:193). The cluster ends with colon 5 with the significant reference that h=n de. evggou. j to. pa, sca ( h` e` orth. tw/n VIoudai, wn, which is the specific occasion of the narrative. Thus this cluster is a typical introductory section to the miracle narrative. The semantic relations between the cola are as follows: colon 1 is linked to colon 2 by means of a character setting (place, circumstance) relationship. Therein colon 2 can be divided into two sub-colons as follows, which has a reason (2.1.)-result (2.2.) relationship internally:

<div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 15px; height: 15px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	2.1. hvkolou, qei de. auvtw/   o; cloj polu, j (
	2. o[ti evqew, roun ta. shmei/a
	2.2.1. a] evpoi, ei evpi. tw/n avsqenou,ntwn

Colon 3 is linked to colon 4 by means of a different consequential relationship (an unfolding structure). The preceding two cola (1-2) play the function of the setting for these two cola (3-4) and these four cola (1-4) is the setting for the last colon (colon 5). This cluster is identified as ‘Jesus encounters the crowds.’

**Cluster B (cola 6-10):** The attention turns from Jesus and crowds to Jesus and his disciples, which is the first reason for the demarcation. The second reason for the demarcation is the conjunction ou=n in colon 6, which functions as a link to the preceding cluster by means of setting the circumstance relationship. The cluster is concentrated on the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples that is focused on ‘the lack of food.’ In colon 6, Jesus uses this problematic situation to test his disciples. Cola 7-8 consist of Philip’s answer to Jesus, therein colon 8 is the reason for colon 7 because of ga. r in colon 8. Cola 9-10 consist of Andrew’s answer to Jesus, therein colon 10 is the subsequent mention (colon 9) of Andrew to Jesus. Thus colon 6 is the setting (time) for the following cola (7-10). The theme of the cluster is thus ‘the lack of food.’

**Cluster C (cola 11-16):** The most prominent reason for the demarcation of this cluster as a separate unit is to be found in the fact that the attention turns from Jesus

and his disciples to the miraculous act of Jesus. The miraculous action of the feeding is presented in this cluster. That is, whereas the previous unit concerns the test for Jesus' disciples, from colon 11 onwards the focus shifts to the supply of the food. Cola 11-13 are the preparatory operations for cola 14-16 because the conjunction  $\text{ou}=\text{n}$  in colon 14 indicates the interrelationship between both (cola 11-13 and 14-16). Internally, colon 12 is linked to colon 13 by means of a qualificational setting relationship and these two cola have a logical cause-effect relationship with colon 11. Thus Jesus undertakes to demonstrate His superiority in cola 11-13. Cola 14, 15 and 16 have different consequential relationships. Jesus takes the loaves (colon 14), gives thanks and distributes them to the crowds (cola 15), and so also the fishes, as much as they want (colon 16). The main point of the cluster is thus the performance of the miracle, that is, 'the feeding of the multitude.'

**Cluster D (cola 17-19):** The two sequential conjunctions  $\text{w}^{\text{`j}} \text{de}.$  lead to the new unit from the preceding. Without the crowd's response to the miracle, the attention turns from Jesus and crowds to Jesus and his disciples again. Thus the demarcation is accurate. The narrative is concentrated on the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples that is in turn focused on the leftover food. Jesus orders his disciples to gather up the pieces of the leftovers in colon 17 and the disciples follow Jesus' order in cola 18-19. Thus the semantic relations between both cola are as follows: colon 17 is linked to cola 18-19 by means of a cause-effect relationship (see the conjunction  $\text{ou}=\text{n}$  in colon 18) and cola 18 and 19 have a consequential relationship. Therefore the main focus of the cluster is identified as 'the leftover food.'

**Cluster E (cola 20-21):** The reason for the demarcation is the conjunction  $\text{ou}=\text{n}$  in colon 20. This cluster functions as the conclusion of the pericope. The crowd reappears in this cluster. They attempt to crown Jesus king (colon 20), but Jesus escapes them and retreats into the mountains (colon 21). Therefore the miracle once again seems to have a negative result just as the previous miracle did (5:1-18; see below). The semantic relations between cola are as follows: colon 20 is linked to colon 21 by means of a reason-result relation. The theme of the cluster is thus 'Jesus escapes the crowds.'

### 3.3.2.3. The summary of the clusters

According to the structural analysis, the relations between the clusters can be expressed diagrammatically in the following way:

1 <sup>1</sup>	cola 1-5	Jesus encounters the crowds
2 <sup>1</sup>	cola 6-10	The lack of food
3	cola 11-16	The feeding of the multitude
2 <sup>2</sup>	cola 17-19	The leftover food
1 <sup>2</sup>	cola 20-21	Jesus escapes the crowds

The structure has a loose chiasmic form (Beasley-Murray 1987:85; cf. Stibbe 1993:82; Crossan 1983: 145-164). Cola 1-5 and 20-21 form both the introduction and the conclusion, which have verbal parallels in the words *avnh/lqen ... eivj to. o;roj* (in colon 3) and *avnecw,rhsen ... eivj to. o;roj* (in colon 21) respectively. Two dialogues between Jesus and his disciples in cola 6-10 and cola 17-19 concentrate on the food respectively: the lack of food (the problem) and the leftover food (the solution). Thus cola 11-16 are marked as the centrepiece of the pericope, which contains Jesus' actual miracle (sign), and are emphasised by the narrator (cf. Witkamp 1990:46-51).

### 3.3.3. The literary setting

The narrator only furnishes the spatial setting ('the sea of Galilee') at the outset of the narrative.

#### 3.3.3.1. The spatial setting

The setting of the episode is 'the sea of Galilee' (*th/j qala,sshj th/j*



Galilai, aj th/j Tiberia, doj, v. 1; 20:3)<sup>114</sup>, by which the author may intend to designate the eastern shore, as suggested by verse 17 (Kysar 1986:90). Herod Antipas built a city on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee and called it Tiberias in honour of the Roman emperor Tiberius Caesar (Strachan 1941:178). Then, the name gradually came to stand for the lake, but this was probably only after Jesus' time (see Brown 1966:232; Carson 1991:268; Ridderbos 1992:209). On a symbolic level, on the other hand, this spatial mention implies an uncomplicated location. That is, as Brodie (1993:257) argues, this disruption of geography has a purpose: "it provides a geographic contradiction which challenges the reader to rise above the level of what is space-bound and to enter into another realm, ultimately into the realm of God, the realm which in this chapter is symbolised particularly by the bread." Thus Jerusalem and Galilee, which are the two contrasting places, from the negative and the positive poles respectively (see Olsson 1974:27-29). These antithetic responses may shed light on two positions of the reader's community: the acceptance and the rejection (cf. Witherington III 1995:151; see Domeris 1988:49-56). Finally, in chapter 5, Jesus is rejected and, what is more persecuted, but the reader in this instance anticipates the mild disposition. That is, it is expected that a positive and faithful response toward Jesus, after the miracle, will be drawn. This inference is immediately obvious from the narrator's description that *hvkolou, qei de. auvtw/ | o; cloj polu, j* in the ensuing verse (v. 2).

### 3.3.4. The aspects highlighted by the narratological perspective

From a macro contextual investigation, structural analysis and the study of the literary setting, certain issues that grasped the attention of the narrator are exposed, in the following way:

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<sup>114</sup> The identification of the same sea is overdone. P<sup>66c</sup> P<sup>75vid</sup> a A B D L W D Y 0141 f<sup>1</sup> f<sup>13</sup> 28 Byz [E F G H] have th/j Galilai, aj th/j Tiberia, doj. While N<sup>184</sup> sy<sup>2</sup> omit th/j Tiberia, doj, D Q 892 it<sup>b,d,e,r1</sup> insert eivj ta, me, rh between th/j Galilai, aj and th/j Tiberia, doj. P<sup>66\*</sup> I 524 support only th/j Galilai, aj and G N 0210 157 bo<sup>ms</sup> arm<sup>mss</sup> slav support th/j Tiberia, doj. Therefore the external evidence obviously supports the present edition, that is, UBS<sup>4</sup>. In this textual regard, Haenchen (1984:270; cf. Schnackenburg 1968:13) insists that the editor supplements the text by adding the new name to the old as he refers to 'the sea of Tiberias' in John 21:1.

- 1) This episode has a strong educational (or catechetical) purpose. This assumption is supported by the before-and-after the miracle. Before the performance of the miracle (cola 6-10), Jesus takes the opportunity to test his disciple Philip making full use of the problematic situation of the lack of food. After the miracle (cola 17-19), Jesus orders the disciples to gather up the fragments left over, which is obviously intended for the education of the disciples. Besides, some specific features of the narrative have a catechetical nature (see below). Thus this aspect of the narrative should be attended to carefully.
- 2) The pericope concentrates structurally on the miracle itself. In the miraculous process of the feeding of the multitude (cola 11-16), as can clearly be seen, the narrator depicts in detail the outstanding action of Jesus and this accordingly brings up the image of the Eucharist. Therefore the analysis must deal with the relationship between the miracle and the Eucharist.
- 3) As mentioned in the macro contextual investigation, the underlying narrative is placed at the launch of the development of the Mosaic motif. This is particularly evident from the mention of ‘the Passover’ (ἡ ἑορτή τῆς Πάσχα) in verse 4 and ‘the manna’ (or ‘the bread of life’) discourse in the ensuing verses (vv. 25-71). This point might be the hermeneutical key to understanding the underlying sign, so this point should be investigated in more detail.

The analysis will proceed under the following headings: 1) the catechetical nature, 2) the Eucharistic association; and 3) ‘the Passover’ motif.

#### **3.3.4.1. The catechetical nature**

This narrative has a strong catechetical nature, which is evident in the whole narrative. The first catechetical aspect of the narrative is found in the posture of Jesus. There is a

reference that ‘Jesus sits down on the mountain with his disciples’ (v. 3; cf. Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:126). In the Synoptics Jesus usually sits down to teach the followers (cf. Mt 5:1; 13:1; Mk 4:1; 9:35; Lk 4:20), which was a customary pose for Jewish teachers while teaching (Strachan 1941:178). Besides, the mention ‘on the mountain’ implies the scenery of Moses, the great teacher of Israel, who receives the Law on the mountain of Sinai (Schnackenburg 1980:17-18; Brown 1966:232; Dodd 1953:333; cf. Kysar 1986:90). Thus, although the narrator does not explicitly indicate that Jesus sits down on the mountain with the purpose of teaching in this narrative, the reader who knows the Synoptics and the Jewish customs immediately associates this motion with the appropriate posture of education (cf. Newman & Nida 1980:177; Brown 1966:232). The narrator may have wanted particularly to contrast Jesus with the Jewish teacher *par excellence*, Moses, from the outset (Witkamp 1990:47; see Philips 1983:23-56).

The second catechetical aspect of the narrative is found in a significant reference by the narrator in verse 2. Here the narrator mentions that *hvkolou, qei de. auvtw/ | o; cloj polu, j ( o [ti evqew, roun ta. shmei/a a] evpoi, ei evpi. tw/n avsqenou, ntw n*. The narrator doesn’t give any information about where this great crowd comes from, but mentions a number of ‘about five thousand’ (v. 10). This specification of the figure indicates the immensity of the crowd, and thus heightens the impact of the subsequent miracle (Moloney 1996:35; Schnackenburg 1980:16; Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:126). Furthermore, through this significant mention of the narrator, the reader is immediately reminded of the wrong faith in this statement because the narrator has already alerted the reader to the fact that such faith is limited in the experience of Nathanael (1:49-51), Nicodemus (3:1-11), the Samaritan Woman (4:16-26), and the narrator’s comment in 2:23-25 (Moloney 1996:33; Carson 1991:268). Therefore this mention functions to alert the reader to avoid faith that depends on a visible miracle. This can be regarded as the catechesis (cf. 2:23-24; 4:45, 48).

The third, and strongest, catechetical feature of the narrative is found in the scene of Jesus’ test of His disciple. When Jesus looks up and sees a large crowd coming

towards Him, Jesus said to His disciple Philip,  $\text{Po, qen avgora, swmen a; rtouj i[na fa, gwsin ou-toi}$  (v. 5). Thus Jesus takes the initiative in posing the problem to the disciples, as opposed to the Synoptic accounts in which the disciples raise the question (e.g. Mk 6:35-36; Kysar 1986:91). Then, the narrator adds the ensuing comment (v. 6) that  $\text{tou/to de. e;legen peira, zwn auvto, n\ auvto. j ga. r h; |dei ti, e; mellen poiei/n}$  to forestall any reader from thinking that Jesus is stumped, or surprised by the miracle that is eventually performed. The narrator avers that Jesus already has His own plan and that the problem itself gives Him a further opportunity to test Philip (Carson 1991:269). According to Kysar (1986:91), this verse (v. 6) is the standard Johannine note reminding the reader of the absolute knowledge of Christ and the certainty of his intentions. Hence the question is only a teaching device (Schnackenburg 1980:15). It is unclear why Jesus selects to test Philip especially among all the disciples, but what is certain is that his answer to Jesus is unfaithful, as is expected. Philip thinks only at the level of the marketplace, the natural world (v. 7). As Brodie (1993:261) states, “the testing of Philip helps to make the disciple conscious of his own limited awareness and thus more receptive to what Jesus is offering.” That is, Jesus attempts to lead the various characters in the narrative (particularly Philip and the disciples at this juncture) to a fuller understanding of the events reported and thus to a deeper level of belief (Moloney 1998:199; see Barrett 1978:228). This story unit can be regarded as the third catechetical element of the narrative.

At this time, Andrew<sup>115</sup> introduces a boy who has five barley loaves and two fishes to Jesus (vv. 8-9a; cf. Strachan 1941:179; see Barrett 1978:229). ‘Barley loaf’ ( $\text{a; rtouj kriqi, nouj}$ ) is the inexpensive bread of the poorer classes (cf. Jdg 7:13; Ezk 4:12; 1Ki 4:28; cf. Witherington III 1995:152; Freed 1983:62-73) and ‘small fish’ ( $\text{ovya, ria}$ ) is probably pickled fish to be eaten as a side dish with the small cakes of barley bread (see Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:126). Luke 11:5 also implies that three loaves are looked upon as the amount required for one meal for one person. Thus the narrator seems to employ the appearance and mention of Andrew to

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<sup>115</sup> They (Philip and Andrew) are always a pair in the Gospel (cf. 12:20-22).

heighten the miracle (Carson 1991:27; cf. Elliott 1991:102-108). Since this tiny meal is ludicrously inadequate to the need, Andrew immediately expresses his idea on the impossibility of the supplication of food for the large crowds with this tiny meal as *avlla. tau/ta ti, evstineivj tosou, touj*<sup>116</sup> (v. 9b). This question may be rendered ‘but how will they help all these people?’ or ‘how will they satisfy.....?’ or even ‘how will these be enough for all these people?’ Thus, as pointed out by Orchard (1998:74), the reader, like Philip and Andrew, does not know the solution to the problem of how to satisfy so many people with insufficient resources. That is, all the characters including the reader and except for Jesus are far from having a true appreciation of Jesus’ divine resources (cf. Stibbe 1993:83). For this reason, the object of the teaching is expanded to all the paradigmatic readers.

The catechetical nature of the narrative is found finally in the aftermath of the miracle (vv. 12-13). After the miracle, Jesus orders to his disciples that *Sunaga, gete ta. perisseu, santa kla, smata i[na mh, ti avpo, lhtai* (cf. v. 12). Jesus’ directions to the disciples convey an important practical lesson. To waste food that one does not need, when so many live at starvation level, is an insult to the divine giver. When this practical lesson has been digested, there may be a further spiritual lesson (Bruce 1983:145).

In conclusion, the narrative has a twofold educational nature (cf. 6:59): the education of the disciples (primarily) and the paradigmatic readers (secondly). Witkamp (1990:47) accurately remarks on this nature of the narrative as follows: “Jesus’ motivation is not compassion for the crowd that is needy and hungry, as in all Synoptic versions. His motivation is that he is a teacher and can act as a teacher by means of this sign. That is why he starts doing the miracle immediately.”

#### **3.3.4.2. The Eucharistic association**

This narrative has a Eucharistic association, which is apparent from the miraculous process in the centrepiece of the narrative (vv. 10-11). Jesus commands the disciples

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<sup>116</sup> This is a rhetorical question in Greek (Newman & Nida 1980:180; Moloney 1996:34).

to make the people sit down (v. 10), which is normally used to describe the position taken in eating a meal (Newman & Nida 1980:180). The narrator immediately mentions that there was a lot of grass (co, rtoj polu.j) in the place that enabled the people to sit down for the meal<sup>117</sup>, which implies that it was spring-time, after the rain, just before the Passover (see v. 4; cf. Mk 6:39-40; Strachan 1941:179; Bernard 1928a:179).<sup>118</sup> The number of men (oi` a;ndrej) is ‘about five thousand.’ This shows the patriarchy of the times, and thus the total number of people may well have exceeded twenty thousand or more (cf. Moloney 1998:200; Carson 1991:270; see Bruce 1983:144-145).<sup>119</sup>

After the preparations for the feeding, Jesus takes the loaves and distributes them to the crowds who are seated (v. 11).<sup>120</sup> The process of the miracle is reported more significantly than the previous texts: e;laben ou=n tou.j a;rtouj o` VIhsou/j kai. euvcaristh, saj die, dwken toi/j avnakeime, noi j o`moi, wj kai. evk tw/n ovvari, wn o[son h;qelon (v. 11). Jesus serves as the host at the meal, giving thanks and distributing the food. Thus He is pictured as the giver of the essential nourishment of humanity (Kysar 1986:91). Considering this verse, moreover, there has been much debate up to now whether this miracle is associated with the Eucharist or not. Earlier, commentators such as Barrett (1978:276;

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<sup>117</sup> This expression indicates that the narrative uses the literary device of realistic effects. Stibbe (1993:85) states this regard in detail as follows: “The details that create the effect of the real are: the names of Jesus’ addressee in vv. 5-9 (Philip and Andrew); the notice of Andrew’s relationship with Simon Peter (v. 8, compare 1:40); the mention of the little boy in v. 9 (paida, rion, a double diminutive of paij, boy); the specific reference to five barley loaves (a;rtouj kriqi, nouj, the bread of the poor); the double diminutive of ovvoj in v. 9 (ovya, ria, dried or preserved fish); and the description of plentiful grass on which to sit in v. 10.” This realistic effect contributes to the history-like quality of the narrative.

<sup>118</sup> Moloney (1996:34; cf. Kiley 1988:556-558) states regarding this mention that “the insinuation, which has been with the reader since vv. 5-6, that Jesus will eventually provide bread for the multitude suggests that the abundance of grass links the passage with Ps 23:2: ‘He makes me lie down in green pastures.’ With this passage in mind, the reader waits for Jesus to provide nourishment for his flock in the way promised by the psalm: ‘The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want’ (Ps 23:1).”

<sup>119</sup> Regarding this specific number, Carson (1991:270) states, “in the light of verse 15, where the people try to make Jesus king by force, it is easy to think that, at least in John, the specification of five thousand men is a way of drawing attention to a potential guerrilla force of eager recruits willing and able to serve the right leader.”

<sup>120</sup> As claimed by Schnackenburg (1980:14), subtle information is missing here that is provided in all the Synoptic accounts of the first feeding. That is the time of day: it had grown late (Mk 6:35 par; but cf. John 6:16) - or a mention of the discomfort of the people (in the second account in Mk 8:2-3). Thus the Johannine narrator only seems to be concerned about Jesus’ feeding.

also see Bruce 1983:145; Morris 1971:344) clearly claimed that “Jesus is not concerned to teach of doctrine of the Eucharist; the only effect of this mention as are given is to point forward to the ensuing discourse” (6:26-58). More recently, some commentators such as Culpepper (1998:156; also see Moloney 1998:200) also point out that this narrative does not mean the institution of the Eucharist and the Gospel of John does not record the Eucharist. Carson (1991:270), however, thinks that the verb *euvcaristh, saj* itself is insufficient evidence to suppose that the author is either anachronistic, or trying to portray the feeding as a Eucharistic celebration.

Jesus’ action is clearly an appropriate condition of the occasion and Jewish meal customs (Schnackenburg 1980:16). However, the description, *viz.*, *e;laben, euvcaristh, saj*, and *die, dwken* is naturally recalled for the post-Easter reader on behalf of the formal setting of the Eucharist (cf. Kysar 1986:92). As Schnackenburg (1980:24) insists, the statement that Jesus himself gave out the food (*die, dwken*), which is at variance with the Synoptic accounts, is hard to reconcile with the image of the Eucharist, but the narrative does not exclude it as part of the background. Brown (1966:247; see Orchard 1998:73) claims in this regard that, in all the accounts of the narrative, there is a strong Eucharistic motif. According to him, “as the account of the multiplication was handed down in the teaching tradition of the Christian community, its connection with the special food of God’s people, the Eucharist, was recognised.” Besides, the Greek word *klasma, twn*<sup>121</sup> is used in the *Didache* (9:3, 4) in the early church when speaking of the fragments of bread at the Eucharist (Brown 1966:234; cf. Ridderbos 1992:214-215), and the *Didache* (9:4), *I Clement* (34:7) and *Ignatius (Letter to Polycarp 4:2)* use the verb *sunagagei/n* in ways that indicate the gathering of the faithful at the Eucharist (Moloney 1996:35). In addition, the direct discourse of Jesus in vv. 53-58 definitely indicates the Eucharist. Therefore, even if one cannot be sure of every detail, the Eucharistic colouring of the Johannine account of the multiplication seems beyond doubt (Brown 1966:248).

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<sup>121</sup> According to Bernard (1928a:182), in the New Testament, this term is only found in the Gospel accounts of the miraculous feedings. It is rare in LXX, but *klasma, ta ;artwn* in Ezk 13:19 and *klasma, ta ;artou* in Jdg 19:5.

This Eucharistic association of the narrative may enhance the pivotal theological point of the author. That is, this miraculous action of Jesus has a particular relationship with the Last Supper where Jesus is symbolically associated with the Passover Lamb.<sup>122</sup>

#### **3.3.4.3. ‘The Passover’ motif**

The Passover motif must now be considered. The narrator pointedly mentions the approaching Passover in verse 4<sup>123</sup>, which is the second Passover reported in the Gospel of John; the first is in John 2:13 (see Kysar 1986:90). As stated by Ridderbos (1992:210; also Bruce 1983:142-143), this is not just a time indication but is also intended to evoke the content of the narrative that follows. That is, it means that the ensuing discourse of Jesus must be read in the light of Passover lessons (cf. Schnackenburg 1980:14). The broader context of chapters 5-10 also supports this assumption, that the narrator organises the narrative in relation to the Jewish feasts (see ‘Macro context’). Witkamp (1990:48) states conclusively that it might be historically correct to connect this Passover with the multiplication, but a more important observation is that, in John’s gospel, the references to Passover function as sign-posts for Jesus’ death (cf. 2:13; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:28, 39; 19:4).

The following arguments support this thematic inference more precisely:

Firstly, the narrator depicts Jesus as sitting down ‘on the mountain’ with his disciples (v. 3). Although the author uses the definite article ‘the’ before ‘mountain’, it is impossible to know exactly what mountain he had in mind. According to Brown (1966:232), this mountain, always with the definite article, appears frequently in the Synoptic tradition and is associated with important theological events: the sermon on the mountain (cf. Mt 5:1), the calling of the twelve disciples (Mk 3:13), post-Resurrectional appearance (Mt 28:16), etc. The mention ‘on the mountain’ in this context especially can be related to the scene of Moses receiving the Law. For

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<sup>122</sup> For a full discussion in this regard, see Dunn (1971:328-338).



this reason the narrator gives a hint to the reader that Jesus is adopting a position parallel to that of Moses (Ex 19:20; 14:1-2; Isa 34:2-4; cf. Moloney 1996:33; Witkamp 1990:47). In this narrative, the narrator depicts a similar scene to that of Moses: in the setting of the narrative, ‘Jesus went up on the mountain’ (v. 3) just as ‘Moses went up on the mountain’ (cf. Ex 19:3, 20; 24:12-13); in the question of Jesus to His disciple, ‘where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?’ (v. 5) just as the question of Moses to God, ‘where am I to get meat to give all these people?’ (cf. Nu 11:13); and in the ensuing discourse on the supply of true bread by the sacrifice of his body (v. 33, 51) just as the supply of manna in the desert (cf. Yee 1989:64-67; cf. Carson 1991:268).<sup>124</sup> Besides, this coincidence soon takes concrete shape in the ensuing phrase that *h=n de. evggou.j to. pa,sca( h` e`orth. tw/n VIoudai, wn* (v. 4). Therefore, the reader now realises that Moses is superseded and replaced by the person of Jesus (Yee 1989:64; cf. Menken 1988:39-41).

Secondly, when crowds are satisfied after eating the food, 12 baskets of food are left over (vv. 12-13). This narrative shape is a striking contrast to ‘five barley loaves and two fish’ (v. 9). Then Jesus orders His disciples that *Sunaga, gete ta. perisseu, santa kla, smata( i[na mh, ti avpo, lhtai*. The gathering of the leftovers, which appears in the Old Testament account of gathering the manna, is only used in this Gospel (Brown 1966:234). In the narrative of Moses, in the desert, the manna should be gathered each day and eaten it until they have had their fill (see Ex 16:8, 12, 16, 18, 21), but they are not allowed to store it because any manna that was collected and put away perished (Ex 16:19-20). However, the *kla, sma* given by Jesus on the occasion of the Passover feast have not perished, and are still available (Moloney 1996:36). Thus the reader encounters a definite contrast between Jesus’ gift of bread and Moses’ gift of manna. Furthermore, according to Schnackenburg (1980:17-18), this expression acquires a theological meaning if one compares 6:27: ‘do not labour for the food that passes away’. He states this point precisely as follows: “The bread which strengthens the body passes away, but it points

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<sup>123</sup> Although Crossan (1983:5) maintains that this verse is a disconnection, the trace of interpolation is not of interest to this study.

symbolically to a food which endures. In the evangelist's mind the idea that nothing should be lost probably expresses, not just the Jew's high regard for bread as a gift from God, but also indicates the symbolic character of the bread offered by Jesus. The point is not these scraps of bread but an imperishable bread of which the bread of the wonderful feeding is an image." Then, the narrator mentions that sunh, gagon ou=n kai. evge, misan dw, deka kofi, nouj klasma, tw'n evk tw'n pe, nte a;rtwn tw'n kriqi, nwn a] evperi, sseusan toi/j bebrwko, sin (v. 13). The '12 baskets' indicates a collection complete in itself (see also Mt 14:20; Mk 6:43; Lk 9:17; Moloney 1996:36) and stresses as well the abundance of the gift given through Christ- the people eat as much as they want and even then there are twelve baskets filled with the leftovers (Kysar 1986:92; Bruce 1983:145). Therefore, these verses force the disciples to know that Jesus is the Lord who supplies imperishable and ample provision for His people (see Je 31:14).<sup>125</sup>

Finally, the result of the miracle is to provoke a temper of political excitement among the crowd (vv. 14-15; Strachan 1941:180). After the miracle, the people regard Jesus as o` profh, thj o` evrco, menoj eivj to.n ko, smon<sup>126</sup> (v. 14). Their recognition of Jesus seems quite plausible and acceptable, because this expectation is based partly on Deut 18:15-18, an expectation of a Moses-like prophetic king (Brodie 1993:263; see Blomberg 2001:120). However, although the crowd's perception is correct in a limited sense, Jesus is not restricted to being just a temporal prophet like

<sup>124</sup> Therefore, bearing in mind the context, the claim by some scholars such as Kysar (see 1986:90), that the mountains mentioned in verse 3 seem to have no symbolic importance is not persuasive.

<sup>125</sup> Lindars (1972:243; see Carson 1991:270) states that this depiction is motivated by the Elisha narrative (2 Ki 4:42-44), in which 'the leavings' are a sign of the abundance of food.

<sup>126</sup> There is textual confusion in this verse. The textual evidence reads as follows:

o] evpoi,hsen shmei/on	a D W 0141 it <sup>aur,b,c,d,ff2,j,l,r1</sup> vg <sup>ww,st</sup> sy <sup>e,s</sup> sa pbo Didymus <sup>lem</sup>
o] evpoi,hsen shmei/on o] ;Ihsou/j	A L D Y Q f <sup>l</sup> f <sup>13</sup> 28 Byz [E F G] lect sy <sup>p,h(pal)</sup> eth slav
a] evpoi,hsen shmei/a	P <sup>75</sup> B 091 it <sup>a</sup>

The plural supported by P<sup>75</sup> B might to be due to the assimilation of 2:23 and 6:2 and the singular might be an adoption of the miracle of feeding which had just been witnessed (Barrett 1978:277). The addition of o] ;Ihsou/j seems to have been changed intentionally by copyists for purposes of clarity. Therefore, it is difficult to decide the original reading, nevertheless o] evpoi,hsen shmei/on is more preferable according to evidence as mentioned above.

Moses (Koester 1995:92). The narrator links ‘prophet’ and ‘king’ (v. 15).<sup>127</sup> This is for the reason that, in the first century Mediterranean world, according to Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:126), “kings are not simply a political equivalent of a president with rights of hereditary succession. Rather, kings have total control of and responsibility for their subjects; they are expected to provide them with fertility, peace, and abundance.” Therefore, the crowd expects that Jesus would help them escape servitude to Rome just as Moses had led the people out of slavery to Egypt. However, this kind of political kingship stands in contrast to the true kingship of Jesus (cf. 18:36; Kysar 1986:93), thus Jesus goes off to the mountain by Himself at the end. This throws those people (the crowds) into despair but rather gives hope to the Johannine reader because this indicates the fact that Jesus escapes from the view of the limited physical Messiah and thus approaches the view of the true and everlasting (or eschatological) Messiah.<sup>128</sup> The narrator presents the superiority of Jesus who surpasses Moses and other prophets and kings who provide a setting of physical freedom from tyranny (see Van der Watt 2000:223; Painter 1989b:29).

**To summarize:** the statement of Beasley-Murray (1987:88) on the Passover motif of the narrative is very appropriate: “the statement as to the nearness of the Passover (v. 4), the identification of Jesus as the prophet who should come (cf. Dt 18:15), and the discussion on the bread from heaven within the discourse (vv. 31-33) combine to indicate the hope of a second Exodus.”

### 3.3.5. The point of view

The narrator has a retrospective standpoint in the temporal perspective. This is evident from the Passover motif, the Eucharistic features, and the manna typology.

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<sup>127</sup> Regarding the textual problem of verse 15, the major witnesses (P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> a<sup>2</sup> A B D L W D Q Y 0141 f<sup>1</sup> f<sup>13</sup> Byz [E F G] lect it<sup>b,d,e,f,q,r1</sup> sy<sup>(s),p,h,pal</sup> sa pbo bo slav Origen Chrysostom Cyril) read *avnecw, rhsen*, but a<sup>\*</sup> vg it<sup>a,aur,c,ff2,1</sup> and some Latin fathers (Tertulian, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, etc.) read *feu, rei*. Therefore *avnecw, rhsen* is preferable according to the vast external evidence.

<sup>128</sup> According to Carson (1991:272), the juxtaposition of v. 14 (o` profh, thj) and v. 15 (basile, a) presupposes that the people who think Jesus may well be the eschatological Prophet understand this Prophet’s function to be simultaneously kingly.

Thus the reader reads the narrative in association with the Moses narrative. This attempt to understand the narrative is enhanced by Jesus' ensuing discourse (6:22-59), which functions as the explanation of the sign.

The narrator adopts an omnipresent point of view in the spatial perspective. This is evident from the whole pericope. The narrator moves his position into every place: on the side of Jesus, on the side of disciples, and on the side of crowds. This is the reason that their detailed behaviour and words make the plot of the narrative. As far as Jesus is concerned the narrator presents Him as a teacher. He presents Jesus' intention to test the disciple and His escape from the crowd who attempt to make Him their political king. As for the disciples, on the other hand, the narrator stresses the limited material recognition of the disciples through the appearance of Philip and Andrew. With regard to the crowds, the narrator demonstrates the wrong faith that is based on signs.

The narrator adopts both an omniscient point of view and a limited point of view in the psychological perspective. He reports on the inner thoughts of Jesus and the crowds, but does not depict those of the disciples. The intent of the crowds is found in verse 14 and the realisation of Jesus is shown in v. 15, but the inner emotion or feeling of the disciples is not found. Hence the narrator gives to the reader his theological standpoint through the relations between Jesus and the crowds, apart from the disciples.

### **3.3.6. The synthesis**

#### **3.3.6.1. The eschatological feeding**

This is the fourth sign in the Gospel of John, and is specifically mentioned by the narrator at verse 14 (*shmei/on*). Thus the narrator not merely mentions a miraculous event but also attempts to expose his theological message, that is, the identity of Jesus just as the previous signs, through this feeding miracle account. The feeding action of Jesus can be complemented by His ensuing discourse on 'the bread

of life' (vv. 22-71). According to Van der Watt (see 2000:217-218), in ancient times, hunger, thirst and famine were associated with the wrath of the gods who were supposed to guarantee the provision of food. Therefore the feeding action and the discourse on the bread of life is not just a matter of supplication of the physical bread; it is a matter of satisfying this need forever by means of the eschatological gift from God. This indicates that the underlying narrative should not be understood in a physical dimension but should be identified as a Christological occasion in the eschatological dimension.

### **3.3.6.2. The identity of Jesus**

The narrator arranges the miracle tradition anew for narrating his story. He unfolds his theological intention in exposing the identity of Jesus in three points according to the three aspects of the narrative. They are Jesus as a true teacher, Jesus as the essence of the Eucharist, and Jesus as the true prophet.

#### **1) Jesus is a true teacher**

In this narrative, the narrator stresses that Jesus is the one who provides ample food for the people. It should be kept in mind that Jesus' motivation for the feeding is not compassion for the crowd that is needy and hungry, as in all Synoptic versions. His motivation is that He is a teacher and can act as a teacher by means of this sign (Witkamp 1990:47). To put it more precisely, the narrator organises the story with further didactic features: Jesus takes the posture of a rabbi through His sitting down with the disciples (cf. Newman & Nida 1980:177; Brown 1966:232; Strachan 1941:178); this alerts the reader to avoid faith that depends on visible miracles only (cf. Moloney 1996:33; Carson 1991:268); the scene of the testing of Philip in order to force a deeper faith (cf. Moloney 1998:199; Brodie 1993:261; Schnackenburg 1980:15; Barrett 1978:228); and the gathering up of the fragments of the leftovers, which is a practical lesson for the disciples (Bruce 1983:145). Therefore the narrator has an educational purpose, by employment of these literary devices, to let the disciples and also the paradigmatic readers recognise the divine identity of Jesus (cf.

Talbert 1992:132).

## **2) Jesus is an essence of the Eucharist**

The narrator structures the narrative chiasmatically (cf. Beasley-Murray 1987:85; Stibbe 1993:82; Crossan 1983: 145-164). The centrepiece of the pericope is the miracle itself so that the reader is aware that the narrator emphasises the miraculous procedure (cf. Witkamp 1990:46-51). The miraculous process obviously recalls the Eucharistic association, even if one cannot be sure of every detail. That is, as the account of the multiplication is handed down in the teaching tradition of the Christian community, its connection with the special food of God's people, the Eucharist, is recognised. Thus the post-Easter reader naturally reads this narrative in association with the Eucharist that is a very important liturgical incident in the early church (see Brown 1966:247-248; Orchard 1998:73). This Eucharistic association of the narrative may enhance the pivotal theological point of the author. That is, this sign has a certain relationship with the Last Supper where Jesus is symbolically associated with the Passover Lamb, which may be linked to the Passover motif in verse 4. In this regard, it is possible to conclude that Jesus gives the eschatological food that symbolically indicates His own body and blood (cf. 6:53-58).

## **3) Jesus is a true prophet**

The narrator composes the underlying miracle in the overt penetration of the Mosaic theme. This is evident from macro contextual investigation of chapters 5-10, therein the narrator organises the narrative in relation to the Jewish feasts (cf. Schnackenburg 1980:14). Chapters 6-8 particularly stress the development of the Mosaic motif (Stibbe 1993:81). Thus the narrative should be read in the light of the hidden Mosaic motif. In the underlying narrative, the narrator pointedly mentions the approaching Passover in verse 4. This is not just a time indication but is also intended to evoke the content of the narrative that follows (Ridderbos 1992:210; Bruce 1983:142-143).

Besides, in the entire narrative, the narrator forces the reader to see the superiority of

Jesus compared with Moses who implies the Passover incidence. They are presented as follows: The mention ‘on the mountain’ can be related with the scene of Moses who receives the Law, an inference which is supported from the narrator’s hint that Jesus is adopting a position parallel to that of Moses in the whole episode (cf. Moloney 1996:33; Witkamp 1990:47). Then, the gathering of the leftovers, which appears in the Old Testament account of gathering the manna, forces the reader to observe the contrast between Jesus’ gift of bread and Moses’ gift of manna (cf. Brown 1966:234). Finally, with the mention of Passover, the identification of Jesus as the prophet who should come and the discussion on the bread from heaven within the discourse (cf. vv. 31-33) combine to indicate the hope of a second Exodus (Beasley-Murray 1987:88; cf. Koester 1995:92).

Therefore the reader now might realise that Moses is superseded and replaced by the person of Jesus (Yee 1989:64). That is, through the comparison of Jesus with Moses the importance of both of whom is stressed by the indication of the Passover, the narrator forces the disciples (readers as well) to understand/accept that Jesus is the Lord who supplies imperishable and ample provision for His people (cf. Je 31:14; see Moloney 1996:36). Thus Jesus is the true prophet who has been expected from ancient times (Dt 18:15-18): ‘The LORD your God will raise up for you **a prophet** like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. . . . . I will raise up for them **a prophet** like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.’

### **3.3.6.3. Theological and hermeneutical conclusion**

This narrative teaches the reader that Jesus is the giver of divine nourishment (Kysar 1986:93). This divine (or eschatological) provision allows the people to sustain eternal life. Thus Jesus reveals His identity as ‘the bread of God who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world’ (v. 33). Besides, Jesus declares that He is the bread of life and thus everyone who comes to Him will never go hungry, and everyone who believes in Him will never be thirsty (v. 35).

### 3.4. The walking on the sea (6:16-21)

#### 3.4.1. The macro context

##### 3.4.1.1. The fifth sign?

There has been debate on whether the underlying episode belongs to the sign texts or not (cf. 'Chapter I. Introduction'). Some scholars, such as Lindars (1972:246; see Smalley 1978:86-88), do not regard this narrative as a miracle. The main reason for ignoring the story as a miracle is that *evpi. th/j qala, sshj* (v. 19) can be translated as 'by the sea,' especially in Aramaic, in which the preposition '*al*' ('on') regularly means 'beside' in such contexts (cf. Bernard 1928a:185-186). This interpretation is supported by the fact that in 21:1 the same phrase is used to mean that Jesus appeared to His disciples 'by the sea of Tiberias,' and in verse 21 the same preposition must be translated 'at' the land (Strachan 1941:182). Grammatically, the phrase *evpi. th/j qala, sshj* can be translated into both 'on the sea' and 'by the sea,' but the context demands that this is a miracle (cf. Moloney 1998:204).

Firstly, the distance *w`j stadi, ouj ei; kosi pe, nte h' tria, konta* (v. 19a) may correspond to 'five or six kilometres' and subsequently the narrator describes how 'the disciples see Jesus approaching the boat' (v. 19b), hence the appearance of Jesus is surely 'on the water.' Secondly, Carson (1991:275; also Bruce 1983:148) believes that if the disciples simply saw Jesus walking by the sea, it is hard to imagine why they were terrified. Thirdly, as Brown (1966:252; also Strachan 1941:182) observes, although Mark 4:49 uses the same vague expression as the Gospel of John, Matthew 14:25 uses the preposition with the accusative to show clearly that the first author thought of Jesus as walking upon the sea. Fourthly, as seen at the ending of the narrative, the narrator mentions the sudden arrival of the boat on the shore, which is another miraculous phenomenon and functions to heighten the miracle; thus the narrative has a totally miraculous nature (see Schnackenburg 1980:28). Finally, the motif 'walking on the water' is not unusual in the Bible, but rather a familiar biblical miraculous theme (see Job 9:8; Ps 77:15-20; Isa 43:2-3).



Therefore, though the phrase *evpi. th/j qala,sshj* could possibly be translated into ‘on the seashore,’ it is obvious that the author composes this narrative as a miracle (Newman & Nida 1980:186).

### 3.4.1.2. The Exodus-typology

This narrative is an episode subsequent to the multiplication (cf. Mt 14:22-34; Mk 6:45-54; see Brown 1966:236-244; Dodd 1953:196-222; Strachan 1941:181-182).<sup>129</sup> Like many commentators, Barrett (1978:279; cf. Blomberg 2001:121) supposes that the author includes this narrative after the feeding miracle because it was firmly fixed in the tradition along with the miracle of the five thousand, and in order to bring Jesus and the disciples back to Capernaum where the discourse on the bread of Life took place (6:59). Culpepper (1998:157) also insists that this narrative was probably already attached to the miraculous feeding in the oral tradition as ‘a fulfilment of the Exodus typology’ before it reached John.

Moreover, many commentators have noticed that it must be the *evgw, eivmi* in verse 20, which is firstly found in this Gospel, that is the centre of the narrative (see ‘Structure’; Witkamp 1990:51). This expression, as will be dealt with later on, is a prominent epiphany formula in the Exodus context of the Old Testament. Thus the commentators often think that this self-identification must have been the reason for the Johannine author recording this sea story in the first place. Therefore the story must be read from the same viewpoint as the preceding sign where the narrative is reflected in the context of a fulfilment of the Exodus (see Koester 1989:339; Witherington III 1995:153).

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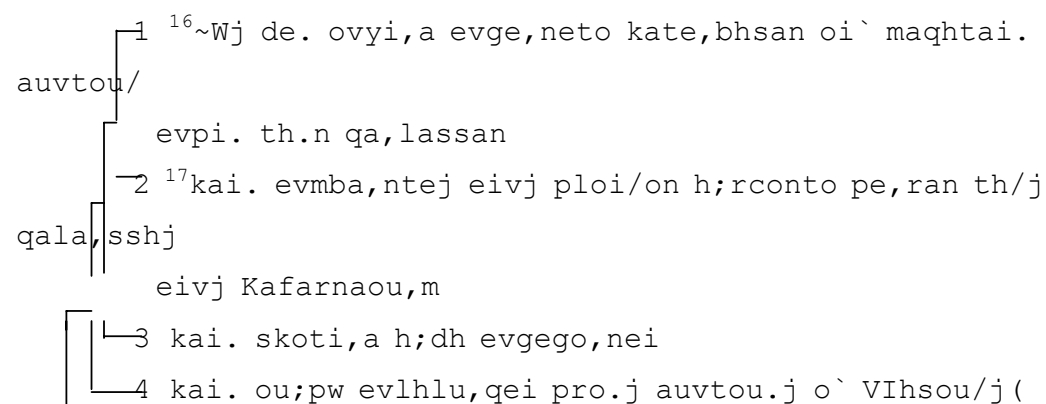
<sup>129</sup> Although the feeding miracle is followed by the incident of the underlying miracle, like the Synoptics, in the Gospel of John this incident does not follow immediately. The result of the feeding is the recognition of Jesus by the crowd (as by the Samaritan woman in 4:19, by some of the visitors to the Feast of Tabernacles in 7:40, and by the blind man healed in 9:17) as the coming Prophet (Dodd 1953:334). On the other hand, as Moloney (1998:202) states, this story focuses on Jesus’ approaching to the disciples in a miraculous fashion, His making Himself known to them (vv. 19-20), and their receiving Him (v. 21). Thus although the shape of the story matches the account of the miracle of the loaves and fish, the action and the aftermath are not marked by the obtuseness of the disciples (vv. 5-9) and the ambiguity of the crowd (vv. 14-15).

### 3.4.2. Structure

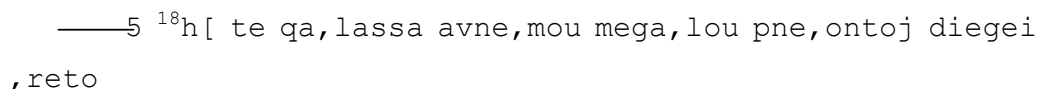
The following is a discourse analysis of the pericope.

#### 3.4.2.1. Division of the text into cola

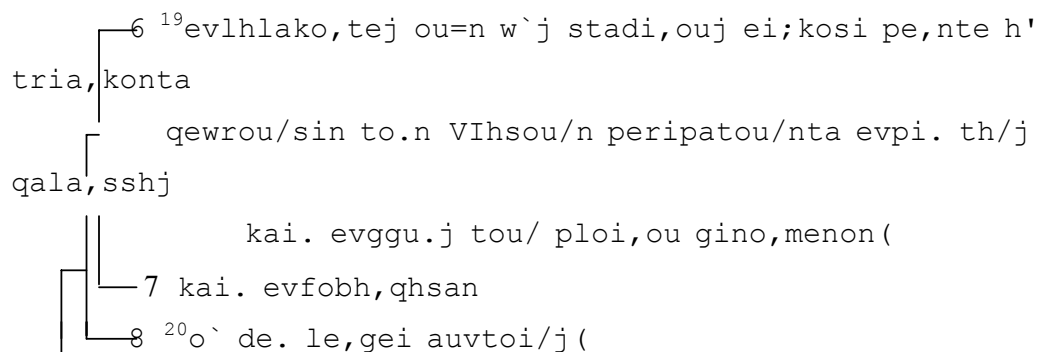
##### Cluster A The disciples part from Jesus



##### Cluster B The sea becomes rough



##### Cluster C Jesus' walking on the sea



8.1 VEgw, eivmi (

8.2 mh. fobei/sqe

#### Cluster D The boat reaches the shore

— 9 <sup>21</sup>h;qelon ou=n lapei/n auvto.n eivj to. ploi/on(  
10 kai. euvqe,wj evge,neto to. ploi/on evpi. th/j gh/  
j eivj h|n u`ph/gon

#### 3.4.2.2. The discussion of the clusters

The pericope is divided into 10 cola that are grouped into 4 clusters as follows:

Cola 1-4 / 5 / 6-8 / 9-10

**Cluster A (cola 1-4):** The coordinate conjunction *de .* in colon 1 isolates the section below from the preceding section (6:1-15). Colon 1 presents the time (*ovyi, a*), place (*qa, lassin*) and the main character (*oi` maqhtai.*) of the episode while colon 2 presents the more precise action of the character (*evmba, ntej eivj ploi/on h;rconto pe, ran th/j qala, sshj*). Then (*kai.*) colon 3 narrows down the more specific occasion (*skoti, a*) of the narrative. After all this (*kai.*), the opening mention of colon 4 (*kai. ou;pw*) leads to the conclusion of the setting. Thus this cluster has the typical introductory pattern of a Johannine miracle story (cf. Moloney 1998:202). The semantic relations between the cola are as follows: colon 1 is the setting (time) of colon 2, and cola 1-2 play the role of presenting the preceding incident of colon 3. Then the preceding three cola (1-3) form a subordinate-circumstance relationship to colon 4. This cluster therefore forms the typical introduction to the sign texts in the Gospel. The theme of the cluster is thus formulated as ‘the disciples part from Jesus.’

**Cluster B (colon 5):** The conjunction *te* changes the scene, which makes the addition emphatic (Ridderbos 1992:217). In this colon, the narrator briefly but vividly

states that a strong wind is blowing and the waters grow rough, so that the scene changes to a desperate situation. Thus the present demarcation is correct. Accordingly, the main theme of the cluster is formulated as ‘the sea becomes rough.’

**Cluster C (cola 6-8):** The reason for the demarcation of this cluster from the preceding one is the conjunction  $ou=n$ . Besides, the scene is completely turned from the desperate situation at sea to the disciples’ observance of Jesus’ coming towards them. Thus the miracle is narrated in this cluster. Internally, colon 6 is semantically linked to colon 7 by means of a setting (time) relationship. Colon 8 is linked to cola 6-7 by means of means-result relationship due to the fact that the mention of Jesus is caused by the fear of the disciples. The main point of the cluster is thus the performance of the miracle, that is, ‘Jesus’ walking on the sea.’

**Cluster D (cola 9-10):** The conjunction  $ou=n$  again functions to demarcate the scene from the preceding one. This cluster is the concluding comment of the narrator. The mention of ‘the reception of Jesus’ and ‘the reaching of the boat’ implies the positive achievement of the narrative. The semantic relationship between cola 9 and 10 are the reason-result relationship. The theme of the cluster is thus formulated as ‘the boat reaches the shore.’

### 3.4.2.3. The summary of the clusters

According to the structural analysis, the relations between the clusters can be diagrammed as follow:

1 <sup>1</sup>	cola 1-4	The disciples part from Jesus
1 <sup>2</sup>	colon 5	The sea becomes rough
2 <sup>1</sup>	cola 6-8	Jesus’ walking on the sea
2 <sup>2</sup>	cola 9-10	The boat reaches the shore

The pericope has a clear double reason-result structure: cola 1-4 are the reason for colon 5 while cola 6-8 are the reason for cola 9-10. That is, in the former sub-unit

(cola 1-5) the separation of Jesus from His disciples causes fear by the rough sea but, in the latter sub-unit (cola 6-10), the reunion with Jesus by His walking on the sea immediately allows the boat to arrive at its intended destination.

### **3.4.3. The literary setting**

The narrator furnishes the temporal ('the coming of evening'; 'darkness') and the spatial setting ('on the sea') at the outset of the narrative.

#### **3.4.3.1. The temporal setting**

The narrator begins the episode with the mention of 'the coming of evening' (*ovyi, a evge, neto*) and 'darkness' (*skoti, a*). The Greek word *ovyi, a* may refer to any time in the late afternoon (see 20:19; Mt 14:15, 23). It is evident from the following verse (v. 17) that it did not become dark when the disciples went down to the sea (Newman & Nida 1980:184). It becomes dark only after the disciples have set off across the lake. Moloney (1998:203) insists that the use of 'darkness' (*skoti, a*, v. 17) is dramatic, but too much should not be read into it, nor is it symbolic of a lack of faith or the power of evil as some would claim. According to Carson (1991:274), however, the words 'by now it was now dark and Jesus had not yet come to them,' though doubtless prosaically true, may also be symbolic: as in 3:2; 13:30, the darkness of night and the absence of Jesus (v. 17b) are powerfully linked to make the reader aware of the gloomy foreboding. Kysar (1986:93) also interprets this expression ('darkness') as deliberate Johannine symbolism, suggesting that the disciples are immersed in the darkness of the world. Witkamp (1990:53) more precisely indicates that *skoti, a* bears overtones of Jesus' absence and return, that is, Jesus is referred as 'the light' in the world and when He leaves the light is gone and it is dark (cf. 1:5; 9:4-5; 11:9-10; 12:35-36, 46). Besides, later on, the scene of high waves forces the reader to realise that the predicament of the disciples is more serious (v. 18). Thus the symbolic interpretation of this temporal term seems to be plausible. That is, the temporal setting of the narrative implies the gloominess of the situation of the disciples (see Ridderbos 1992:217).

### 3.4.3.2. The spatial setting

The narrator provides the spatial information in ‘on the sea’ (επι. θη.ν. θα.λα.σσαν). The Greek word θα.λα.σσα, though some translations render it as lake, usually means a body of salt water rather than a freshwater lake (Newman & Nida 1980:185). Also in the first century Mediterranean world, the people recognised that the sea was surely a different entity from water. Thus to walk on the sea is to trample on a being that can engulf people with its waves, swallow them in its deep, and support all sorts of living being (Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:128). Heavy windstorms occur commonly on the Sea of Galilee at certain times of the year and the suddenness with which they can arise is truly astonishing (cf. Moloney 1998:202). Carson (1991:275) more accurately explains this phenomenon by the fact that the Sea of Galilee lies about six hundred feet below sea level and cool air from the south-eastern plateaus can rush in to displace the warm moist air over the lake, churning up the water in a violent squall. Therefore, like the temporal setting, the spatial setting adds to the gloominess of the disciples’ situation.

**To summarize:** Both the temporal and the spatial setting of the narrative provides not only the factual, contextual information of a historical event, but also depict the gloomy mood symbolically.

### 3.4.4. The aspects highlighted by the narratological perspective

From the result of the macro context, the structural analysis and the literary setting, certain issues containing more detail yet to be investigated, having grasped the special attention of the narrator, is exposed in the following way:

- 1) The narrative seems to be taken from the stock of tradition (Mt 14:22-34; Mk 6:45-54) as seen briefly in the macro contextual study. The Johannine account, however, is considerably redacted to fit the author’s own theological purpose. Therefore the similarities and differences between the Johannine narrative

and the Synoptics should be discussed to draw the Johannine author's own theological message into the narrative.

- 2) The narrative is in the Exodus context, which is also briefly introduced in the macro contextual investigation. In the centrepiece of the pericope (cola 6-8), particularly, the narrator mentions Jesus' self-manifestation by using *vegw, eivmi*, that is God's revelatory formula in the Exodus context of the Old Testament. Therefore the narrator seems to expose Jesus' divine identity with relation to the concept of YHWH.

The analysis will proceed according to the following headings: 1) the Johannine redactional emphasis, and 2) the self-identification of Jesus.

#### **3.4.4.1. The Johannine redactional emphasis**

The narrative is probably derived from the stock of traditions (Mt 14:22-34; Mk 6:45-54; see above). Thus there are several correspondences between the Synoptics and this Gospel (see Painter 1989a:421-450). This is primarily evident from the remarkable coincidence in the Greek vocabulary between the Synoptics and the Gospel of John such as: *ovyi, a evge, neto kate, bhsan, evmba, ntej, ploi/on, pe, ran, th/j qala, sshj, avne, mou, evlhlako, tej, stadi, oj, peripatou/nta evpi. th/j qala, sshj, VEgw, eivmi* (mh. fobei/sqe).<sup>130</sup> According to Brown (1966:253), most of these similarities are in the nautical terms because it is impossible to tell a narrative about an incident at sea without a certain basic nautical vocabulary. This coincidence, however, is more striking in this episode than in the previous one ('the multiplication').

Besides, at the macro-contextual level, 'the multiplication of the loaves for the five thousand' in both Matthew-Mark and in the Gospel of John (but inexplicably, not in Luke) is followed identically by 'the walking on the sea.' This, as mentioned above,

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<sup>130</sup> In these words, the Johannine account is rough and so gives the impression of being older (cf. Schnackenburg 1980:25-28; Lindars 1972:238).

indicates that the underlying narrative has been firmly fixed in the oral tradition along with the miracle of the five thousand before it reaches the author. The following table shows the more precise sequence of the events that follow the multiplication in the Gospel of John compared with that of Mark (Brown 1966:238-239), which shows that the author keeps very closely to the tradition of the underlying narrative.

Feeding miracle	John 6:1-15	Mark 6:30-44
Walking on the sea	16-24	45-54
Then skipping to the end of Mark's second multiplication account which is found in Mark 8:1-10		
Request for a sign	25-34	8:11-13
Remarks on bread	35-59	14-21
Faith of Peter	60-69	27-30
Passion theme; betrayal	70-71	31-33

However, there are obviously differences between both (see Blomberg 2001:121-122). What strikes one immediately in comparing this account with the Synoptic records is the simplicity and economy of John's narrative (Kysar 1986:93).<sup>131</sup> This difference may be caused by one of the fundamental principles, that is, that identical traditions can be differently composed in the script according to the author's redactional distinctiveness which reflects his own theological view of the different circumstances. In other words, the author of this Gospel does not just copy stories out of historical faithfulness, but organises them with artistry depending on his own theological standpoint (cf. Witkamp 1990:51). This inference is firstly supported by the fact that, in the Synoptics, 'Jesus' walking on the sea' functions as the conclusion of the multiplication scene, but in the Gospel of John, 6:14-15 constitute the conclusion of the feeding miracle. This means that the underlying narrative itself has its own strong theological purpose. That is, the narrative in this Gospel has more independence than

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<sup>131</sup> However, according to Kysar (1986:93), since neither abbreviation nor elaboration is always a clue to the process of oral tradition, whether John's form of the story is more primitive than the Synoptics' is hard to say.



it does in the Synoptics (Brown 1966:252).<sup>132</sup> If this is not the case, one's analytical task is to find what the theological purpose of the narrator is.

The following argument clearly shows the redactional distinctiveness of this Gospel, and partially depends on the proposal of Brown:

Both narratives have the same narrative sequence (see Brown 1966:253-254; Blomberg 2001:121-122): setting (the disciples' departure to sea, away from Jesus), time (evening), weather (strong wind and waves), disciples' position (the distance from land), the coming of Jesus (Jesus' walking on the sea), reaction (the disciples' fear and Jesus' reassurance) and ending (different endings). However, in this order, amongst others, each narrative clearly has a different ending. Matthew alone states Peter's walking to meet Jesus on the sea; Synoptics narrate that Jesus gets into the boat and the wind is calmed; Matthew adds that the disciples worship Jesus, hailing him as God's son; and the Gospel of John describes the disciples' reunion with Jesus and the boat's arrival at the shore.

To put it more precisely, there are obvious differences in the nature of the account between the Synoptics and the Gospel of John. That is, the account of the Gospel of John is shorter than that of the Synoptics. Mark uses 8 verses, Matthew 12 but the Gospel of John uses only 6 verses for the composition of the narrative. Matthew adds the account of Peter's falling into a sea in the episode so it is longer than the other Gospels. Mark also provides a detailed explanation of the event and adds besides, in the conclusion of the episode, that the disciples are astonished at the miraculous power of Jesus in governing the sea and wind (see Mk 6:51). Thus the Synoptics generally formulate the episode as a salvation and a nature miracle: 'Jesus rescues His disciples by governing the rough sea.' The Gospel of John, in contrast, does not mention the suffering of the disciples on the rough sea and also does not place the focus on the power of Jesus to govern nature (see Giblin 1983:96). The only emphasis in this account is on the absence of Jesus (at the beginning) and the reunion with Him

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<sup>132</sup> For a redactional structure of chapter 6, see Ball (1996:67-79): according to him, the 'I am' saying is the criterion of the division.

(at the end), as proved by the structural analysis. This reunion is marked by Jesus' coming to the disciples as Lord, revealing Himself as 'I am,' and being received by them (v. 21; see below). Therefore it is obvious that John's redactional distinctiveness is the disciples' reunion with Jesus.

**In conclusion:** The Johannine account focuses on the fact that the separation from Jesus nourishes a fear while reunion with Him brings calm and peace, in contrast to the Synoptics that emphasise the supernatural power of Jesus who governs the sea and the wind.

#### **3.4.4.2. The self-identification of Jesus**

In the preceding episode (in vv. 1-15), Jesus has earlier withdrawn from the crowds and goes to the mountain, which is a continuation of the previous. Accordingly, the disciples cannot stay with Jesus and descend to the sea to leave for Capernaum (vv. 16-17a). Thus the characters of the episode separate at the outset (cf. 14:18, 19; 16:16), which is different from the preceding episode (6:1-15) wherein all characters unite (Moloney 1996:39): Jesus retreats from the crowd to the mountain by Himself so that the crowd also remain alone by the sea, and the disciples come down to sea, parting from Jesus.

The narrator does not state the reason for the disciples departure alone. According to Beasley-Murray (1987:89; also see Bruce 1983:147), however, taking the context into account, the disciples are sent by Jesus to escape the dangerous situation described in v 15. The disciples, too, are Jews, sharing their contemporaries' understanding of the Messiah and His work, and they must be prevented from becoming embroiled in a threatened messianic uprising.

After the departure of the disciples toward Capernaum, the sea suddenly becomes rough because a strong wind blows (vv. 17b-18). Rowing under these circumstances is very hard work, and *evlhlako, tej* may possibly imply this, but they make fairly good progress (cf. Bruce 1983:148). The expression of the narrator, *kai*.

skoti, a h;dh evgego, nei kai. ou;pw evlhlu, qei pro.j avtou.j o` VIhsou/j, indicates that now the disciples are totally in the dark (see ‘Literary setting’).<sup>133</sup> Subsequent mention *te qa,lassa avne,mou mega,lou pne,ontoj diegei,reto* in verse 18 adds to the plight of the disciples - now they are in the midst of a storm (Kysar 1986:94). The narrator dramatically depicts the hopelessness of the disciples in the first half of the narrative (vv. 16-18).

When the disciples have rowed three to three and a half miles, they see Jesus approaching the boat, miraculously walking on the sea (v. 19). The narrator’s language becomes vivid with the use of the present tense (see *qewrou/sin to.n VIhsou/n peripatou/nta evpi. th/j qala,sshj kai. evggu.j tou/ ploi,ou gino,menon*; Morris 1971:349-350). It is interesting that the narrator describes the fear of the disciples, not from the storm but because of Jesus’ miraculous walking on the sea, unlike in the Synoptics.<sup>134</sup> This might show that the narrator is less interested in dissecting their fear than in portraying its alleviation (Carson 1991:275; cf. Ridderbos 1992:217).

When Jesus approaches the disciples and sees their fear, He says to them that *Vegw, eivmi ( mh. fobei/sqe* (v. 20). This simple saying of Jesus is in a literal sense only a self-identification intended to soothe the disciples’ fear (cf. Mk 6:50; John 14:5-6, 15:4-5), but by saying this Jesus also describes His coming and appearance as a divine epiphany; and this occurs in a context – and that is where the emphasis lies in this self-revelation – that should convince them that, by virtue of the glory given Him by God, no darkness is too deep, waves too high, or sea too wide for Him to find them and be with them in the midst of that tumult (Ridderbos 1992:217; cf. Bruce 1983:148). Kysar (1986:94-95; cf. Lightfoot 1956:157) also says that this expression

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<sup>133</sup> Schnackenburg (1980:26; also see Kysar 1986:94) states in this regard, “the anticipatory remark of Jesus had not yet come to them (v. 17) leads up to the reversal that takes place with the appearance of Jesus and his closeness to them (v. 19). This strengthens still further the Christological emphasis of the narrative, which paints a stark picture of the contrast between the situation far from Jesus and that in his presence (cf. 8:12; 12:35).”

<sup>134</sup> The reason for the disciples’ fear is found in the Synoptics (see Mk 6:49), where the author tells that the disciples think that they are seeing a ghost. This is the reason that the Greco-Romans identified the ‘living’ sea with the important deity Poseidon/Neptune (Semites called this deity Tiamat of Tehom), a deity noted for violent power (Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:128).

has a deeper meaning. That is, the same form of the expression with the implied predicate ‘he’ is found at 18:5-6, where at its utterance the guards fall back onto the ground - an obvious indication that the words carry the force of divine authority. The setting of the expression here is certainly a theophany and, even without the *vegw, eivmi* statement, Jesus reveals His divine power in the event (cf. 4:26 above and 8:24, 28 below). After all, the saying of Jesus (*vegw, eivmi*) at this juncture can be identified as the formula of divine self-disclosure, like the case of the Old Testament literary form for a theophany (see, for example, Ge 15:1; 26:24; 46:3; Ex 14-15; Dt 7:2-7; Job 9:8; 38:16; Ps 29:3; 65:8; 77:20; 89:10; 93:3-4; Isa 41:13-14; 43:1-5; 51:9-10; see McKay 1996:302-303).<sup>135</sup> Thus Jesus reveals YHWH’s unique authority over the terror of the sea (see, for example, Isa. 43:1-5) with a revelatory statement that discloses that Jesus Himself is the Lord (see Moloney 1998:202-203; Du Rand 1997:27).<sup>136</sup>

The disciples take Jesus into the boat and immediately (*euvqe, wj*) the boat lands safely (v. 21).<sup>137</sup> This mention shows both the disciples’ willingness (*h; qel on*) to accept and their reception (*labei/n*) of Jesus. The verb *labei/n* has been used earlier in the Gospel (e.g., 1:12-13) to indicate the authentic reception of Jesus (Moloney 1998:204). The miracle shows the reader the perfect happy ending of the narrative. In this ending, after all, the narrator has an interest in describing how the disciples’ fears are overcome in this narrative (Schnackenburg 1971:27). This is feasible through the disciples’ reunion with Jesus. That is, as mentioned at the structural analysis, the separation between Jesus and the disciples causes the fear of the rough sea (in vv. 16-18) but the reunion with Jesus on the sea makes the boat immediately reach the shore (in vv. 19-21). Therefore, the narrator stresses through the entire narrative that the true peace and calm feasible in the union with Jesus who is

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<sup>135</sup> Schnackenburg (1980:27) states, “this *vegw, eivmi* bears the full weight of Jesus’ claim to be the bread of life come down from heaven (vv. 35, 41, 48, 51).”

<sup>136</sup> For further discussions concerning the *vegw, eivmi* saying in this context, see Beasley-Murray (1987:89-90).

<sup>137</sup> As observed by Bruce (1983:148-149), Mark (6:48, 51) fills in details by telling the reader that it was ‘about the fourth watch of the night’ – i.e., not long before dawn – that Jesus came to them, and that the wind fell as soon as He entered the boat. Probably dawn was breaking as they came safely ashore at Capernaum.

the Lord (cf. Labahn 1999:191-192).

### 3.4.5. The point of view

The narrator organizes the story chronologically, that is, the story is stated according to the sequence in which the actions occur, which include: 1) the separation of the disciples from Jesus; 2) the departure of the disciples toward Capernaum; 3) the desperate situation of the disciples in the midst of the sea; 4) the walking of Jesus on the sea; and 5) the disciples' encounter with Jesus and their safe arrival on the shore. However, he omits the time that the disciples have been rowing out to sea even though it may take furlongs ( $\omega\acute{\nu}\tau\alpha\sigma\tau\alpha\delta\iota\alpha, \omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon\iota\kappa\omicron\sigma\iota\pi\epsilon, \nu\tau\epsilon\eta\tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\alpha, \kappa\omicron\nu\tau\alpha$ ) and the time of safe arrival on the original shore. This means that the interest of the narrator lies in the narrative plot and not in the description of the vital scene itself.

The narrator has a retrospective point of view in the temporal perspective. This is evident from the self-epiphany formula  $\epsilon\upsilon\gamma\omega, \epsilon\iota\upsilon\mu\iota$  (see above), which consists of the centrepiece of the narrative (see 'Structure').

The narrator adopts an omnipresent point of view in the spatial perspective. It is evident from the entire pericope. He is in every place, *viz.*, the landing place, the midst of the sea, and the destination. Each changing place contributes to the establishment of the narrative plot. That is, in the landing place, the narrator presents the separation of the disciples from Jesus; in the midst of the rough sea, the narrator shows the desperate situation of the disciples; and in the destination, the narrator mentions their reunion with Jesus which forces the safe arrival of the boat. Therefore, through this omnipresent spatial perspective, the narrator delivers his theological message that the separation from Jesus causes distressing circumstances and a reunion with Jesus brings peace.

In the psychological perspective, the narrator is only concerned with the omniscient viewpoint of the disciples (cf. Staley 1988:38). That is, the narrator's situation coincides with that of the disciples. In regarding this narrator's viewpoint, Brown

(1966:253; Bultmann 1971:215; Giblin 1983:97) refers to the mention of Chrysostom (*In Jo.* XLIII 1; PG 59:246), as follows: “this narrative has viewpoint of the disciples who are waiting for Jesus, while the synoptic accounts is from the viewpoint of Jesus who is alone on the land and sees the disciples distressed.”

### **3.4.6. The synthesis**

#### **3.4.6.1. The reunion with Jesus**

This is the fifth sign in the Gospel of John, and it is obvious that, even though there is no specific reference to a sign, the underlying narrative and the preceding feeding miracle is reported as a single entity in the tradition. Thus the underlying narrative can be counted as a sign (see ‘Macro context’). There are parallels between the present narrative and the ‘walking on the sea’ narratives in the Synoptics. However, the Johannine account focuses on the theological fact that the separation from Jesus nourishes a fear but reunion with Him brings a calm and a peace, while the narratives in Synoptics emphasise the supernatural power of Jesus who governs the sea and the wind (see Giblin 1983:96). This inference is also supported by the narrator’s particular structural arrangements. That is, the narrator sets up this narrative with a double reason-result structure. Specifically, verses 16-17 are the reason for verse 18 while verses 19-20 are the reason for verse 21. Thus, in the former sub-unit (verses 16-18), the separation of Jesus from His disciples causes fear by the rough sea but, in the latter sub-unit (verses 19-21), the reunion with Jesus by His walking on the sea immediately makes the boat arrive at its intended destination (cf. 10:27-29; see Richardson & Chamblin 1963:65).

#### **3.4.6.2. The self-disclosure of Jesus**

The reader acquires a strong Christological revelation from this instance, which is the most prominent theological purpose of this narrative. As stated above, the underlying narrative and the preceding feeding miracle are reported as a single entity in the tradition. This indicates that the narrator uses the associative macro-context of a

fulfilment of the Exodus typology of the feeding miracle (cf. Moore 1983:35). Thus the interpretation of the pericope should be considered in this associated context (see Koester 1989:339). Elaborately, the narrator mentions *Ἐγώ, εἰμὶ* saying of Jesus Himself in the narrative. This simple saying of Jesus is in a literal sense only a self-identification intended to soothe the disciples' fear, but by saying this Jesus also describes His coming and appearance as a divine epiphany; and this occurs in a context - and that is where the emphasis lies in this self-revelation - that should convince them that, by virtue of the glory given Him by God, no darkness is too deep, waves too high, or sea too wide for Him to find them and be with them in the midst of that tumult (Ridderbos 1992:217; Kysar 1986:94-96; cf. Bruce 1983:148; Lightfoot 1956:157). Thus it is possible to conclude that the narrator attempts to manifest Jesus' divine authority in the same way as the revelation of YHWH's authority to Moses in the Old Testament (see Moloney 1998:202-203; McKay 1996:302-303).

#### **3.4.6.3. The theological and hermeneutical conclusion**

At the outset (vv. 15-16), the narrative has reached a point at which the characters in the story were separated, but by the end (v. 20), Jesus and the disciples are reunited. The false messianic hopes of the crowds (vv. 14-15) have been corrected by Jesus' self-revelation (v. 20), and the disciples are willing recipients of that revelation (v. 21) (Moloney 1998:203). Thus the reader, combining this with the previous feeding miracle that eludes the political personality of Jesus, eventually realises the theological message of the narrator that Jesus is the eschatological messiah who provides true peace and calm.

### **3.5. The healing of the blind man from birth (9:1-41)**

#### **3.5.1. The macro context**

##### **3.5.1.1. The parallelism between chapter 5 and chapter 9**

This narrative is a wonderful scene in which someone receives his sight from Jesus at

the pool. To understand this narrative properly, as has been the concern of every analysis in this dissertation, examination of its relationships with the surrounding context is necessary. The primary point in this regard is that the underlying narrative is placed close to the ending of Jesus' second circular journey. This journey is started in chapter 5 and ends with Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem in this chapter, and there will be no mention again of Jesus' travels until 10:40 (see Stibbe 1993:88-89). This indicates that chapters 5-10 can stand as a literary unit within the larger whole by designating them as a major division in their outline of the Gospel's overall literary structure. The underlying narrative may function as a conclusion to this unit (cf. Holleran 1993:6; Mlakuzhyil 1987:175-178, 211-213; Brown 1966:cxxxviii-cxliv, 201-204).

At the end of this literary unit, the narrator coincides the space ('at the pool'), the miracle nature (healing miracle), and the occasion ('on the Sabbath') with the healing story at the first of the unit (in chapter 5), which are the only two healings of Jesus in Jerusalem proper. The following table presents these similarities more precisely (Stibbe 1993:104; cf. Culpepper 1983:139-140; see Holleran 1993:7-8).<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> On the other hand, the two stories differ in several important ways (Lee 1994:106): "a) John 9 is a whole narrative brought to completion, whereas in John 5 there is no narrative ending; b) Far from being persecuted by the authorities, as in the case of the man born blind (9:34), the healed man in John 5 seems to collude with them by informing on Jesus (5:15); c) Significantly, the narrative of the sick man's encounter with Jesus occurs much earlier in the narrative than in the case of the man born blind (see 9:35-39). In a sense, as we will see, the man's decision in John 5 has already been made. It is not surprising, therefore, that the part played by the healed man comes to an end before the discourse even begins; d) Unlike John 9, where the healed man shares the leading function with the Pharisees, in John 5 the 'Jews' take over the function of leading character from the healed man; e) Whereas John 9 concludes with an exchange between Jesus and the Pharisees (9:40-41), John 5 has no further dialogue between Jesus and the 'Jewish' authorities after v. 18."



Chapter 5		Chapter 9	
v.5	The man's history (38 years)	v.1	The man's history (from birth)
8	The man is socially marginalized	8	The man is socially marginalized
6	Jesus initiates the healing	6	Jesus initiates the healing
2	The setting of the miracle is a pool	7	The setting of the miracle is a pool
2	The place is Jerusalem	7	The place is Jerusalem
9	The miracle happens on the Sabbath	14	The miracle happens on the Sabbath
9b	Jesus slips out of the picture	8	Jesus slips out of the picture
10	Sabbath-violation charge	16	Sabbath-violation charge
12	The Jews interrogate the man	15	The Jews interrogate the man
13	Jesus' whereabouts are unknown by the man	12	Jesus' whereabouts are unknown by the man
14	Jesus reappears to find the man	35	Jesus reappears to find the man
14	The relationship between suffering and sin is explored	3	The relationship between suffering and sin is explored
16	The miracle results trial (of Jesus)	13-34	The miracle results trial (of the man)
17	The miracle is described as a <i>ergon</i>	4	The miracle is described as a <i>ergon</i>

Holleran (1993:9) accurately states that “these suggestive parallels between the two healings are numerous and strong enough to support the conclusion that John 5-10 is marked off as a larger unit in the Gospel whole through the thematic ‘inclusion’ effected by the placement of these two healings and their expansions at the beginning and end of the section” (cf. Ridderbos 1992:189-190). This inference draws the interpretative key that the same interpretative perspective of these six chapters should be sustained in this chapter (see ‘Introduction’). In this regard, a number of characteristic themes are carried through these chapters (for instance, the plot of the Jewish authorities to kill Jesus and their accusations against Him, see Holleran 1993:7-11; Mlakuzhyil 1987:200-215), but amongst others, the most important point of which is that Jesus is the fulfilment of what is celebrated during the particular festival (see Culpepper 1998:148).

### 3.5.1.2. The Tabernacles motif

No change in time (or occasion) and space is indicated from chapter 7 to the present chapter. The temporal (or occasional) setting is still the feast of the Tabernacles while the Passover is the major occasion in chapter 6 and the Dedication in chapter 10, and the spatial setting is still in Jerusalem (Moloney 1996:120). Thus the main narrative stream has been sustained from chapter 7 to the underlying chapter (cf. Talbert 1992:143). The noticeable feature of this literary unit is the increasing hostility of the Jews towards Jesus. As the spatial mention ‘Jerusalem’ implies (see Newman & Nida 1980:56; see Geysler 1986:13-20), in these chapters, the rift between Jesus and the Jews becomes radically deepened during this feast, and the narrator is more continuously occupied by the controversy than any others in this Gospel. This intense opposition of the Pharisees to Jesus is one of the main circumstantial facts for the analysis of the present narrative (Beasley-Murray 1987:153; see Lightfoot 1956:199).

Considering the development of the narrative plot in the Gospel, the narrator seems to compose chapters 7-9 with a well-constructed unit to convey the specific theological message in relation to the feast of the Tabernacles because, as argued already (see ‘Introduction’), the reference to Jewish feasts in chapters 5-10 functions as the hermeneutical key to these chapters (see Culpepper 1998:148, Moloney 1998:165). The feast of the Tabernacles contains rituals to do with water and light (see Stibbe 1993:96-97). Therefore the various metaphoric substances in relation to this feast (*viz.*, water, light, and shepherd, etc.) are linked reciprocally to indicate Jesus’ identity in these chapters (chapters 7-9).<sup>139</sup> To put it precisely, Jesus reveals Himself as ‘the living water’ in chapter 7, and introduces Himself as ‘the light of the world’ in chapter 8 (v. 12), and then, in chapter 9, Jesus explicitly refers to Himself as ‘the light of the world’ (v. 5) and immediately performs the miracle to give sight to the man born blind ‘at the water’ (vv. 6-7) (see Carson 1991:359). Therefore, as Brodie (1993:354) correctly states, “chapter 9, despite its difference of style, builds carefully on the

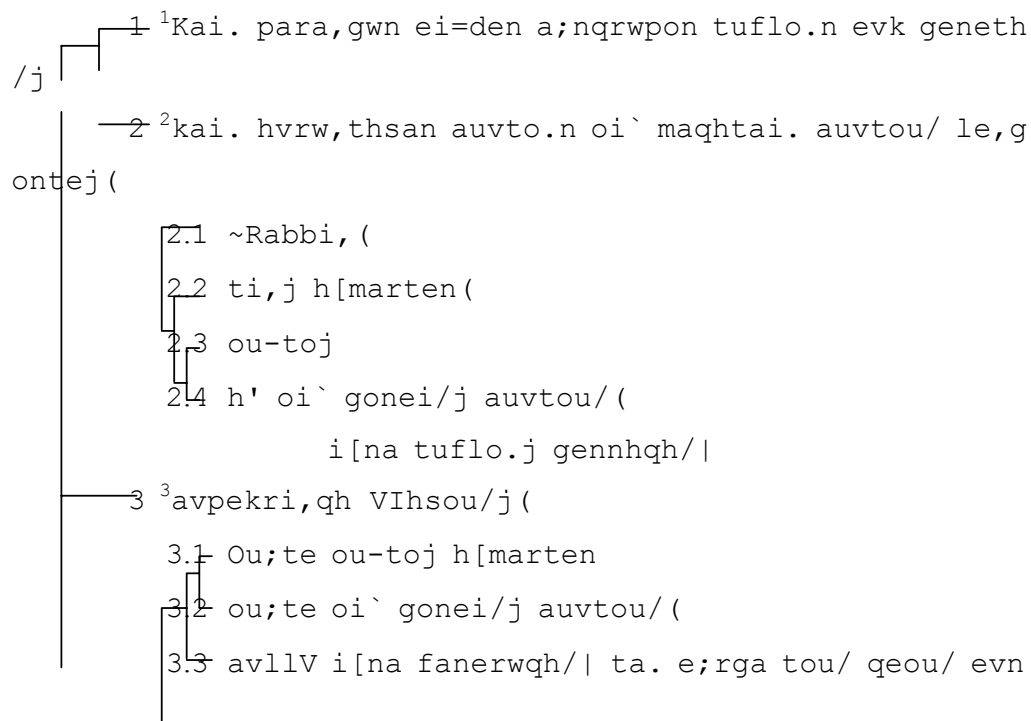
drama of chapters 7-8. Both the idea of the gradual progress of revelation (chapter 7) and the appearance and hiding of the light (chapter 8) find practical expression in the gradually increasing sight and blindness of the man and of the Pharisees.”<sup>140</sup>

### 3.5.2. Structure

The following is a discourse analysis of the pericope.

#### 3.5.2.1. Division of the text into cola

##### Cluster A Jesus heals the blind man



<sup>139</sup> After all, the author of the Gospel seems to be more interested in the juxtaposition of material which has thematic correspondences, and less interested in placing everything in an accurate chronological sequence (Stibbe 1993:104).

<sup>140</sup> On the other hand, this chapter functions to prepare the way for chapter 10, where a sharp contrast is drawn between the good shepherd, who gives his life for his sheep, and other religious leaders, like those in chapter 9, who are nothing but thieves and hirelings (Carson 1991:359). For a full discussion on the spiral of the same narratological lines of chapters 9-10, see Du Rand (1991:94-115; also see Beasley-Murray 1987:148-149; Schnackenburg 1980:238; Brown 1966:388-389; Dodd 1953:356). According to Du Rand, chapter 9 should be taken as the co-text of chapter 10 syntactically. Therein the logical coherence and progression in the composition of chapter 9 and 10 flow from the sign (9:1-7), conveyed by various dialogues on the same central theme.

aavtw/|

nto, j me | 3.4 <sup>4</sup>h`ma/j dei/ evrga, zesqai ta. e;rga tou/ pe,mya  
 |  
 | e[wj h`me,ra evsti,n\  
 | 3.5 e;rcetai nu.x o[te ouvdei.j du,natai evrga, zes  
 qai |  
 | 3.6 <sup>5</sup>o[tan evn tw/| ko,smw| w=( fw/j eivmi tou/ ko,  
 smou |  
 | 4 <sup>6</sup>tau/ta eivpw.n e;ptusen camai.  
 | 5 kai. evpoi,hsen phlo.n evk tou/ ptu,smatoj  
 | 6 kai. evpe,crisen aavtu/ to.n phlo.n evpi. tou.j o  
 vfgalmou.j |  
 | 7 <sup>7</sup>kai. ei=pen aavtw/|(  
 | 7.1 {Upage  
 | 7.2 ni,yai eivj th.n kolumbh,qran tou/ Silwa,m  
 | 8 {o} e`rmhneu,etai  
 | 8.1 VApestalme,noj)  
 | 9 avph/lqen ou=n  
 | 10 kai. evni,yato  
 | 11 kai. h=lqen ble,pwn

**Cluster B The interrogation of the blind man by his neighbours**

rosai, thj h=n e;legon(  
 w/n | 12 <sup>8</sup>Oi` ou=n gei,tonej  
 | kai. oi` qewrou/ntej aavto.n to. pro,teron o[ti p  
 | 12.1 Ouvc ou-to,j evstin o` kaqh,menoj kai. prosait  
 | 13 <sup>9</sup>a;lloi e;legon o[ti  
 | 13.1 Ou-to,j evstin(  
 | 14 a;lloi e;legon(  
 | 14.1 Ouvci,(

14-2 avlla. o[moioj auvtw/| evstin  
—15 evkei/noj e;legen o[ti  
15.1 VEgw, eivmi  
16 <sup>10</sup>e;legon ou=n auvtw/|(  
16.1 Pw/j ou=n hvnew, |cqhsa, n sou oi` ovfqalmoi,  
17 <sup>11</sup>avpekri, qh evkei/noj(  
17-1 ~O a; nqrwpoj o` lego, menoj VIhsou/j phlo.n evp  
oi, hsen  
17-2 kai. evpe, crise, n mou tou.j ovfqalmou.j  
17-3 kai. ei=pe, n moi o[ti  
17.3.1 {Upage eivj to.n Silwa.m  
17.3.2 kai. ni, yai\  
17.4 avpelqw.n ou=n kai. niya, menoj avne, bleya  
18 <sup>12</sup>kai. ei=pan auvtw/|(  
18.1 Pou/ evstin evkei/noj  
19 le, gei( Ouvk oi=da

**Cluster C The interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees**

20 <sup>13</sup>:Agousin auvto.n pro.j tou.j Farisai, ouj to, n po  
te tuflo, n  
21 <sup>14</sup>h=n de. sa, bbaton evn h-| h`me, ra| to.n phlo.n e  
vpoi, hsen o` VIhsou/j  
kai. avne, w|xen auvtou/ tou.j ovfqal  
mou, j  
22 <sup>15</sup>a, lin ou=n hvrw, tw n auvto.n kai. oi` Farisai/oi  
pw/j avne, bleyen  
23 o` de. ei=pen auvtou/j(  
23.1 Phlo.n evpe, qhke, n mou evpi. tou.j ovfqalmou.  
j(  
23.2 kai. evniya, mhn

23.3 kai. ble,pw  
24 <sup>16</sup>e;legon ou=n evk tw/n Farisai,wn tine,j(  
24.1 Ouvk e;stin ou-toj para. qeou/ o` a;nqrwpoj(  
24.2 o[ti to. sa,bbaton ouv threi/  
25 a;lloi de. e;legon(  
25.1 Pw/j du,natai a;nqrwpoj a`martwlo.j toiau/ta  
shmei/a poiei/n  
26 kai. sci,sma h=n evn auvtou/j  
27 <sup>17</sup>le,gousin ou=n tw/| tuflw/| pa,lin(  
27.1 Ti, su. le,geij peri. auvtou/( o[ti hvne,w|x  
,n sou tou.j ovfqalmou,j  
28 o` de. ei=pen o[ti Profh,thj evsti,n

**Cluster D The interrogation of the man's parents by the Pharisees**

29 <sup>18</sup>Ouvk evpi,steusan ou=n oi` VIoudai/oi peri. auvt  
ou/ o[ti  
h=n tuflo.j kai. avne,bleyen  
e[wj o[tou evfw,nhsan tou.j gonei/j auvtou/ to  
u/ avnable,yantoj  
<sup>19</sup>kai. hvrw,thsan auvtou.j le,gontej(  
29.1 Ou-to,j evstin o` ui`o.j u`mw/n(  
o;n u`mei/j le,gete o[ti  
tuflo.j evgennh,qh  
29.2 pw/j ou=n ble,pei a;rte  
30 <sup>20</sup>avpekri,qhsan ou=n oi` gonei/j auvtou/  
31 kai. ei=pan(  
31.1 Oi;damen o[ti ou-to,j evstin o` ui`o.j h`mw/n  
kai. o[ti tuflo.j evgennh,qh

31.2 <sup>21</sup>pw/j de. nu/n ble,pei ouv k oi;damen(  
 31.3 h' ti,j h;noixen avt tou/ tou.j ovfqalmou.j h`  
 mei/j ouv k oi;damen\  
 31.4 avto.n evrwth,sate(  
 31.5 h`liki,an e;cei(  
 31.6 avto.j peri. e`autou/ lalh,sei  
 32 <sup>22</sup>tau/ta ei=pan oi` gonei/j avt tou/ o[ti evfobou/n  
 to tou.j VIoudai,ouj\  
 h;dh ga.r sunete,qeinto oi` VIoudai/oi  
 i[na eva,n tij avto.n o`mologh,sh|  
 Cristo,n(  
 avposuna,gwgoj ge,nhtai  
 33 <sup>23</sup>dia. tou/to oi` gonei/j avt tou/ ei=pan o[ti  
 33.1 ~Hliki,an e;cei(  
 33.2 avto.n evperwth,sate

**Cluster E      The further interrogation of the blind man by the  
 Pharisees**

34 <sup>24</sup>VEfw,nhsan ou=n to.n a;nqrwpon evk deute,rou o]j  
 h=n tuflo.j  
 35 kai. ei=pan avtw/|(  
 35.1 Do.j do,xan tw/| qew/|\  
 35.2 h`mei/j oi;damen o[ti ou-toj o` a;nqrwpoj a`ma  
 rtwlo,j evstin  
 36 <sup>25</sup>avpekri,qh ou=n evkei/noj(  
 36.1 Eiv a`martwlo,j evstin ouv k oi=da\  
 36.2 e]n oi=da o[ti tuflo.j w'n a;r ti ble,pw  
 37 <sup>26</sup>ei=pon ou=n avtw/|(  
 37.1 Ti, evpoi,hse,n soi.  
 37.2 pw/j h;noixe,n sou tou.j ovfqalmou,j  
 38 <sup>27</sup>avpekri,qh avtoi/j(  
 38.1 Eiv a`martwlo,j evstin ouv k oi=da\  
 38.2 e]n oi=da o[ti tuflo.j w'n a;r ti ble,pw

38-1 Ei=pon u`mi/n h;dh  
 38-2 kai. ouvkv hvkou,sate\  
 38-3 ti, pa,lin qe,lete avkou,ein.  
 38-4 mh. kai. u`mei/j qe,lete avvtou/ maqhtai. gene  
 ,sqai  
 39 <sup>28</sup>kai. evloido,rhsan avvtou.n  
 40 kai. ei=pon(  
 40-1 Su. maqhth.j ei= evkei,nou(  
 40-2 h`mei/j de. tou/ Mwus?se,wj evsme.n maqhtai,\  
 40-3 <sup>29</sup>h`mei/j oi;damen o[ti Mwus?sei/ lela,lhken o`  
 qeo,j(  
 40-4 tou/ton de. ouvkv oi;damen po,qen evsti,n  
 41 <sup>30</sup>avpekri,qh o` a;nqrwpoj  
 42 kai. ei=pen avvtou/j(  
 42-1 VEn tou,tw| ga.r to. qaumasto,n evstin(  
 o[ti u`mei/j ouvkv oi;date po,qen evsti,n(  
 kai. h;noixe,n mou tou.j ovfqalmou,j  
 42-2 <sup>31</sup>oi;damen o[ti a`martwlv/n o` qeo.j ouvkv avko  
 u,ei(  
 42-3 avllv eva,n tij qeoseb.h.j h=|  
 kai. to. qe, lhma avvtou/ poih/| tou,tou avkou  
 ,ei  
 42-4 <sup>32</sup>evk tou/ aivw/noj ouvkv hvkou,sqh  
 o[ti hvne,w|xen tij ovfqalmou.j tuflou/ geg  
 ennhme,nou\  
 42-5 <sup>33</sup>eiv mh. h=n ou-toj para. qeou/( ouvkv hvdu,nat  
 o poiei/n ouvde,n  
 43 <sup>34</sup>avpekri,qhsan  
 44 kai. ei=pan avvtw/|(



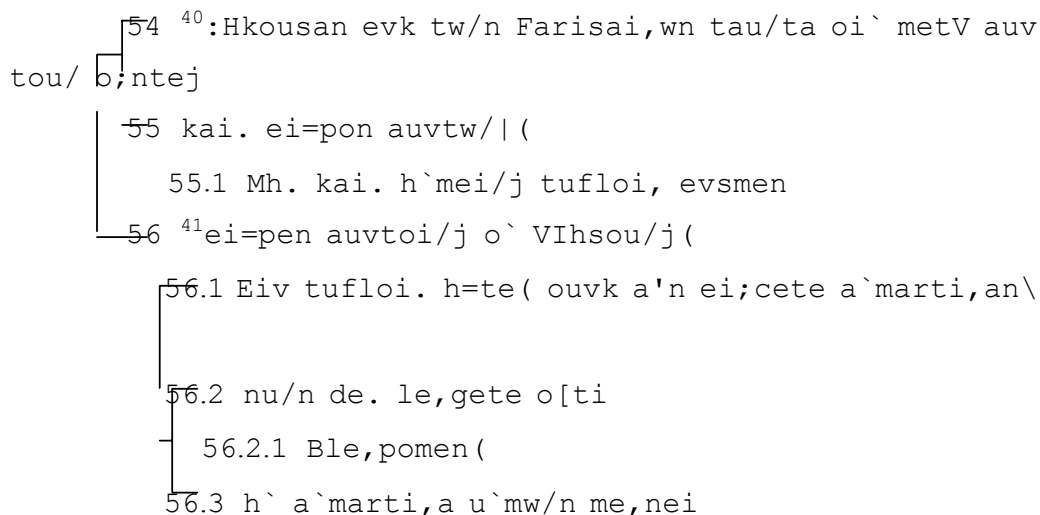
44.1 VEn a`marti,aij su. evgennh,qhj o[loj  
44.2 kai. su. dida,skeij h`ma/j.  
45 kai. evxe,balon auvto.n e;xw

**Cluster F The dialogue between Jesus and the blind man**

46 <sup>35</sup>:Hkousen VIhsou/j o[ti evxe,balon auvto.n e;xw  
47 kai. eu`rw.n auvto.n ei=pen(  
47.1 Su. pisteu,eij eivj to.n ui`o.n tou/ avnqrw,p  
ou  
48 <sup>36</sup>avpekri,qh evkei/noj  
49 kai. ei=pen(  
49.1 Kai. ti,j evstin(  
49.2 ku,rie(  
i[na pisteu,sw eivj auvto,n  
50 <sup>37</sup>ei=pen auvtw/| o` VIhsou/j(  
50.1 Kai. e`w,rakaj auvto.n  
50.2 kai. o` lalw/n meta. sou/ evkei/no,j evstin  
51 <sup>38</sup>o` de. e;fh(  
51.1 Pisteu,w(  
51.2 ku,rie\  
52 kai. proseku,nhsen auvtw/|

**Cluster G The dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees**

53 <sup>39</sup>kai. ei=pen o` VIhsou/j(  
53.1 Eivj kri,ma evgw. eivj to.n ko,smon tou/ton h=  
lqon(  
i[na oi` mh. ble,pontej ble,pwsin  
kai. oi` ble,pontej tufloi. ge,nwntai



### 3.5.2.2. The discussion of the clusters

The pericope is divided into 56 cola which are grouped into 7 clusters in the following way:

Cola 1-11 / 12-19 / 20-28 / 29-33 / 34-45 / 46-52 / 53-56

**Cluster A (cola 1-11):** The reason for the demarcation of these 11 cola as a separate unit from the ensuing colon (colon 12) is to be found in the fact that a shift in focus occurs in colon 12. The first 11 cola focus on the miracle (in cola 4-11), but from colon 12 the focus shifts to the conversation between the blind man and his neighbours. The semantic relationships between cola are as follows: Colon 1 has an additive consequential function to colon 2 because colon 1 introduces the main characters, that is, Jesus and the man blind from birth and colon 2 consequentially presents the disciples' question. Colon 3 is Jesus' answer, thus this colon has a logical cohesive relationship to colon 2. Cola 4-11 are the miraculous procedure. They are internally linked to each other by means of additive consequential relationships. The pivotal theme of this cluster is thus 'Jesus heals the blind man.'

**Cluster B (cola 12-19):** The reason for the separation of these eight cola from the preceding ones is that the scene is clearly changed from the miracle to the

conversation between the blind man and his neighbours. Cola 12-15, 16-17, and 18-19 form three subdivisions in this cluster according to the syntactic pattern (Du Rand 1991:99): question-answer (16-17, concerning the healing of his blindness), and the interrogatives in each of the three subdivisions, cola 12-15, 16-17 and 18-19: ‘who’ (ουvc ou-to, j - colon 12), ‘how’ (pw/j - colon 16), and ‘where’ (pou/ - colon 18). Therefore the focus of the cluster is ‘the interrogation of the blind man by his neighbours.’

**Cluster C (cola 20-28):** The new scene is presented in this unit, which is the reason for the isolation of these 9 cola from the preceding cluster. This cluster introduces the Pharisees and this character is a noteworthy move in the progression of the text (see Du Rand 1991:99). The cluster concentrates on ‘the interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees.’

**Cluster D (cola 29-33):** The main characters are changed from colon 29, which is the main reason for the demarcation. This cluster introduces the man’s parents and they are interrogated by the Pharisees. Thus the cluster focuses on ‘the interrogation of the man’s parents by the Pharisees.’

**Cluster E (cola 34-45):** The more severe interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees is presented from colon 34 and continues to colon 45. So the suggested demarcation is correct. This scene is an intensified description of the previous interrogation of the Pharisees of the blind man (in cluster C). The main focus of the cluster is thus ‘the further interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees.’

**Cluster F (cola 46-52):** From colon 46, the interrogation ends and the main characters of the dialogue became Jesus and the blind man. Although some commentators insist that cola 46-56 (verses 35-41) must be seen as one unit, this suggestion is not accurate because there is a clear inclusion between colon 47 (pisteu,eij) and colon 51 (pisteu,w), which is also found in colon 53 (ei=pen) and colon 56 (ei=pen). The cluster is identified thus as ‘the dialogue between Jesus and the blind man.’

**Cluster G (cola 53-56):** The final cluster is demarcated from the preceding one not only because of the inclusion between colon 53 and colon 56 as mentioned above but also the obvious change of the dialogic scene from the faith confession of the blind man (cola 46-52) to the new dialogic scene of the condemnation of Jesus to the Pharisees (cola 53-56). The main theme of the cluster is thus ‘the dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees.’

### 3.5.2.3. The summary of the clusters

According to the structural analysis, the relations between the clusters can be presented diagrammatically in the following way:

1	cola 1-11	Jesus heals the blind man
2 <sup>1</sup>	cola 12-19	The interrogation of the blind man by his neighbours
2 <sup>2</sup>	cola 20-28	The interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees
2 <sup>3</sup>	cola 29-33	The interrogation of the man’s parents by the Pharisees
2 <sup>4</sup>	cola 34-45	The further interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees
3 <sup>1</sup>	cola 46-52	The dialogue between Jesus and the blind man
3 <sup>2</sup>	cola 53-56	The dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees

The structure of the pericope is clear. It is composed of seven tightly constructed scenes (cf. Holleran 1993:12-18; Du Rand 1991:98-103). The miracle is described in cluster A (cola 1-11; vv 1-7), four sequential interrogations on the identity of the Healer follow in clusters B-E (cola 12-45; vv. 8-34), and two dialogues between Jesus and the blind man and between Jesus and the Jews are mentioned respectively in clusters F-G (cola 46-56; vv. 35-41). The dialogue between Jesus and the blind man shows the man’s confession to Jesus thus the blind man not only receives physical sight but also spiritual insight. However, the dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees implies that the Pharisees are the real blind. Thus the narrator arranges the narrative with such artistry that the healing of the blind man by Jesus causes (cluster A) the four complex interrogations on the identity of the Healer (clusters B-E) and

allows the blind man to make a faithful confession to Jesus (cluster F) and finally blames the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees (cluster G). Therefore as stated by Kysar (1986:148), the underlying chapter is a finely polished drama of seven scenes that shows in an exemplary way how the author recites a miracle story and then proceeds to explore its symbolic meaning.

### **3.5.3. The literary setting**

The narrator furnishes the spatial ('Siloam') and the occasional setting ('a Sabbath') at the outset of the narrative.

#### **3.5.3.1. The spatial setting**

The underlying miraculous event happens at the pool of Siloam (*Silwa*, m, v. 7). Jesus spits on the ground, makes mud with the saliva, and spreads the mud on the blind man's eyes. Then Jesus sends the blind man to wash in the pool of Siloam, as Elisha sent Naaman to wash in the Jordan to heal his leprosy (2 Kg 5:10-14, see Beasley-Murray 1987:155). This strange order by Jesus is extremely difficult to understand (see below). As observed by Ridderbos (1992:336), "why Jesus sent the blind man for his healing to the pool of Siloam and why the man was not healed until he had washed himself there cannot be answered with certainty." The answer to this question can be found in the context of the feast of Tabernacles because the water of the pool of Siloam has been drawn for the ceremonies connected with this feast. As stated above, the reference to the Jewish feasts in this unit provides a hermeneutical hint to the identity of Jesus. Thus the possibility of the messianic interpretation may have been initiated.

The narrator intentionally translates the word 'Siloam,' which is the LXX translation of the Hebrew  $\text{X;L}\{\text{vi}\}$  (v. 7; cf. Isa 8:6)<sup>141</sup>, as in 'Sent' (*avpestalme, noj*), even though this word literally means a discharge (of waters) and thus does not mean

‘Sent’ (Moloney 1998:297; Newman & Nida 1980:302).<sup>142</sup> The narrator of the Gospel mentions 51 times that Jesus is said to be ‘One Sent’ from the Father (cf. 6:29, etc.).<sup>143</sup> Thus the narrator deliberately links the specific space with the messianic term, and thus sees Jesus the Sent One as ‘the spiritual Siloam’ (cf. Gundry 2002:32; Mercer 1992:457-462; Strachan 1941:218-219). That is, as Ridderbos (1992:336) states, “just as v. 5 clearly back to what in 8:12 – also very likely in connection with the feast of Tabernacles – Jesus says of himself as the light of the world, so in the sending of the blind man Jesus is revealed as the one who grants the living water, of which the name of the pool had become symbolic (cf. 7:37 ff).” The blind man gains his sight as he washes in the pool of Siloam, but he actually receives it through the power of the Sent One, not through the actual water (Beasley-Murray 1987:156; see Carson 1991:365).

### 3.5.3.2. The occasional setting

The narrator reveals the occasional setting as a Sabbath (sa, bbaton, v. 14). Before the first interrogation of the man healed by the Pharisees begins in verse 15, the narrator mentions that h=n de . sa, bbaton evn h- | h`me, ra | to.n phlo.n evpoi, hsen o` VIhsou/j kai. avne, w|xen auvtou/ tou.j ovfqalmou, j in verse 14. As in 5:9, this circumstance is described after the narrative of the healing itself because it has not become relevant until now, in the confrontation with the Pharisees (Ridderbos 1992:339; cf. Witherington III 1995:182). Some scholars (see Carson 1991:367) see this mention as a late intrusion into the narrative, but this suggestion overlooks the fact that this detail governs much of the ensuing discussion. That is, this comes into use as the basis of the subsequent controversy. For instance, in chapter 5, the controversy over the Sabbath gives way to a more essential controversy over the relationship between Jesus and God (5:17-18); in similar fashion, the Sabbath controversy in chapter 9 provides a traditional context

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<sup>141</sup> Carson (1991:365) interestingly says that, in Isaiah 8:6 the Jews reject the waters of *Shiloah*; here they reject Jesus.

<sup>142</sup> The author of the Gospel frequently gives his readers the benefit of Greek translations of Hebrew words (e.g., 1:38, 41, 42; 11:16; 19:17; Kysar 1986:150).

<sup>143</sup> For an insightful discussion on the ‘Sending’ motif in this Gospel, see Smith (1995:99-101).

for the narrative, but is not the narrative's central thrust (O'Day 1987:63).

The followings is a list of Jesus' transgressions in this narrative according to the Jews (see Carson 1991:367): Firstly, the healing itself is forbidden on the Sabbath except for cases where life itself is in danger, so the exception is not applicable here, because the man had been blind from birth (see Newman & Nida 1980:305). Secondly, kneading of clay or bread is not allowed on the Sabbath (see Schnackenburg 1980:242; Mishnah *Shabbath* 7:2). Thirdly, making mud from spittle and dirt might well have struck the leaders as falling under that prohibition. Thus, in the eyes of the Jewish hierarchy, although there is a division of opinion among them as to whether or not Jesus is a sinner (v. 16), the healing by Jesus of the blind man is an obvious transgression of the Sabbath law.

The occasional mention of a Sabbath, just as in the healing miracle in chapter 5, functions to dominate the account of the miracle and its aftermath, *viz.*, the conflict between Jesus and the Jews (cf. Moloney 1996:3; Schnackenburg 1980:92-93). However, unlike chapter 5, it is obscure why the narrator presents Jesus as the One who replaces the Sabbath with His own person, which seems rather to be related to the feast of Tabernacles in this narrative.

**To summarize:** the spatial setting ('Siloam') has a messianic association through the narrator's intentional translation of the word ('Sent One') and the occasional setting ('a Sabbath') provides the motivation for the revelation of Jesus' identity by causing the controversy between Jesus and the Jews ('Jesus as the light of the world').

#### **3.5.4. The aspects highlighted by the narratological perspective**

From the macro contextual investigation, structural analysis and the study of the literary setting, certain issues to be investigated in detail are exposed, for having grasped the special attention of the narrator, in the following way:

- 1) From the macro contextual investigation, it is obvious that the hermeneutical

key of the narrative is the association between Jesus and the feast of Tabernacles. The feast of Tabernacles contains rituals to do with water and light, which have been developed with regard to Jesus from chapter 7 to the present. That is, Jesus reveals Himself as ‘the living water’ in chapter 7, and as ‘the light of the world’ in chapter 8, and then, in this chapter, Jesus explicitly refers to Himself as ‘the light of the world’ and immediately performs the miracle of giving sight to the man born blind ‘at the water.’ Thus the investigator will consider this revelational development during the analysis of the narrative.

- 2) From the structural analysis, it is clear that the narrator arranges the narrative in such a way that the healing of the blind man by Jesus causes the four complex interrogations of the identity of the Healer and finally makes the blind man confess faith in Jesus and finally blames the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees respectively. According to the progression of the story, two contrasting responses of the blind man and the Jews are developed. The function of the miracle causes two distinguishable results, which are impressive features that should be discussed.
- 3) From the narrative setting, it is exposed that the narrative should be interpreted from a Christological viewpoint because the spatial setting (‘Siloam’) has messianic associations through the narrator’s intentional translation of the word (‘Sent One’). The occasional setting (‘a Sabbath’) leads motivation for the revelation of Jesus’ identity through the causing of the controversy between Jesus and the Jews (‘Jesus as the light of the world’). Thus the investigator will consider the narrative centring on the manifested identity of Jesus.

The analysis will proceed under the following headings: 1) the function of the miracle account, and 2) the two contrasting responses to the miracle (that is, ‘the progressive faith-confession of the blind man’ and ‘the blame of the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees’).



### 3.5.4.1. The function of the miracle account

The narrator begins the narrative with the statement that ‘Jesus saw a man blind from birth’ (v. 1). From the very outset, the narrator gives the hint that certain events might happen between Jesus and the blind man, because ‘Jesus’ seeing’ (ei=den) does not simply refer to natural observation but serves to introduce what follows (cf. Ridderbos 1992:332). This man has never seen, as he has been blind ‘from birth.’ The expression ‘from birth’ (evk geneth/j) is not used elsewhere in the New Testament, but only here. This feature of the man’s case functions as evidence of the narrator’s heightening of the miracle (Barrett 1978:294; Lightfoot 1956:199). Thus, as Moloney (1998:296) states, “what happens in the gift of sight, light, and faith to the man is a new creation.”

Then the narrator describes the appearance of the disciples who come into view again for the first time since 6:70 (v. 2; see Stibbe 1993:109). They pose a logical question on the common Jewish link between ‘sin’ and ‘sickness’ by the mention that ‘rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ (see Van der Watt 2000:323-326) This is an academic question, perhaps taken from rabbinic disputations (e.g., Ex 20:5; Lindars 1972:342; cf. Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:170; Alison 1997:83-102; Ridderbos 1992:332-333; Beasley-Murray 1987:154-155): assuming that suffering is due to sin, how is suffering from birth to be accounted for? It might be due to the sin of the parent (in spite of Ezek 18:20), or it might be due to ante-natal sin (as, for instance, when a pregnant woman commits idolatry, involving the child in her womb in the act of bending in worship). In verse 34, the Jews assert this connection between sin and blindness. The disciples evaporate, but only their ‘question,’ not themselves, functions as an elicitation of Jesus’ significant answer in what follows now.

Jesus answers the interjection of the disciples’ theological question by ‘neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him’ (v. 3). Beasley-Murray (1987:155) claims that this answer does not have human suffering in view generally but rather a particular individual in relation to

Jesus' mission. That is, in this story, the blind man is not born because of any person's sin but is prepared for the revelation of 'the work of God' (see Newman & Nida 1980:300; Strachan 1941:218). This is a totally different perspective from that of the Synoptic because, in Luke 13:2-5, Jesus does not reject the connection between sin and suffering but instead warns against a superficial application of it, but, by contrast, Jesus at this juncture subsumes suffering under a totally different viewpoint as the specific purpose of revealing God's works in Jesus (Ridderbos 1992:333). After all, Jesus' response focuses on the pronouncement of His specific mission for God's glorification (cf. 11:4; Ex 7:3f) rather than the presentation of the solution to the disciples' general curiosity.

Subsequently, Jesus states that 'we (h`ma/j) must work the works of him who sent me (me)<sup>144</sup> while it is day; night is coming when no one can work' (v. 4). At this juncture Jesus refers to the two contrastive words, 'day' (h`me, ra) and 'night' (nu . x), with the synchronized use of plural and singular form ('we' and 'me'). It is possible to assume in this verse that 'day' figuratively indicates the presence of Jesus and 'night' indicates the absence of Jesus from this earth (see Carson 1991:362-363). This inference is supported by the ensuing self-disclosure of Jesus as 'the light of the world' (fw/j eivmi tou/ ko, smou) in verse 5.<sup>145</sup> This revelatory description 'the light of the world' is taken up from 8:12, in which the programmatic expression of the revelation of Jesus is enunciated with the universal application, and is here applied to a concrete instance (Beasley-Murray 1987:155; see Lee 1994:161). No one can work by night because one cannot see, and accordingly one should do what is

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<sup>144</sup> The singular (evme. dei/ ..... pe, myanto, j me) is given by **a**<sup>1</sup> A C D Y Q 0141 f<sup>1</sup> f<sup>13</sup> 28 Byz [E F G H] *lect* vg sy<sup>s,p,h</sup> arm slav, but plural (h`ma/j dei/ ..... pe, myanto, j h`ma/j) is given by P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> **a\*** B L W Cyril. The committee of UBS<sup>4</sup> preferred h`ma/j dei/ ..... pe, myanto, j me, which are supported by 070 (it<sup>d</sup>) sy<sup>(pal)</sup> geo. Even though the major witnesses (P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> **a\*** B) read both the plural, pe, myanto, j h`ma/j is a non-Johannine expression and it seems to be a correlation with h`ma/j dei (Metzger 1994:194). Thus the printed edition is much more plausible.

<sup>145</sup> Some commentators such as Blomberg (2001:151) think that this logic may well be based on Exodus 9:16 and God's rationale for dealing harshly with Pharaoh, but Newman & Nida (1980:299) think the parallel between Exodus 9:16 and the underlying verse is not very close, except that both passages indicate God's ultimate control over history and the affairs of men. According to them, "there are really more differences than similarities. In the Exodus account the plague are a result of Pharaoh's wilful rejection of God's rule, while in this instance of a man born blind, the man's blindness cannot be due to his own sin."

required by day. This statement highlights the necessity of doing what is to be done at the right time. In this case it is the works of the one who has sent Jesus, the Father. According to 9:3, these works are to heal the blind man so that people can see the works of God revealed (Van der Watt 2000:251-252).

Furthermore, the narrator synchronizes the plural and singular form ('we' and 'me') in this verse. Barrett (1978:357; also see Beasley-Murray 1987:155) explains this collocation of plural and singular verbs as Jesus associating Himself with the apostles, describing that as the Father has sent Him so He sends them, and therefore upon them as upon Him there rests the obligation to do the work of God while the opportunity lasts (cf. 14:12; 20:21). Thus this declaration implies that the presence of the light in the world, doing the works of the Father, will not be limited to the historical life of Jesus; it will continue into the presence of Jesus in His associates, the disciples (Moloney 1996:121). In other words, Christ is in the world both during His earthly ministry and after His resurrection-ascension through the Spirit's presence in the community of believers (cf. 16:12-14 below; Kysar 1986:149).

After the introductory mark (vv. 1-5) a miracle performed by Jesus to the blind man is narrated (vv. 6-7).<sup>146</sup> Jesus spits on the ground and makes mud with the saliva and spreads the mud on the man's eyes. This method of healing is conspicuous, even though the Synoptics (cf. Mk 7:31-36; 8:22-26) record similar techniques (see Resseguie 1993:116). Some commentators insist plausibly that Jesus adopts a traditional medical practice because saliva is regarded as having healing properties in the first century Mediterranean world (see Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:175-177; Witherington III 1995:181; Barrett 1978:358). However, soon after this anointing of the eyes, the man is told to wash his eyes off in the pool of Siloam. The reader recognises that 'Siloam' has a messianic association, which is remarked by the straight annotation of the narrator (see 'Literary setting'). The narrator presents the

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<sup>146</sup> According to O'Day (1987:58), the narration of the healing stands in marked contrast to the eloquence of the previous five verses. Jesus' words in verses 3-5 are grand and serious, whereas His actions in verses 6-7 are earthier, direct, and surprisingly understated (cf. Poirier 1996:288-294). Besides, linguistically, the narrator explicitly connects two sections by use of a participle: *tau/ta eivpw.n e;ptusen camai.*, which heightens the contrast.

manifestation of Jesus Himself as ‘the light of the world’ right before the miracle account. Therefore the performance of Jesus should not merely be viewed as traditional superstition; rather it should be understood as a Christological associative action (see Derrett 1994:251-254; Cook 1992:254). The man immediately obeys the orders of Jesus and without elaboration it is said that he came back able to see (see Kysar 1986:150). Therefore it is not the contact with the waters of Siloam that effects the cure, but contact with the Sent One (Moloney 1998:292).

**In sum:** The initial part of the narrative (vv 1-7), which is the miracle account, starts with the theological motif of the relationship between sin and blindness (vv. 1-2), unfolded with the pronouncement of Jesus’ mission to reveal God’s glory and His self-disclosure as ‘the light of the world’ (vv. 3-5), and then finishes with the performance of the miracle that has a Christological association (vv. 6-7). Thus the miracle account functions not just to establish the basis of the ensuing dialogical narrative, but also to suggest some theological implications such as the relationship between sin and blindness, the glorification of God, and the exposure of Jesus’ identity as the light of the world. These theological motifs will be dealt with later on in detail.

#### **3.5.4.2. The two contrasting responses to the miracle**

As argued in the structural analysis (see ‘Structure’), the narrator arranges the narrative with elaborate artistry: the miracle of Jesus (vv. 1-7) causes the four complex interrogations on the identity of the Healer (vv. 8-34) and makes the two contrastive characters (the blind man and the Pharisees) gain spiritual sight and spiritual blindness respectively (vv. 35-41). With the progression of the narrative, the narrator draws the two contrasting responses of the two contrasting characters (that is, the blind man and the Pharisees). The positive aspect of the blind man will be dealt with first and the negative aspect of the Pharisees will be dealt second.

## 1) The progressive faith-confession of the blind man

The blind man is actually used as material for the occasion of the disciples' theological question and Jesus' revelatory remarks; but subsequently he takes on a living presence as one who acts upon the authoritative command of Jesus (Staley 1991:65; see Duke 1985:125). In the ensuing dialogical narratives, the blind man, as clearly the major character in the episode, appears in five of its seven scenes and has more dialogue than any of the other characters. Throughout the story his role is the opposite of that of the authorities. From the outset, unlike the cripple at the pool of Bethesda (in chapter 5), the once-blind man knows his benefactor's identity and gives credit where credit is due (Bruce 1983:211). Moreover, throughout the entire story, he symbolises the growth of faith while the Pharisees symbolise the reduction of faith (Holleran 1993:20; see). This blind man's progressive faith-confession to Jesus can be accepted as the greatest part of the narrative in general, which can be arranged as follows (see O'Day 1987:55; Strachan 1941:219-220):

### A. Introduction: The healing

Scene 1: Jesus heals the blind man (1-7)

### B. The interrogations

Scene 2: The interrogation of the blind man by his neighbours (8-12)

Confession of the man: *A man that is called Jesus* (v. 11)

Scene 3: The interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees (13-17)

Confession of the man: *Jesus is a prophet* (v. 17)

Scene 4: The interrogation of the blind man's parents by the Pharisees (18-23)<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> The parents of the blind man appear only in this episode of scene. As Holleran (1993:19) says, "their functions are limited but important to the story: establishing in the face of the authorities' disbelief the identity of their son and his condition of blindness from birth, but also out of fear of these same authorities avoiding any admission that Jesus is his healer, thus serving as foils for their son and making clear the risk faced by anyone who, like him, defends or confesses Jesus." On the other hand, the confirmation by the man's parents that their son was born blind functions as proof of the reality of the miracle (vv. 18-20). Furthermore, the contemporary reader must pay attention to the original situation of the Gospel. When the Pharisees question the identity of the healer, the parents of the man

Scene 5: The further interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees (24-34)

Confession of the man: *Jesus is from God* (v. 33)

### C. Conclusion: The aftermath of the sign

Scene 6: The dialogue between Jesus and the blind man (35-38)

Confession of the man: *Jesus is the Lord* (v. 38)

Scene 7: The dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees (39-41)

With the progress of the scenes, the confession of the blind man to Jesus becomes with more specific and deepens.<sup>148</sup> Holleran (1993:20) states this confessional development as follows: In the first scene, the blind man does exactly what Jesus tells him to do and finds himself gifted with sight. In the second scene, and thereafter repeatedly, he witnesses to the reality, the manner and the author of the healing. In the process he comes ever more to stand as an advocate who defends Jesus against the attacks of the authorities and proves that Jesus is a prophet from God who cannot be a sinner and work such signs. By the time the Pharisees cast him out of the synagogue, he has convicted the stubbornness of the Pharisees, and by contrast when Jesus finds him, he receives Jesus as the Son of Man<sup>149</sup> in worship and faith. Therefore, although the man is expelled from the synagogue and thus is judged to be an inferior by the Jewish authorities (v. 34)<sup>150</sup>, he is by the narrator proved to be superior to the religious

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refuse to answer the Pharisees saying 'but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes' (v. 21). The narrator explains the reason for the refusal as 'his parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue' (v. 22). This mention is a reflection of the social situation of the first Johannine reader. According to Stibbe (1993:105; also see Staley 1991:67-68), the author completed this towards the end of the first century after his original readers had been expelled from the synagogues because of their open confessions to Jesus. Therefore the fear of the man's parents is natural in their terror of excommunication.

<sup>148</sup> In this regard, he is a typical round character.

<sup>149</sup> The term 'Son of Man' (το.ν υι' ο.ν του/ avnqrw, pou) is replaced by 'Son of God' (το.ν υι' ο.ν του/ Qeou/) in some later Greek witnesses and Latin versions, i.e., A L D Y Q 070 0141 0233 f<sup>1</sup> f<sup>13</sup> 28 33 Byz [E F G] lect sy<sup>p,h,pal</sup> slav, etc. However there is a close parallel to this passage in 12:31-36 (Barrett 1978:364; Schnackenburg 1980:253). The major manuscripts (P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> a B D W it<sup>d</sup> sy<sup>s</sup> sa) also support avnqrw, pou. Not only does the textual evidence appear to favour it, but the context also strongly suggests its correctness. For a discussion on the contextual support of this reading, see Burkett (1991).

<sup>150</sup> Yee (1989:44-45) supposes that, with the fear of the blind man's parents (v. 22), the persecution of the synagogue reflects the circumstances of the author's time rather than Jesus' time.

leaders due to his full confession of faith (cf. Karris 1990:49).<sup>151</sup> That is, man gains not only his physical sight, but also his spiritual sight, which is the most correct response Jesus' miracle (cf. Farmer 1996:62-63).

On the narratological level, this gradual faith-confession of the blind man ultimately functions as a tool for the presentation of Jesus' identity in full. The reader acquires the identity of Jesus gradually and profoundly through the mouth of this man. This is the same pattern of exposure of Jesus' identity in the first chapter of the Gospel, where John the Baptist plays the role of witness (see '2.2.1.1. Chapter 1 as a Johannine Christological introduction'). In the present narrative, Jesus is depicted as the miraculous healer in the opening scene but, in the last scene, Jesus is introduced as 'the Son of Man.' This title 'Son of Man' is one of the Johannine characteristic portrayals of Jesus, and is found 13 times in this Gospel (1:51, 3:13, 3:14, 5:27, 6:27, 6:53, 6:62, 8:28, 9:35, 12:23, 12:34c, 12:34d, 13:31f). After all, through the characterisation of the blind man, the narrator wants to draw twofold significance: 1) the help of Jesus for the man troubled by the physical suffering on the surface level, and 2) the bringing of the visual effect of Jesus' revelatory mention on the deep level.

## 2) The blame for the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees

The antagonists are referred to both as 'the Pharisees' and as 'the Jews.' The term 'the Pharisees' is used in vv. 13, 15, 16, 40 (at the first question, vv. 13-17) and 'the Jews' is used in vv. 18, 22 (at the second question, vv. 18-23).<sup>152</sup> Thus the character of the

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<sup>151</sup> ο` δε. ε; fh is supported by P<sup>66</sup> a<sup>2</sup> A B D L D Q Y 0141 f<sup>1</sup> f<sup>13</sup> Byz [E F G] lect it<sup>a,aur,b,c,d,f,ff2,q,r1</sup> vg sy<sup>p,h,pal</sup> bo and some church Fathers. However P<sup>75</sup> a\* W it<sup>b,(l)</sup> some Coptic versions and Diatessaron omit this verse. This seems to be why ε; fh is rare in the Gospel of John (only 1:23). Brown (1966:376) explains that some witnesses read it in v. 36, and its use here may be borrowed from there. Therefore ο` δε. ε; fh ..... kai. ei=pen ο` VIhsou/j is perhaps the original reading. Incidentally l and 253 read this verse as: ο` δε. ε; fh( Pisteu,w( ku,rie\ kai. proseku,nhsen auvtw/|\_ kai. ei=pen( Nai(. ku,rie(. pepi,steuka o[ti su. ei= ο` ui`o.j tou/ qeou/ ο` eivj to.n ko,smon evrco,menoj\_ kai. ei=pen ο` VIhsou/j. This is a mixture of v. 38-39 and 11:27, so its support is the weakest among both external and internal evidence.

<sup>152</sup> The term 'the Jews' occurs sixty-one times and 'the Pharisees' occurs twenty times in the Gospel, which are generally represented as the opposition to Jesus in the Gospel (see Van der Watt 2002:3; De Jonge 2001:132-136; Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:177-178).

Jews is confused with the Pharisees (and in certain sense, with the neighbours as well) in the narrative. It seems unnecessary to divine their specific position in accordance with the narrator's message. As major protagonists in chapters 7-10 they are just represented as the same group opposed to Jesus (Moloney 1998:297).

The Jews (including the neighbours) play a large part in the story.<sup>153</sup> They appear in the four interrogation scenes, which are situated in the centre (vv. 8-34) of the narrative. There is also gradual development as with the blind man, but this is in the portrayal of their deteriorating character (Holleran 1993:20). Thus with the confession of the blind man, the controversy with the Jewish leaders is deeper and more serious. This is to say that in the interrogational stage of the narrative, the reader realises that the Jews become progressively blind about the real identity of Jesus while the blind man's eyes are gradually opened to Him (Stibbe 1993:108-109; Beasley-Murray 1987:161). They begin with, 'this man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath (v. 16). They then proceed to call Jesus 'a sinner' and deny the miracle (v. 24). They proclaim that 'we do not know where he comes from' (v. 29), which displays their lack of spiritual knowledge. Finally, they eject (εἶξεν, βαλον αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς) the blind man from the Synagogue, and in so doing they reject Jesus. According to Lindars (1972:349; see Ridderbos 1992:341-344), 'the casting the man out' indicates the Pharisees' final refusal to believe in Jesus (v. 34; cf. 12:42).

The Jews blame Jesus from their religious perspective that Jesus not only breaches the Sabbath regulations in healing the blind man, but also sets Himself up as an equivalent to God.<sup>154</sup> As has been thoroughly dealt with by Van der Watt (2002:5-13), not just at this juncture, but in the whole Gospel, the Jews (or the Pharisees) who can

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<sup>153</sup> The reason that the investigator regards the neighbours in the category of the Jews is that the neighbours might already have reported the healed man's story to the Pharisees because they ask 'how he had received his sight' (9:15) instead of 'why have your neighbours brought you here?' (see Staley 1991:66).

<sup>154</sup> Regarding the division of the Pharisees presented in verse 16, that is, the opinion of one side that 'this man is not from God for he does not observe the Sabbath' and of the other side that 'how can a man who is a sinner perform such signs', Yee (1989:45) explains as follows: As these opinions reveal, Jesus' sign can be considered from two different vantage points. One can view the 'sign' as 'work' performed on the Sabbath and, hence, a transgression of the law. Or, one can regard the 'sign' as a miraculous 'work' of God that transcends the law. From the first point of view, Jesus will equate the



be identified as ‘the disciples of Moses’ are in contraposition to Believers (or Christians) who can be identified as ‘the disciples of Jesus’ (cf. 9:28). While Jesus gives clear indications of what the problems with the disciples of Moses are such as their alienation from God and their rejection of the God who should be their Father and their misunderstanding of the Law, they accuse Jesus’ blasphemy (cf. 5:18; 10:33; 19:7) and His disobedience towards the Law (cf. 5:18; 9:16) with several serious attacks on his honour and person. They call Him a criminal (19:30), a sinner (9:24), a Samaritan (8:48), and accuse Him of madness (10:20), and of demon possession (8:48, 52; 10:20-21). This conflict is caused mainly by the fact that the opponents of Jesus did not acknowledge the change in the modus of God’s presence while the disciples of Jesus claimed that it was changed in and through the presence of Jesus. Thus now, in Jesus, the Father becomes present. In other words, he is revealed (5:20-22). Jesus is the agent of God. He is the way to the Father and the Father lives in Him and acts through Him (14:1-14). Only through Jesus, the Word (1:1), will people know the Father (1:18) because He alone has seen the Father (6:46) and reveals/declares/witnesses what He has seen or heard (in heaven- 3:11, 32-34; 4:26-27; 8:26). Thus those who see Jesus see the Father (12:45; 14:7), and those who know Jesus know the Father (14:7). This claim of Jesus indicates that they (the Father and the Son) are one (10:30). However, Jesus has to prove His divine authority because the Jews ask what miraculous sign He could offer to substantiate His authority (2:18). Thus Jesus drinks the cup the Father prepared for Him (18:11) and lays down His life to take it up again (10:17-18; 19:11). Jesus was raised by God. This resurrection of Jesus is proof of His relationship with the living God because the death and resurrection of Jesus are interpreted as an act of power (authority) required by the Father. In other words, it is underlined several times that the death and consequent resurrection is a sign of the presence of His Father, God, with Him (16:32; cf. 12:23, 28; 17:1). Thus by not accepting Jesus the disciples of Moses lose their claim to God.

At the last verse (v. 41), Jesus says to the Jewish authorities, ‘if you were blind, you

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first position with ‘blindness,’ and the second with ‘discipleship’ (see Cook 1992:255-256; Moloney 1998:293).

would not have sin. But now that you say, we see, your sin remains.’ As Lindars (1972:352) says, if the Pharisees were really incapable of understanding, their blindness would not be morally culpable; but in the foregoing dialogue they have claimed to be well-informed spiritual guides, and so they have no excuse. The notion of sin is now turned radically on its head. That is, the imputation of sin is transferred from the healed man and Jesus (vv. 2, 16, 24, 34) to the religious leaders (v. 41b) (Lee 1994:181). This reminds the reader of the question of the disciples on the Jewish link between ‘sin’ and ‘sickness’ in verse 2. It is very important to note in this regard that ‘sin’ in John’s Gospel is not about all the wrong deeds a person might commit, but rather describes the existential position of guilt and alienation from God. This existential position forms the grounds for doing wrong things (cf. 3:19; 7:7). Sin is an inability to recognize Jesus (Van der Watt 2000:323-326). This inability to recognize Jesus by His deeds makes them guilty of sin, since they know what the truth is - the blind man explained it to them (cf. 9:30-34; 15:22). Thus this last claim of Jesus is a play on two levels of the metaphor of blindness, *i.e.* incapacity to understand and wilful refusal to understand. Thus the Jews are marked out as the true blind people and as the true sinners because of their unbelief in Jesus, which ultimately functions to indicate that true blindness is an incapacity to recognize Jesus (cf. Stibbe 1993:109).

### **3.5.5. The point of view**

This account of the miraculous healing of blind man is structured such that the intention is clear. The narrator skilfully combines the miracle account with the subsequent controversy narrative so that the reader realises the narrator’s theological message of the nature of blindness.

The narrator has a strong retrospective point of view in the temporal perspective. This is evident from the fact that he interprets the narrative for his readership from a future vantage point. The following evidence supports this: the reference to Jesus’ death in v. 4, the synagogue ban in v. 22, or the apologia of future disciples in the healed man’s witness in vv. 8-34 (Holleran 1993:25). In fact, this viewpoint has a decisive influence

on the narrator's theological point of view (see 'The Synthesis').

Spatially the narrator adopts spatially an omnipresent point of view. He participates in every scene although the pericope has various scenes, such as the place in which Jesus, the disciples, the Jews and other minor characters appear. This is why every scene makes the plot of the narrative similar to chapter 5. That is, each episode unfolds centring on the characters such as Jesus, the blind man and the Jews, so that Jesus' identity is drawn progressively.

The narrator takes an omniscient point of view in the psychological point of view. He is privy to the characters' inner thoughts, feelings and intentions. This is obviously evident from the disbelief of the Jewish authorities in v. 18 and the fear of the blind man's parents in v. 22 (Holleran 1993:25; Culpepper 1983:24). This viewpoint conveys the stubbornness of the Jews and the circumstances of the reader.

### **3.5.6. The synthesis**

#### **3.5.6.1. The motivation of the narrative**

This is the sixth sign in the Gospel of John, and is clearly mentioned in verse 16. The narrative has a tightly knit narrative, using imagery, structure, the movement of the plot, and characterisation. With these literary devices, the narrator exposes his theological message unmistakably. The narrative starts with the theological question of the disciples on the relationships between 'sin' and 'sickness.' Jesus then answers that this instance has occurred so that God's works might be revealed in this man. Thus Jesus prefers not to answer the question; instead He points to the purpose of the man's blindness (see Resseguie 1993:116; Newman & Nida 1980:300; Strachan 1941:218). That is, from the outset, the purpose of the narrative is clearly drawn (that is, the revelation of God's glorification). This initiation warns the reader that the purpose of the narrative is not just to describe a historical event but also to deliver an important theological message to the reader. Thus the task of the analysis is not to take it of face value but rather to delve deeper for its true meaning (see Dodd

1953:297). This is why the narrator uses the term ‘sign’ to indicate this account.

### **3.5.6.2. The Christological implications**

As in the case of the previous signs, the underlying narrative also affirmatively contains a strong Christological portrait of Jesus. This can be seen in two separated parts of the narrative respectively, that is, in the miracle account (vv. 1-7) and in the ensuing dialogues (vv. 8-41).

Firstly, in the miracle account (vv. 1-7), the narrator intrudes into the narrative to inform the reader that the word ‘Siloam’ means ‘Sent’ (cf. Newman & Nida 1980:302). This translation of Siloam as ‘Sent’ draws the reader’s attention to the narrator’s expectations of making a connection between Siloam and Jesus as ‘the One who is sent’ (see Derrett 1994:251-254; Cook 1992:254; Mercer 1992:457-462). In the Gospel of John, Jesus is said to be ‘the one who is sent’ 51 times from the Father (e.g., 3:17, 34; 5:35; 6:29, etc.). As immediately as verse 4 of chapter 9 the reader is told that Jesus does the works of ‘Him who sent Me’ (Resseguie 1993:116-117). Therefore, though the blind man gains his sight as he washes in the pool of Siloam, he actually receives it through the power of the Sent One and not through the physical water (Beasley-Murray 1987:156; see Carson 1991:365). That is, just as verse 5 clearly goes back to what is in 8:12 – also very likely in connection with the feast of Tabernacles – Jesus calls Himself as the light of the world. In sending the blind man Jesus is revealed as the One who grants the living water, of which the name of the pool has become symbolic (cf. 7:37 ff) (cf. Gundry 2002:32; Ridderbos 1992:336; Strachan 1941:218-219).

Secondly, in the ensuing dialogues (vv. 8-41), the narrator positively exposes the identity of Jesus through the characterisations. That is, although Jesus disappears from the ensuing scenes in the main debates after the miracle – the cured blind man and the Jews controversy on the healing – until He reappears in His concluding revelatory mention on His true identity (vv. 35-41), He still remains as the main subject of the whole debate. Ironically, the reader acquires the full information of Jesus’ identity

through the controversy. This is particularly evident in the description of the narrator of the three main characters (Jesus, the blind man, and the Jews), as follows: 1) Jesus functions as the giver of light who is already enunciated in 8:12 through His direct powerful giving of the sight to a blind man.<sup>155</sup> 2) The blind man functions as the material to draw the divine identity of Jesus by his progressive faith-confession to Jesus. The man confesses Jesus as the miraculous healer in the opening scene but, in the last scene, he declares Jesus to be ‘the Son of Man.’ 3) The Jews function as the material to initiate the debate and to make the lengthy (or more precise) argument for the revelation of Jesus. Thus the Jews are not employed just for the antagonist but also affirmatively as an important source of the exposure of Jesus’ identity.

### **3.5.6.3. The illustration of faith in Jesus**

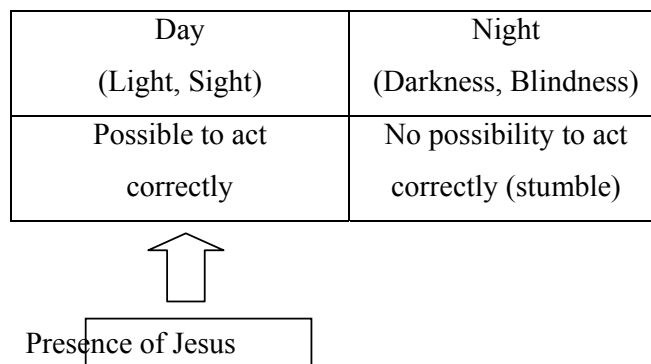
In this narrative, particularly, the narrator employs the dualistic imagery of day and night, of sight and blindness, of light and darkness. The images of day and night are clearly set in opposition to each other in the mention of Jesus in verse 4: ‘we must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work.’ The images of sight and blindness are set with the healing of the man’s blindness and Jesus’ judgment of the blindness of the Jews. The images of light and darkness flow through the whole narrative, and are particularly reflected in the divided opinions of the Pharisees on who Jesus is (see Resseguie 1993:116). With this artistic use of dualistic (or contrasting) imagery, the narrator unfolds the whole story, drawing his theological message (see Painter 1986:31-61).

These contrastive terms can be categorised bipartitely with a positive side (day, sight, and light) and a negative side (night, blindness, and darkness). When one has light (or sight, or in the day), one can act or walk correctly. Those who are in darkness (or blindness, or at night) stumble and do not know where they are going. In this narratological level, the affirmative part of this bipartition symbolically indicates the presence of Jesus (cf. v. 5). Thus in Jesus, one can act correctly in one’s totality,

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<sup>155</sup> The predicative saying *evgw, eivmi* in this narrative is Jesus’ second self-revelation in the Gospel (cf. 8:12).

morally and existentially, including in the sphere of religious (or spiritual) activity. This dualistic observable fact can be presented as follows (Van der Watt 2000:252, 259):



Hence the narrative is composed with strong literary artistry in which the significant message is implied in the necessity of involvement in the presence of Jesus. Jesus is the light and thus He makes it possible for people to see the works of the Father (9:3), which are the healing deeds of Jesus, and which refer to His ability to give life. Thus people do first need to recognize Jesus as the Light in order to have the light needed to really see and understand the deeds of Jesus.

The narrator in the incident substantiates this principle through the employment of two main characters: ‘the blind man’ and ‘the Jews.’ The theme of the story has moved gradually from physical sight and blindness to the more serious matter of spiritual sight and blindness involved in the human response to the revelation (Kysar 1986:158). Originally the man was blind and the Jews could see. However, the man gains not only physical sight but also spiritual sight because he has put his faith in Jesus. Conversely, after Jesus pronounces His status as judge, mentioning that ‘I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind’ (v. 39)<sup>156</sup>, the Pharisees, who have physical sight, are

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<sup>156</sup> There is a contrast between this mention and 3:17 (‘God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.’), but there is no real contradiction. As believed by Newman & Nida (1980:319), the earlier verse affirms that the ultimate purpose of God’s sending his son into the world was to be its saviour, but the later verse speaks of the inevitable results of the son’s coming: judgment on those who refuse to open their eyes to the light. On the other hand, As believed by Beasley-Murray (1987:160), the assertion ‘I came .....’ reminds one

described as being blind in verses 40-41 because they did not confess their faith to Jesus (cf. Farmer 1996:62-63).

Therefore, as stated by Van der Watt (2000:252-253), “although they can physically see, they fail to recognize the divine identity of Jesus. They claim that they see, but they do not see the true reality. This is a figurative expression where see points to the ability to know and recognize the truth: in other words, Jesus, who is the truth.” The moment the man realised who Jesus is, he knelt down and worshipped Him (vv. 36-38), but the Pharisees are spiritually blind, which explains their inability to recognize Jesus as the Son of God. This is the core of their sin. Those who recognize and accept Jesus in faith are saved, and eventually receive eternal life (Van der Watt 2000:326; cf. Witherington III 1995:185; see Bultmann 1964:832-875).

#### **3.5.6.4. The theological and hermeneutical conclusion**

The narrator is able to persuade the reader to attend to the same fate of the blind man. That is, like the blind man, the narrator attempts to invite the reader to put his faith in Jesus. In this regard, Stibbe (1993:106) observes that the vitality of the blind man as the most impressive of all. The man’s stubborn refusal to give way to the perverse denial on the part of his accusers is noteworthy: ‘I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see’ (v. 25). His sarcasm in v. 27 is also suggestive of vitality: ‘why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?’ Thus the narrator elaborately requests the paradigmatic reader to become a disciple through the portrayal of the blind man.

Incidentally, there is a very important point to consider on the circumstances of the Johannine community. This is primarily reflected on the response of the man’s parents to the Jewish authorities in verses 20-21: ‘We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.’ Subsequently, the

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of related statements in the synoptic Gospels that speak of the purpose of Jesus' mission (e.g., Mk 2:17; Mt 5:17; Lk 12:49), and links up with sayings that speak of Jesus as Son of Man (cf. Mk 10:45; Lk

narrator adds his comment in verse 22: ‘His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.’ As stated by Resseguie (see 1993:118), many scholars have seen this puzzling comment by the narrator as a later redaction added to the narrative for a reflection of the social situation (*Sitz-im-Leben*) of the first Johannine reader. In this regard, according to Stibbe (1993:105; also see Staley 1991:67-68), the author completed this towards the end of the first century after his original readers had been expelled from the synagogues because of their open confession to Jesus. Thus the fear of the man’s parents is natural.

Therefore, all the while, what the narrator has been describing speaks directly to his own situation and that of his church. The man healed of blindness represents the genuine believer coming to faith in spite of those who would prevent him from doing so, while the religious leaders represent the members of the synagogue who expelled the believers from their religious territory (Kysar 1986:158). After all, the expulsion exemplifies the disciples who do not fall away under the threat of eviction (16:1-2), and his example provides encouragement for others to maintain their loyalty to Christ despite the opposition from the local Jewish leaders (Koester 1995: 59).

### **3.6. Conclusion**

This chapter has studied the theological messages of four signs in chapters 5-10 of the Gospel. These are ‘the healing at the pool of Bethesda’ (5:1-18); ‘the feeding of the multitude’ (6:1-15); ‘the walking on the sea’ (6:16-21); and ‘the healing of the blind man from birth’ (9:1-41). These six chapters, which contain the second cyclical journey of Jesus, are a well-rounded unit that has thematic coherence such as the exclusive references to the Jewish feasts. The author mostly focuses on drawing Jesus’ identity, centring on signs in these chapters. That is, in chapter 5, the author places the healing miracle before the discourse of Jesus on His divine authority to work on Sabbath. In chapter 6, the miraculous feeding and walking on the sea accounts are described and are followed by a lengthy discourse of Jesus on His

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19:10).



identity as the Bread of Life in the Passover context. In chapters 7-8, the author exposes the identity of Jesus in the Tabernacle context as the water of life and the light of life, which are the substances for the Tabernacle feast, and subsequently in chapter 9, in the healing miracle that is closely linked to this feast by the employment of water and light imagery. This is followed to Jesus' discourse on His revelatory proclamation as the light of the world. Thus each miracle story is followed by dialogue texts and also by revelatory monologues, which allow the reader to develop a more complete identity of Jesus.

The main concern of the signs can be reviewed as follows: the third sign ('the healing at the pool of Bethesda,' 5:1-18) exposes Jesus' life-giving power and ultimately implies His equality with God. Thus the one who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, but whoever hears the word of Jesus and believes God who sent Jesus will receive eternal life (cf. 5:23-24). The fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15) teaches the reader that Jesus is the giver of divine nourishment. This divine (or eschatological) provision allows the people to sustain eternal life. Jesus Himself is 'the bread of God who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world' (v. 33), thus anyone who comes to Him will never go hungry, and everyone who believes in Him will never be thirsty (v. 35). The fifth sign ('the walking on the sea,' 6:16-21) depicts Jesus as the eschatological messiah who provides true peace and calm. Separation from Jesus causes fear, but union with Him brings peace and calm (cf. 10:27-29). The sixth sign ('the healing of the blind man from birth,' 9:1-41) depicts Jesus as the divine Sent One who brings true spiritual light to the world. In this account, the author stresses that Jesus is the light of the world and thus He makes it possible for people to see the works of the Father, which are the healing deeds of Jesus and refer to His ability to give life. Thus people do first need to recognize Jesus as the Light to really see and understand the deeds of Jesus.

The revelation of the person of Jesus seems in the previous unit to have been quite limited, but in this unit, the report of the self-revelation of Jesus in chapters 2-4 continues with an ever increasing and deepening wealth of topics and motifs. Thus the signs in these chapters can be identified as 'the intensified signs.' Jesus is the light of

the world. Whoever follows Him will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life (cf. 8:12).

## CHAPTER IV. THE CLIMACTIC SIGN

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter will study the theological role of the last sign in chapter 11, ‘the raising of Lazarus’ (11:1-44). The primary reason for dealing with this sign in isolation here is that, like chapters 2-4 and chapters 5-10, chapters 11-12 are bound together, and this sign appears in these two chapters only. The reason for this demarcation of chapters 11-12 from the others is supported not only by the end-limit of the previous unit which is the last verse of chapter 10 as argued in the ‘Introduction of CHAPTER III’ (see Carson 1991:403; Brown 1966:413-415), but also by the fact that there they contain content that may be distinctive from the previous chapters. That is, quite peculiarly, the present two chapters are concerned with someone’s stupendous restoration to life from the death and on the serious aftermath of this sign/miracle that immediately foreshadows Jesus’ death. Besides, from 13:1, the narrator apparently mentions Jesus’ Passion, which also perhaps is distinctive from the preceding chapters, even though there has been development in this theme from the beginning of this Gospel (cf. 2:23-25). In other words, chapters 11-12 constitute a transition from the confrontational dialogue between Jesus and the Jews to the narrative of Jesus’ suffering and death, which begins in 13:1 (Ridderbos 1992:381).<sup>157</sup> For this reason, it is generally acceptable practice to isolate chapter 13 from the previous chapters (see Mlakuzhyil 1987:181-185). Therefore chapters 11-12 are proved to be a well-rounded unit and accordingly the analysis of this sign in isolation is appropriate. Therefore, as in the preceding cases, the present sign will be analysed according to the methodological framework, bearing in mind this broader context. The theological role of this sign will thus be drawn accurately.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> As stated by Van Tilborg (1993:189), “the relation with what happens before is made in the text itself (11:37, 47) and has thus the approval of the author.”

<sup>158</sup> There are serious debates among scholars about the historical development of this longest sustained narrative outside of the Passion account in the Gospel of John (see Ridderbos 1992:383-386; Brown 1966:427-428). Many scholars argue that this narrative provides an excellent test case for source-critical study because it contains numerous examples of the different types of literary problems (*viz.*, *aporias*) found throughout the Gospel (Burkett 1994:215). Culpepper (1998:183) states, for instance, “source critics have even suggested that the cleansing of the temple was moved up in this Gospel to chapter 2 so that the raising of Lazarus could occupy this position.” However, whatever the

## **4.2. The raising of Lazarus (11:1-44)**

### **4.2.1. The macro context**

#### **4.2.1.1. The transitional role of chapters 11-12**

Structurally, chapters 11-12 can be divided into two sub-parts, 11:1-54 and 11:55-12:50. The main division of chapters 11-12 is clearly marked by introductions and conclusions. In this regard, according to Mlakuzhyil (see 1987:215-221), the first two verses of chapter 11 serve as an introduction to the Lazarus-episode since they mention for the first time new characters (Lazarus, Martha and Mary) and a new place, and 11:54 appears to be a transitional conclusion to the Lazarus-episode (11:1-53) since mention is made of Jesus' departure to Ephraim and His stay there. Subsequently, 11:55-57, a transitional introduction describes the nearness of the Passover and its correlated consequences, and functions as the dramatic setting for the events to be described in chapter 12. The last verses of chapter 12 (vv. 44-50), form a revelatory discourse by Jesus, and function as a dramatic technique the author has used to create a mysterious atmosphere (as of an invisible voice) to make the reader reflect deeply on the last public discourse of Jesus.

According to this division, as will be investigated later, the first part (11:1-54), which is concerned with the stupendous miracle of the restoration to life, can be functioned as the conclusion of the preceding chapters since the main motif ('life') in this part of the story has been dramatically developed up to this juncture and reaches a climax here.

The second part (11:55-12:50), which is concerned with the events that lead up to

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history behind the development of the traditions surrounding this narrative, the only necessary focus of the present study is to regard that the miracle has been performed to serve the purposes of Johannine theology (Brown 1966:430). Therefore the present analysis will concentrate on only the final form of the text and accordingly on the exposure of the theological message that the narrative contains. In this regard, Witherington III (1995:196) believes that the replacement of this story is likely to owe more to the author's theology than to chronology.

Jesus' death and resurrection, function as the prelude to the ensuing chapters because the underlying story provokes the Jewish plot to kill Jesus, which will also be dealt with in detail later on. Thus these chapters play a transitional role common to both the preceding chapters and the following chapters (cf. Mlakuzhyil 1987:181-182; Brown 1966:429-430). In this regard, Beasley-Murray (1987:186) correctly asserts that the underlying episode, as the last of the signs of Jesus, brings to a climax all that preceded it and precipitated His own death and the resurrection.

#### 4.2.1.2. The distinctive nature of the present miracle

The underlying story is unique in many respects. Scholars generally agree that 2:1-11 and 4:46-54 are the Cana miracles, 6:1-15 and 6:16-21 are the Galilean sea miracles, and 5:1-18 and 9:1-41 are the Jerusalem pool miracles. These six miracles have formal similarities as can be seen in the following table (Stibbe 1994a:81).

Miracle	Text	Formal similarities with other miracles
The first sign at Cana	2:1-11	4:46-54. Request-rebuke-response structure, Setting in Cana, description as <i>shmei/on</i>
The second sign at Cana	4:46-54	2:1-11. Request-rebuke-response structure, Setting in Cana, description as <i>shmei/on</i>
The healing of the crippled man	5:1-18	9:1-41. Setting in Jerusalem, pool followed by trial scene
The feeding of the multitude	6:1-15	6:16-21. The setting (Sea of Galilee) and context (6:1-15 and 6:16-21 are juxtaposed)
The walking on the sea	6:16-21	6:1-15. The setting (Sea of Galilee) and context (6:16-21 follows directly after 6:1-15)
The healing of the blind man	9:1-41	5:1-18. Setting in Jerusalem, pool followed by trial scene
The raising of Lazarus	11:1-44	No obvious parallels except a vague request-rebuke-response structure

What is immediately clear in this structural summary is that the narrator has paired up all the miracles in the so-called ‘Book of Signs,’ except the raising of Lazarus. The two Cana miracles are connected, as are the two Galilean sea miracles in chapter 6 (which are actually juxtaposed in the plot) and the two Jerusalem miracles. The Lazarus narrative thus stands out for its formal individuality (Stibbe 1994b:40).<sup>159</sup>

Furthermore, the account of this miracle breaks with the usual Johannine pattern (see O’Day 1987:78-79; cf. Culpepper 1998:185; Witherington III 1995:199). While in chapters 5, 6 and 9, the miracles (5:1-9; 6:1-14; 9:6-7) commonly precede the dialogues (5:11-19; 6:25-40; 9:8-41), in this chapter, this relationship is reversed, as the heart of the dialogue (11:1-42) precedes the miracle (11:43-44). Strictly speaking, the reader cannot distinguish between the miracle account and the associated narrative of Jesus. In a certain sense, the miracle account and the discourse are intertwined in the whole narrative, thus the narrator reiterates his theological purpose in the entire narrative (cf. v. 4; 23-26; 40; see Morris 1971:560; Stibbe 1994b:49). Thus, unlike the previous miracles, in the Lazarus narrative the miraculous event and Jesus’ self-revelation in that event are completely interwoven (Ridderbos 1992:383; cf. Dodd 1953:363). Besides, apart from the fact that this miracle is the only resurrection miracle in the Gospel of John (there are resurrection stories in Synoptics, for instance, Mk 5:21-43; Mt 9:18-26; Lk 8:40-56; Lk 7:11-16; see Blomberg 2001:164-165; Barrett 1978:323), the underlying story is one of the most dramatic and impressive of the compositions, not just in the Gospel of John but also in all of the four Gospels, particularly the scene where Jesus raises Lazarus from the tomb (cf. 11:38-44; see Kysar 1986:182-184).

This formal individuality and literary uniqueness of composition implies that the

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<sup>159</sup> Although the underlying miracle has some formal similarities with the two Cana miracles (‘the changing of water into wine’ and ‘the healing of the royal official’s son’) in so far as a request-rebuke-response structure is arguably visible (the sisters of Lazarus request Jesus’ presence at Bethany, vv. 1-3; Jesus rebukes the disciples for their lack of understanding, vv. 14-15; before responding with the miracle itself, vv. 38-44), it should be noted that the rebuke in chapter 11 departs from the rebukes in chapter 2 and chapter 4, where it is the one making the request whom Jesus castigates (Stibbe 1994b:40).

underlying narrative plays a role as a splendid finish to the proceeding signs and is accordingly more superiorly designed than the others. Thus the theological value of a deep analysis of the pericope is greatly strengthened.

#### 4.2.2. Structure

The following is a discourse analysis of the pericope.

##### 4.2.2.1. Division of the text into cola

###### Cluster A The illness of Lazarus

$\left[ \begin{array}{l} 1 \\ 2 \end{array} \right. \begin{array}{l} \text{Hn de, tij avsqenw/n(} \\ \text{La, zaroj avpo. Bhqani, aj(} \\ \text{evk th/j kw, mhj Mari, aj kai. Ma, rqaj th/j} \\ \text{avdelfh/j auvth/j} \end{array}$

$\left[ \begin{array}{l} 3 \end{array} \right. \begin{array}{l} \text{h=n de. Maria.m h` avlei, yasa to.n ku, rion mu, rw|} \\ \text{kai. evkma, xasa tou.j po, daj auvtou/ tai/j} \\ \text{qrixin auvth/j(} \\ \text{h-j o` avdelfo.j La, zaroj hvsqe, nei} \end{array}$

$\left[ \begin{array}{l} 4 \end{array} \right. \begin{array}{l} \text{avpe, steilan ou=n ai` avdelfai. pro.j auvto.n} \\ \text{le, gousai\} \end{array}$

$\left[ \begin{array}{l} 4.1 \\ 4.2 \\ 4.3 \end{array} \right. \begin{array}{l} \text{ku, rie(} \\ \text{i; de} \\ \text{o]n filei/j avsqenei/\} \end{array}$

$\left[ \begin{array}{l} 5 \end{array} \right. \begin{array}{l} \text{avkou, saj de. o` VIhsou/j ei=pen\} \\ \text{au[th h` avsqe, neia ouvke; stin pro.j qa, naton} \\ \text{avllv u`pe.r th/j do, xhj tou/ qeou/(} \\ \text{i[na doxasqh/| o` ui`o.j tou/ qeou/ diV} \\ \text{auvth/j} \end{array}$

6 <sup>5</sup>hvgā,pa de. o` VIhsou/j th.n Ma,rqan  
 kai. th.n avdelfh.n auvth/j kai. to.n  
 La,zaronÅ  
 7 <sup>6</sup>w`j ou=n h;kousen o[ti avsqenei/( to,te me.n e;meinen  
 evn w-| h=n to,pw|  
 du,o h`me,raj(

**Cluster B The dialogue between Jesus and the disciples**

8 <sup>7</sup>e;peita meta. tou/to le,gei toi/j maqhtai/j\  
 8.1 a;gwmēn eivj th.n VIoudai,an pa,linÅ  
 9 <sup>8</sup>le,gousin auvtw/| oi` maqhtai,\  
 9.1 r`abbi,(  
 9.2 nu/n evzh,toun se liqa,sai oi` VIoudai/oi(  
 9.3 kai. pa,lin u`pa,geij evkei/È  
 10 <sup>9</sup>avpekri,qh VIhsou/j\  
 10.1 ouvci. dw,deka w-rai, eivsin th/j h`me,rajÈ  
 10.2 eva,n tij peripath/| evn th/| h`me,ra|( ouv  
 prosko,ptei(  
 o[ti to. fw/j tou/ ko,smou tou,tou ble,pei\  
 10.3 <sup>10</sup>eva.n de, tij peripath/| evn th/|  
 nukti,( prosko,ptei(  
 o[ti to. fw/j ouv k e;stin evn auvtw/|Å  
 11 <sup>11</sup>Tau/ta ei=pen(  
 12 kai. meta. tou/to le,gei auvtoi/j\  
 12.1 La,zarōj o` fi,loj h`mw/n kekoi,mhtai\  
 12.2 avlla. poreu,omai i[na evxupni,sw auvto,nÅ  
 13 <sup>12</sup>ei=pan ou=n oi` maqhtai. auvtw/|\  
 13



13.1 ku,rie(  
13.2 eiv kekoi,mhtai swqh,setaiÅ  
14 <sup>13</sup>eivrh,kei de. o` VIhsou/j peri. tou/ qana,tou  
aavtoug/  
15 evkei/nou de. e;doxan o[ti peri. th/j koimh,sewj  
toug/ u[pnou le,geiÅ  
16 <sup>14</sup>to,te ou=n ei=pen aavtoi/j o` VIhsou/j parrhsi,a|\  
16.1 Ia,zarog avpe,qanen(  
16.2 <sup>15</sup>kai. cai,rw diV u`ma/j i[na pisteu,shte(  
o[ti ouvkh;mhn evkei/\  
16.3 avlla. a;gwmen pro.j aavto,nÅ  
17 <sup>16</sup>ei=pen ou=n Qwma/j o` lego,menoj Di,dumoj toi/j  
summaqhtai/j\  
17.1 a;gwmen kai. h`mei/j i[na avpoqa,nwmen metV  
aavtoug/Å

### Cluster C The dialogue between Jesus and Martha

18 <sup>17</sup>VElqw.n ou=n o` VIhsou/j eu-ren aavto.n te,ssaraj  
h;dh h`me,raj  
e;conta evn tw/| mnhmei,w|Å  
19 <sup>18</sup>h=n de. h` Bhqani,a evggug.j tw/n ~Ierosolu,mwn  
w`j avpo. stadi,wn dekape,nteÅ  
20 <sup>19</sup>polloi. de. evk tw/n VIoudai,wn evlhlu,qeisan  
pro.j th.n Ma,rqan kai. Maria.m  
i[na paramuqh,swntai aavta.j peri. tou/  
avdelfoug/Å  
21 <sup>20</sup>h` ou=n Ma,rqa w`j h;kousen o[ti VIhsou/j e;rcetai

u`ph,nthsen auvtw/|\

22 Maria.m de. evn tw/| oi;kw| evkaqe,zetoÅ

23 <sup>21</sup>ei=pen ou=n h` Ma,rqa pro.j to.n VIhsou/n\  
23.1 ku,rie(  
23.2 eiv h=j w-de ouvka'n avpe,qanen o` avdelfo,j  
mou\  
23.3 <sup>22</sup>ïavlla.Ð kai. nu/n oi=da o[ti o[sa a'n  
aivth,sh| to.n qeo.n  
dw,sei soi o` qeo,jÅ

24 <sup>23</sup>le,gei auvth/| o` VIhsou/j\  
24.1 avnasth,setai o` avdelfo,j souÅ

25 <sup>24</sup>le,gei auvtw/| h` Ma,rqa\  
25.1 oi=da o[ti avnasth,setai evn th/| avnasta,sei  
evn th/| evsca,th| h`me,ra|Å

26 <sup>25</sup>ei=pen auvth/| o` VIhsou/j\  
26.1 evgw, eivmi h` avna,stasij kai. h` zwh,\  
zh,setai(  
26.2 o` pisteu,wn eivj evme. ka'n avpoqa,nh|  
26.3 <sup>26</sup>kai. pa/j o` zw/n kai. pisteu,wn eivj evme.  
ouv mh. avpoqa,nh| eivj to.n aivw/naÅ

26.4 pisteu,eij tou/toÈ

27 <sup>27</sup>le,gei auvtw/|\

27.1 nai.  
27.2 ku,rie(  
27.3 evgw. pepi,steuka o[ti su. ei= o` cristo.j  
o` ui`o.j tou/ qeou/

o` eivj to.n ko,smon  
evrco,menojÅ

**Cluster D The dialogue between Jesus and Mary**

28 <sup>28</sup>Kai. tou/to eivpou/sa avph/lqen  
29 kai. evfw,nhsen Maria.m th.n avdelfh.n auvth/j  
la,qra| eivpou/sa\  
29.1 o` dida,skaloj pa,restin  
29.2 kai. fwnei/ seÅ  
30 <sup>29</sup>evkei,nh de. w`j h;kousen hvge,rqh tacu.  
31 kai. h;rceto pro.j auvto,nÅ  
32 <sup>30</sup>ou;pw de. evlhlu,qei o` VIhsou/j eivj th.n kw,mhn(  
33 avllV h=n e;ti evn tw/| to,pw| o[pou u`ph,nhsen  
auvtw/| h` Ma,rqaÅ  
34 <sup>31</sup>oi` ou=n VIoudai/oi oi` o;ntej metV auvth/j evn  
th/| oivki,a|  
kai. paramuqou,menoi auvth,n(  
ivdo,ntej th.n Maria.m o[ti tace,wj avne,sth  
kai. evxh/lqen(  
hvkolou,qhsan auvth/| do,xantej o[ti u`pa,gei  
eivj to. mnhmei/on  
i[na klau,sh| evkei/Å  
35 <sup>32</sup>~H ou=n Maria.m w`j h=lqen o[pou h=n VIhsou/j  
ivdou/sa auvto.n e;pesen auvtou/ pro.j tou.j  
po,daj  
le,gousa auvtw/|\  
35.1 ku,rie(  
35.2 eiv h=j w-de ouvka;n mou avpe,qanen o`

avdelfo, jÅ

36 <sup>33</sup>VIhsou/j ou=n w`j ei=den auvth.n klai,ousan  
 kai. tou.j sunelqo,ntaj auvth/|

VIoudai,ouj klai,ontaj(  
 evnebrimh,sato tw/| pneu,mati

37 kai. evta,raxen e`auto.n

38 <sup>34</sup>kai. ei=pen\  
 38.1 pou/ tegei,kate auvto,nÈ

39 le,gousin auvtw/|\

39.1 ku,rie(  
 39.2 e;rcou  
 39.3 kai. i;deÅ

40 <sup>35</sup>evda,krusen o` VIhsou/jÅ

41 <sup>36</sup>e;legon ou=n oi` VIoudai/oi\  
 41.1 i;de pw/j evfi,lei auvto,nÅ

42 <sup>37</sup>tine.j de. evx auvtw/n ei=pan\  
 42.1 ouvkv evdu,nato ou-toj o` avnoi,xaj tou.j  
 ovfqalmou.j tou/ tuflou/  
 poihsai i[na kai. ou-toj mh.

avpoqa,nh|È

**Cluster E The raising of Lazarus**

43 <sup>38</sup>VIhsou/j ou=n pa,lin evmbrimw,menoj evn e`autw/|  
 e;rcetai  
 eivj to. mnhmei/on\  
 44 h=n de. sph,laion  
 45 kai. li,qoj evpe,keito evpV auvtw/|Å  
 46 <sup>39</sup>le,gei o` VIhsou/j\  
 46.1 a;rate to.n li,qonÅ  
 47 le,gei auvtw/| h` avdelfh. tou/ teteleuthko,toj

Ma,rqa\

- 47.1 ku,rie(
- 47.2 h;dh o;zei(
- 47.3 tetartai/oj ga,r evstinÅ

48 <sup>40</sup>le,gei auvth/| o` VIhsou/j\

- 48.1 ouv k ei=po,n soi o[ti
- 48.1.1 eva.n pisteu,sh|j o;yh| th.n do,xan tou/

qeou/È

49 <sup>41</sup>h=ran ou=n to.n li,qonÅ

50 o` de. VIhsou/j h=ren tou.j ovfqalmou.j a;nw

51 kai. ei=pen\

- 51.1 pa,ter(
- 51.2 euvcaristw/ soi
- o[ti h;kousa,j mouÅ
- 51.3 <sup>42</sup>evgw. de. h;|dein o[ti pa,ntote, mou

avkou,eij(

51.4 avlla. dia. to.n o;clon to.n periestw/ta

ei=pon(

i[na pisteu,swsin  
o[ti su, me avpe,steilajÅ

52 <sup>43</sup>kai. tau/ta eivpw.n fwnh/| mega,lh| evkrau,gasen\

- 52.1 La,zare(
- 52.2 deu/ro e;xwÅ

53 <sup>44</sup>evxh/lqen o` teqnhkw.j

dedeme,noj tou.j po,daj kai. ta.j cei/raj

keiri,aij

54 kai. h` o;yij auvtou/ soudari,w| periede,detoÅ

55 le,gei auvtou/j o` VIhsou/j\

- 55.1 lu,sate auvto.n
- 55.2 kai. a;fete auvto.n u`pa,geinÅ

#### 4.2.2.2. The discussion of the clusters

The pericope is divided into 55 cola, which are grouped into 5 clusters, in the following way:

Cola 1-7 / 8-17 / 18-27 / 28-42 / 43-55

**Cluster A (cola 1-7):** The reason for the demarcation of these 7 cola as a separate unit from the following cola is to be found in the fact that a shift in focus occurs in colon 8. The first 7 cola focus on the narrative setting, but from colon 8 the focus shifts to the conversation between Jesus and the disciples. Colon 1 is linked to colon 2 by means of a genetic-specific relationship, and colon 3 is a more detail explanation of cola 1-2. Colon 4 contains the personal request of the sisters on behalf of the ill Lazarus. Colon 5 presents the theological purpose of Jesus in Lazarus' illness, and this colon and colon 6 are respectively different consequential mentions of this purpose. Thus the cluster, which can be identified as the narrative setting, concentrates on 'the illness of Lazarus.'

**Cluster B (cola 8-17):** As stated above, the reason for the separation of these 10 cola from the preceding ones is the change of scene from the narrative setting to the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples. Besides, a characteristic Johannine term in colon 8 *meta. tou/to* also supports this separation (see Lozada 2000:68; Booth 1996:46). Colon 8 is the suggestion of Jesus to go back to Judea, colon 9 is the curious response of the disciples to Jesus' idea and colon 10 is Jesus' significant explanation of His idea to the disciples. Cola 11-12 are Jesus' speech exploring His intention and colon 13 is the reply of the disciples to Jesus. Cola 14 and 15 also have the same form as the previous cola and this pattern is continued in cola 16 and 17. The focus of the cluster is thus 'the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples.'

**Cluster C (cola 18-27):** The new scene is presented in this unit, which is the main reason for the isolation of these 10 cola from those preceding. The cluster shows 'the

dialogue between Jesus and Martha,’ while the previous cluster is a dialogue between Jesus and the disciples. The semantic relationships of the cola are as follows: Colon 18 is the setting (time and circumstance) of the ensuing cola. Colon 19 is linked to colon 20 by means of the added different consequential relationship. Colon 21 is a setting (time) for colon 22. Cola 23-27 contain the dialogue between Jesus and Martha, in which two kinds of communicative words (*ei=pen* in cola 23, 26; *le, gei* in cola 24, 25, 27) are prominent. Thus the pivotal point of the cluster may be formulated as ‘the dialogue between Jesus and Martha.’

**Cluster D (cola 28-42):** The main characters are different from colon 28, which is the major reason for the demarcation. In this cluster, Jesus talks to Mary while the previous cluster shows the Jesus’ conversation with Martha. The transitional word *kai . tou/to* also supports this demarcation. Cola 28-29 function as the setting of the new dialogue. Colon 30 is the qualificational setting (time) of colon 31. Colon 32 is linked to colon 33 by means of a dyadic contrastive relationship (see *avlla*). Colon 34 firstly introduces the new character the ‘Jews’ to the narrative. Colon 35 shows the encounter between Jesus and Mary. Colon 36 is linked to colon 37 by means of a different consequential relationship and these two cola have a different consequential relationship semantic relationship with colon 38, and these cola (cola 36-38) are linked to colon 39 by means of a logical cause-effect relationship. Colon 40 contains Jesus’ weeping and cola 41 and 42 show the different responses of the Jews to Jesus’ weeping. Thus colon 40 is linked to cola 41-42 by means of a cause-effect relationship. The main theme of the cluster is therefore ‘the dialogue between Jesus and Mary.’

**Cluster E (cola 43-55):** The miracle is at last introduced in this cluster, which is the main reason for the division of these cola from the preceding one. The narrator depicts Jesus’ inner emotional situation in colon 43 and shows the circumstances of the place of the tomb in cola 44-45. Cola 46-49 present the prior action, including the brief discourse of Jesus on the theological purpose of the miracle, before the performance of the miracle. Finally, cola 50-55 show the actual miracle by Jesus. Therefore the main theme of the cluster can be expressed as ‘the raising of Lazarus.’

#### 4.2.2.3. The summary of the clusters

According to structural analysis, the relations between the clusters can be expressed diagrammatically in the following way:

1	cola 1-7	The illness of Lazarus
2 <sup>1</sup>	cola 8-17	The dialogue between Jesus and the disciples
2 <sup>2</sup>	cola 18-27	The dialogue between Jesus and Martha
2 <sup>3</sup>	cola 28-42	The dialogue between Jesus and Mary
3	cola 43-55	The raising of Lazarus

The structure of the pericope is simple and obvious. The pericope is composed of five sustained scenes (cf. Moloney 1998:324-325; Wuellner 1991:118-120; Strachan 1941:229). The introduction is described in cluster A (cola 1-7), three sequential dialogues between Jesus and the main characters (the disciples, Martha, and Mary) are followed in clusters B-D (cola 8-17; 18-27; 28-42), and the miracle is mentioned in cluster E (cola 43-55). The narrator does not mention the miracle until the last cluster; instead he presents the various conversations between Jesus and three main characters in the centre of the narrative. This skilful composition indicates that the theological message of the narrator may be argued through the dialogues of the characters and then maximised with the miracle (cf. Schnackenburg 1980:317).

#### 4.2.3. The literary setting

The narrator furnishes only the spatial setting ('Bethany') in the outset of the narrative.

##### 4.2.3.1. The spatial setting

The narrator mentions the specific place 'Bethany' (Bhḡani, a) at the outset of the narrative. The statement explaining this is 'of Bethany, the village of Mary and her



sister Martha.’ As mentioned by Carson (1991:405; see Barrett 1978:323; Kysar 1986:173), this Bethany lies on the east of the Mount of Olives, less than two miles from Jerusalem and along the road toward Jericho. It has not been mentioned in the Gospel of John before and must be distinguished from the Bethany of 1:28 and that alluded to in 10:40-42, which is why the narrator characterises it as the ‘village of Mary and her sister Martha.’ In Synoptics, this is well attested to as the place where Jesus resided when visiting Jerusalem (Mk 11:11; 14:3; cf. Bernard 1928b:372). In this regard, Brown (1966:431) correctly states that if Bethany in this narrative is Jesus’ lodging place when He comes to Jerusalem, then it is not too unreasonable to suggest that it is at this home that He stayed and that its occupants are truly His close friends. Thus this spatial mention has not important significant weight in the narrative. In any case, the narrator seems to mention this place basically serves to bring Mary and her sister Martha into the story (Ridderbos 1992:386).

#### **4.2.4. The aspects highlighted by the narratological perspective**

From the macro-contextual investigation, the structural analysis and the study of the literary setting, certain issues that grasped the special attention of the narrator are exposed in the following way:

- 1) Macro-contextually, the present narrative functions both as the conclusion of the preceding signs and the prelude of the Passion of Jesus. Thus the whole analysis should be considered from this overall perspective.
- 2) At the outset of the narrative (v. 4), and reiterated at the end (v. 40), the theological purpose of the narrative that the narrator wants to draw is clearly presented through the mouth of Jesus Himself. Jesus mentions that the illness of Lazarus is intended to reveal God’s glory so that the Son of God may be glorified through it. Thus the reader should concentrates on an understanding of this purpose while reading the text.
- 3) In the middle of the narrative (vv. 7-37, clusters B-D), which forms a large

part of the whole narrative, the narrator mentions three consequential dialogues between Jesus and the main characters (the disciples, Martha and Mary). Thus it seems to be the case that the narrator wants to deliver his theological message through the sequential dialogues and then to obtain effective visibility through the miracle.<sup>160</sup>

The analysis will thus proceed under the following headings: 1) the purpose of Lazarus' illness, 2) the function of the sequential dialogues, and 3) the connotation of Lazarus' raising.

#### 4.2.4.1. The purpose of Lazarus' illness (vv. 1-6)

The narrator begins the story without any reference to the preceding events or the circumstances of Jesus, but only introduces the three family members (vv. 1-2): Lazarus, Mary and Martha. The narrator briefly explains each character, concentrating particularly on Mary. The narrator mentions that Mary is the one who anointed Jesus with perfume and wiped His feet with her hair<sup>161</sup>, Martha is her sister and Lazarus is their brother (cf. Moloney 1998:325).<sup>162</sup> Thus the emphasis is on Mary although the protagonist is obviously Lazarus. This deliberate stress can be explained by the narrator's intention to link this narrative to the Passion of Jesus that follows. This inference is generally accepted by commentators including O'Day (1987:80) who states that the anointing of Jesus in chapter 12 is explicitly cast as a

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<sup>160</sup> Culpepper (1998:185) also suggests that these three conversations interpret the meaning of the sign before the raising of Lazarus is actually narrated.

<sup>161</sup> The introduction of Mary by means of reference to the anointing, which is clearly a parenthesis added by an editor, suggests that this story is well known in Christian communities. Such fame fits well with Mk 14:9 in which Jesus proclaims that whatever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her (cf. Lk 10:38-42; Blomberg 2001:165; Culpepper 1998:186; Kysar 1986:173; Brown 1966:423; Bernard 1928b:372).

<sup>162</sup> According to O'Day (1987:80), the narrator uses the chiasmus to introduce this family to the reader: After Lazarus is named, his two sisters are named, and the family portrait then closes with another reference to Lazarus and his illness. This is diagrammed as follow:

ill Lazarus – Mary-Martha-Mary – ill Lazarus

The chiasmic structure of these opening verses reflects the function the three family members will play throughout the narrative. That is, the narrative is occasioned by Lazarus' illness and reaches its climax in the raising of Lazarus. Between these two pivotal framing events, however, Mary and Martha, in conversation with Jesus, occupy the centre of the narrative (see below).

foreshadowing of the preparation of Jesus' body for burial (cf. 12:3, 8; 19:39-40), an anticipation of the Passion. By reminding the reader of Mary's function in the anointing, the narrator draws the Passion narrative into the narrative of Lazarus. Thus the connection between the Lazarus narrative and Jesus' death is obviously suggested from the outset (see Staley 1988:67).

With the brief introduction to the characters, the narrator reports the information that 'Lazarus is sick.' Accordingly, the two sisters of Lazarus make a request of Jesus that *ku,rie(i;de | o`,n filei/j avsqenei*/<sup>163</sup> (v. 3). The sisters' address to Jesus as *ku,rie* is the common Greek for 'sir' (see Bernard 1928b:373) and *o`,n filei/j avsqenei* is a descriptive phrase for speaking to a close friend. Thus the reader gets the impression a close relationship between Jesus and this family. This focus on the love of Jesus is found in the whole narrative (Stibbe 1994b:49; cf. Staley 1988:69). First of all, the sisters can communicate directly with Jesus, which implies their close mutual relationship. Then, as stated above, the sisters send a message to Jesus saying that *o`,n filei/j* ('he whom you love,' v. 3)<sup>164</sup>. The narrator also mentions that 'Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus' (*hvgga,pa*, the first word in the sentences, for emphasis, v. 5), and Jesus Himself refers to Lazarus as 'our friend Lazarus' (*o` fi, loj h`mw/n*, v. 11). Besides, when Jesus weeps for Lazarus, the Jews exclaim, 'see how he loved him' (v. 36), thus the use of the *i;de* formula emphasises the significance of this theme in the mind of the narrator. Finally, Jesus' love for the family will be ultimately evidenced through deeds that will show 'the glory of God' (Moloney 1996:157; see Caird 1968: 265-277). This love of Jesus for Lazarus' family may be significant to the paradigmatic readers who want to be loved by Jesus (see Van der Watt 2000:309-312).

The sisters might expect that Jesus will come to them immediately. When Jesus hears

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<sup>163</sup> On the basis of this phrase, some commentators have taken Lazarus to be the disciple whom Jesus loved (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7), but there is little for this conclusion (see Blomberg 2001:166; Stibbe 1992:77-82; Carson 1991:406; Newman & Nida 1980:355; Bowman 1975:245-273).

<sup>164</sup> It is an interesting case that the identification of 'the beloved disciple' remains unknown to modern readers of the Gospel in the final analysis. This seems to be that the author attempts to apply this character to the all-paradigmatic readers to be beloved disciples of Jesus (cf. Culpepper 1998:1860, see preceding footnote).

it, however, He responds unexpectedly that  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\ \eta\ \alpha\upsilon\sigma\kappa\epsilon,\ \eta\epsilon\iota\alpha\ \omicron\upsilon\upsilon\kappa\epsilon;\ \sigma\tau\iota\eta\ \rho\acute{\rho}\omicron\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\lambda\lambda\upsilon\ \upsilon\`{\rho}\epsilon.\ \tau\eta/\ \delta\omicron,\ \chi\eta\ \tau\omicron\upsilon/\ \kappa\epsilon\omicron\upsilon/ \ (\ \iota[\ \eta\alpha\ \delta\omicron\chi\alpha\sigma\eta\ \omicron\ \upsilon\iota\`{\omicron}.\ \tau\omicron\upsilon/\ \kappa\epsilon\omicron\upsilon/ \ \delta\iota\upsilon\ \alpha\upsilon\upsilon\tau\eta/\ \eta\ \upsilon\ \text{v. 4; cf. 9:3}).$  The Greek expression  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\ \eta\ \alpha\upsilon\sigma\kappa\epsilon,\ \eta\epsilon\iota\alpha\ \omicron\upsilon\upsilon\kappa\epsilon;\ \sigma\tau\iota\eta\ \rho\acute{\rho}\omicron\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\lambda\lambda\upsilon$  literally means that ‘death will not be the final result of this sickness’ (cf. Newman & Nida 1980:355). The direct reason for the sickness ‘not to end in death’ is because Jesus will give life, that is, physical life as a sign of eternal life (Brown 1966:431). Furthermore, however, the occasion of Lazarus’ death is ultimately to reveal the glory of God and the Son.<sup>165</sup> Thus the miracle is more than a wonder, it is a sign (cf. Bernard 1928b:374). Beasley-Murray (1987:187) accurately comments on the meaning of this mention that the illness of Lazarus is not for the purpose of death (for the disciples it is a temporary illness, for Jesus it is a temporary death), but for the purpose of God’s manifesting His glory in powerful and compassionate action through the Son (see O’Day 1987:81). For this reason, after having heard that Lazarus is ill, despite His love for this family, Jesus stays two days longer in the place where He is (v. 6; see Moloney 1998:325-326; Ridderbos 1992:388-389; cf. Strachan 1941:230-233). This stalling by Jesus indicates His acting solely from His own (actually the Father’s) determination and not that of humans, despite His affirmation of Lazarus (cf. 2:4; 4:48; 7:2-10 above) (cf. Kysar 1986:173).

The opening of the account (vv. 1-6) implies that the present miracle is to be arranged for a significant theological purpose. That is, although the immediate reference is to the raising of Lazarus from death to life, the event is ultimately to be seen as a sign for the manifestation of God’s glory and also the glorification of Jesus. This theological motif will be dealt with in detail later on (see ‘The synthesis’).

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<sup>165</sup> According to Schnackenburg (1980:323), the mutual glorification of the Father and the Son is a dominant theme in Johannine Christology. In other words, as Ridderbos (1992:387) states, “the glory of God and that of the Son, as elsewhere, are mentioned in a single breath. It is in the sending of the Son that the glory of God, that is, God’s reality in the power and majesty of His presence, manifests itself (cf. 13:31; 14:13; 17:4), and that constitutes the all-controlling motive of the miracle that now follows.”

#### 4.2.4.2. The function of the dialogues (vv. 7-37)

After the introduction of the episode, three consequential dialogues are unfolded, which form the longest part of the narrative. They are the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples (vv. 7-16), the dialogue between Jesus and Martha (vv. 17-27), and the dialogue between Jesus and Mary (vv. 28-37).<sup>166</sup> These three dialogues may interpret the meaning of the sign before the raising of Lazarus is actually narrated (Culpepper 1998:185).

##### 1) The dialogue between Jesus and the disciples (vv. 7-16)

After the stalling for two days (see meta . tou/to), Jesus says to the disciples ‘let us go into Judea again’ (v. 7).<sup>167</sup> This expression is not in the sense of asking permission, but a ‘hortatory’ expression, which is a kind of polite command (Newman & Nida 1980:358). The disciples recognise that the animus against Jesus is now so great that it could easily result in His death because it was just a short time ago that the Jews tried to stone Jesus (v. 8), which is explicated in 10:31 (Carson 1991:408; cf. Kysar 1986:174; Schnackenburg 1980:324). Thus, despite their continuing faithfulness to Jesus, the disciples still consistently allow themselves to be guided by purely human considerations (cf. 4:31f; 6:7f, 19; 9:2; Ridderbos 1992:390).

The answer of Jesus to the disciples, which seems to be reminiscent of 9:4, is expressed as *ouvci . dw, deka w-rai, eivsin th/j h`me, raj?eva, n tij peripath/| evn th/| h`me, ra| (ouv prosko, ptei ( o[ti to. fw/j tou/ ko, smou tou, tou ble, pei\ eva.n de, tij peripath/| evn*

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<sup>166</sup> Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:195; see Staley 1988:69), in this regard, mentions as follow: “Commentators have often noted that this narrative about the raising of Lazarus shares much in common with the narrative of the Samaritan woman. It is primarily about Jesus’ interaction with the woman: first, with Martha, and second, with Mary. With the Samaritan woman, the issue is living water as compared to ordinary water. With the Bethany sisters, the issue is living life as compared to ordinary life.”

<sup>167</sup> As Kysar (1986:174) states, this sub-section is comparable in structure to 4:35-38 and betrays one of the narrator’s narrative techniques. In both 4:35-38 and here the narrator interrupts the flow of the story with a brief discussion between Jesus and the disciples that in both cases includes a short parable.

th/| nukti, ( prosko,ptei( o[ti to. fw/j ouvκ e;stin evn auvtw/| (vv. 9-10). Many scholars such as Bernard (1928b:377; see also Blomberg 2001:166; Koester 1995:146; Ridderbos 1992:391; Barrett 1978:392) think that το. fw/j tou/ ko, smou tou, tou ('the light of this world') literally means 'the sun,' but here a mystical meaning lurks behind the literal meaning of the words used. Amongst others, according to Brown (1966:423), Jesus has already spoken of Himself as 'the light of the world' (cf. 8:12), and the suggestion is the same as in the former passage. Thus 'the light of the world' here figuratively indicates Jesus to the disciples.<sup>168</sup> However, Van der Watt (2000:253) insists that there is no apparent metaphorical reference to Jesus, stating that "there are no further direct indications that more should be read into this account, for instance, than that the light is Jesus in this context." According to him (Van der Watt), this is an account that emphasises that daytime should be used for moving around because movement in the dark is hazardous. The immediate context speculates about a possible journey to the seat of His Jewish opponents who were plotting to kill Him (v. 8).

Jesus then urges the disciples to go to Lazarus, using the metaphor of sleep to talk about Lazarus' death as La, zaroj o` fi, loj h`mw/n kekoi, mhtai\ avlla. poreu, omai i[na evxupni, sw auvtο, n (v. 11).<sup>169</sup> However, as believed by Ridderbos (1992:392; see Bretherton 1993:169-173), the reader is not told how and when Jesus received this information. Thus here, too (as in e.g., 1:47f; 4:50), Jesus is speaking as One who has supernatural knowledge of the way and will of the Father, the salvific import of which only gradually becomes clear to Him (cf. v. 15). The euphemism of sleep for death is common in Hebrew and in Greek, both secular and

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<sup>168</sup> In addition, Schnackenburg (1980:325) states that the evidence of the figurative interpretation of this mention is made obligatory by the clause 'because the light is not in Him.' He subsequently says that "thus the reference is no longer to the natural light of the day or the sun, but to the inner light by which the believe is led. Light is no longer a space in which people move, but a light source inside them - a unique use in the Gospel of John, but one paralleled to some extent by the Synoptic light saying (Mt 6:23 par Lk 11:35)." Carson (1991:409) also believes that Jesus' mention turns out that Jesus Himself is the light of the world who is still with them, and as long as they have Him, for the twelve hours of their daylight they should perform the works assigned them, but the darkness of His departure would make such work impossible.

<sup>169</sup> According to Newman & Nida (1980:359), it is thought by some that by the time John's Gospel was written the word 'friend' (ο` fi, loj) was become a technical term for 'Christian believer' (see Luke 12:4; Acts 27:3; 3 John 15; John 15:13-15).

LXX, but the narrator uses it here as a typical Johannine misunderstanding (cf. Strachan 1941:234). That is, the disciples take Jesus' words literally, so they fail to penetrate the reference saying that 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right' (v. 12; Blomberg 2001:167; Lindars 1972:394). Thus the metaphor serves as an opportunity for further clarification.

After the narrator explains the misunderstanding of the disciples (v. 13), he mentions the plain (παρρησι, α|) declaration of Jesus that 'Lazarus is dead' (v. 14) (Culpepper 1998:187; Staley 1988:106; Brown 1966:423). However, the main focus of Jesus' statement to the disciples is found in verse 15 in *kai. cai, rw diV u`ma/j i[na pisteu, shte( o[ti ouv k h; mhn evkei/\* Jesus rejoices because, through the event of the death of Lazarus, His disciples might come to faith (Moloney 1998:326). In this regard, as supposed by Schnackenburg (1980:327), "the faith that Jesus wants to strengthen is not just faith in His power to cure diseases, or even to bring a dead man back to life, but faith in Himself, the Messiah and Son of God." Therefore the reason Jesus now sets out for Bethany and the strangeness of Jesus' delay in departure is being explained. Jesus' delay serves to demonstrate that glory in all its splendour to them – once more before the night falls on Him and on them and their faith in Him is severely tested (Ridderbos 1992:392). In any case, the reader recognises that Jesus always decides according to a response to God's designs, not to human need (Moloney 1998:326; cf. Van der Watt 2000:261; Lightfoot 1956:220). However, the response for Jesus' declaration not seems to be productive because the reaction of Thomas, who appears firstly in the Gospel (cf. 14:5 and 20:24-29), still reflects the same misunderstanding of the disciples (v. 16; cf. 12:24-26; cf. Witherington III 1995:202; Stibbe 1994b:46; see Bernard 1928b:380-382).

Therefore the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples has the following literary form: The circumstantial statement; the misunderstanding of the disciples; and the modification of Jesus and the response of the disciples. To put it precisely, the narrator mentions the circumstantial statement just before the departure of Jesus and the disciples towards Bethany (vv. 7-10), describes the disciples' misunderstanding of

Jesus' intention for the condition of Lazarus (vv. 11-12), and then shows the modification of Jesus on this occasion as well as the response of the disciples (particularly represented as Thomas, vv. 13-16). This particular shape effectively shows the intention of the narrator who wants to deliver Jesus' inner-thoughts on the present occasion and to keep the reader away from the same mistake as the disciples. After all, this dialogue helps Jesus to be closer to whom He is and makes it possible for Him to express Himself.

## **2) The dialogue between Jesus and Martha (vv. 17-27)**

When Jesus reaches Lazarus, Lazarus has already been at the tomb for four days (v. 17). The reason Lazarus has been dead for four days is the intentional delay of Jesus for two days after He heard about the illness of Lazarus. It then took two days to get to Bethany (cf. v. 6; Carson 1991:408). On the narratological level, the numeric detail 'four days' is mentioned to make it clear that Lazarus is truly dead. That is, as observed by Brown (1966:424; also Ridderbos 1992:393), Palestinian rabbis in the first century thought that the soul hovered near the body for three days but after that there was no hope of resuscitation. Thus this is another example of the way the narrator heightens the marvellous quality of Jesus' signs (Kysar 1986:176). Many people come from Jerusalem to console the sisters about their brother (v. 18-19). The narrator especially places 'the many' (*πολλοι*) at the beginning of the sentence to emphasise the reliability of the miracle. On the other hand, according to Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:199; also see Blomberg 2001:167), "it was important to have as many mourners as possible at the time of death, for a large group was an indication of family honour."

Martha initially takes up the conversation with Jesus while Mary is at home (vv. 20ff; cf. Lk 10:38-42; Bruce 1983:243).<sup>170</sup> She starts not with a greeting, but with words that express both faith and implied criticism: *ku, rie ( eiv h=j w-de ouvka 'n*

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<sup>170</sup> In first century Mediterranean society, according to Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:195), female family members often stayed home during the mourning period, so the notice here that Martha goes outside the village of Bethany to where Jesus was is somewhat unusual.



avpe, qanen o` avdelfo, j mou (v. 21; see Culpepper 1998:187)<sup>171</sup>. That is to say, she confesses her faith in Jesus as merely a miracle worker, accepting that Jesus' earlier presence would have cured her brother. The reason for such belief in Jesus comes from her conviction that even now whatever He asks of God will happen (v. 22). (Moloney 1998:327). Martha gives expression to the future time of Lazarus' resurrection about which Jesus says that avnasth, setai o` avdelfo, j sou (v. 23), with the addition, oi=da o[ti avnasth, setai evn th/| avnasta, sei evn th/| evsca, th| h`me, ra| (v. 24). Interrupting Jesus' words, Martha tells Him that she accepts a current Jewish understanding of a final resurrection of the dead (Moloney 1998:328).

Martha's energetic perception of the limited eschatological expectation is a misunderstanding, as becomes clear from Jesus' answer that evgw, eivmi h` avna, stasij kai. h` zwh, \ o` pisteu, wn eivj evme. ka'n avpoqa, nh|<sup>172</sup> zh, setai<sup>173</sup> (kai. pa/j o` zw/n kai. pisteu, wn eivj evme. ouv mh. avpoqa, nh| eivj to.n aivw/na (vv. 25-26; Blomberg 2001:168).<sup>174</sup> This statement indicates that resurrection is not only what occurs on the last day but also an event that has already begun in Jesus and is present, and that believing in the resurrection is therefore a matter of believing in Him (Ridderbos 1992:397; cf. Strachan 1941:235). Thus, as Culpepper (1998:187) states, just as earlier Jesus had articulated a realised eschatology in reference to the Last Judgment (3:18-19), so now He pulls the hope of resurrection from the future into the present. Jesus helps Martha to make the transition from present to future by changing her

<sup>171</sup> In verse 21, Ku, rie is omitted in B sy<sup>s,b</sup>, but P<sup>45</sup> P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> a A C D L W D Y Q f<sup>1</sup> f<sup>13</sup> 28 Byz [E F G H] it<sup>aur,b,c,d,f2,j,l,r1</sup> vg<sup>ww,st</sup> sy<sup>c,s</sup> sa pbo read as the printed edition (UBS<sup>4</sup>). The omission of Ku, rie is probably accidental. Thus the printed edition has very strong external evidence. On the other hand, this opening sentence can be compared with what Jesus' mother said to Him in the Cana narrative, 'they have no wine' (see Van Tilborg 1993:191).

<sup>172</sup> 'Even though he dies' (ka'n avpoqa, nh|) must be taken as a reference to physical death, rather than to spiritual death in sin (Newman & Nida 1980:366).

<sup>173</sup> The important statement of Jesus in verse 25 is omitted in P<sup>45</sup> it<sup>1</sup> sy<sup>s,pal</sup> Diatessaron<sup>sy</sup> Cyrian Paulinus-Nola, Origen and Titus of Bostra. In this regard, Barrett (1978:396) insists that the short text may well be original because it is entirely suitable to the context, yet the addition is one that might easily be made by a copyist. However kai. h` zwh is supported by the majority (P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> a A B C D L W D Q Y 0141 f<sup>1</sup> f<sup>13</sup> Byz [E F G H], etc.).

<sup>174</sup> For a full treatment of evgw, eivmi in this context, see Bernard (1928b:386-389).

knowledge about the future resurrection to a belief in Him who is the resurrection and the life.<sup>175</sup> Thus no longer is resurrection to eternal life an idea in her mind; it is a reality in the person of Jesus and in her own experience (Stibbe 1994b:47). Accordingly, in the past Martha came to a certain understanding of Jesus as a miraculous worker, but now she makes her grand confession to Jesus as ‘the Christ’ (ο` cristο. j), ‘the Son of God’ (ο` ui`ο. j tou/ qeou/), and ‘the One coming into the world’ (ο` eivj to.n ko, smon evrco, meno j).<sup>176</sup> In this regard, Van Tilborg (1993:191) states, “the confession of faith with which Martha closes the conversation (v. 27), indicates that she (at least) understood what Jesus was speaking about. Her statement is completely in line with the intention of the author in writing his book (20:31), so Martha achieved what the author intended. In this regard, Martha is the perfect reader model (192).”

Therefore, as in the previous dialogue, the narrator arranges the dialogue between Jesus and Martha in the following literary form: The circumstantial statement; the misunderstanding by Martha; and the modification by Jesus and the response of the Martha. To put it precisely, after the narrator mentions the circumstantial statement of the mourning house in Bethany (vv. 17-19), he describes the misunderstanding of Martha on the limited knowledge of the eschatology (vv. 20-24). Then, the narrator presents the modification of Jesus to inform the correct knowledge of Jesus’ identity and states the response of the Martha (vv. 25-27). The characterisation of Martha in the underlying narrative of one who has changed in limited understanding of the eschatological expectation to an understanding of the true authority of Jesus (cf. Blomberg 2001:169; Brown 1966:433). This growth of Martha’s faith presenting the true identity of Jesus is what the narrator wishes his readers to reach (Bernard 1928b:389-390). That is, for the paradigmatic reader Marta demonstrates an example of true faith that enables the reader to understand who Jesus is (cf. O’Day 1987:88; Kysar 1986:179).

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<sup>175</sup> The twofold presentation of Jesus as the Resurrection, and as the Life is expanded and explained (Bernard 1928b:388).

<sup>176</sup> These titles are traditionally associated with messianic belief (cf. 1:41, 49; 10:24f, 36). For a detailed explanation in this regard, see Kysar (1986:179).

### 3) The dialogue between Jesus and Mary (vv. 28-37)

After Jesus ends the dialogue with Martha, He calls Mary who was stayed at home and she now goes outside the village of Bethany to where Jesus is (vv. 28-30).<sup>177</sup> Jesus' remaining outside the town and the cautious whispering about His presence in verse 28 ('quietly') suggests to some that there is an attempt to keep Jesus' presence from being too widely known (Brown 1966:425; cf. Ridderbos 1992:400; Barrett 1978:331). The immediate departure of Mary toward Jesus indicates her attachment to Jesus and her expectation of comfort in this painful situation (Schnackenburg 1980:333; cf. Blomberg 2001:169). The Jews who are with Mary in the house<sup>178</sup>, consoling her, follow Mary because they think that she is going to the tomb to weep there (v. 31)<sup>179</sup>. While Mary responds to the presence of Jesus (cf. v. 28: *o` dida, skaloj pa, restin*), the Jews expect her to follow accepted grieving practices. Thus the indication of the attitude of the Jews, totally focused on the dead Lazarus rather than on the presence of Jesus, is crucial for a proper understanding of this difficult verse 33 (Moloney 1998:329).

When Mary arrives where Jesus is and sees Him, she kneels at His feet (v. 32a).<sup>180</sup> Thus while Martha simply addresses Jesus in verse 21, Mary approaches Jesus in a different fashion (see Moloney 1998:329). However, she immediately expresses her

<sup>177</sup> Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:200; cf. Morris 1971:537) infers that Mary seems to be the older sister, probably remaining in the house while the younger runs out to greet Jesus. The fact that Mary disposes of family wealth with such prodigality in the net episode (anointing 12:1-8) may also indicate her elder status.

<sup>178</sup> According to Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:195), the mourners in the house with Mary are undoubtedly women. The entourage thinking to follow her to the tomb would have been largely Judean women (cf. Blomberg 2001:169).

<sup>179</sup> Regarding the textual problem of *do, xantej* (v. 31), there are three variant readings:

<i>do, xantej</i>	a B C* D L W 0141 f <sup>1</sup> f <sup>13</sup> it <sup>d</sup> sy <sup>s,p,hmg</sup> arm eth geo
<i>doxa, zontej</i>	P <sup>75</sup> 33
<i>le, gontej</i>	P <sup>66</sup> A C <sup>2</sup> D Q Y 0250 Byz [E F G H] <i>lect</i> it <sup>a,aur,b,c,e,f,f2,p,r1</sup> vg sy <sup>h,pal</sup> sa

Metzger (1994:199) tries to solve this problem by *le, gontej* that may have arisen when it was asked how the author could have known the thoughts of the Jews. But, this still does not provide a definite solution, nevertheless *do, xantej* is a better substitute than *le, gontej*.

<sup>180</sup> Mary appears at the feet of Jesus in each of her scenes. She is introduced as the one who anointed Jesus' feet in the outset (v. 2), in this scene she falls at Jesus' feet, and in the next chapter the anointing of His feet is reported (12:3) (Culpepper 1998:188; cf. Bernard 1928b:409-414).

unbelief to Jesus, like Martha (cf. v. 21), by the identical mention of what Martha said to Jesus: *ku,rie( eiv h=j w-de ouvk a;n mou avpe,qanen o` avdelfo,j* (v. 32b). In this statement, the reason for Martha's confidence is omitted ('God will give you whatever you ask of Him,' v. 22), thus some commentators think that Martha's understanding of Jesus as a miracle-worker is not repeated in Mary's confession (cf. Moloney 1998:330). That is, they think that Mary simply states her unconditional trust in the power of the presence of Jesus (see Ridderbos 1992:400-401).<sup>181</sup> However, Malina & Rohrbaugh (1998:195) correctly state that Mary shares Martha's assessment of Jesus as healer but does not provoke a revelation of Jesus nor does she take the opportunity to show her belief in that revelation. Stereotypically, the reader just would have to say that there is a hint here of displeasure on Mary's part, because if Jesus were an honourable friend, He would have made a greater effort to be of Lazarus's side.

When Jesus sees Mary and the Jews who come with her weeping, He is very angry in spirit and deeply moved (*evnebrimh,sato tw/| pneu,mati kai. evta,raxen e`auto.n*, v. 33).<sup>182</sup> The difficulty is at whom or what is Jesus angry. Some scholars such as Kysar (1986:180) believe that the simplest solution seems to be that Jesus is made angry by the destructive force of death among humans. That is, Kysar thinks that Jesus is angry at the reality of death that produces such suffering and pain as He witnesses in the sisters and their guests. However, Jesus will now reveal God's glory by the raising of Lazarus but will also be glorified (cf. vv. 4; 23-26). Thus there is no reason for pity for the death of 'His own,' and so this inference is not persuasive. Rather, many commentators think that the reason for Jesus' anger is the failure of Mary (also of the crowd) who has shifted her focus from Jesus to the mourning associated with the death of Lazarus (see Moloney 1994:489, 1998:327-331; Van Tilborg 1993:194; Ridderbos 1992:401; Strachan 1941:237-238).

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<sup>181</sup> Some commentators suppose that the reader finds a totally different portrayal of Mary from Martha in her dialogue with Jesus (see Lightfoot 1956:223). Van Tilborg (1993:193), for instance, thinks that there is a clear difference in formulation that changes the tone of the communication. It is that the possessive *mou* comes earlier and expresses thus a stronger effect. That is, Martha says *o` avdelfo,j mou*, while Mary says *mou ..... o` avdelfo,j*, indicating that she is herself affected by his death. However, this subtle change does not make an obvious difference.

That is, as Beasley-Murray (1987:193) states, despite the testimony of the Bible, despite the signs of Jesus wrought among them, which all bore witness to the life of the divine sovereignty that had come into the world through Him, and despite the word that He proclaimed, with its emphasis on the promise of life now and hereafter, they mourned like ‘the rest of men who have no hope’ (cf. 1 Th 4:13). After Jesus asks to be taken to the grave and is led there by the crowds (v. 34), He again begins to weep (v. 35). The reason for Jesus’ tears is certainly not grief for Lazarus because Jesus is now advancing to his tomb to call him from it, and not to weep beside it. Then, what is an accurate explanation? The ensuing verses (vv. 36-37) present two reactions of the crowd to Jesus’ emotions (see Kysar 1986:181). The first is to conclude rightly that Jesus loved Lazarus, and the second reaction restates the words of Mary and Martha (vv. 21, 32) and poses the question of why Jesus did not try to save His friend. However, considering the characterisation of the Jews in the Gospel of John, the possibility of an affirmative aspect of the Jews seems remote. Rather, it is natural to take the same reason as in the previous case (cf. 33). That is, as Beasley-Murray (1987:193) thinks, the tears of Jesus are motivated by the lack of faith that caused Him anger in verse 33. In this regard, Ridderbos (1992:401) also states, “Jesus’ weeping is said - because of Jesus’ sense of His own power to raise the dead - to be hardly intelligible except as an expression of grief over so much unbelief, and even to have no other purpose than to provoke an expression of that unbelief by ‘the Jews’ (vv. 36f).” Thus, while the grief of Martha is one which has room for a growth in resurrection faith, the grief of Mary is a desperate, passionate and forlorn affair (Stibbe 1994b:47; cf. Bernard 1928b:383-384).

Therefore, as in the previous cases, the dialogue between Jesus and Mary also has the following literary form: the circumstantial statement (vv. 28-31); the misunderstanding of Mary (v. 32); and the modification of Jesus through His emotional exposure of his anger at their unbelief and the response of the Jews (vv. 33-37). The most impressive matter in this dialogue is the narrator’s depiction of the overflow of angry emotion from Jesus at the peoples’ unbelief. In this way the

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<sup>182</sup> For an accurate translation of the Greek word *evnebrimh,sato* into ‘anger,’ see Kysar (1986:180).

narrator stresses the importance of faith in Jesus. Another point to note in this conversation is that this dialogue underscores the affirmative attitude of Mary to Jesus (cf. ‘anointing’), which evokes the reader to have this level of familiar relations with Him.

**In sum:** the three consequential dialogues have the same literary form: the circumstantial statement; the misunderstanding of people; and the modification by Jesus and their response to Jesus. This particular literary shape effectively exposes the intention of the narrator who wants to deliver Jesus’ inner-thoughts and to keep the reader from making the same mistake as the present characters. To put it precisely: through Jesus’ dialogue with the disciples, the expectation of Jesus that His disciples might come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God, not just one who has the power to cure diseases, is exposed. Through Jesus’ dialogue with Martha, her perception of the limited eschatological expectation is exposed. That is, Jesus helps Martha to make the transition from present to future by changing her knowledge about the future resurrection into a belief in Him who is the resurrection and the life. And through Jesus’ dialogue with Mary, the narrator depicts the overflowing anger of Jesus at the peoples’ unbelief, thus the import of faith in Jesus is emphasised dramatically. After all, these three dialogues of Jesus with the three characters have a revelational role, making it possible for Jesus to express Himself and the theological message of the narrator as ‘doxology’ and ‘eschatology’ (cf. Kysar 1986:177).

#### **4.2.4.3. The connotation of Lazarus’ raising (vv. 38-44)**

The last stage in the story opens as Jesus, once again moved to anger by the ongoing emotion at the death of ‘His affirmative own<sup>183</sup>’, comes to the tomb where a stone is lying against it (v. 38; cf. Ridderbos 1992:403; see Bernard 1928b:395). This type of burial place was common in first century Palestine (Moloney 1998:341; see Blomberg 2001:170). Interestingly, as Culpepper (1998:188; cf. Schnackenburg 1980:338) states, this scene at Lazarus’ tomb is strikingly similar to the narrative of

the empty tomb of Jesus (Mk 15:46 pars). There are weeping women, the tomb, a stone lying against it, references to the wrappings around the corpse, and days have passed. This parallelism thus also alludes that the underlying episode has a certain implication in Jesus' death and resurrection.

Jesus orders the stone to be removed, but Martha tries to stop Him because of the stench mentioning that 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days' (v. 39). This statement of Martha's is caused by her abhorrence at the mere thought that Jesus should expose the body of her brother to the light of day. However, Martha's words, in the nature of case, are designed to accentuate the utter impossibility and absurdity of the miracle narrated here (cf. Kysar 1986:182). In her previous encounter with Jesus, she confessed her faith that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, but now she begins to suspect Jesus' power to control the dead (cf. Ridderbos 1992:404; Strachan 1941:239).<sup>184</sup> Jesus does not fault Martha for her lack of faith or demand more faith from her, but asks that  $\text{ouv}k \text{ ei}=\text{po},n \text{ soi } \text{o}[\text{ti} \text{ eva}.n \text{ pisteu},sh|j \text{ o};yh| \text{ th}.n \text{ do},xan \text{ tou/ } \text{qeou/}$  (v. 40; cf. Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:193; Brown 1966:436; Bernard 1928b:396-397). This is not a direct quote of anything that is said to Martha in verse 4 but rather the general import of Jesus' remarks (Morris 1971:560; cf. Stibbe 1994b:49). That is, as stated by Carson (1991:417; see Blomberg 2001:170), this rhetorical question must be taken as a summary of what was promised in 11:23-25 - *i.e.* to raise to life someone who has died is a revelatory act, the manifestation of the glory of God in Jesus. On the present occasion not only Martha and Mary, but the Jews (vv 19; 31-34; 42) and the disciples (v. 15) are present, and all, as is emphasised later (12:9, 17, 18), witness with their physical sight that which now takes place; but only believers are enabled to see or penetrate its significance, namely, the conquest of death by the Lord, and therefore the depth of His love for man (Lightfoot 1956:224).

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<sup>183</sup> This verse (v. 38) exactly reiterates the anger of Jesus in verse 33, which is supported by its synonyms with verse 33; for instance, 'in himself' here is synonymous with 'in spirit' of verse 33. Thus it is correct to think the reason for Jesus' anger is the same as verse 33 (cf. Kysar 1986:181).

<sup>184</sup> On the other hand, on a narratological level, the notice that 'Lazarus has been dead four days' is repeated here to emphasise that he is beyond hope. Besides, the narrator identifies Martha as 'the sister of the dead man' in this statement so that the fact of the death of Lazarus is stressed again. Thus the narrator attempts to prove the reliability of Lazarus' death (cf. Barrett 1978:335).

Jesus now positions Himself outside the tomb in which Lazarus is placed (v. 41). His ultimate purpose in coming to Bethany is to restore life to His dear friend. The earlier notices that Jesus delayed His coming, and then the subsequent displeasure of Mary and the Judean mourners (vv. 32, 37), all build the tension in the narrative in anticipation of Jesus' rescue of Lazarus (Malina & Rohrbaugh 1998:195). Jesus does not ask God for anything, but here He merely thanks the Father that He always hears Him (vv. 41-42; cf. Culpepper 1998:189). The implication is that Jesus has already asked the Father to raise Lazarus, so now all that is necessary is to voice gratitude so that the crowd standing by might know that what is about to happen is an act of God (Barrett 1978:336; cf. Kysar 1986:182-183). The reader also realises Jesus' dependence on the Father in this statement of His. Jesus does the works that the Father has given Him, and continually gives Him, to accomplish (5:36; 4:34; Barrett 1978:402-403; Lindars 1972:401). That is, because the Son does nothing and is able to do nothing apart from the fact that He is the Son and that the Father loves Him, contemplation of the greatest miracle is valueless if it does not bring its witnesses to faith in Him as the One sent by the Father. This understanding of miracles characterises the entire Gospel and characterises the words and deeds of Jesus from the beginning (1:14, 51; Ridderbos 1992:405).

At last the mighty act of Jesus takes place: Jesus calls Lazarus out of the tomb and Lazarus comes out in response to Jesus' cry (vv. 43-44). The loud voice of Jesus expresses His majesty and power (cf. 7:28, 37; 12:33; see Moloney 1994:489-490; Lightfoot 1956:225). The reader may be meant to see in this a preliminary fulfilment of the teaching that the dead would respond to the Son's voice and come forth from their graves (cf. 5:25-29). The point is that Jesus already has this power prior to His death and resurrection, and can both give life and overcome death because He already is the resurrection and the life. (Witherington III 1995:204). The appearance of the dead man who comes out with the linen bands still around him offers a realistic effect to the miracle, which fits contemporary Jewish practice (v. 44a; Beasley-Murray 1987:195; Schnackenburg 1980:340; Bernard 1928b:400). Furthermore, the depiction of the bound Lazarus allows the reader to associate the pictorial image of the case of



Jesus (cf. 19:40-41; 20:7; see Moloney 1996:172). The divine power of Jesus to overcome death is thus sufficiently proved. It will provide a chance for the disciples (see vv. 15, 42), for the Jews (v. 42), and for both Martha (see vv. 26-27, 39, 42) and Mary (see vv. 33, 42) to believe that God is made known through the words and actions of His Sent One, Jesus (Moloney 1966:171-172; Ridderbos 1992:406). The old order no longer reigns (O'Day 1987:98). Jesus displays the power and a crowd could see the miracle, but only believers will see its real significance, the glory (Morris 1971:560).

The end of the narrative (vv. 38-44) manifests the glory of the Father and the Son through the stupendous miracle, which is the theological purpose of the narrative (v. 4). The expectation of Jesus that His disciples (actually, all characters) might come to a faith that God sent Jesus is now accomplished (v. 42). The reader now anticipates the glorifying of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus and the glorifying of the Son through God's exalting Him to His right hand (Beasley-Murray 1987:187).

#### **4.2.5. The point of view**

The narrator adopts a retrospective viewpoint in the temporal perspective. It is evident from the introductory mention of Mary in her anointing of Jesus (cf. 12:3). The theological purpose of the narrative that is mentioned by Jesus Himself at the outset also supports this assumption. After all, the narrator attempts to link the raising of Lazarus to Jesus' resurrection so that the narrative exposes the glory of Jesus (see 'Macro context').

The narrator adopts an omnipresent point of view in the spatial perspective. This is evident from the whole pericope. The narrator moves his position to every place: the outskirts of Bethany (vv. 1-6), the place nearest to Bethany (vv. 7-16), inside Bethany (vv. 17-37), and in front of the tomb (vv. 38-44). This is because it is necessary to deliver the detailed behaviour and words of characters to make a plot from the narrative.

The narrator adopts both an omniscient point of view and a limited point of view in the psychological perspective. He reports the inner thoughts of Jesus (for instance, His love for Lazarus' family and His emotions at the unbelief), the disciples (for instance, their fear and tribulation), the two sisters (for instance, their aspirations and grievances against Jesus), and the Jews (for instance, their pity for Lazarus' family), but does not depict the inner emotion of Lazarus even though he is the protagonist of the narrative (cf. Culpepper 1983:22). This seems to indicate that the narrator wants to avoid a portrayal of Lazarus as the mysterious hero, and instead focuses on the heroic identity of Jesus.

#### **4.2.6. The synthesis**

##### **4.2.6.1. The literary artistry of the narrator**

This is the seventh (last) sign in the Gospel of John, which is clearly mentioned at 11:47 and 12:18. The narrative is composed of the most stupendous scenery that is the restoration of life from the death. Along with this spectacular setting of scene, the narrator employs specific literary forms in each scene. The narrative can be divided structurally into three sub-parts (cf. Moloney 1998:324-325; Wuellner 1991:118-120; Strachan 1941:229). The first part is the illness of Lazarus (vv. 1-6), the second part is the three consequential dialogues between Jesus and the three main characters (vv. 7-37), and the last part is the raising of Lazarus (vv. 38-44). In the first and last parts of the story, the narrator reiteratively stresses the association of the death and raising of Lazarus with the death and raising of Jesus (see '4.2.6.2. Glorification'). In the middle of the narrative, the narrator places the three consequential dialogues of Jesus with the characters (the disciples, Martha, and Mary), through these, the narrator clearly draws the true identity of Jesus who overcomes the death (see '4.2.6.3. The life-giving power of Jesus'). Thus the theological message of the narrator is effectively established through his artistry (cf. Schnackenburg 1980:317).

##### **4.2.6.2. Glorification of the Father and the Son**

The narrator obviously gives a specific purpose of the present episode, as in the previous sign (cf. 9:1-41) in which the purpose of the blindness is to have God's works revealed in Him (cf. 9:3). The first words attributed to Jesus show this: 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory (δο, χα), so that the Son of God may be glorified through it' (11:4). Thus the illness of Lazarus is not for the purpose of death, but for the purpose of God's manifesting His glory in powerful and compassionate action through the Son (Beasley-Murray 1987:187; O'Day 1987:81). The same point is referred to again just before the climax of the narrative in verse 40 (see Lindars 1992:89), in which Jesus says 'did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' Therefore the investigation of what the exact meaning of 'glory of the Father and the Son' is in this context provides the interpretative key factor for the understanding of this narrative.

In the Gospel of John it is generally accepted that the manifestation of Jesus' glory implies an anticipation of Jesus' resurrection glory and thus attempts to make the glorified Christ in heaven visible in the life of the earthly Jesus (cf. Collins 1995:105-107; Peterson 1993:33; Ridderbos 1992:388; Bratcher 1991:401-408; Cook 1984:291-297; Nicol 1972:124-137; Caird 1968:265-277). In chapter 1, particularly, the author declares that 'we have seen His glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth' (cf. v. 14) and this is immediately manifested in the wedding miracle at the beginning of chapter 2 (cf. Collins 1995:105-107; Peterson 1993:33). As Brown (1966:101; also Barrett 1978:193; see Von Rad 1974:241-242; Strachan 1941:103-106) understands, however, the true glory of Jesus is only to be revealed in 'His hour' since 7:39 clearly states that during the ministry Jesus had not yet been glorified. Thus the manifestation of glory in this initial part of the Gospel can be thought of either as referring to a partial manifestation of glory, or as being part of the encapsulation of the training of the disciples (or the paradigmatic reader), where their whole career, including their sight of the glory of the resurrected Jesus, was foreshadowed.

However, Jesus, who goes with His disciples away across the Jordan to avoid the sudden persecution by the Jews at the end of chapter 10, now goes up to Bethany to

raise Lazarus and this incident causes the decision of the Sanhedrin to kill Jesus (11:46ff; 12:10, 18f) (Ridderbos 1992:381; Staley 1988:69; cf. Kysar 1986:172; see Beutler 1994:399-406).<sup>185</sup> Besides, in chapter 12, the narrator elaborately contains the accounts of the anointing of Jesus, which is also mentioned in the underlying narrative, that implies Jesus' burial, and His triumphal entry into Jerusalem that implies the preparation for the approaching Passover (see Culpepper 1998:190; Brown 1966:447-465). Thus, even though it is literally correct that the 'glory' here is specifically a reference to the revelation of the Son's power to give life (see Newman & Nida 1980:355), theologically this miracle will glorify Jesus, not so much in the sense that people will admire it and praise Him, but in the sense that it will lead to His death, which is a stage in His glorification (see Brown 1966:431). For this reason, it is possible to say that the Lazarus event functions as a symbol of Jesus' death. That is, as Van der Watt (2000:215) states, "only in the light of the death event of Jesus does the Lazarus event find its full meaning." This aspect will be further examined below.

#### **4.2.6.3. Life-giving power of Jesus**

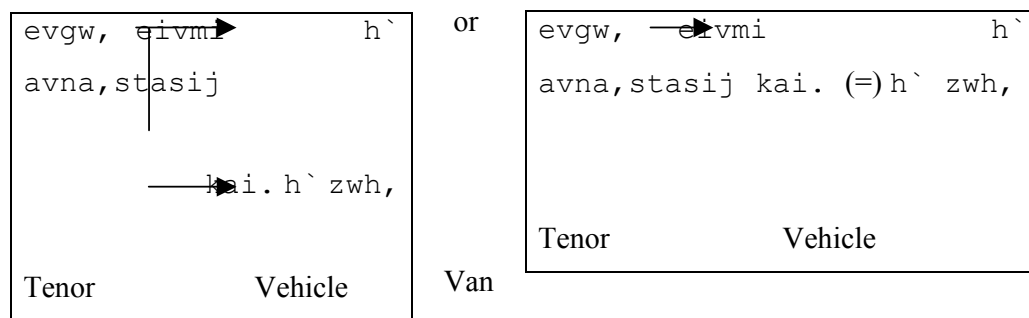
In the thematic progress of the so-called 'Book of Signs' (chapters 2-12), the 'life' motif has been gradually developed (see Carson 1991:403). The prologue opened the Gospel affirming that 'in Him was life' (1:4). The theme of Jesus as giver of life is stressed in the exposition of chapters 2-4 because these chapters centre on the discourse of eternal life (see '2.3.4.2. The life motif'; cf. Mlakuzhyil 1987:199). In chapter 5, the narrator intensifies Jesus as the giver of life, therein the narrator declares that the Father has given the authority to Jesus to raise the dead and give life, and thus the one who hears Jesus' word and believes in Him has eternal life and has already passed from death into life (5:21, 24). Chapter 6 effectively emphasis the identity of Jesus as the eschatological life-giver through His miraculous feeding as

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<sup>185</sup> Like many scholars, Stibbe (1993:121; 1994b: 39) mentions that while in the Synoptics it is the cleansing of the temple which proves to be the decisive factor in determining Jesus' fate, in John's Gospel the same event is placed at the very beginning of the Gospel narrative. In this Gospel, it is the raising of Lazarus which proves to be the last straw for the hostile Jewish hierarchy. This point is particularly exposed in the dismayed mention of the disciples *r`abbi*, ( *nu/n evzh, toun se liqa, sai oi` VIoudai/oi( kai. pa, lin u`pa, geij evkei/È* in v. 8, who are well aware of the precariousness of the journey toward Jerusalem.

well as the associated discourse on the bread of life (see Van der Watt 2003:216-228). In chapters 7-9, through the symbolism of ‘the living water’ (in chapter 7) and ‘the light of the world’ (in chapter 8) and through the performance of the miracle (in chapter 9), Jesus declares that whoever follows Him will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life (cf. 8:12; 11:37). Subsequently, in chapter 10, Jesus claims strongly that He gives His sheep eternal life (cf. v. 28). Then, finally in this chapter (chapter 11), the raising of Lazarus now serves to underscore the visual effect of the grandest divine power of Jesus who gives life (Culpepper 1998:184; Schnackenburg 1980:352-361).

The most important reference in the climactic part of the ‘life’ motif is perhaps Jesus’ declaration that ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die’ (11:25-26). According to Van der Watt (2000:213-215), the indication ‘I am the resurrection and the life’ (v. 25a) has two vehicles which function in close association with each other, which can be shown as follows:



der Watt here thinks that the first metaphor ‘I am the resurrection,’ in which the resurrection is personified (evgw, eivmi) in Jesus, suggests that Jesus makes resurrection possible by raising a person from death to life. The power of Jesus to raise people from death is substantiated by both as an immediate sign (the raising of Lazarus) and an eschatological act (5:29). Jesus also raises Himself from death (10:17-18). Van der Watt thinks that the second metaphor ‘I am the life,’ in which the life is also personified in Jesus, serves as an explanatory extension of the first metaphor. Resurrection leads to life. Jesus does not only raise a person, but in His presence that person also lives. Thus since life logically follows

resurrection it does not make a significant difference to the interpretation whether resurrection and life are read as two separate but connected vehicles or as one combined vehicle. After all, Van der Watt concludes that metaphorically the extension resurrection and life functions as an explanation of who Jesus is and what He does. The ensuing declaration is the result of this divine identity of Jesus made clear to believers (vv. 25b-26). The type of death mentioned in verse 25b is physical death. Physical death does not affect (spiritual) eternal life, thus even those people who have died physically will live (πιστευ,wn eivj evme. ka'n avpoqa,nh| zh, setai, in v. 25b). Verse 26 (pa/j o` zw/n kai. pisteu,wn eivj evme. ouv mh. avpoqa,nh| eivj to.n aivw/na) denies any possibility of death; rather, it indicates that the believer might die physically, but will not die spiritually. Jesus will not only raise the believers, but will also eventually sustain their life.

#### **4.2.6.4. Theological and hermeneutical conclusion**

The author composes the Lazarus episode as a form of miracle narrative that is different from those forms that the author has already employed. This formal individuality of the Lazarus narrative indicates the specific function of the underlying narrative. It is the author's intention to use this sign as the climax of all preceding signs. That is, the demonstration of Jesus' identity as the life-giver up to now is maximised at this juncture by the spectacular scenery and the revelatory declaration of Jesus. The author pronounces that in the person of Jesus the resurrection is already present (see Van der Watt 2003:214). Those who believe in Jesus, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in Jesus will never die (vv. 25-26). Therefore the author mentions this last sign to promote the faith of people in Jesus (cf. 20:31), which is evident from Jesus' prayer; 'I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me' (v. 42).

#### **4.3. Conclusion**

This chapter has explored the theological role of the last sign in chapters 11-12. These two chapters are bound together as in the case of the previous cases (chapters 2-4 and

chapters 5-10). The thematic development (particularly ‘the life’ motif) of the preceding chapters (chapters 1-10) is maximised in these chapters, and the pivotal focus of the ensuing chapters (that is, the death and resurrection of Jesus) is foreshadowed here. Thus it is generally accepted that these chapters play a role of transition common to both the so-called ‘Book of Signs’ and ‘the Passion narrative,’ and this structural feature might motivate the name of these chapters as ‘the conclusion of the Book of Signs’ and ‘the prelude of the Passion narrative.’

The author places the solitary sign, that is, ‘the raising of Lazarus’ (11:1-44) in these chapters. The author does not merely compose this narrative without any consideration but with artistry he uses this to support his theological purpose. The purpose of this narrative is clearly mentioned through the mouth of Jesus as the manifestation of ‘glorification of the Father and the Son’ at the beginning (cf. v. 4) and at the end (cf. v. 40). This glorification should be understood in the sense that the occasion will lead to Jesus’ death, which is a stage in Jesus’ glorification. Thus the Lazarus event functions as a symbol for Jesus’ death. Only in the light of the death event of Jesus does the Lazarus event find its full meaning. In this narrative, Jesus is revealed as the eschatological life-giver who has been developed in the previous chapters (chapters 1-10). This point is stressed by Jesus’ direct voice that ‘I am the resurrection and the life’ (11:25) and by Jesus’ stupendous act of raising Lazarus from the grave. Jesus will not only raise the believers, but will also sustain their life.

Through the dramatic event of raising Lazarus from the dead, the author exposes the theological message very strongly. For this reason, the underlying sign can be identified as ‘the climactic sign’ (cf. Culpepper 1998:189).

## **CHAPTER V. CONCLUSION**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This study has explored the theological role of the signs in the Gospel of John. To achieve this aim, the investigator has examined the theological messages of all seven signs by using the synchronic method of biblical interpretation. The synchronic interpretative method contributes to interpreting the meaning of the text that the author wants to convey accurately, while the diachronic approach only focuses on examining the historical development of the text. Besides, the investigator has considered the important interpretative fact that the individual sign does not exist on its own but reciprocates its influence with the associated discourses on the revelatory mentions of Jesus and/or operates together with the other signs in its specific context. In this last chapter, the theological messages of signs that have been highlighted in this investigation will be synthesised and discussed in detail.

### **5.2. Christological focus**

As a result of the analysis of all the signs, it has been proved that the primary concern of these signs in the Gospel of John is to describe the divine identity of Jesus, by illustrating different aspects of the Christological pictures of Jesus. The following are the Christological portrayals that have been conveyed by the author of John's Gospel through the seven signs.

#### **1) Jesus as the eschatological bridegroom**

The first Christological picture of Jesus is as the eschatological bridegroom, shown by the first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-11). The reader, who has a potential knowledge of the messianic connotation of bridegroom (cf. Mk 2:19f. par; Mt 29:1-13; Rev 21:2, 9; 22:17), the apocalyptic symbolism of wine and the symbolic representation of Jesus as bridegroom that is made explicit in John 3:29, realises that the bridegroom in this narrative has the role of an evocative character who is alluded



in Christological light. The narrator describes how Jesus, as the eschatological bridegroom, supplies an abundance of the best wine at the banquet so that He satisfies all the people while the physical bridegroom disappoints guests through the shortage of wine. This contrast presents an obvious distinction between the old (Jewish order) and the new order (Christological order). God now spreads the eschatological (or messianic) banquet and Jesus satisfies the people who participate in this banquet.

## **2) Jesus as the provider of eternal life**

The second Christological illustration of Jesus is as the provider of eternal life. This is drawn by the second sign ('the healing of the royal official's son,' 4:46-54), the third sign ('the healing at the pool of Bethesda,' 5:1-18), the fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15) and most prominently by the last sign ('the raising of Lazarus,' 11:1-44). Through the healing accounts of physical illness and death, the narrator depicts Jesus as the divine One who possesses life-giving power. The life at these junctures should not be regarded as physical life but as eternal life. To put it more precisely, the second sign conveys the fact that everyone who believes Jesus' word will be given eternal life, the third sign implies that God gives life-giving power to Jesus so that, like God, Jesus can give life to whomsoever He pleases, and the seventh sign underscores Jesus' mightiest power of giving life by raising a person from the dead. Further more, the narrator, through the miraculous feeding of the multitude in the fourth sign, demonstrates the fact that Moses gave perishable manna in the desert, but Jesus supplies the imperishable and makes ample provision for His people (cf. Je 31:14). This eschatological food allows the people to sustain eternal life.

## **3) Jesus as the One who is sent by God**

In the Gospel of John, Jesus is said 51 times to be 'the one who is sent from the Father' (e.g., 3:17, 34; 5:35; 6:29, etc.). This Christological portrayal is stressed at the sixth sign ('the healing of the blind man from birth,' 9:1-41). In this story, the narrator intentionally translates the spatial mention 'Siloam' as 'Sent.' This translation draws the reader's attention to the narrator's expectations of making a connection between

Siloam and Jesus as ‘the One who is sent’. As immediately as verse 4 of chapter 9 the reader is told that Jesus does the works of ‘Him who sent Me.’ Therefore the blind man gains his sight as he washes in the pool of Siloam, but he actually receives it through the power of the Sent One, not through the actual water.

#### **4) Jesus as the Lord of the Sabbath (Jesus is equal to God)**

At the third sign (‘the healing at the pool of Bethesda,’ 5:1-18) and at the sixth sign (‘the healing of the blind man from birth,’ 9:1-41), Jesus intentionally causes a conflict between Him and the Jews by the performance of the healing ministry on the Sabbath, thus breaching the Sabbath regulation. In both stories, through the depiction of Jesus’ work on the Sabbath, the narrator conveys the theological message that Jesus performs God’s creative/liberating work throughout the course of salvation history, just like God. This Christological theme is verified by the narrative role of the characters. That is, interestingly, the narrator unfolds the both stories by centering on the three main characters. They are Jesus, the problematic man (*i.e.*, the crippled man and the man born blind) and the Jews. Jesus exposes His divine identity through positive speeches and actions; the problematic men contribute to making Jesus convey His divine identity in a completely negative way; and the Jews play the role of paradoxical tool in drawing the identity of Jesus in the controversy structure. The narrator thus uses ‘the breach of Sabbath regulation’ vehicle to make the identity of Jesus more effective.

#### **5) Jesus as the true teacher (the educational nature of the sign)**

This Christological picture is found in the fourth sign (‘the feeding of the multitude,’ 6:1-15). In this narrative, the narrator stresses that Jesus is the one who provides ample food for the people. It should be kept in mind that Jesus’ motivation for the feeding is not compassion for the crowd that is needy and hungry, as in all Synoptic versions. His motivation is that He is a teacher and can act as a teacher by means of this sign. To put it more precisely, the narrator arranges the story with further didactic features: Jesus adopts the posture of a rabbi through His sitting down with the

disciples; this alerts the reader to avoid faith that depends on visible miracles only; the scene of the testing of Philip in order to force a deeper faith; and the gathering up of the fragments of the leftovers, which is a practical lesson for the disciples. Therefore Jesus is recognised as a good teacher who educates His disciples effectively by means of the sign.

#### **6) Jesus as the bringer of eschatological salvation**

The sixth Christological portrayal of Jesus is as the bringer of eschatological salvation. The term 'salvation' can be interpreted in the Johannine term as 'eternal life,' but at the first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-11), at the fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15) and at the last sign ('the raising of Lazarus,' 11:1-44), the reader finds this specific aspect of Christological picture most conspicuous. The narrator in the first sign, which delivers the theological implication of the eschatological banquet, emphasises Jesus' portrayal as the eschatological bridegroom who supplies plentiful good wine to the people. This good wine implies the eschatological salvation and thus the narrator ultimately indicates that Jesus can save the world from sin and death, whereas Judaism has failed in this regard. With the fourth sign, the narrator implies that the people have been waiting for the saviour of their nation from the tyranny of the Roman emperor. When they saw Jesus performing the miracle they attempted to make Jesus their ruler (or saviour). This false (or political) messianic hope of the crowd, however, is corrected by the withdrawal of Jesus from the crowd. The narrator attempts to teach the crowd that Jesus is the eschatological or spiritual saviour. Finally, with the last sign, the narrator mentions Jesus' declaration that 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die' (11:25-26), and subsequently describes Jesus' performance in raising Lazarus. This discourse and act of Jesus illustrates the fact that Jesus is the eschatological saviour, saving mankind from the death and the power of Satan.

### **7) The universal range of Jesus' ministry**

The second sign ('the healing of the royal official's son,' 4:46-54) conveys the theological message that the realm of the ministry of Jesus is universal but not limited only to the Jews. This is shown through the identity of the royal official who is drawn as a Gentile. On the macro contextual level, the mission of the Lord expands: in chapter 2 when the glory of the Lord is shown to His disciples, and in chapter 3 as new life is offered to the Jews, and in 4:1-42, to the Samaritans; in this episode, with great brevity and a dramatic sign of power, it is brought to the Gentiles. Therefore, Jesus is regarded as *o` swth.r tou/ ko, smou*, as confessed by the Samaritan woman (4:42). In this regard, one of the Johannine kernel messages in 5:24-25 is noteworthy: 'Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life. Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.'

### **8) Jesus as the Messiah / Christ / King**

The narrator of this Gospel formulates the theological conviction of the portrayal of Jesus as the messiah (or Christ) more explicitly than the other gospels (see Smith 1995:85-86; Coetzee 1993:62). This Christological aspect is apparent throughout the whole Gospel and, among the signs, is particularly obvious in the first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-1), in the fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15) and in the fifth sign ('the walking on the sea,' 6:16-21). Through the performance of Jesus in the changing of the wine, His glory is revealed and this forces the disciples to recognise Jesus' identity as the bringer of the eschatological salvation and therefore the messiah (2:11; cf. 1:41). In the fourth sign, 'messiah' and 'king' are corresponding terms, when the crowd attempts to seize Jesus and make Him political or physical king who can provide them with political or physical peace (6:14). However, the narrator attempts to provide the crowds with an accurate understanding of Jesus as the eschatological or spiritual king with the mention of the withdrawal of

Jesus (6:15). The narrator subsequently employs Jesus' miraculous walking episode as the fifth sign and therein the false messianic hope of the crowds is corrected by the depiction of Jesus' self-revelational statement *Ἐγώ, εἰμι* (6:20), which is the Epiphany formula of the Old Testament, and by the mention of the positive result that the disciples have been given the true peace and calm due to their willing acceptance of this revelation (6:21). The issue of Jesus' kingship becomes a major theme of the passion narrative and is developed here much more fully than in the other Gospels, particularly in the interchange between Jesus, Pilate, and the Jews (19:28-20:16).

### **9) Jesus brings calm and peace**

With the fifth sign ('the walking on the sea,' 6:16-21), the narrator stresses the theological message that separation from Jesus nourishes fear but reunion with Him brings calm and peace.

### **10) Jesus as the Passover lamb (the death of Jesus)**

In the first chapter of this Gospel, John the Baptist declares of Jesus that *ἰδεὸς ἀμνοῦ τοῦ ἁγίου τοῦ αἰῶνος τῆν ἀμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου* (1:29). This significant indication foreshadows the destiny of Jesus: giving His life for His people. The narrator reflects this aspect in the first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-1) and particularly in the fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15). In the first sign, the narrator ends the story by revealing Jesus' glory (cf. 2:11). The glorification of Jesus implies His death and resurrection in this Gospel (see below), that is, the atonement of Jesus. More specifically, at the fourth sign, the narrator arranges the miraculous process clearly to recall the Eucharistic association, even if one cannot be sure of every detail (see below). This Eucharistic association of the narrative may enhance the author's pivotal theological point. That is, this sign has a certain relationship with the Last Supper where Jesus is symbolically associated with the Passover Lamb, and may be linked to the Passover motif in 6:4. Thus Jesus is 'Lamb of God' who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world (cf. 6:25-58).

### **11) The bread of life**

At the fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15), Jesus performs the feeding miracle and subsequently reveals His identity as 'the bread of God who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world' (6:33). He declares that He is the bread of life and thus all who come to Him will never go hungry, and all who believe in Him will never be thirsty (6:35).

### **12) The resurrection of Jesus**

This important Christological theme is found in the first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-1) and in the last sign ('the raising of Lazarus,' 11:1-44). In the first sign, the narrator begins the episode with the temporal mention of 'on the third day' (th/| h`me,ra| th/| tri,th). This numeric mention is intended to deliver the symbolic allusion of the Resurrection. This is the reason that 'the third day' is in Christian tradition, from earliest times, the day when Christ manifests His glory in resurrection from the dead (cf. Hos 6:2; Mt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:64; Lk 9:22; 18:32; 24:7, 46; Acts 10:40; 1 Co 15:4). To elaborate, this inference is supported by the strong Easter term of 'manifestation of the glory of Jesus' at the conclusion of the episode in 2:11. The last sign emphasises this theological theme. The last sign contains this theological message most effectively by revelatory discourse and raising act from the death. Jesus declares that 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die' (11:25-26). The indication 'I am the resurrection and the life' (v. 25a) has two vehicles which function in close association with each other (Van der Watt 2000:213-215): the first metaphor 'I am the resurrection,' in which the resurrection is personified (εἰμι, εἰμι) in Jesus, suggests that Jesus makes resurrection possible by raising a person from death to life. The second metaphor 'I am the life,' in which life is also personified in Jesus, serves as an explanatory extension of the first metaphor. Resurrection leads to life. Jesus not only raises a person, but in His presence that person also lives. Thus since life logically follows

resurrection it does not make a significant difference to the interpretation whether resurrection and life are read as two separate but connected vehicles, or as one combined vehicle. Then, Jesus raises Lazarus from the grave in a spectacular act. This miracle serves to underscore the visual effect of the grandest divine power of Jesus who gives life. Therefore the declaration of Jesus on the resurrection and life is verified.

### **13) Jesus' divine origin**

The thirteenth Christological focus of sign is the divine origin of Jesus, which is discovered in the sixth sign ('the healing of the blind man from birth,' 9:1-41) and in the last sign ('the raising of Lazarus,' 11:1-44). At the sixth sign, the narrator intentionally interprets the word 'Siloam' as 'sent,' which supports the divine origin of Jesus (see above). Besides, the narrator arranges the story with such artistry that, with the progress of the scenes, the blind man's confession to Jesus becomes more specific and deepens. In the further interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees (9:24-34), the blind man at last confesses that *eiv mh. h=n ou-toj para. qeou/ ( ouvk hvdu, nato poiei/n ouvde, n* (9:33). This implies the divine origin of Jesus. At the last sign, the narrator mentions the scene of Jesus' talking (or praying) to His father (11:41-42). This scene also supports the divine origin of Jesus. The performance of the miracle is clearly apparent in Jesus' prayer in the expression of *i[na pisteu, swsin o[ti su, me avpe, steilaj* (v. 42). Thus one of the significant purposes of the signs is to force the people believe the fact that Jesus is sent from God.

### **14) The light of the world**

Jesus reveals Himself as 'the living water' in chapter 7, and introduces Himself as 'the light of the world' in chapter 8 (v. 12). In chapter 9, Jesus explicitly refers to Himself as 'the light of the world' (v. 5) and immediately performs the miracle of giving sight to the man born blind 'at the water' (9:6-7). Thus the narrator conveys the theological message that Jesus makes it possible for people to see the works of the father.

### 15) Jesus as the true prophet

The narrator composes the fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15) in an overt penetration of the Mosaic theme, which is gradually developed in chapters 6-8. This is evident from a cursory glance at the overall themes of these chapters: in chapter 6, Jesus supplies the spiritual Bread of Life just as the manna is given by God to Moses in the desert. In chapter 7, Jesus announces the new stream of living water just as the water comes from the rock in the wilderness. In chapter 8, Jesus proclaims his identity as the Light of the World just as the pillar of light is given by God to guide the Israelites in the desert. Thus, clearly, Moses is the *sensus plenior* of the Jesus story, just as Jesus is the *sensus plenior* of the Moses story. This means that the narratives in chapters 6-8, including the underlying narrative, must be read according to the perspective of a hidden Mosaic theme. In this narrative, the narrator pointedly mentions the approaching Passover in verse 4. This is not just a time indication but is also intended to evoke the content of the narrative that follows. Besides, in the entire narrative, the narrator forces the reader to see the superiority of Jesus compared with Moses who implies the Passover incidence. Therefore the reader now might realise that Moses is superseded and replaced by the person of Jesus. That is, through the comparison of Jesus with Moses, the importance of both of whom is stressed by the indication of the Passover, the narrator forces the disciples (and the readers as well) to understand and accept that Jesus is the true Moses who makes permanent and ample provision for His people (cf. Je 31:14). Thus Jesus is the true prophet who has been expected since ancient times (Dt 18:15-18): 'The LORD your God will raise up for you **a prophet** like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. . . . . I will raise up for them **a prophet** like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.'

### 16) Jesus as a sympathiser

There are two people in John's narrative who are on the margins of society. One is the crippled man in the third sign ('the healing at the pool of Bethesda,' 5:1-18) and the



other is the man born blind in the sixth sign ('the healing of the blind man from birth,' 9:1-41). In the third sign, the 'first come, first served approach,' as described in 5:8, and the important man's lack of help at the critical moment, should be contrasted with the Lord's universal and permanent invitation, as described in 6:35, 37. At the sixth sign, the crippled man is depicted as a hopeless case while Jesus is described as the One who has concern for an exceedingly weak person. In other words, Jesus heals the person who is utterly marginalised.

### **17) Supernatural knowledge of Jesus**

This Christological aspect is found in the whole Gospel and thus accordingly in all the signs. This is particularly obvious in the second sign ('the healing of the royal official's son,' 4:46-54), the third sign ('the healing at the pool of Bethesda,' 5:1-18), the fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15), the sixth sign ('the healing of the blind man from birth,' 9:1-41) and the last sign ('the raising of Lazarus,' 11:1-44). In the second sign, Jesus knows the condition of Gentile's dying son at the distance. In the third sign, Jesus knows the long duration of the man's desperate situation (cf. 5:6) and anticipates the serious result of his deed by the performance of the miracle on the Sabbath. In the third sign, Jesus knows the response of His disciples and the starving crowd. In the sixth sign, Jesus knows the reason for the man being born blind and thus answers the interjection of the disciples' question with 'neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him' (9:3). At the last sign, Jesus urges the disciples to go to Lazarus, using the metaphor of sleep when talking about Lazarus' death as *La, zaroj o` fi, loj h`mw/n kekoi, mhtai\ avlla. poreu, omai i [na evxupni, sw auvto, n* (11:11). The reader is not told how and when Jesus received this information. Thus here, too (as in e.g. 1:47f; 4:50), Jesus is speaking as One who has supernatural knowledge of the way and will of the Father, the salvific import of which only becomes clear to Him gradually (cf. 11:15).

### **5.3. Some other theological themes**

It is also apparent that the Johannine signs contain other theological themes. Like Christological pictures, the different signs illustrate the different aspects of theological themes. The following are the theological themes that have been conveyed by the author of John's Gospel through the seven signs.

### **1) The replacement of the Jewish tradition**

The first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-11) notably reveals this aspect. The narrator, prominently through the miraculous process of changing of water into wine (2:6-8), contrasts the inadequacy of Judaism and the plentifulness of the Christological order. This contrast is furthermore heightened by the macro contextual arrangement in chapters 2-4, which is, as has been investigated, a well-rounded unit. The narrator mostly shows the inaugural acts of Jesus that can be compressed as the breaks with the old order and the commencement of the new order. The second sign ('the healing of the royal official's son,' 4:46-54) also stresses this theological theme. Through the miraculous healing of the Gentile's dying son by Jesus, the narrator shows the universal realm of the ministry of Jesus. That is, the narrator destroys the Jews' fixation on their superiority over the Gentile by the fact that Jesus does not work just for Jews, but also the Gentiles. Finally, the fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15) presents this theological feature. In this narrative, through the replacement of Moses by Jesus, the narrator conveys the theological fact that Jesus is superior to Moses and accordingly the old tradition of the Jews is innovatively replaced by the new tradition.

### **2) The discipleship**

This theme is found in the whole Gospel and accordingly in all the signs. Of all the signs, the first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-11) presents this theological theme most effectively. In the structure of this narrative, the disciples are highlighted in both the opening and at the end of the narrative by the chiasmic structural artistry of the narrator. First of all, in the opening (v. 2), the narrator describes how Jesus' disciples are invited to participate in a wedding party. The

reference to the disciples is once again found at the end of the narrative (v. 11). Here the narrator ends the episode with a reference to the directive instalment of the faith of the disciples in Jesus, which is semantically a result of His preceding action. This structural artistry of the narrator is aimed at guiding the reader deeper into discipleship.

### **3) The significance of faith**

The second sign ('the healing of the royal official's son,' 4:46-54) and the sixth sign ('the healing of the blind man from birth,' 9:1-41) particularly concern the matter of faith. In the second sign, the miracle takes place when the royal official trusts in the word of Jesus without any visual proof. Besides, the importance of putting faith in Jesus through the word without seeing the miracle is especially emphasised by the narrator's criticism faith based on signs and wonders, mentioned in the transitional verses (4:43-45), and the provocative mention of Jesus in 4:48 that *eva.n mh. shmei/a kai. te, rata i;dhte( ouv mh. pisteu, shte*. Thus, in this sign narrative, the reader realises that adequate faith is based on the words of Jesus but not on the miracles. In the sixth sign, the reader again encounters the significance of faith in Jesus. The narrator stresses a faith by the two contrastive characters, which are 'the man born blind' and 'the Jewish authorities.' In this story, the theme has moved gradually from physical sight and blindness to the more serious matter of spiritual sight and blindness involved in the human response to the revelation. Originally the man was blind and the Jews could see. However, the man gains not only physical sight but also spiritual sight because he has put his faith in Jesus, while the Pharisees, who have physical sight, are described as being blind at the end of the story because they do not confess their faith to Jesus. Thus the importance of faith is strongly stressed by the literary device of paradox in this narrative.

The narrator also partly stresses the significance of faith in the first sign ('His disciples believed in Him,' 2:11), in the fourth sign (in the scene of the testing of Philip in order to force a deeper faith), in the last sign ('but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me,' 11:42),

and ultimately at the end of this Gospel when he explains the purpose of the signs ('these [signs] are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name,' 20:31). Therefore, in conclusion, it is possible to say that a correct and fruitful relationship with Jesus is built not on the wonders He performs; it is built on belief in the word of Jesus. Nevertheless, Jesus performs miraculous acts to promote people's faith in Him.

#### **4) The imagery of the heavenly family**

In the first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-11), the reader recognises that Jesus does not immediately listen to nor do what His earthly family suggest. In 2:4, Jesus remarks: *ti, evmoi. kai. soi, (gu,naiÈ ou;pw h[kei h` w[ra mou* and in 7:8: *u`mei/j avna,bhte eivj th.n e`orth,n\ evgw. ouvkv avnabai,nw eivj th.n e`orth.n tau, thn( o[ti o` evmo.j kairo.j ou;pw pepalh, rwtai.* The will of His heavenly Father, but not that of His earthly family, dominates the actions of Jesus. The priority of adherence to the heavenly family is stressed. Jesus here declares His freedom from any kind of human manipulation. This may cause the reader to reflect on the pre-mentioned identity of Jesus as 'the Son of God' provided through the mouth of John the Baptist in John 1:34. Jesus proves his obedience to God, and therefore His true sonship, by accomplishing the work that the Father gives Him to do (Smalley 1978:216). This theological motif of Jesus as 'the Son of God' will be developed in the whole Gospel (see 1:49; 5:25; 10:36; 11:4, 27; 19:7; 20:31), but here only the vague initial picture of this is found (see Smith 1995:127-131).

#### **5) Glorification of Jesus**

The first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-11) and the seventh sign ('the raising of Lazarus,' 11:1-44) stress the glorification of Jesus. In the first sign, Jesus performs the miracle with the intention of revealing His glory. This recalls the reader to the narrator's previous declaration, which is that of 'the glory as of a father's only son' in chapter 1. In the Gospel of John, the true glory of Jesus is only to be revealed

at His hour since 7:39 clearly states that during the ministry Jesus had not yet been glorified. Thus the reader can think of this glory in 2:11 either as referring to a partial manifestation of glory, or as being part of the encapsulation of the training of the disciples, where their whole career, including their sight of the glory of the resurrected Jesus, was foreshadowed.

In the seventh sign, Jesus clearly mentions that the illness of Lazarus is not for the purpose of death, but for the purpose of God's manifesting His glory in powerful and compassionate action through the Son. Even though it is literally correct that the glory here is specifically a reference to the revelation of the Son's power to give life, ultimately (or theologically) this miracle will glorify Jesus, not so much in the sense that people will admire it and praise Him, but in the sense that it will lead to His death, which is a stage in His glorification. In this regard, as has been pointed out above, the Lazarus event functions as a symbol for Jesus' death. In other words, only in the light of the death event of Jesus does the Lazarus event find its full meaning. Thus it is proved that the narrator conveys the spiritual truth through the physical miracle accounts in this Gospel.

## **6) Unbelief**

On the macro structural level of this Gospel, as has been argued, chapters 2-4 generally contain an enthusiastic faith-response by the Jews to Jesus, although their attitudes are partially negative (cf. 2:23-25). In chapters 5-12, however, the hostility of the Jews against Jesus intensifies sharply. The issue is the locus of revelation – Jesus or the Law. Thus in these chapters (chapters 5-12), the Jews plot to kill Jesus and make every attempt to seize or to stone Him as He performs miracles and by way of discourses exposes to them necessary and special information. This, however, does not necessarily indicate that there are no responses of faith in these chapters: it is merely stated to note that such responses are unusual. This theme of unbelief is found in all the signs, but most obviously in the third ('the healing at the pool of Bethesda,' 5:1-18) and the sixth sign ('the healing of the blind man from birth,' 9:1-41). In the third sign, even though Jesus performs the healing miracle for the crippled man and

reveals His divine identity through positive speeches and actions, the healed man does not confess his faith to Jesus, unlike the previous cases. Besides, the Jews do not exhibit surprise at the miracle, but instead rebuke the crippled man for his violation of the Sabbath and as soon as they learn from the man that the Healer is Jesus from Nazareth, they begin to persecute Jesus. In the sixth sign ('the healing of the blind man from birth,' 9:1-41), with the gradual development of the faith-confession of the blind man to Jesus, the animosity of the Jewish leaders toward Jesus becomes deeper and more serious. This is to say that the Jews become progressively blind about the real identity of Jesus while the blind man's eyes are gradually opened to Him. Thus the Jews are marked out as the true blind people and as the true sinners because of their unbelief in Jesus, which ultimately functions to indicate that true blindness is an incapacity to recognise Jesus.

#### **7) Jewish feasts**

There are some distinctive thematic features in chapters 5-10, one of which is the references to the Jewish feasts. These include the following: the Sabbath (5:9); the Passover (6:4); the Tabernacles (7:2) and the Dedication (10:22). At each festival Jesus does or says things that show that He is the fulfilment of what is celebrated during that particular festival. Therefore, the analysis of each text must be done according to the reciprocal relations between the significance of the feast and the fulfilment of Jesus. Thus the narrative plots are unfolded with particular reference to the Jewish feasts and this seems the way in which the narrator presents the personality of Jesus. Bearing in mind this context, at the third sign ('the healing at the pool of Bethesda,' 5:1-18) and at the sixth sign ('the healing of the blind man from birth,' 9:1-41), the reader anticipates that the narrator presents Jesus as the One who replaces the Sabbath with His own person. In the fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15), the narrator pointedly mentions the approaching Passover in verse 4 of this chapter. This is not just a time indication but is also intended to evoke the content of the narrative that follows. That is, it means that the ensuing discourse of Jesus must be read in the light of Passover lessons. In this narrative, the narrator forces the reader to realise that Moses is superseded and replaced by the person of Jesus, that Jesus is the

Lord who supplies imperishable and ample provision for His people and that Jesus is superior to Moses and other prophets and kings who provide a setting of physical freedom from tyranny. Thus the statement as to the nearness of the Passover (v. 4), the identification of Jesus as the prophet who should come (cf. Dt 18:15), and the discussion on the bread from heaven within the discourse (vv. 31-33) combine to indicate the hope of a second Exodus.

### **8) Eucharistic motif**

The fourth sign ('the feeding of the multitude,' 6:1-15) has a Eucharistic association, which is apparent from the miraculous process at the centre of the narrative (vv. 10-11). Jesus commands the disciples to make the people sit down (v. 10), which is normally used to describe the position taken in eating a meal. After the preparations for the feeding, Jesus takes the loaves and distributes them to the crowds who are seated (v. 11). Jesus serves as the host at the meal, giving thanks and distributing the food. Thus He is pictured as the giver of the essential nourishment of humanity. Jesus' action is clearly an appropriate condition of the occasion and Jewish meal customs. However, the description, *viz.*, *e; laben, euvcaristh, saj, and die, dwken* is naturally recalled for the post-Easter reader on behalf of the formal setting of the Eucharist (cf. Kysar 1986:92). This Eucharistic association of the narrative may enhance the pivotal theological point of the author. That is, this miraculous action of Jesus has a particular relationship with the Last Supper where Jesus is symbolically associated with the Passover Lamb, which may be linked to the Passover motif in verse 4. In this regard, it is possible to conclude that Jesus gives the eschatological food that symbolically indicates His own body and blood (see above).

### **9) The lack of Judaism and abundance of new order**

In the first sign ('the changing of water into wine,' 2:1-11), the narrator mentions the qualificational setting for the miracle in verse 6 in *h=san de . evkei/ li, qinai u`dri, ai e]x kata . to.n kaqarismo.n tw/n VIoudai,wn kei,menai ( cwrou/sai avna . metrhta . j du, o h' trei/j*. This mention

not only provides the reader with factual information, but also furnishes a complete symbolic association. Particularly, the numeral-mention of ‘six’ implies a strong Jewish atmosphere. The Jews regard ‘seven’ as the perfect number and ‘six’ accordingly is short of perfection, lacking, incomplete. Hence the ‘six jars’ in this verse are held to point to Judaism as incompleteness. Besides, in verse 10, after the miracle, the narrator refers to the mention of the steward of the new wine that  $\text{Pa/j a;nqrwpoj prw/ton to.n kalo.n oi=non ti,qhsin kai. o[tan me qusqw/sin to.n evla,ssw\ su. teth,rhkaj to.n kalo.n oi=non e[wj a;rti}$ . This statement of the steward concretises the obvious theological message that the narrative contains. The narrator implicitly applies the imagery of the bridegroom to Jesus (see above). Jesus, as the eschatological bridegroom, supplies an abundance of the best wine at the banquet so that He satisfies the people, while the physical bridegroom disappoints the people through the shortage of wine. This contrast presents the obvious distinction between the old order (Jewish order) and the new order (Christological order). The narrator actually attempts to show that Jesus can save the world from sin and death, whereas Judaism has failed in this regard.

#### **10) Expulsion from the synagogue**

The sixth sign (‘the healing of the blind man from birth,’ 9:1-41) considers the circumstances of the Johannine community: expulsion from the synagogue. This is primarily reflected in the response of the man’s parents to the Jewish authorities in verses 20-21: ‘We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.’ Subsequently, the narrator adds his comment in verse 22: ‘His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.’ Many scholars think that the author completed this towards the end of the first century after his original readers had been expelled from the synagogues because of their open confessions to Jesus. Therefore the fear of the man’s parents is natural, considering their terror of excommunication. However, the narrator is able to persuade the reader to attend to the same fate of the blind man. That is, like the blind



man, the narrator attempts to invite the reader to put his faith in Jesus. The man's stubborn refusal to give way to the perverse denial on the part of his accusers is noteworthy: 'I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see' (v. 25). His sarcasm in v. 27 is also suggestive of vitality: 'why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?' Thus the narrator elaborately requests the paradigmatic reader to become a disciple through the portrayal of the blind man. Therefore, all the while, what the narrator has been describing speaks directly to his own situation and that of his church. The man healed of blindness represents the genuine believer coming to faith in spite of those who would prevent him from doing so, while the religious leaders represent the members of the synagogue who expelled the believers from their religious territory. After all, the expulsion exemplifies the disciples who do not fall away under the threat of eviction (16:1-2), and his example provides encouragement for others to maintain their loyalty to Christ despite the opposition from the local Jewish leaders.

#### **5.4. Concluding remarks**

The author of the Gospel of John recorded the seven miracle accounts in his book and named them prominently as *shmei/a*. This peculiar term signifies that the miracles of Jesus in this Gospel are not merely magnificent events, but are significant occasions in which associative messages are packed. As a result of the comprehensive analysis of all the signs, it is clear that the main concern of *shmei/a* in this Gospel is to draw the identity of Jesus and to convey some significant theological themes.

The divine identities of Jesus that are exposed in signs are, for example, 'the eschatological bridegroom' (in the first sign), 'the provider of eternal life' (in the second sign, in the third sign, in the fourth sign and in the seventh sign), 'the bringer of the eschatological salvation' (in the first sign, in the fourth sign and in the last sign), 'the Messiah/Christ/King' (in the first sign, in the fourth sign and in the fifth sign), 'the Passover lamb' (in the first sign and in the fourth sign), 'the divine origin of Jesus' (in the sixth sign and in the last sign), 'an universal saviour' (in the second sign), and 'a sympathiser' (particularly in the healing accounts).

Some other theological themes that have been conveyed through the signs are, for example, ‘the replacement of the Jewish tradition’ (in the first sign, in the second sign and in the fourth sign), ‘the significance of a faith in Jesus’ (in the second sign, in the sixth sign, and implicitly in the first, fourth and seventh sign), ‘glorification of Jesus’ (in the first sign and in the seventh sign), ‘the discipleship’ (in the first sign), ‘The imagery of heavenly family’ (in the first sign), ‘unbelief’ (in the third sign and in the sixth sign), ‘Jewish feasts’ (in the third sign, in the fourth sign, and in the sixth sign), and ‘Eucharistic motif’ (in the fourth sign). There are still some additional theological themes which have not been synthesised here, such as ‘the relationship between sin and sickness,’ ‘purification or renewal,’ ‘progressive faith confession,’ ‘metaphor of blindness,’ and ‘eschatological expectation.’

Jesus is the incarnate Word who has been revealed from ancient times through Moses and the prophets. He came into the world to provide eternal life at the hour that God has fixed. The Gospel of John was recorded to pronounce this Good News to all people in all times. The miracle accounts (*shmei/a*) in this Gospel are written so that people may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing people may have Life in His name (cf. 20:31).

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